

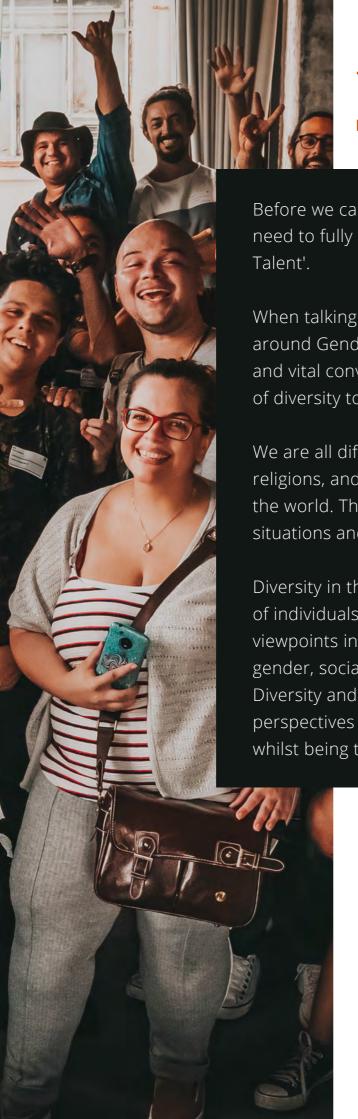
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Harper Fox Search Partners

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What Diverse Talent Means

Before we can talk about attraction and retention, we first need to fully understand what is meant by the term 'Diverse Talent'.

When talking about Diversity and Inclusion, most topics centre around Gender or Race. Whilst these are hugely important and vital conversations to have, there are also other aspects of diversity to consider.

We are all different. We have different upbringings, abilities, religions, and life experiences that shape our perspective of the world. These differences affect how we look at different situations and help us solve problems in different ways.

Diversity in the workplace refers to an organization comprised of individuals with a range of different characteristics and viewpoints in life. Whether that is due to their ethnicity, gender, social class, disability or other differential factors. Diversity and inclusion in business brings together diverse perspectives in the workforce and enables people to thrive whilst being their authentic selves.

There are many types of diversity in the workplace, and this can include (but are not limited to):

- ·Race
- ·Ethnicity
- ·Assigned sex
- ·Gender identity
- ·Age
- ·Physical disability
- ·Mental disability

- ·Religion
- ·Sexual orientation
- ·Social Class
- ·Education
- ·Relationship status
- ·Life experiences
- ·Political beliefs



Why Diversity Is Important

Currently the STEM sectors are not yet representative of the workforce for gender, ethnicity or disability. Overall, the UK STEM sector has a lower share of Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani workers in science, maths and engineering.

Women only make up 24% of the UK core-STEM workforce, this drops further to 10.3% for women in engineering.

When looking at disability, 14% of the UK workforce are classified as disabled under the Equality Act, however this drops to 11% for the UK STEM workforce.

These findings are echoed across the globe too. In the US, Black workers make up only 9% of the STEM workforce compared to 11% in the rest of the workforce. Furthermore, women only make up a quarter or fewer of US workers in computing and engineering.

Moreover, although there has been some progress made over the past 12 years, the majority of European countries have not yet achieved the 50% goal for women in science and engineering roles.



Businesses With a Diverse Workforce can Expect to See:

- ·Increased profits
- ·Increased productivity
- ·Increased experience and knowledge
- ·Quicker problem solving
- ·Higher employee engagement
- ·Reduced employee turnover
- ·Improved customer service
- ·Improved company reputation
- ·Improved recruitment results
- ·A culture that promotes innovation



Outperform

A diverse and inclusive workforce – with differing approaches and perspectives – is proven to give greater employee engagement and boost business profitability within the globalised economy.

It has also been reported that companies with a diverse workforce are up to 36% more likely to outperform those without diversity initiatives.

Diversity, inclusion and cultural competence is a business must. It starts by attracting exceptional talent, who bring diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions. This fused with a nurturing and inclusive environment, whereby individuals can be their authentic selves, steers the path for empowered diverse leaders, to thrive and advance business engagement and profitability.

Overcoming EDI Barriers

When considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion there are many barriers that can prevent your business progressing.

Before we can overcome these barriers, we need to identify and acknowledge that barriers do exist.

