



Maximising women's contribution to future economic growth

A view from business six months on – December 2013



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Foreword



'For cultural change to continue, as it must, more businesses must join the Council and the Government in a more united effort to enable every woman to fulfil her true potential.'

In June of this year, the Women's Business Council published its report setting out clear recommendations for both Government and business to help optimise women's contribution to economic growth.

Six months on, the Council is encouraged by the response the recommendations have received: the Government has launched an action plan and established a ministerial task force to ensure the delivery of the report's recommendations. Yet despite this positive start, the Council realises that there is still more to achieve.

Real cultural change – the key to unlocking women's contribution to UK economic growth – relies on business playing its part too. In recognition of this, the Council has created this document as a useful, up-to-date resource for businesses looking to spark up conversation and drive change in their current approach to women both within education and the workplace.

We would ask you all to consider the programmes and insights found within this document, and see how you might implement similar programmes to make a difference and improve the talent pipeline within your own business.

The document offers two principal areas of insight:

- Best practice case studies: these cover the 'Starting Out' and 'Getting On' stages of the report and are all live programmes run by leading UK companies. They share with the reader the importance and impact - on the people involved, whether school children, graduates or senior managers - of running programmes aligned with the report's recommendations.

- Leadership insights: these come from female employees, in FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 companies, at different stages of their career. From CEOs to recent graduates, the employees' personal insights articulate many of the obstacles and challenges that women still face in the world of business. In addition, they offer advice and inspiration to others yet to launch their career, and importantly serve as poignant reminders of the continuing need for business to do more.

Looking ahead, the work of the Council remains clear. We must continue to work collaboratively with both Government and business in a joint effort to:

- Increase the number of girls entering STEM disciplines
- Promote flexible working opportunities
- Improve girls' aspirations
- Support and promote apprenticeships
- Improve the situation for older people in the workplace

At this moment in time, I am pleased to announce that the wheels of change are in motion. Where businesses are implementing the report's recommendations, the results are evident. Yet for cultural change to continue, as it must, more businesses must join the Council and the Government in a more united effort to enable every woman to fulfil her true potential.

Recommendations overview

1. Starting out

Supporting the choices of girls and young women

- Broaden girls' aspirations and their understanding of career options by creating more effective partnerships between schools, career development professionals, parents and employers.
- Utilise the skills and talents of girls and young women to increase the nation's economic competitiveness in a global market.

Improving careers advice



Supporting girls and parents with better information and resources



Promoting effective work experience and developing workplace skills



Supporting more girls into STEM careers



2. Getting on

Supporting women in the middle phase of their working lives

The creation of a work and social environment which ensures women can fully contribute their economic potential by:

- Ensuring effective talent management;
- Facilitating access to affordable, accessible and quality childcare; and,
- Supporting culture change in business through the promotion and adoption of flexible working.

Ensuring effective talent management



Facilitating access to affordable childcare



Promoting and supporting flexible working



3. Staying on

Supporting women's continuing development and contribution in the third phase of their working lives

Ensure the skills and talents of women in the third phase of their working lives are fully used and are not lost to the economy due to caring responsibilities or the changing labour market by:

- Helping individuals and businesses better balance senior roles and caring responsibilities; and,
- Supporting these women to gain the skills to work in sectors forecasting growth and experiencing skills shortages.

Reskilling to match sectors of predicted growth



Helping to balance work and caring responsibilities



Challenging ingrained stereotypes and workplace culture



4. Enterprise

Helping women gain the necessary skills to set up and run their own business

- Ensuring women understand how enterprise opportunities can offer financial independence and flexibility in the workplace; and,
- Helping women to gain the necessary skills to run their own business.

Promoting enterprise through education



Increasing the availability of inspirational role models



Providing access to finance



Promoting support for women who want to start a business



Read the full report at womensbusinesscouncil.dcms.gov.uk

easyJet

Carolyn McCall – CEO

easyJet are Europe's leading airline, operating on over 600 routes across more than 30 countries with a fleet of over 200 Airbus aircraft. Last year they flew over 60 million passengers.

Growing up, did you know what you wanted to do?

No, I honestly had no idea what I wanted to do growing up.

What are the key things that have enabled you to achieve what you have?

I would attribute my success to hard work and, I guess, some lucky breaks. What's more, I've always really enjoyed my work.

Who has been influential to you throughout your career?

I have been fortunate to have worked with some fantastic people who have had a great impact on my personal development. Some have been inspirational figures and others, superb teachers, always willing to share their knowledge and experience.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

If you really like the company but want to perform another role, don't leave - get the other role. It makes a big difference if you love the job AND the company and its culture.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Be confident, take opportunities to expand your knowledge, work in another country, learn all the time, and work well with people, as a team player.

What have been the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

The greatest challenges always revolve around big business change, whether that's digital disruption in media or working in a new sector like aviation. The way I dealt with this was by embracing change, ensuring I gained as much intelligence and knowledge about the issues as quickly as possible, and then working with the team around me to create a clear strategy and business plan.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

I think this is about two key things - women being confident and asking for what they want changed in order for them to stay after having kids; and companies showing more agility in that very short period to retain female talent. This is the only way the talent pipeline for senior management will contain more women and, in turn, the only way more women will reach executive committees and boards.

'It makes a big difference if you love the job AND the company and its culture.'



easyJet

Rachel Kentleton - Director of Strategy, IR & Regulatory Affairs

Growing up, did you know what you wanted to do?

I attended a convent school that had a very limited view of what women could aspire to. Added to that, my family were pretty much all teachers so at school I always thought I would end up in a similar career. It was at university where my horizons broadened and I started to consider a career in business.

What are the key things that have enabled you to achieve what you have?

I was really lucky that my first job out of university was on the Unilever graduate training scheme; they took a politics and psychology graduate with no business experience and really developed me, as well as supporting me in gaining an accountancy qualification. This has been the foundation for everything I have done since. I think my natural drive and energy have been key, as well as my resilience - when things don't go to plan, I bounce back quickly and always seem to deliver in tough situations. I've also been very lucky in that my husband has truly supported my career and genuinely shares in the care of our children.

Who has been influential to you throughout your career?

Catherine James at Diageo was inspirational as a senior female leader who also had a family at a time when I was embarking on motherhood. Carolyn McCall, as well, for giving me opportunities to develop and also caring enough to give me tough feedback when it was required.

What is the best advice you've received?

Focus on making sure you have the very best people you can in your team and make sure you really prioritise their development.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Do something you enjoy and think hard about the type of organisation you are joining. It's important to consider whether you'll be able to succeed there and whether or not you buy into their values. Also, never lose perspective; whilst work is important and fulfilling, so is creating the time for family life or developing other interests and talents.

What have been the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

The return to work after my first child proved tough. In the end, only time and a change of job and company enabled me to balance both work and motherhood well. In addition, given my decision to pursue a career in finance, I often find that I'm the only woman in the room and this sometimes means I'm excluded from the informal social networking that happens. I used to find this isolating, but now, after realising that my being a woman does not affect my ability to perform effectively as a team member or leader, I have learnt to deal with it.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

I think we need to be better at keeping high potential women on track after they've started a family. I also feel that it comes down to understanding women better. In many cases, women aren't as effective as they could be at flagging their achievements, managing upwards and making sure they secure the resources they need to deliver good results.

'It comes down to understanding women better. In many cases, women aren't as effective as they could be at flagging their achievements, managing upwards and making sure they secure the resources they need to deliver good results.'

easyJet

Alita Benson – Group People Director

Growing up, did you know what you wanted to do?

When I was at school, I wanted to be a primary school teacher. However, during university, I decided that I actually wanted to get into business.

What are the key things that have enabled you to achieve what you have?

A number of things have enabled my success to date. The foresight, support and investment of my parents which gave me an excellent education and outlook on life; a good foundation early on in my career through a good graduate programme; some great managers, leaders, and mentors who have supported and inspired me; some great teams that have worked for me; and a husband who allows me to throw whatever I need to into work whilst he will pick up the pieces at home!

