

---

Joanna Mazur – Director of Resource Management at Sygnity S.A., bearing responsibility through the years for fields such as Organization and Management and the Personnel area. Managed many projects in both typically HR areas, such as the building of the Personnel Department, design and implementation of solutions improving company safety in the area of Human Resource Management, conducting several restructuring projects, and implementing integrated information systems in support of human resource management, as well as in areas related to the organization as a whole, such as “Implementation of the CMMI Model in the Company and Conducting an Assessment of Processes Undertaken in the Company with Respect to Agreement with that Model Using the SCAMPI Method” and “Selection and Implementation of Venture Management Methodology as Undertaken by Sygnity S.A. (ComputerLand).”

## Izabela Jagosz-Kuchta

### The Pro-Innovation Influence of HRM at IBM

The origins of the **IBM Corporation** go back to the 19th century. IBM stands out not only for its extraordinary achievements in the field of innovation, where it holds the greatest number of patents (4,186), including for the prototype of the personal computer, the floppy disk, etc. The company is also outstanding in its solutions that foster revolutionary progress in many fields, ranging from enhancing the process of the accumulation of solar energy, through nanotechnology research, all the way to the diagnostics of osteoporosis and the development of a computer simulation of the human organism.

IBM is more than just innovative achievements in technology. It also represents special and continuous care for people. For IBM, it is Man who represents the highest of values. This is visible in the strong society-oriented policy targeting the company's employees (almost 400,000 people in 170 countries) as well as the external social environment. With respect to resource management, what makes IBM unique is innovation, an unconventional approach, up-to-date tools, and flexibility. All these features have a direct impact on the innovation level of the solutions the company offers to customers. IBM understands that implementation of innovation inside the company first is absolutely indispensable for promotion of innovation on the market.

## Pro-Innovative HRM

Pro-innovative HRM is usually based on two main lines of action by the HRM department—investment in worker development and the molding of proper interpersonal relations supporting not only growth in worker involvement, but also building better worker relations and helping maintain the work-life balance (WL-B). Human resource management at IBM is aimed at building involvement as leverage leading to innovation.

### Investing in Worker Development

That is why IBM stimulates employees to the constant development by:

- Creating favorable conditions,
- Preparing annual individual development plans, put together by employees together with managers, and
- Investing in employee training, by providing access to a wide offer of internal and external e-learning as well as traditional courses, where thanks to IT employees can participate in international distance learning and also have an opportunity to take part in professional workshops, shadowing courses, and technical training and general courses, including language courses—the mentoring program is highly developed at IBM.

The company supports development through the work of its branches in different countries. It favors talents at work and creates an environment that encourages self-fulfillment and individual success. IBM cultivates an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual trust among employees as well as between employees and their managers. It develops diversity management (Workforce Diversity Program), which is based on equality and partnership, regardless of sex, age, nationality, race, level of ability, sexual orientation, or religion—supporting the idea that “none of us is as strong as we are all together.”

One of the most innovative and original global solutions offered to employees is corporate brainstorming (IBMJam), which enables a parallel involvement of thousands of employees from every corner of the world in working on a problem solution, sharing opinions, and taking the initiative. ValuesJam 2003 became the platform for a redefinition of IBM's primary values and objectives, making **innovation** one of its three top values that are the guidelines for every IBM employee in the world. The three values are:

- Dedication to every client's success,
- “Innovation that matters, for our company and for the world,” and
- Trust and personal responsibility in all relations.

InnovationJam 2006 was the greatest brainstorm in the history of IBM. It put together 150,000 people from 104 countries and resulted in ten new projects that use

modern IBM technologies. IBM went on to invest a total of 100 million dollars in those technologies.

To show appreciation for innovation among its employees, IBM Poland grants the IBM Values Award every month. One of the main criteria that determines who receives the award is employee promotion of the “innovation that matters, for our company and for the world” value.

## Shaping Interpersonal Relations

As one of a handful of companies on the Polish market, IBM provides its employees with the opportunity to use multiple flexible timetables and workplaces. This includes telecommuting, thanks to which the employees may work at home. This form is especially valued by those who have to commute from distant places, work with colleagues from different time zones, provide care of little children or ill members of the family, or those who have to combine study with work. It is the form of assessment of employees that encourages such work organization and accounts for the effects of employee work. IBM technology provides safe, remote access to the company's knowledge resources and enables communication with associates in real time and “beyond the borders.” All IBM employees all over the world use the same common instant messaging software.

Research conducted in IBM Poland has proved that what employees expect most is company support manifested not only in providing the possibility to work at home, but also in helping them to take care of their children and reconcile family life with a career.

