



Case Study: Implementing a Parental Leave Transition Program at McCormick Australia

What did McCormick Australia set out to achieve?

Off the back of celebrating International Women's Day 2022, the HR Director of McCormick Australia, Blair Lindsay, identified an opportunity to provide better transition support for parents returning to work after parental leave, through the delivery of a tailored coaching program. Natalie Moloney (At the Helm Career Services) and Andrew Perry (Andrew M Perry & Associates), both practising career practitioners, were engaged to pilot a Parental Leave Transition Program to better support McCormick employees during this important work and life transition.

"McCormick believes that its employees underpin its success. McCormick's Power of People values guide the company in championing equality and ensuring the education, development, and wellbeing of its people, while working to create better health outcomes."
~ McCormick Australia

Natalie has specialised experience providing tailored career services to women returners through her private practice. She was well equipped through her experience (both work & life), research and passion, to develop an effective and supportive program, where she acts as the key career practitioner providing one to one coaching support throughout the process. In collaboration with Blair and the wider McCormick Australia HR team, the program outline was finalised, and a program pilot was undertaken. Delivery of the program is now ongoing.

What type of support does the program offer?

The program was designed to support individuals to effectively prepare for parental leave, and manage their back to work transition, to help them achieve a smooth and successful journey back to work. Whilst following a content framework, the program is designed to have the agility to also be tailored to individual specific needs, allowing participants to move forward confidently with the guidance and support of an experienced and qualified career specialist.

The program includes one to one 'pre and post' parental leave transition coaching across 6 sessions on a virtual basis. The first session is conducted prior to parental leave starting. The program includes tailored activities to support objectives, and effective resources to support the learning content. It has been designed to include support for managing the transition at both work and in life, to help equip participants with the knowledge, tools and strategies to help them thrive.



Key program content includes:

- What to consider and plan for when preparing for parental leave
- Returning to work – understanding your unique story
- Maintaining balanced work and life roles
- Managing a successful transition back to work
- Managing changes at home
- Selfcare and maintaining a positive self-image.

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development was also utilised in the development of the content framework for the program, to include key competencies identified as significant to parents returning to work. These were based on understanding common challenges, issues and concerns that can be encountered after a career break.

How has the Parental Leave Transition Program helped McCormick employees?

An initial pilot program was undertaken with an employee who had recently returned from parental leave, receiving very encouraging feedback from the participant. Several more McCormick Australia employees have now been engaged in the program, which continues to receive positive feedback about the support being provided.

The Parental Leave Transition program is a unique and innovative program that adds value to the employee experience, their important work and life transition, whilst also adding value to the organisation. The program provides a positive contribution to the wellbeing and change agility of employees, which encourages happier and more engaged employees, equipped with the skills to help them thrive through, and beyond, this challenging transition.