Who has been influential to you throughout your career?

I have worked for some great bosses – each bringing something different, and each challenging and stretching me depending on where I have been on my own learning curve - my first boss helped me to think about problems from a very clear perspective and to form recommendations of my own. I've also had a boss who helped me think about the blue sky future as opposed to the here and now, and another who helped me take my personal leadership and HR thinking to a new level.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Two key areas of advice, from various people, stay with me. The first, 'don't sweat the small stuff' – which always reminds me of the need for balance - and the second, 'believe in yourself'.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

I think for any young person starting out in business, regardless of gender, I would say – work hard, be the best that you can be, maintain a sense of perspective, grab opportunities that are given, be curious, and stay true to yourself.

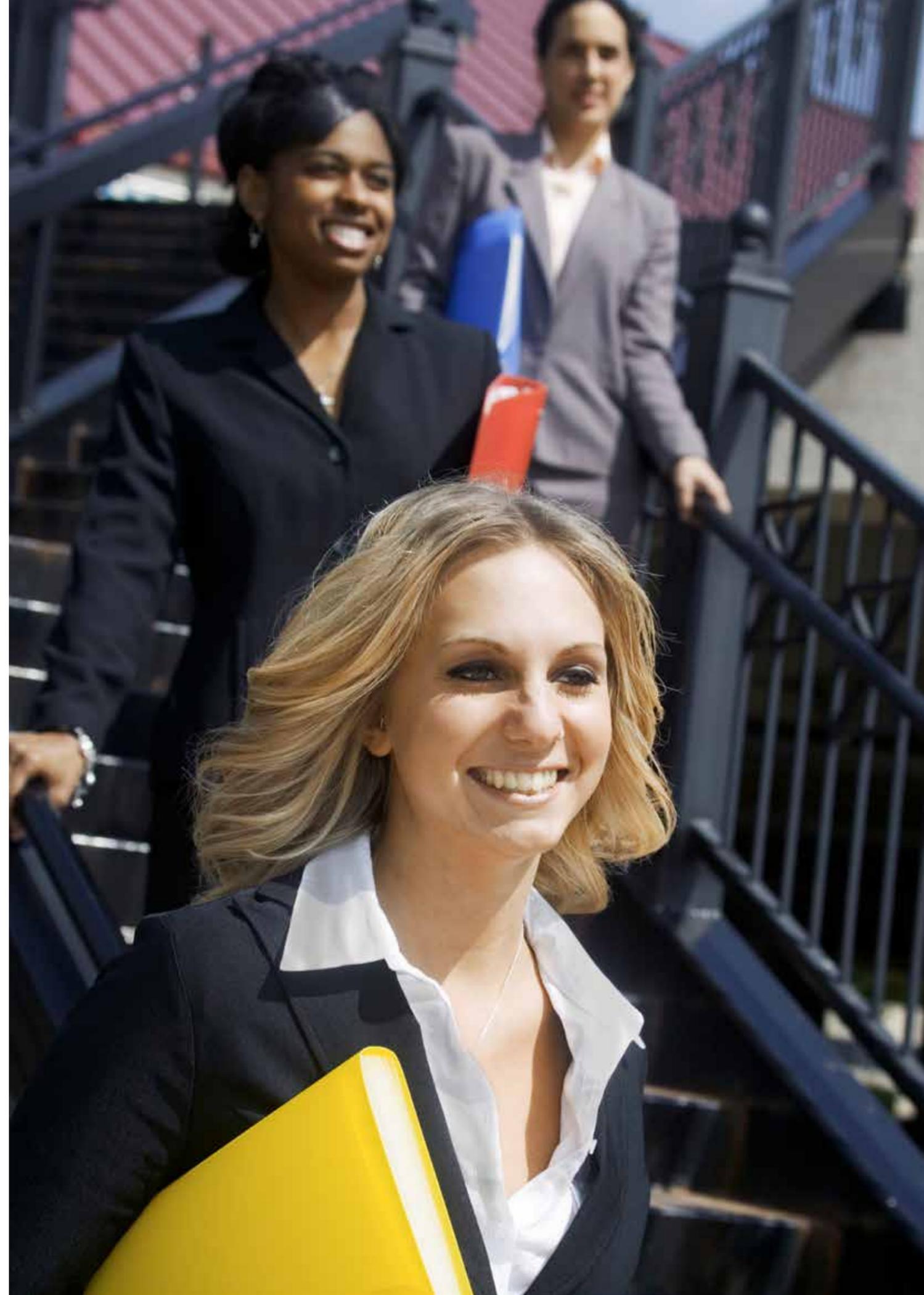
What have been the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

The biggest challenge has probably been moving into a much bigger role slightly earlier than I had expected. In this situation, I had to take my own advice (listed above) and use people around me to support me on my learning experience.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

I think the first important thing is for women to start to believe that they have the capability to be at the top – we have to remove the imposter syndrome from our thinking! I think flexibility in cultures and working practices is always important and there is more that can be done here.

'The first important thing is for women to start to believe that they have the capability to be at the top – we have to remove the imposter syndrome from our thinking!'



TalkTalk

Dido Harding - CEO

TalkTalk Group are the UK's leading value for money provider of fixed line broadband, voice telephony, television and mobile services to consumers and businesses.

Growing up, what role did teachers, parents and careers advisors play in influencing your career choice?

There is one person who deserves to take most credit for setting me on the right path in life: my grandfather. He started work at 16 and successfully rose through the army through two world wars to become Field Marshal of the British Army. Without doubt, he was the ultimate role model.

How can we give more young women a relevant insight into careers?

By promoting a culture in which senior management figures across all industries feel an obligation to go out and share their experiences and stories with young people – personally, I would always be willing to deliver a talk in a school. I think it's so important to inform the next generation of the opportunities out there.

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

These days, there seems to be a growing number of dual-career households. This is simply the result of changes in society over the past few decades. Flexible working, facilitated by recent technological advances, is the only way these households can function and maintain a work/life balance. This balance is crucial, not only for individuals but for businesses who want employees with a wide perspective on life.

Why should women in middle management push themselves to achieve more?

Because life's more fun when you push yourself.

What's the most unexpected thing that comes with being CEO of a company?

How absorbing the role is, day in, day out. I always wanted to be a CEO and now that I'm here, I am constantly surprised by how the role changes all the time and how much more there is to do.

What fuels your desire to achieve more?

My belief that there's so much more still to achieve.

'Life's more fun when you push yourself.'



TalkTalk

Jo Taylor – Head of Talent Management

Growing up, what role did teachers, parents and careers advisors play in influencing your career choice?

Without doubt, my parents had the greatest impact on my personal development and career aspirations. They were very supportive and encouraged me to gain as much work experience as I could. Importantly, I feel they taught me the true value of work and this is something that has stayed with me throughout my career.

How can we give more young women a relevant insight into careers?

Nowadays, we are fortunate to live in a world dominated by social media. In my opinion, this has dramatically simplified access to powerful sources of inspiration. Many of us now read tweets and articles by role models, helping us figure out what is needed to be successful (one of the few positives that has come out of today's celebrity culture!) I also think we should look to give something back, whether by going into schools or mentoring young employees. Such initiatives need to grow organically and should never be forced upon people.

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

These days, I feel people have to work harder to earn as much as their parents. Unfortunately, this means long hours are becoming the norm. I believe flexible work offers a solution to this, helping employees balance their work and home life. Technology has also played a part, helping employees work productively from remote locations. In all cases, trust is key. Without it, the system does not work.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Be yourself, be realistic, and most importantly, don't compromise on what's important to you.

What have been the greatest challenges you've facing during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

Two spring to mind: firstly, switching careers. When moving from broadcasting to HR, I had to learn how to make others take me seriously, especially when I had less qualifications than my colleagues; and secondly, my decision not to have children. Whilst many might assume this decision simplified my career, in fact it was quite the opposite. It has proven to be a regular source of frustration as colleagues often assume that my decision was purely career-motivated.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

I'm not sure there is anything specific. Society has changed and I think it's a case of holding our nerve. Perhaps the most important thing is to let men and women be themselves – this is what makes others gravitate towards them and what, ultimately, drives success.