When there is a clear understanding of the current business culture and talent

pool, positive and engaged change can be made.

EDI objectives and initiatives can then be put into place to enable equal opportunity through fairness and transparency.

Once barriers have been identified you can use the below strategies to make improvements.

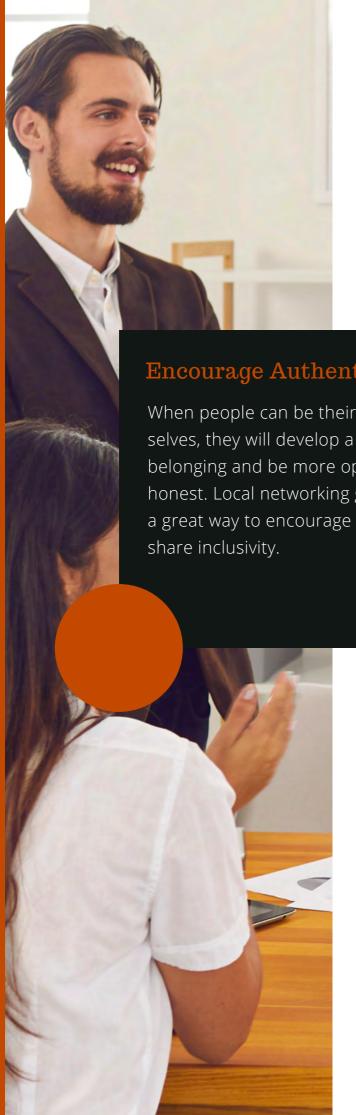
Set Goals

Set the right data-driven targets for your business and representation of diverse talent. Think about what your company needs to prioritise. Once these goals have been set, be clear with your search partner or recruitment team about your talent attraction objectives and reasons why. Support and understanding from the wider internal teams is also just as important as approval from your suppliers and HR department.



Incorporate 'Social Listening'

This can be collated via employee surveys / audits; these are key to understanding what your people want from their working culture and how it is currently viewed. This will reflect what the outside world 'hears' about your business.



Ask Questions

Actively seek to understand your recruitment partners EDI initiatives. Ask your search partners the value they can bring to support your EDI objectives, their statistics, testimonials and case studies will give a good idea as to whether this is really a key driver for them. This can also be extended to your internal HR or recruitment teams, provide training and continually ask how the team is supporting the businesses EDI goals.

Encourage Authenticity

When people can be their authentic selves, they will develop a sense of belonging and be more open and honest. Local networking groups are a great way to encourage this and

Be Open and Fair

Enable equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency. It is critical that your business ensures a level playing field in advancement and opportunity and that this is seen by your employees and external partners.

Showcase Your EDI

Develop an employer brand that showcases your Equality, Diversity and Inclusion vision for the business. Live and breathe this and embed it into the culture; this will make your business more attractive to the relevant candidate pool.

Shared Values

Working with a search partner who shares your EDI objectives and passion within this area is a great way to overcome potential internal barriers. Ensure that your search partner or recruitment team understands all of your EDI initiatives, and they are aware of how important this is for the business.

6 EDI
Questions
You
Should be
Asking
Your
Search
Provider



When recruiting, make certain that your executive search partners or internal recruitment team understand the businesses equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and hiring needs. The aim is to ensure they are aware of how important these objectives are for the overall success of the wider business.

Here are a few key questions to ask your search partner to determine their equality, diversity and inclusion position:

- How can the prospective search firm bring value to support your organisation's wider EDI objectives?
- How does your search partner actively encourage Diverse talent into the industry?
- Is your search partner able to share any EDI initiatives that they have been involved within?

- Do they have any relevant testimonials or case studies that can be shared?
- How is their candidate sourcing strategy likely to reach and attract candidates from under-represented groups?
- What are your search partner's Ethnic Minority, Female and or under-represented talent placement statistics?

It is important to unearth the answers to these questions before a search firm is selected. Prioritising working with an executive search partner who shares your EDI objectives and passion within this area, is key to shared success.

Their passion will be reflected during the search and when speaking to candidates, ensuring the message will be promoted in the industry, reaching a wider pool of your target candidates.



How to Make Your STEM Vacancy More Appealing to Female Candidates

It's important that moving forward, businesses in STEM work to attract more female candidates to their available vacancies. Women and girls represent half of the world's population, yet females make up just 24% of the STEM workforce in the UK.



