



Saxton Bampfylde

This year's International Women's Day theme is #EmbraceEquity. What does this mean to you in your work life?



Kate Ludlow, Managing Partner

That as a female leader, my view and opinion is give equal weight and space to those of my male colleagues. That my professional development and any aspirations I have for my career will not be different or modified simply because I'm a woman.

Sophie Tredinnick, Consultant

Equity to me means trying to be as fair, representative and as inclusive as possible across all communities. We have a responsibility as leadership consultants to contribute to trying to level the playing field for those who have protected characteristics and/or are in under represented groups. This includes our wonderful women. We need to continue to push back on our clients where we don't think that they are taking an equitable approach, this can at times be uncomfortable but it does mean we have more impact in the long term. So go and have those difficult conversations and be proud of the impact that you can have in your work life.



Jonathan Morgan, Managing Partner

We spend a lot of time at work. Being valued for who you are and being able to be that person in all the parts of your life is massively important for everyone.



Sophie Tredinnick, Consultant

When I joined the Civil Service in 2012 most of the senior leaders were men, we barely had any ethnic, gender, disabled or LGBTQ+ representation. We only had one female Director in a group of 6 and one female Director General in a team of 8. This has changed dramatically, the department I was working in is now led by a woman and her senior team (including her) has an equal split of genders. I've seen more and more women returning to work after having children and successfully (although not without stress!) juggling childcare and work responsibilities, this really is to be celebrated as 20/30 years ago the balance was very different.



Kate Ludlow, Managing Partner

I think the fact the gender diversity is something that simply expected by clients today shows the progress that has been made. We no longer hear leaders having to make a business or values case for why this is important, and we're no longer being asked to appoint the first female leader to a board or leadership team.



Rachel Hubbard, Consultant

Huge. I watched Margaret Thatcher become the first female Prime Minister. I didn't like her politics, but she was an exotic in a sea of grey suited men. She challenged the male norm, as did Marjorie Scardino at Pearson, who we placed as the first FTSE 100 Female CEO.



Rebecca Emerick, Associate Consultant

I am sure the world is a very different place to what it was even twenty years ago, but I personally do not think nearly enough progress has been made. As someone who has volunteered with vulnerable women in different contexts, I think more people would be horrified by what women still face when they are most in need of help.

What progress have you seen on gender equality in your life and work?



Jonathan Morgan, Managing Partner

I remember a time when it was a controversial idea to suggest that boards and senior management teams should have gender equality as a goal, let alone a reality. It's brilliant to see how far (mostly) we have come.

Which women/women inspired or supported you in your career path?



Rachel Hubbard, Consultant

My mother inspired me. She wasn't in paid employment after she became a mother, but she was a very active volunteer supporting others. She wanted me to be able just who I wanted to be.

Jonathan Morgan, Managing Partner

In my own career, many women have inspired and supported me, but a special thanks would have to go to our former consultant, Sarah Orwin, who taught me a huge amount of what I know and do today.



Rebecca Emerick, Associate Consultant

Dolly Parton and Jane Fonda never cease to amaze me with how they protested against misogyny long before it was cool. I was also really struck by last year's biopic of Marilyn Monroe and the one-dimensional way its world-famous male producers chose to remember her. Marilyn Monroe was heroic in her rise from semi orphan-hood and poverty to become one of the most talented women in Hollywood. She also did a lot to further the cause of race relations. I would also add Sally Wainwright and Sarah Lancashire for the feminist masterpiece that was BBC drama Happy Valley. And most importantly my mum for being a very inspiring single mum years before society made it easy!



Why do we need more women in leadership?



Rachel Hubbard, Consultant

We need variety and diversity in leadership – this includes as many women as men, but women doing it as women, not trying to do it in the same way men are leaders! We also need organisations to allow leaders to balance their work with other commitments – for both men and women.

Kate Ludlow, Managing Partner

We need to ensure that organisations have access to and can leverage the broadest possible range of talent. Female leaders bring a different perspective, view point and approach, which will always benefit an organisation when considered in the whole. Organisations that have genuinely diverse leadership teams will attract diverse talent, and have access to the largest pools of talent.



Jonathan Morgan, Managing Partner

We need diversity of every kind in leadership. More points of view and different approaches almost always mean better and more considered decision making. Organisations can encourage women to become leaders in so many ways: coaching, role-modelling, formal and informal development programmes. Perhaps most of all though: by creating a culture where women feel that they want to become leaders.



Rebecca Emerick, Associate Consultant

Because we are still so far from the goal!



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