'Let men and women be themselves - this is what makes others gravitate towards them and what, ultimately, drives success.'



TalkTalk

Jemma Jones – Group Talent Innovator

Growing up, did you think much about your future career?

Yes, I would say I spent quite a lot of time and effort learning about potential careers. My family was thoroughly supportive and never pressured me into doing a career they wanted me to do.

Did your teachers talk to you much about careers?

Not really. School careers advice tended to be very narrow, with a focus on the standard careers – law, banking, medicine, and teaching. I was certainly never told about all the career options that I have discovered since.

How can we improve the transition between school and work?

In my opinion, the transition period could be improved by contextualising the education system. These days, students skip from one set of exams to another, with an exclusive focus on gaining the required grades. Schools don't help students consider the bigger picture and explain how knowledge of individual subjects helps in the world of work.

Have you been assigned a mentor – what impact have they had?

Yes. They have been very helpful in counterbalancing my personality and supporting me throughout. Their experience and knowledge of the road ahead has been invaluable in helping me work out where I wish to take my career.

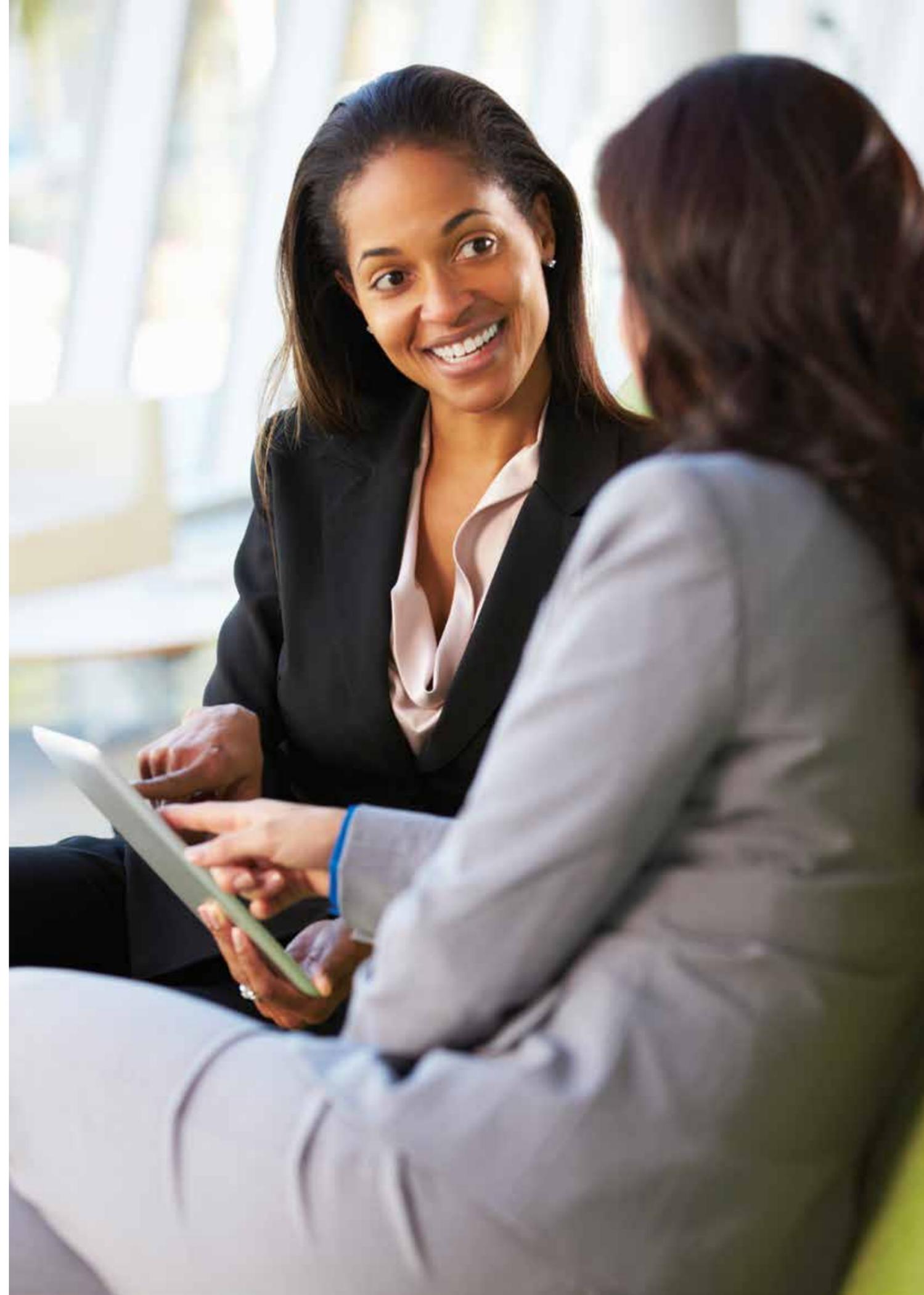
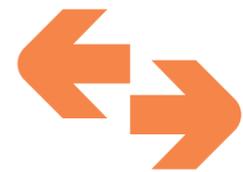
What are the key things you feel you need to develop to achieve success in the future?

I think I will need to gain a greater breadth of experience in the HR world. In addition, I will need to learn to manage my 'fear of failure' and become more confident in challenging others.

What is the biggest decision you've had to make so far in your career?

Moving to TalkTalk. I was at a stage in my career where I needed to move. It would have been simple for me to stay at my existing company, but I knew that I would benefit more by cutting the ties and facing the challenge offered by a new company.

'The transition period (between school and work) could be improved by contextualising the education system.'





School Engagement Programme

A revolutionary model for connecting schools and employers

Founded in 2012, Inspiring the Future is a free service which allows people from all sectors, professions and levels – from apprentice to CEO - to visit local state schools and colleges on a voluntary basis to talk about their job, career path and education.

Inspiring the Future represents a government-backed effort to bring about a cultural change in the way young people view careers. With research highlighting that young people who gain insights into the world of work whilst at school are likely to do better in their later working lives, it is no surprise that over 65% of state schools in England have now signed up.

Free, safe access to cross-sectoral volunteers

The initiative's success stems from its simple approach. Connected through a secure, online platform, schools can

select volunteers with the skills they're after where and when they want. With teachers overwhelmingly wanting their pupils to hear directly from employers, figures pupils instinctively trust, this employer-engagement programme facilitates the exchange of up-to-date career perspectives and knowledge across a generation.

One hour, once a year

Inspiring the Future offers employees a free, effective way of engaging with students across the country without having to commit more than one hour, once a year. Volunteers represent all professions and ages, and talk to young people on topics ranging from the use of modern languages in their job to the role of maths in the workplace. They are invaluable in bringing home to students the real value of education as well as providing teachers with an extra resource to personalise the learning experience.

Genuine, up-to-date insight

With too many young people having a limited understanding of the range of jobs that might suit their interests, and subsequently choosing courses with limited career openings, contact with employers is invaluable. In broadening students' horizons and raising their aspirations, volunteers offer insights that contextualise student's education and leave them motivated for the opportunities that lie ahead.

If you would like to sign up to Inspiring the Future – visit: www.inspiringthefuture.org or phone 0203 206 0510

Last year **6,000** volunteers helped inspire **99,400** young people

Signed up:
Bank of America Merrill Lynch
Compass Group
Deloitte
WPP



2,300

state schools and colleges already signed up

Volunteer **one hour, once a year**





Working Knowledge

Partnership between the MITIE Foundation and Working Knowledge

Announced in January 2013, this mutually-beneficial partnership has in just nine months seen 74 MITIE employees from across the country complete skills-based volunteering days.

Facilitating the transition from education to employment

Working Knowledge's fun, interactive programmes bring young people and talented business experts together, helping to prepare the next generation of employees and entrepreneurs. The programme looks to develop young people's employability skills and self-confidence, providing a crucial bridge between education and employment.