If we look at the whole working population, women are also less likely to hold a senior position in the workplace and are generally paid less than their male counterparts. A study in 2021 found that in the UK, the median weekly pay for female full-time employees was £543 compared to £619 for male full-time employees. This study also reported a higher share of males were working as managers, directors or senior officials, with 14% of males in these roles compared to 9% of females.

Gender diversity in the workplace is essential to achieve sustainable development. Furthermore, it is widely reported that advancing women's equality could drastically boost the Global GDP. These are not new revelations; the majority of people already know the importance of a diverse workforce and the issue of attracting more women into the STEM sectors is certainly a topical subject within the industry.



So what can be done about this? How can we attract more women to apply for roles in sectors that are traditionally male dominated? As experts in diverse recruitment, below we have collated our tips to attract more female candidates to your job vacancy.

Include the Salary Range for the Position

The gender pay gap is a poignant issue and one of the most talked about topics within the STEM sectors; women and men are increasingly aware that male colleagues may receive a higher salary.

So, to put it simply, when a company is transparent with its salary ranges it shows that they are committed to fair and equal pay.

In addition, a study by LinkedIn showed that including salary information on a job description is more important to women than men which in turn will result in more female applicants than if the salary is not included.



When writing a job description, we need to sell the opportunity to potential candidates, and this often means including the company benefits. This is an opportunity to ensure the benefits being advertised appeal to a diverse talent pool.

Career progression and job security are common priorities for all, however, benefits such as flexible working hours, comprehensive maternity leave programs, childcare salary sacrifice schemes and the opportunity to work from home are likely to be more desirable for women. These types of benefits will also assist with the retention of your current female employees.



Only Include Qualifications That Are Absolute Must-Haves

A Harvard Business Review study revealed that what held women back from applying for jobs was not a mistaken perception about themselves, but a mistaken perception about the hiring process. Women do not tend to apply for jobs unless they meet 100% of the listed requirements whereas men will apply if they meet 60%.

So, review the job requirements: Does the candidate really need 10 years of experience? Do they need to be from a specific sector. Could transferrable skills be considered? Women have generally been given few opportunities to obtain more senior titles, but does their job title really define their capabilities? Review the listed requirements and remove anything that is not absolutely essential or consider ideals, rather than must haves.



Ensure Your Job Description Uses Gender Neutral Wording

Many job descriptions are written with an unintentional gender bias – we often write this way without realising. We find that job descriptions within the STEM sector tend to be masculine-coded, meaning that the description or vacancy advert uses words that are subtly perceived as more masculine (e.g. head-strong, outspoken, determined) rather than words that are subtly perceived as more feminine (e.g. understanding, polite, considerate).

Research has shown that using masculine language can put women off applying for jobs completely. Of course, there are many reasons why a woman may not apply for a position, however we can make sure that the job description isn't one of them by running it through a Gender Decoder.



Summary of Thoughts

The progress towards gender equality is positively advancing. Businesses are increasingly working to attract more female candidates to their available roles, however, there is certainly more work to do.

The slight but effective changes we can make to our job advertisements and vacancy specifications will make roles more appealing to women and encourage a more diverse range of applicants.

There are many experienced and qualified women across the world with over one million women working in UK based core STEM occupations alone.

How Harper Fox Partners Can Help

Harper Fox Partners passionately exemplify equality, diversity and inclusion within the business world. We lead businesses to define equality objectives to develop a cohesive strategy which will attract, present and advance diversity recruitment. This is supported by EDI business analysis, our Fair Selection Policy, Gender Pay Gap Advisory, as well as identifying and removing bias from the talent recruitment process. We understand that diverse talent is central to building a highly productive and innovative workforce for all. Having achieved a 27% increase in placing diverse talent, compared to the industry average of 11%, your organisation will see the benefits with our proven expertise.

If your company's hiring practices do not produce the diverse list of candidates you are looking for, get in touch with Harper Fox Search Partners to find out how we can support your business.



Eliminating Bias from the Recruitment Process

When recruiting, it is important to follow best practice to ensure you find the best person for the position or opportunity whilst eliminating discrimination.