In order to maintain harmony and balance between work and the private lives of employees, IBM has created a special fund throughout its world branches—the Global Work Life Fund. This Fund is designed to meet the requirements and characteristics of a given country, and therefore to meet the specific needs of employees working in those branches. The company co-finances holiday trips for children and supervises their organization every year within the framework of this Fund. What employees appreciate most is the day camps organized for their children, which enable the children to spend time in an interesting way while their parents are at work. Children are picked up from the office in the morning and their parents collect them in the afternoon to take them home. IBM Poland co-finances kindergartens located in the vicinity of company offices for the children of its employees. It also collaborates with private facilities and reimburses a significant part of the expenses spent on a child's kindergarten. Moreover, IBM offers attractive healthcare packages for seniors as a form of help for employees taking care of older members of the family.

IBM also supports a program for young mothers—"Stay in touch." Its objective is to make a mother's return to work after maternity leave easier. Every woman, if she so desires, may use a personal computer with an Internet connection during her stay at home to access the company intranet. She may participate in organized e-learning programs, raise her professional qualifications, and stay up-to-date with the information concerning the company. IBM also provides specific forms of aid such as the *Young Working Mother's Guidebook*, which contains information on how to cope with stress and time management.

The company's concern for preserving a balance between work and private life has been recently appreciated by young mothers at IBM who participated in an independent ranking (encompassing 200 companies) organized by the *Dziecko* [Child] magazine and contributed to awarding the company the honorable title of "Mother-Friendly Company" in appreciation of the "homeworking" program.

Another innovative solution related to human resource management is attracting and communicating with future potential employees when they are at the age of twelve to sixteen. This is a reference to the "Women in Technology" initiative, which aims at encouraging girls to study and work in the field of science, especially IT. This program provides young girls with positive models, supports their science education, and, above all, shows that computer science may be fun and may be the start of a wonderful career in the IT industry. EX.I.T.E. camps (EXploring Interests in Technology and Engineering) are organized all over the world every year within the framework of WIT. They always take place at IBM locations. During these workshops girls can discover much interesting information about technology and engineering as well as about opportunities for professional careers offered by IBM in those fields. IBM Poland organized an EXITE camp for thirty schoolgirls from Warsaw high schools in 2008. Initiatives of this sort provide mutual benefits: For young people they are an interesting experience, a chance to acquire additional knowledge, and an opportunity to see what a job at a big international corporation looks like. For IBM, they provide an opportunity to work with the best, eradicate some of the stereotypes about the IT industry, and activate future employees, paying special attention to women.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

IBM is a socially responsible company. For the past decade IBM has been one of the greatest donors of money and equipment. It has also delegated many people to help non-governmental organizations and educational facilities all over the world. The company's philanthropic activity is concentrated on many different areas, but it is always based on the knowledge and skills of modern technologies and aims at solving the most urgent

social problems. IBM supports the improvement of education of all students, from the youngest to the oldest. It is also involved in health protection by providing educational institutions and non-governmental organizations with IT equipment. IBM is also highly concerned about the environment and does not forget its responsibilities in this field. This attitude is reflected in the company's energy-saving programs, for example.

Being a socially responsible company, IBM supports its employees in their activities for the benefit of the environment where they live and work. A special website has been created providing ready-to-use tools and materials to support employee actions for various non-profit institutions and organizations to develop the employee voluntary service program.

Employee involvement in the "World Community Grid" program—a social program supporting breakthrough scientific research—is an example of such activity. This program uses a huge amount of the free computational resources of millions of private and corporate computers all over the world, merging them into a network processing data and simultaneously creating a large system with a tremendous computational power—far greater than the computational potential of a dozen supercomputers. Without IBM's initiative, calculations that now take several months would take years.

The "On Demand Community" page provides an opportunity to apply for financial and in-kind contributions from IBM to organizations or schools where employees work as volunteers. Within the framework of the IBM Mentor Place program, many of IBM employees help students with issues concerning their education and the choice of professional career path as volunteers.

IBM strongly believes that the same innovations that revolutionized business can now become a foundation for crucial economic and social breakthroughs and contribute to dramatic improvements in the quality of services performed for customers and the world. But all this begins and ends with the innovation potential of our employees.

---

Izabela Jagosz-Kuchta – Personnel Director at IBM Polska as of October 2007. Prior to that, the Operating Director of the Global Business Services division at IBM Polska. Became a part of the IBM team as a result of the takeover of PWC Consulting, where she worked over the 1998–2002 period. Before that, gained experience in the financial sector working at the PBKS Head Office and at the PBKS Brokerage House (1992–1997). Graduated from the University of Warsaw, majoring in Management and Marketing, the University of Szczecin, majoring in Economics, the University of Illinois and the University of Warsaw, an Executive MBA, post-graduate studies in Human Resource Management at the Warsaw School of Economics, and studies in Investment Banking at the Gdańsk Academy of Banking.