Experts with a wealth of managerial and business experience

Each programme sees volunteers from a range of sectors give up a day of their time to advise, motivate and mentor a small group of young people as they develop a business idea. Ideal volunteers have at least four years' experience managing people, projects or budgets, alongside an enthusiasm for inspiring others.

Nurturing young talent of the future

Working Knowledge's award-winning programmes offer volunteers meaningful youth-engagement opportunities in a supportive, small-group setup. Team-based activities boost staff morale, facilitate networking with like-minded professionals, and provide the opportunity to share real-world business experience.

Bob Forsyth, Managing Director at MITIE, who has participated in several Working Knowledge days, feels that young people have great ideas but often need help developing them. He believes the programme is invaluable in harnessing young people's talent and enthusiasm for the opportunities that lie ahead.

Working Knowledge is currently looking to develop further exclusive partnerships with a select number of leading UK companies. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact: oliver.collard@workingknowledge.org.uk

Mitie has volunteered at every programme

22,000 students involved

Over 1,250 volunteer business-experts

Worked with over 100 colleges and universities in the UK



School Outreach Programme

A comprehensive school outreach programme

Building a diverse workforce is a business priority for KPMG. With the help of role models from across the business, its comprehensive school outreach programme helps improve access to the accountancy profession for women and other under-represented groups. The programme's initiatives include:

- School Champions who work with target schools to increase students' aspirations, employability skills and pathways into the accounting profession. Supporting students from Key Stage 1 to Sixth Form, activities include work placements, careers talks, curriculum support, employability workshops, and literacy and numeracy enterprise sessions.
- A School and College Leaver Programme: launched in January 2011, this audit programme offers a fresh alternative to university, recognising the growing pool of talent that wishes to launch a career straight after A-levels. The programme provides 87 students with full time employment for six years

whilst studying for a degree at one of three Russell Group universities for exams that lead to full chartered accountancy status. To date, KPMG has recruited 375 school leavers, including 165 women, across 23 offices.

- Two Apprenticeship Programmes: launched in October 2012, these programmes in Accountancy and Technology offer apprentices three years of business experience. Apprentices can choose to work and study towards either an accountancy or technology qualification. After the three years, apprentices can continue to work in their specialist area or follow another career in KPMG. The programmes have so far seen 22 school leavers, including 8 young women, take up offers.

Three new partnerships to give talented young people greater opportunities

KPMG is also entering into three new partnership agreements with the Social Mobility Foundation, Teach First and Push on three complementary programmes which aim to give talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds greater opportunities. Each programme will provide a variety of skills workshops, careers mentoring and work placements for young people at schools or KPMG offices.

Recruited 375 school leavers, including women
165

'For our profession and business in general to remain relevant, we must reflect the wider society in which we operate.'
Marianne Fallon, Head of Corporate Affairs.

School and College Leaver Programme provides 87 students with full-time employment for 6 years whilst studying

Deloitte.

Women in Technology Network

Supporting the development of women working in technology

Since 2007, Deloitte's Women in Technology Network (WiTN) has helped to attract, retain, motivate and support the personal and professional development of women working in technology across the firm. Through four linked streams – communication, recruitment, events & talent management - the team of over 20 volunteers reach out to the 600+ WiT community.

Impacting recruitment and talent management

The WiTN recruitment workstream works closely with the Graduate Recruitment team to attract more women into technology roles. WiTN members are encouraged to participate in graduate recruitment events such as:

- Technology-related careers fairs
- Campus based recruitment events
- Guest lectures on targeted courses
- Technology insight days at Deloitte offices
- Events such as the 'It's not just for the boys' panel debate with 13 other city organisations to encourage more female students to apply for technology jobs

Encouraging more females to consider technology as a career is something the WiTN are passionate about and one member's participation in the Career Player Video will reach secondary school aged children across the country to educate them on what a career in technology and at Deloitte looks like, dispelling some of the myths associated with working in technology.

The WiTN events workstream holds internal and external events. Internal theme-based networking events provide access to senior Deloitte role models and peers, and support members in achieving their personal and professional goals. From 'Confidence and Resilience' seminars to mentoring breakfasts, the events provide forums to share and leverage experience as well as discuss recommendations to take to leadership to effect necessary change.

External events see WiTN join up with similar networks from other organisations from a range of industry sectors to support external network building, knowledge sharing for mutual business improvement and the opportunity to hear from inspirational senior role models.

This calendar year, some of our events have included:

- Two major external events with clients (Tesco and Thomson Reuters) focusing on interesting technology themes intertwined with relevant training

- Access to role model CIOs from a number of Deloitte's client organisations
- Motivational speaking from the author of 'Beyond the Boys Club', Dr Suzanne Doyle-Morris, combined with having a go at circus skills
- Participation at the Your Future Your Ambition event with 15 other city organisations (where over 300 ethnic minority students attended) to encourage 7-18 year olds to think about technology careers

The WiTN communications workstream aims to provide insightful, relevant information to support all aspects of its members' development. It increasingly uses Yammer and blogging to encourage discussion between members as well as informative newsletters.

The talent management workstream focuses on providing the support to members through mentoring and other initiatives whilst forming a link to the Deloitte Women in Leadership initiative.

The WiTN is now increasingly seen as an attraction mechanism for top talent looking to enter technology roles within Deloitte. In addition, the network has increased the desire and motivation of the workforce, helped to build the brand and increased awareness of Deloitte's offering in the technology space.

8% increase in female graduates joining the technology competency

6 organisations approached WiTN in last 24 months to discuss partnering opportunities

Currently partner with BP, HP, Tesco & Thomson Reuters

Sainsbury's

Youth Can Campaign

Highlighting opportunities within the retail industry

Sainsbury's launched Youth Can in 2012 following a proposal from its National Youth Forum, a group that represents the views of the 48,000 people at Sainsbury's under the age of 25. The programme aims to tackle the perceived stigma that surrounds careers in retail and improve young people's understanding of the breadth of opportunities on offer.

Network of young ambassadors working to broaden career aspirations

The programme encourages hundreds of young Sainsbury's colleagues to take their personal experiences out into the community and talk directly to young people about the range of careers available in retail. Now well established, the network of young ambassadors visits schools and forums across the country, reinforcing the message that a career in retail at Sainsbury's offers many opportunities to progress. As part of this, the network emphasises the many positions available for women within buying, finance and HR, to name just a few (32% of departmental directors within Sainsbury's are women).

The programme is also run internally, with a focus on advising young employees of the varied opportunities within the company.

The programme's success stems largely from its organic, peer to peer set up. Mel Worth, Head of Resourcing at Sainsbury's who oversees the Youth Can campaign and who started on the shop floor, working her way up by taking as many opportunities as possible, comments: 'Asking young people to take their stories out to the people who need to hear them most – young people who are facing one of the most challenging employment markets for some time – has proved really effective. We're a growing business, and can offer people the chance to grow with us. I know that Sainsbury's is a place where you're able to progress and try lots of new things.'

Launched in response to young people's concern over the opportunities available within the retail industry.

Sharing personal experiences to help broaden career aspirations.

Peer to peer set up connects young employees with those yet to launch a career.



Ruby McGregor-Smith, CBE – CEO

What are the key things that have enabled you to achieve what you have?

I have been very fortunate to have worked with some great people who were prepared to take a risk on me. This has complimented my competitive, hard-working and positive nature that refuses to dwell on past failures in a belief that there is always more to achieve. I also think my success stems from the fact that I love what I do. I would never have been successful if I had stayed in practice. For me, it's about doing something that you're truly passionate about.

Who has been influential to you throughout your career?