The aim is for the shortlisted candidates to be truly representative of all segments of society and for each candidate to feel respected and able to be their authentic selves throughout the process. This can be achieved through a comprehensive range of fair and inclusive executive search practices as detailed below.

Assessments:

For any assessments you use, whether internal or external ensure they meet these requirements:

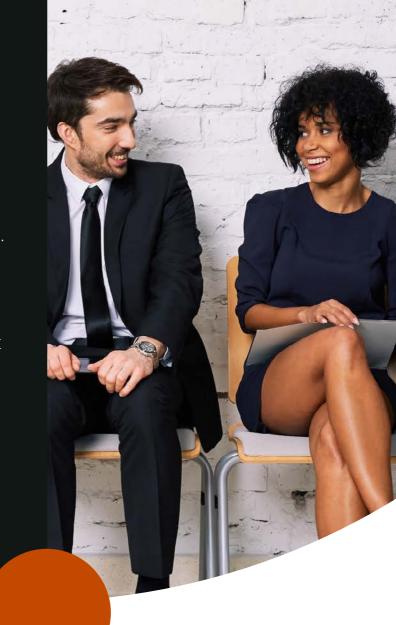
- Content Validity (Is the assessment representative of the job requirements?)
- Construct Validity (Does the assessment measure relevant traits?)
- Criterion Validity (Does the assessment predict what it's saying it will predict?)
- Face Validity (Will candidates understand what is being tested?)



Advertising:

- When providing information about the available opportunity ensure the language used is neutral and inclusive. This is to make sure the wording of the job description is inclusive and appealing to all.
- Ensure that the requirements for the position do not discriminate against any potential employees. Where a requirement may indirectly cause discrimination, consider adjustments to ensure a widened candidate pool.

 Use a range of different mediums to reach potential candidates, this is guaranteed to reach the widest range of applicants.

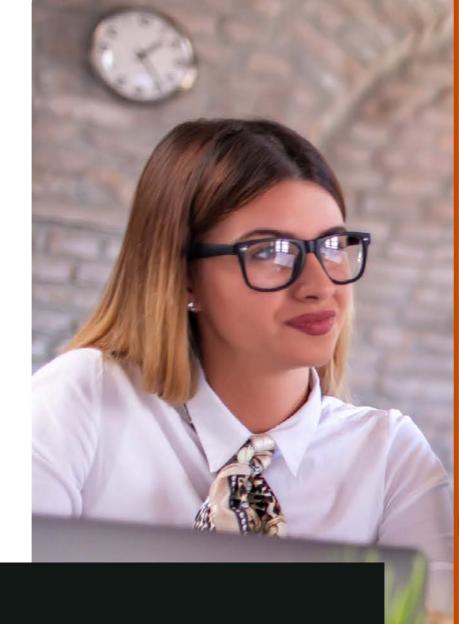


Shortlisting:

- Combine a selection of first stage screening tools to ensure the fair and objective measurement of aptitude, skill, leadership style, team suitability, strength and potential development areas.
- This can include but is not limited to: Blind CV's, Competency-Based Interview, Candidate Verification Check, Ability tests, Psychometric Profiling, Face to Face Leadership Appraisal and Company Culture Suitability.
- Provide complete flexibility with interview times and places with candidates to prevent indirect discrimination.
- Interviews should be held with a minimum of two different employees within the business to lessen any unconscious bias.
- During interviews all candidates should be asked the same questions and scored consistently by each interviewer.
- Detailed conversations regarding a candidate's personal life should be avoided to prevent potential discriminatory bias.

The Gender Pay Gap: 5 Strategies to Accelerate Change

Research shows systemic social change is needed in the workplace to ensure we close the Gender Pay Gap.
But how do you accelerate change in your organisation?
The below strategies will help you on your journey to equality.



