

Booz Allen Hamilton

LEADERSHIP IN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

AS A LEADING STRATEGY AND technology consulting firm primarily serving the public sector, Booz Allen Hamilton has gone to great lengths to reflect and even exceed the diversity reflected by many of its government clients. Besides meeting the demands of its clients, implementing diversity initiatives over the past decade has also made a big difference for many of Booz Allen Hamilton's veteran employees. One is Laurie Gallo, who joined Booz Allen Hamilton 25 years ago in an entry-level position on her way to becoming partner. She has seen many changes in what she described as the male-dominated culture of the company, which had no female partners when she signed on. Today, 20 percent of the 113 partners are female—including Gallo herself. In 2002, the year she became partner, there were more females promoted to partner than males.

Work-life balance issues were critical for Booz Allen Hamilton's female employees at all levels. "At that point, there was a significant effort to start finding ways to bring in new female partners, and we haven't looked back," she says. "We held a meeting where we brought the women partners and the other senior partners together—and had a very open and candid dialogue about the importance of inclusiveness, and how we could work together. We ended up with a more flexible work strategy that turned out to help both men and women employees. Flexible schedules are now a part of the normal business rhythm here, and it makes this a very attractive place to work. We are creating that kind of environment to make sure that we don't lose the best of talent—and having employees exit and come back to work is routine now." At one point, 35 percent of Gallo's own staff was on some kind of flextime schedule—and more than half of those flextimers were men.

Gallo has also witnessed a dramatic increase in multicultural diversity at Booz Allen Hamilton. "When you think about consulting, the value we offer comes from diverse views," she explained. "You get diverse views by bringing in people with diverse backgrounds and experiences. That was one of the "aha" lessons that we



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embraced, and we quickly realized diversity was going to be in our best interests. That is when we started seeing real change here. Over the past 25 years, we have become a younger company, and have built a truly diverse canvas with all the visible signs of diversity. There was also a broader acceptance—and even an active desire—to achieve multiple levels of diversity. That ensured that we would continue to generate fresh perspectives for our clients, and provide new energy and better ideas for them. That is what our clients were buying from us."

Booz Allen Hamilton further ramped up its diversity effort six years ago with its Board Diversity Initiative, which created a network of implementation teams around

the country to develop customized diversity action plans, sponsor local diversity activities and leverage Booz Allen Hamilton's 13 grassroots diversity forums. Then, earlier this year, the company hired a new director of diversity and inclusion to help create a more integrated, multicultural agenda. "What the director is helping us do

is embed the multicultural aspect into all areas of the business," added Gallo. "Our learning and development function, for example, now offers diversity training as part of its week-long on-boarding process. A big piece of that is making sure people understand our core values, of which multicultural diversity is an important one. It also means thinking about diversity when we hire new talent or promote from within—and making sure we are choosing from a diverse slate of candidates. That has to be a natural part of the process."

Booz Allen Hamilton's reputation for diversity is both attracting new clients and pleasing old ones. "Some of our clients go back to the 1940s, and as they have made their own tremendous push

to become more diverse at senior levels, they are demanding to see diversity in us," says Horacio Rozanski, Booz Allen Hamilton's chief personnel officer. "Many of our contracts have requirements to demonstrate that we hire people with diverse backgrounds from diverse places, and that we partner with institutions that are fundamentally diverse so that we can ensure multiple perspectives. The bottom line is we can't find the best people in the business if we don't reach far and wide to find them—regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or any other dimension of diversity. We have to cast a very wide net to attract the best people, and they won't come here if we aren't as diverse as they expect us to be."

Booz Allen Hamilton's most recently formed employee resource group is its multicultural forum, which is designed to help employees operate more effectively across different cultures. "It attracts people like me who were not born in this country, but also people who have lived here all their lives but have an interest in living elsewhere, as well as people, especially younger people, who are interested in learning about other cultures," says Rozanski, who points out that three-quarters of all Booz Allen Hamilton employees donate their time to community service. "Diversity of views is especially important to the younger generation—and we are finding that there are many people who come to work here just because of our track record for diversity and community service."



Horacio Rozanski
Vice President and
Chief Personnel Officer



Laurie Gallo
Vice President and
Partner