My first real mentor, Richard White, at Serco who believed in me at a time when I didn't have the confidence to know my true capabilities. He showed me that with the right attitude, I could achieve anything I wanted. Similarly, my close interaction with David Telling and Ian Stewart, the founders of MITIE, was also hugely beneficial in shaping my understanding of how to grow a business.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

I have received so much great advice over the years. The best: do something you love.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Learn as much as you can. Nowadays, there are so many great role models out there and so many more opportunities. Be inquisitive. Never let stereotypes of what you 'can be' or 'should do' dampen your aspirations. Go on, see what's out there.

What have been the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

To begin with, confidence. I used to be really shy. Now it's no longer a concern – public presentations and board meetings have an uncanny ability to banish such a timid disposition! Returning to work after having children was also a real challenge. I'm sure many other working mothers would agree. Yet no one really tells you this. Having a family does change your life, regardless of your gender or seniority. That's ok. It's about being honest and realistic.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

The current obsession with quotas. They don't work. You need to put talent first and focus on whether someone will be good at the job, not prioritise candidates on the basis of their diversity credentials. The only solution is to address the talent pipeline, removing those deep-seated barriers that inhibit women's success in business. We need to raise the aspirations of our children, offering careers advice and work experience that is relevant and up-to-date, as well as fixing childcare which is currently too expensive and which prematurely removes the best talent from a business. Until we do this, don't expect the talent pipeline in businesses to improve for women. And finally, we need to see a cultural change in the way flexible working is perceived. At present, people are too quick to channel criticism at something that makes business sense.

'I have received so much great advice over the years. The best: do something you love.'

'Never let stereotypes of what you 'can be' or 'should do' dampen your aspirations.'



Suzanne Baxter – Group Finance Director

Growing up did you know what you wanted to do?

I always knew I wanted to go to university and develop a career that gave me financial independence and options. In addition, I was good at maths and had a fascination for business, so a career in finance and accountancy were natural steps after leaving university. On reflection, that was probably also down to my limited knowledge of alternative career routes – my careers advice was poor and extremely uninspiring and I remember being told I should go to work at the local bank in the town where I grew up. Headstrong, I am pleased to say I ignored that!

What are the key things that have enabled you to achieve what you have?

Three things stand out for me here. The support of my family, an exceptional amount of hard work and a constant desire to grab hold of interesting, new opportunities.

To explain further, I would say I owe a great deal to my parents whose encouragement and unquestioning support of my decisions growing up played a crucial role in ensuring I had multiple career choices later in life. I still have a fantastic support network, except nowadays it's headed up by my husband and daughters whose practical and emotional support is so critical to my success at work.

My achievements also stem from my hard working attitude and my high aspirations. My early academic success helped to open doors, reinforce what is possible with hard work and give me all important confidence at a young age. I have also always taken the view that I should take on any interesting opportunity that is given to me, even if, at the time, I don't have all of the requisite skills. In addition, I think

it's important to realise that you don't have to do everything yourself. Instead, success is about combining your talent with that of others – this way, you are able to take on new and interesting things, something that helps you grow and boost your confidence.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

Three pieces of advice particularly resonate with me: choose people and organisations to work with that will enable you to be the best you can be; you can have it all – but you don't need to have it all at the same time; and finally, don't be surprised by people.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Do something that you enjoy and focus on your strengths. Get as much practical experience as you can. Ask people for help or advice – it will often be far easier for them to say yes than you might imagine.

What are the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

I have faced a number of challenges during my career that have been difficult from either a technical, professional or personal perspective. On reflection, I have dealt with them by seeking the support and engagement of key people around me at the time. Sometimes that has meant tracking down people with deep expertise in their field whose judgements I trusted or it's meant enlisting the support of friends, family or colleagues to help to solve the problem at hand. When times are tough, it's always good to remember that time will pass and the problem you face will get solved in due course, and that there will always be an answer - even if it's unpalatable.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

I think we need to raise our expectation of women's contribution to the economy and raise the aspirations of girls at school. Young women should leave school with an understanding of how they can use their skills to gain employment in a range of fields, an understanding of what it takes to progress and an expectation that they can contribute economically. Our education system and school careers advice should support this ethos as well as requiring all head teachers to partner with business to bring practical experience and inspired ideas to all our young people.

We also need to enable women's return to the workplace after having children. We have a talent pool of highly capable, well-educated and practically experienced women who leave the workplace when they have children and then find it difficult to return at similar levels of seniority when their children are older. This is economically inefficient in the long term. If we are ever to reverse this trend, return to work programmes and programmes that enable women to maintain work-ready skills whilst taking a career break must be given our full focus and support.

'Young women should leave school with an understanding of how they can use their skills to gain employment in a range of fields.'

A portrait of Ruby McGregor-Smith, CEO of Mitie, looking out a window. She has long brown hair and is wearing a dark blazer. Her reflection is visible on the glass to her left. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds.

.....
'Be inquisitive. Never let stereotypes of what you 'can be' or 'should do' dampen your aspirations. Go on, see what's out there.'
.....

Ruby McGregor-Smith, CBE -
CEO, Mitie



Erica Lockhart – Head of Corporate Affairs

Growing up did you know what you wanted to do?

Yes, from when I was very little I wanted to be a barrister or criminal lawyer. I didn't get in to my preferred law school so started studying economics, and quickly realised that being a lawyer would've been a mistake.

Who has been influential to you throughout your career?

I've been lucky to work for a few incredibly supportive people who have taught me a lot: Ivan, the boss I worked with at Qantas who despite his seniority acted as a manager, mentor and sponsor, sharing his business knowledge and wider life experience with me; also, two of my managers at MITIE who have given me a huge amount of autonomy and put a lot of trust in me, which has been a brilliant experience.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Take your work seriously but not yourself.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Not to worry too much about long-term goals. Instead, grab the opportunities that are in front of you and make the best of everything you do. Keep an open mind and be ready to snap up and create good opportunities, whether expected or not. I think if you do that, the long run seems to take care of itself.

What have been the greatest challenges you've faced during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

The biggest challenge by far has been working for two really difficult people on two separate occasions. It can be hard to accept when something isn't working, but the right answer for me was definitely to find a way out of those situations without damaging my career. That meant being quite proactive in creating an exit, as well as patient whilst going through it, but I think I got the balance right – just.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

Tax breaks for child care would have a huge impact for all the women around my age worrying about how children will impact their careers. But flexibility is also really important – for couples where both partners have successful and demanding careers. In fact, flexibility is key even where children aren't in the picture. I'd also like to see a cultural change in the way latent sexism is viewed in the workplace – whilst progress has been made, I think a lot of companies and industries still have a long way to go.

'Grab the opportunities that are in front of you and make the best of everything you do.'



Michelle Howes-Salisbury – Apprentice Electrician

Growing up, did you know what you wanted to do?

Yes, throughout school I had a few ideas of what I wanted to do. I always knew that I wanted to do something that was hands on but never imagined I would end up being an apprentice electrician!

What sort of careers advice did you receive at school?

I had really good grades at school, so my careers advice was simple: you can do anything you want to do. In all honesty, this wasn't much use as I wasn't 100% sure what it was I wanted to do.

How well did school prepare you for the world of work?

I did one week's work experience. I don't remember much else - it was a while ago now.

What needs to change to make education better?

There need to be more careers advisers that listen and understand you as a person. I remember telling my careers adviser that I wanted to be a mechanic like my dad. They told me not to be so silly. With my grades, I should be 'aiming higher'. Yet I had always helped my dad and knew that I loved his work. My higher grades prevented me from trying any vocational courses. Instead, all my options revolved around going to university. If I had been allowed to choose a vocational course from

the start, I would have gone for an apprenticeship straight from school. In essence, we didn't seem to get the same opportunities.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in work today?

Be prepared. Especially when working within male dominated careers. It's a tough world and it's nothing like school. However, the rewards can be amazing. Work hard, keep your head down and enjoy the challenges!

What challenges do you see coming up in the rest of your career?

I think there will be numerous challenges ahead – at least I hope so – that's the reason I chose this career in the first place. For now, my biggest challenge is finishing my college course and starting work on my own. This will be a big change for me, as I've always had a lot of support, but it's a challenge I look forward to taking on.

'Be prepared. Especially when working within male dominated careers.'



Flexible Working Programme

Finding a solution that works for the individual and the business

KPMG has offered flexible working options to their employees for a number of years. Indeed, the right to request flexible working extends to all employees with two years' employment, irrespective of their status as a parent or carer. The firm offers a range of flexible working options, including part-time working, regular home-working, glide time, annualised days and job sharing.

Creating a real culture change

In 2011, KPMG introduced new initiatives to change the culture around flexible working, empowering their people to fully leverage the existing proposition. Focus has been on:

- Creating the change from policy to practical application.
- Supporting line managers to become the key enablers to culture change. This has been done by developing a Flexible Working Toolkit and offering an HR partner to assist them in considering all areas of a request
- Increasing the number of flexible workers in senior, client-facing roles with the promotion of job shares. They have even introduced an initiative called FlexConnect whereby individuals are able to job share on a project basis. This fits better with the firm's dynamic, project-based, resource requirements.
- Refreshing awareness through firm-wide communications, including raising the visibility of role models and recipients of nominated and received awards.
- Creating a dedicated maternity and flexible working team that offers tailored advice and helps process flexible working requests.

KPMG believes that agile working options are necessary for their people and that it is critical they have the policies and procedures in place to provide a truly inclusive workplace. The firm's achievements around flexible working have been recognised with a BITC Opportunity Now Agile Organisation award.



10% of staff have a flexible working arrangement in place

In 2011, **90%** of our women returned to work after maternity leave

Almost **50%** of those returners changed from full to part time hours within 1 year



Personalised Careers Programme

A personalised approach to careers

Employing over 500,000 colleagues worldwide, Tesco have always seen people as the foundation to their success and the key to their future. At the heart of this lies one word: opportunity.

Tesco understand that 'opportunity' means different things to different people at different times, and have identified a need to provide a personalised approach to careers, with initiatives ranging from simple, self-learn guides to flexible working programmes.

Helping every colleague to reach their potential

Tesco's personalised approach includes:

- An annual career discussion for colleagues in head office and management in stores. This is an opportunity for individuals to have an honest conversation with their line manager about what they want to achieve, to share their goals and to understand how they are seen.

- A 'Building Your Career' guide and tools - a simple self-learn guide that helps employees contemplate future challenges, career options and next steps.
- 'Time for You' - a range of flexible working solutions to help colleagues achieve a healthy work-life balance

Building a career in a way that works for colleagues

Flexible working is an important element of Tesco's personalised approach to careers. Here, Ben and Sarah, two senior directors within Tesco's Site Research department, explain how it helped them create the perfect role.

After returning from an international assignment, Ben was keen to spend more time around his family as well as undertaking more voluntary & community work. He discussed the idea of a job share with Sarah, who was already working as a part-time Director following her return from maternity leave. Together, they proposed the idea of a shared Site Research Director role. Less than two weeks later, it was approved.

Ben comments, 'I feel very fortunate to have had a receptive manager, and to be part of an organisation where flexible working isn't just something that's talked about, it is actively supported – but that doesn't mean it has to be forever – as my life changes, my career plan can change as well. It's great to know that by making the decision to reduce my working days, it doesn't reduce my future potential.'

Ben and Sarah are just one example of many part-time roles and job shares found at a senior level within Tesco. Operating in a demanding 24-hour retail culture, Tesco recognise that employees still find it difficult to discuss career options and flexible working. Its personalised approach represents a significant step forward in this area, helping colleagues build a career that works for them.

77% of Senior Managers, Directors and Business Leaders are promoted from within

'It's great to know that by making the decision to reduce my working days, it doesn't reduce my future potential.'

Ben, Site Research Director

DEBENHAMS

Flexible Working Programme

All employees with 26 weeks service have right to request flexible working

When the Government introduced legislation in 2003 to give carers of children under 6 with 26 weeks service the right to request flexible working, Debenhams made the commitment to offer this opportunity to all employees with 26 weeks service. We wanted to be an employer of choice, to improve our ability to retain key employees, and to have a diverse workforce of motivated individuals. Whilst we needed to deliver our business objectives, we also wanted to make a commitment to helping employees balance their working and private lives. 10 years later, these aims haven't changed and we continue to offer this opportunity to all eligible employees with great success.

Moving beyond traditional part-time working

Debenhams' Flexible Working policy mirrors the legislative process. We felt it was important to ensure consistency of approach whilst showing employees that they were being taken seriously and treated fairly. We offer a number of flexible working options, such as part-time working, term-time, job-share, flexible start/finish times, and we try to

work with employees to find options which suit both their requirements and the business. We also offer a career break scheme, which allows employees to take a break from work for up to one year.

We will only refuse a request if there is a justifiable business reason

Here's how it works: employees submit an application form to their line manager outlining their request. If this can be agreed straightaway, then they will simply confirm the change in writing. Often, employees will speak to their line manager informally and a change is mutually agreed without the need for a formal process. If the line manager can't agree to the request straight away, an initial meeting will be held with the employee to discuss their application in more detail. Debenhams has made a commitment to genuinely consider all requests and will only refuse a request if there is a justifiable business reason, and once all alternative options have been considered. Often a trial period is offered to ensure that the new arrangements suit both the business and the employee.

Improving employee retention, reducing recruitment costs and boosting employee commitment

The key benefits to the firm include being able to retain skilled staff and reduce recruitment costs, as well as the ability to improve morale and the commitment of our employees. The policy is popular with women returning from maternity leave who welcome the opportunity to achieve the best possible balance between their commitments at home and their career at Debenhams.

The benefits to our employees can be best summed up by a senior manager who has had three children during her career with Debenhams. She comments, 'flexible working is highly beneficial in allowing you to balance the demands of a family with the demands of work. It enables you to find time for your family without impinging on your work and also for yourself, something which is very important in maintaining a work life balance. I believe this is crucial when working in a demanding business such as retail.'

89 Managers within our retail stores work part-time, **84** are women

19 Senior Executives work part-time, **18** are women

95 Managers within Head Office work part-time, **90** are women





Katherine Garrett-Cox - CEO

Alliance Trust PLC is a FTSE 250 self-managed investment company with investment trust status.

Growing up, what role did teachers, parents and careers advisors play in influencing your career choice?

My parents were the most important influence for me in my ultimate career choice, less so in terms of steering me towards financial services, but more in terms of providing me with great role models as to what's important in any career – a strong moral compass with a relentless drive to make a lasting impact upon the organisation you are part of.

How can we give more young women a relevant insight into careers?

By ensuring we take the time to share our own learnings with school leavers and university undergraduates. At Alliance Trust, we have been collaborating with some secondary schools in Dundee to promote financial services. I hope that in a small way this will help show what kind of opportunities are open to young aspiring women.

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

I believe that employers are increasingly beginning to understand the need to be more flexible to the changing needs of their people. It is important to have the best people in the right roles, and we need to find a way to accommodate different ways of working to retain the top talent.

Why should women in middle management push themselves to achieve more?

Very often I think women lack the ability or desire to promote themselves, sometimes waiting in the vain hope that senior managers will recognise them for their contribution. I believe that there is a need for women to network more at the right levels and to constantly remind senior managers what they have been working on and where they would like to contribute further.

What's the most unexpected thing that comes with being CEO of a company?

How lonely the job can sometimes be.

What fuels your desire to achieve more?

The belief that a small number of very focused people can make a genuine difference to a business, our economy, our industry and our community.

'We need to find a way to accommodate different ways of working to retain talent.'

'What's important in any career – a strong moral compass with a relentless drive to make a lasting impact.'



Ella Riesco - Brand, Marketing and Design Director

How can we give more young women a relevant insight into careers?

By providing opportunities for work experience/ internships, attending careers fairs and speaking at schools and universities to ensure that young women (and men) are given a real insight into the different options available. Alongside this, we should encourage young people to network both physically and via social media sites such as LinkedIn to help build up their book of contacts and knowledge. Most importantly, we should take the time to listen, support and educate the young, ensuring the continuous development of future generations.

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

Flexible working allows people to work around other commitments such as children or other dependents. It also lets people take control of their lives and gives them ultimate responsibility for the way they maintain a healthy work/life balance.

What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Meet as many people as possible throughout school and university. When you meet someone, be sure to stay in touch. Recently, I was impressed when a young woman, who I had met a while back and who had proactively sought me out on LinkedIn, asked for further guidance and some work experience. Also, keep studying hard – relevant qualifications are becoming more and more important.

What have been the greatest challenges you've facing during your career to date – how have you overcome them?

Being fairly young for my role as well as being a woman in a male-dominated industry. In both cases, I held my own by proving to others that I was competent and hardworking, as well as making sure that people understood my point of view.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

This is very difficult. In a few cases, I feel women are guilty of letting themselves down by taking advantage of the maternity leave system. However, in the norm, I think women's careers are hindered by a lack of flexibility in the workplace and by child care issues. In addition, salary inequalities do not help and more strict rules would definitely be an advantage. I am also against quotas - personally, I would not feel comfortable being in a position where there is even a chance of just being there because I am a woman.

'Take time to listen, support and educate the young, ensuring the continuous development of future generations.'





Jo Raven - Management Trainee

Growing up, did you think much about your future career?

I was lucky enough to have parents who always asked me what I would like to do in the future, encouraging me to dream and think broadly about the career options ahead. Funnily enough, even with all this thinking, it wasn't actually until my second year at university, after hours of research, speaking to numerous individuals, working in different industries and writing a dissertation on the financial industry, that I made my decision.

Did your teachers talk to you much about careers?

During my school years, very few of my teachers spoke to me about the many career choices on offer. Instead, the focus was on what you were going to study and where you would go to university. In my case, careers advice was left more to tutors at university and the career's centre - a voluntary organisation which most students avoided until their final year.

How can we improve the transition between school and work?

I think the most important way to improve the transition between school and work is by improving the provision and quality of work experience. Young people need to be exposed to the working world in order to gain a realistic insight into what's it all about. I think this will only come when companies start showing a greater willingness to support young people.

Have you been assigned a mentor – what impact have they had?

I have not formally been assigned a mentor. However, I have begun to build an informal network of contacts which has proven incredibly useful in helping me navigate around the company, learning the do's and don'ts and listening to the different career pathways and choices that people have taken. Mentors are also an important source of moral support and daily encouragement.

What is the biggest decision you've had to make so far in your career?

I think one of the biggest decisions I have taken so far in my (short!) career was the decision to join Alliance Trust straight from university. I spent nearly two years looking for the right company, and it is satisfying to have found one where I can grow, learn and make an impact.

'Mentors are also an important source of moral support and daily encouragement.'



Women Global Leaders Programme

Enhancing the leadership skills of mid and senior-level female executives

Deutsche Bank Women Global Leaders (DB WGL) is a global programme for high potential female Directors with 35 participants per annum from every business division and region. Launched in 2010 in partnership with INSEAD business school, the objective is simple: to enhance the leadership skills of mid and senior-level female executives.

Active support from Chairmen and Managing Directors

As part of the programme, one of DB's chairmen personally delivers a talk and engages in dialogue with the participants about the bank's strategy. In addition, senior female Managing Directors from DB's Accomplished Top Leaders Advancement Strategy (ATLAS) mentor the participants and serve as role models, helping them pragmatically apply what they have learned.

Leadership development topics include leading change, leading across cultures, situational leadership, creating networks, and leadership, power and influence. By studying cases of successful leaders at the bank and analysing their successes and failures, the programme prepares women to become future leaders. In addition, there is a comprehensive 360 degree review process used by participants and coaches as input into professional group coaching and personal development plans.

Measurable impact on retention, promotion and scope of responsibility

The global and cross-divisional attendees generate a unique networking experience, connecting female executives to one another and to the organisation.

Following the programme, there is continuous connectivity amongst alumnae through regional events, follow-up conferences and a dedicated internal social networking platform. Participants benefit from a better understanding of the strategy of each business, something which improves cross-divisional know-how, continuous profile raising for the participants, facilitated linking of the network, and the visibility of role models for other employees.





Women in Leadership Programme

Turning potential into progression

Tesco are proud to be one of the biggest employers of women in the UK; since 2007, the number of female Directors and Business Leaders has increased by 110%. Despite this, the percentage of women still declines at more senior management levels, and they continue to recognise the need to help women succeed in senior roles more generally throughout the company.

Developing confidence and capability

In 2011, with a view to accelerating progression, Tesco launched their first Women in Leadership programme within the UK, targeted at middle to senior level colleagues. The programme has been designed to redress the gender imbalance by developing the confidence and capability of women, in areas where research

suggests they would benefit most. It's not about women changing who they are; it's about women building on their strengths, understanding their own personal barriers and any aspects which may be limiting them and their career development.

Encouraging early signs of progress

Whilst the programme is still in its early stages and true quantitative evaluation will come later, since taking part in the 2011 programme, over 1/3rd of delegates have since been promoted and the 2012 programmes are continuing to show great indications of success. Tesco have 7 new female Directors from those two groups, and a quarter of the 2011/2012 delegates are in the process of progressing to Director level. One other indicator of the programme's success is its popularity: nominations are always oversubscribed with demand for more programmes to be run.

One recent delegate, a Commercial Development Manager at Tesco Bank, shares her experience – "The course made me feel inspired, excited and motivated. This has really made me believe in Tesco being the company I want to spend time in developing my career and supporting my home life too."

Supported by strong networks

In addition, Tesco also have a corporate Women@Tesco network that holds large events each year across the UK (approx. 500 attendees each time) open to everyone at any level. The events are a mixture of networking, workshop learning, speakers and 'what's on your mind' type Q&A sessions. Some functions such as Property and IT also run their own Women in Business networks, focusing on the key topics for women in that area.

25% of the 2011/2012 delegates progressing to Director Level

7 new female Directors from the 2011/2012 programmes

271 women attended this programme, with a further 90 starting in October 2013

Over 1/3 of delegates who took part in 2011 programme have since been promoted



Strategic Excellence Programme

A development programme anchored in best practice

Despite recruiting equal numbers of men and women across the firm's international network for many years, Freshfields consistently noticed the small number of women available and selected for partnership compared to men. Long-held methods regarding the identification and retention of partners of the future were not, in practice, delivering a partnership that truly represented the best talent available.

After commissioning firm-specific research to pinpoint the real and perceived barriers to women's progression in the firm, Freshfields created a development programme for women that is anchored in best practice and tailored to the firm's particular needs.

Four-stage programme designed for female lawyers

The four-stage programme designed for female lawyers - Strategic Excellence - is run in partnership with Aspire, the highly regarded women's leadership and research consultancy. The programme comprises:

- A half-day introductory programme for junior lawyers, and follow up mentoring session with a female partner.
- A six month small group coaching programme for mid-level lawyers.
- A year long small group coaching programme for senior lawyers.
- A year long one-to-one coaching programme for partners.

- Through its annual employee engagement survey, Freshfields has found that by far the greatest increase in engagement has been women partners. All those partners who have completed the programme feel that it has improved their management skills, and 40% believe it has also helped them to develop new business. Female lawyers say the programme enables them to share experiences with peers who are in a similar position, focus on their strengths and gain confidence.

Annual employee engagement survey revealed **female partners** by far the **most engaged**

40% of partners who have completed the programme believe it has helped them develop new business



Mentoring in Practice Programme

Supporting the development of female lawyers through cross-practice mentoring

Launched in October 2012, Freshfield's 'Mentoring in Practice' scheme, which forms part of the larger Associate Women's Network programme, helps to support and develop the firm's female lawyers. Using a specially developed online platform, the firm pairs junior and mid-level associates with a partner, counsel or senior associate mentor from a separate practice group.

The scheme provides targeted support for women by investing in their personal and professional growth; facilitating relationship building; providing opportunities to network across departments; and promoting understanding of issues facing women in the workplace.

Matching mentees to personally-selected mentors

Mentors are required to attend an in-depth briefing session, to contribute a biography and complete a questionnaire identifying topics they feel confident discussing with a mentee. Each mentee completes a similar exercise, and three potential mentor options are then generated. The mentee selects which of the three mentors they would like to be mentored by for the following twelve month period.

Combining tangible support with professional development

To date the programme has received incredibly positive feedback. One in three female associates has signed up to be mentored, with approximately 55 partners, counsel and senior associates (both male and female) signing up to be mentors. It has been particularly helpful for those mentees in small practice groups and provided an opportunity for mentors to genuinely help their colleagues as well as contributing to the professional development of female associates at Freshfields. The firm's Paris and Dubai offices are looking to roll-out a similar scheme



1 in 3 female associates signed up to be mentored

Almost 55 partners, counsel and senior associated signed up as mentors

Soon to be rolled out in Paris and Dubai offices





Louise Makin – CEO

BCG is a FTSE 250 growing international specialist healthcare company. Its mission is to bring to market medical products that meet the needs of specialist healthcare physicians and their patients.

Growing up, what role did teachers, parents and careers advisors play in influencing your career choice?

My parents and teachers always encouraged me to pursue what I enjoyed rather than getting too focused on what I needed for a particular career. This meant I had a varied base of experience at an early age that has set me up well for what I do today.

How can we give more young women a relevant insight into careers?

There are so many different career paths and many of them are non-linear. Case studies are a powerful source of insight - with social media and the internet, it should be much easier to make many stories accessible to many young women.

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

Improvements in technology. The globalisation of jobs means that office hours are less relevant for many. Flexible working can be seen as an extension of this.

Why should women in middle management push themselves to achieve more?

I am not sure they should. I think they should push themselves to do more of what they enjoy and to continue to learn to develop themselves; achievement of what's important to them should follow!

What's the most unexpected thing that comes with being CEO of a company?

Being able to watch many people across the company develop, seize opportunities and grow in the contribution they make. It's a unique vantage point.

What fuels your desire to achieve more?

To seize the opportunity the Leadership Team here at BTG has created to build a company that will be meaningful for our patients, physicians, payers, communities, employees and shareholders, whilst at the same time creating a company where people can learn and grow, and achieve their goals.

'There are so many different career paths and many of them are non-linear'



Sharon Escott – Human Resources Manager

Flexible working is becoming more of a norm. Why do you think this is?

Legislation has played a key part. I also think great employees want to work for great employers. Companies who have been recognising this and offer flexibility and work/life balance to their employees have the competitive advantage when it comes to talent.

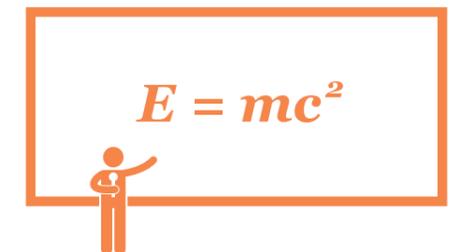
What advice would you give to young women starting out in business today?

Join the right organisation that matches your values and beliefs, as well as your expectations of the role. You want to work somewhere where you can make a difference.

What needs to change to enable more women to be successful in business – how do we do it?

Women need to be more confident in their abilities and not feel phased by their male counterparts in the boardroom.

'Join the right organisation that matches your values and beliefs, as well as your expectations of the role'





Rhiannon Wright – Graduate Scientist

Growing up, did you think much about your future career?

Yes, I thought about my career quite a lot when I was younger, envisaging all the things I could achieve and hoping that I could somehow make a difference. This focus helped me channel my efforts in my studies to achieve the best I could and to fulfil my aim to be in a career I genuinely enjoyed.

Did your teachers talk to you much about careers?

We had careers advisors in school who we met with towards the more important stages of our education (GCSEs, A levels and University selection). They helped us to match the right subjects to the correct career path and to gain relevant work experience where possible. One teacher stood out as a role model because they had a real passion for their work. This pushed me to work harder to have an enjoyable career too.

How can we improve the transition between school and work?

Employers generally want relevant experience as well as all the correct qualifications, and sometimes this is hard to come by. If more companies offered work experience, the transition would become a lot smoother and give students hands on experience which would also disclose the type of work to expect in a particular field.

Have you been assigned a mentor – what impact have they had?

Since working for BTG, I have had a few mentors - each has taught different skills. They have all had an impact on me and helped me to identify the qualities or skills that I should look to acquire going forward. I think mentors are an important part of an individual's development; the wisdom and past experience they can impart is invaluable.

What is the biggest decision you've had to make so far in your career?

I think the biggest decision I've made so far in my career is my degree subject. This dictated what kind of area I would head towards and what kind of experience I would gain during my studies. This in turn dictated what type of jobs I would be qualified for and thus my future career path.

‘One teacher stood out as a role model because they had a real passion for their work. This pushed me to work harder’



Building a better working world

Maternity Coaching Programme

Maternity coaching – improving retention of talented women

In 2011, EY launched a maternity coaching programme aimed at reducing the number of talented female employees leaving the firm within two years of returning from maternity leave. Run by Talking Talent, a specialist maternity coaching provider, the coaching forms a key part in EY's wider programme of cultural change which looks to develop the organisation's talent pipeline and enhance gender balance at the top of the firm.

Tailored coaching for different employee groups

Following feedback from focus groups held across the firm's regions, EY decided to tailor the coaching sessions to support women at all levels of the organisation. Employees have

access to small group sessions as well as one-to-one coaching – feedback revealed that some employees were keen to share experiences whilst others preferred to discuss matters more privately. In addition, managers responsible for someone going on or returning from maternity leave are required to attend line manager training which boosts managers' confidence in handling the maternity transition.

Accessible coaching to suit a mobile workforce

To ensure coaching is accessible to all employees, coaching is delivered through a mixture of face-to-face sessions, one-to-one phone calls and webinars – flexible sessions which allow employees to dial in irrespective of their location.

With change comes opportunity

The programme's success stems from its innovative approach. Far from narrow policy information, the coaching helps employees consider changes in their identity, formal/informal alternative work patterns, how to re-engage with stakeholders and key clients, and the importance of setting boundaries between work and personal time. What's more, the manager coaching reminds managers that their attitude is critical in determining the wider team's response to an employee's maternity leave.



600 managers attended mandatory manager coaching

77% of those back from maternity leave retain or improve their performance management grade

Almost 900 employees coached since 2011

‘More women are hitting the ground running and are better equipped when returning to work,’

Sally Bucknell, Director, Diversity & Inclusiveness



Women Global Leaders Programme

Supporting women through a major transition in their professional life

Established in 2010, Deutsche Bank's UK maternity coaching programme supports high-achieving women experiencing a major transition in the context of their professional life. This practical programme is entirely led by the particular challenges or questions of the individual. Although the programme is optional for all women going on maternity leave, it is mandatory for all of their managers. Manager support is critical to a successful transition to and from maternity leave.

Practical programme aimed at the individual

The programme is split into two, with specific workshops and coaching for different employee levels.

- Those women in junior management and administrative functions are able to attend two group workshops, prior to leaving and on return from maternity leave.
- Those in middle and senior management positions have access to five one-to-one coaching sessions:
 - Session 1 – prior to maternity leave
 - Session 2 – during maternity leave
 - Session 3 – after maternity leave
 - Session 4 – between 6-12 months after returning from maternity leave
 - Session 5 – between 12-24 months after returning from maternity leave (implemented in 2011 following research indicating this is the point at which women start to question their position and career development).

In addition to this support for employees, managers are required to attend two one-to-one sessions.

Improving return and retention rates

The programme has helped female employees plan and manage their maternity leave better, as well as encouraging objective 'personal space' for them to think about longer-term goals including career development. The sessions also allow employees time to communicate return plans.

Greater acceptance of flexible working arrangements

Improved return rates

Improved retention of women

Improved level of manager support