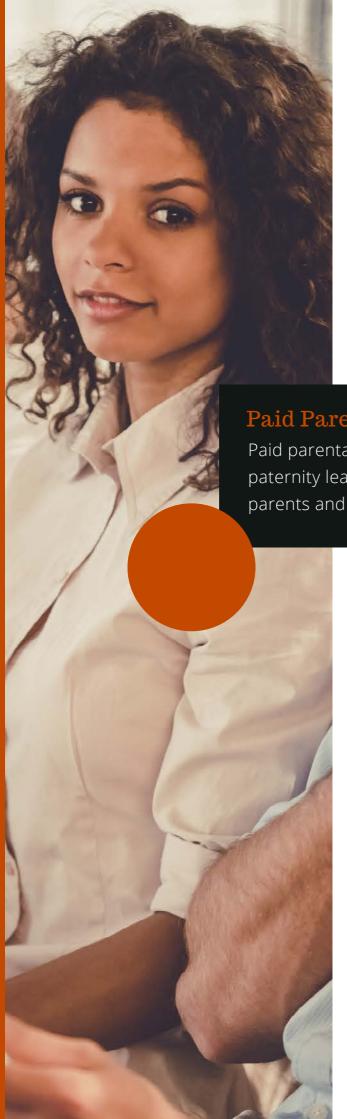
Flexibility:

Consider providing a flexible working environment for all employees. Research shows that female employees tend to be the main carers in the household. This means they often reduce work hours due to lack of flexibility. This in turn delays or even completely ceases their promotional opportunities. Workplace flexibility is instrumental in changing this.

Salary Transparency

Awareness is key to close the gender pay gap. Having a salary transparency policy ensures equal pay for equal roles. It seems clear however not many companies are completely transparent in this department.





Earnings History:

As an Executive Search Firm, we see many companies requesting the earning history of candidates. To close the gender pay gap, a voluntary stoppage asking about a candidate's earnings history should be considered.

This would ensure a lower salary in a former position does not affect the candidate's entire future earnings trajectory. This is especially important for females returning to the workplace.

Paid Parental Leave:

Paid parental leave is key for equal pay, inclusive of paid paternity leave, leading to equality at home. Further support for parents and carers can go a long way with your employees too.

Partnerships:

The number of organisations who are actively working towards equality in the workplace is growing. Working with organisations that specialise in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, can assist with systemic change which puts everyone on an equal footing to earn and secure top leadership positions. This is why we have partnered with The Equal Group to provide a comprehensive EDI offering to our clients.

At Harper Fox Partners we are able to deliver the support needed to implement sustainable inclusion whilst ensuring the benefits of diverse hiring are reached. Our EDI knowledge and experience at Harper Fox Partners enables us to focus on impactful, inclusive talent attraction campaigns on behalf our clients.



Cost Free Ways to Support Parents and Caregivers in the Workplace

A large percentage of the workforce are parents or caregivers, however a study from LinkedIn found that just over a third of UK professionals do not believe that their employers do enough to support new parents.

Support for employees with family care duties is crucial. In fact studies have shown that through supporting parents and caregivers, businesses can reduce workplace stress, enhance productivity, and increase employee retention.

One of the biggest challenges faced by parents is immense childcare costs. While many UK businesses do offer additional financial assistance in conjunction with their legal obligations, this is not always a financially viable solution for SME's.

However, not offering additional financial incentives doesn't mean that you are unable to provide support to employees who are caregivers. Below we have listed 5 ways businesses can support working parents without impacting the budget.



Introduce Remote Working

Homeworking does not equal a decrease in productivity – in fact, it is widely reported that employees who are working from home, often work more hours than those in an office.

Allowing parents and caregivers the opportunity to work remotely can help employees work more efficiently and reduce emotional stress.

It can also result in less sickness absence and unpaid leave taken. For example, if childcare arrangements have fallen through, the opportunity to work from home can eliminate the need to take time off work.



Provide Family Friendly Flexibility

An affecting challenge for parents is the need for flexibility. In a recent study 56.2% of mothers and 22.4% of fathers reported that they had made changes to their employment for childcare reasons. Meaning, mothers in particular are more likely to change jobs if they feel their current employer does not provide the flexibility they require.

Simple changes can make a huge difference to whether a caregiver will remain at a company or not. For example, businesses could amend an employees working hours to accommodate school drop offs / pick-ups or introduce flexible working hours to allow for appointments or other caregiver commitments.



Embrace Fluidity

Integrating work and family life can be hard and they can often blend together. The idea of separating the day into work time and then family time is just is not feasible in today's world.

By introducing flexible and remote working, businesses can create a culture where parents and caregivers don't feel guilty for the fluidity of their lives.

It's okay to have commitments outside of work, it doesn't make employees any less dedicated to their career.

Create a Supportive Community

Creating a community between parents and caregivers is a great way to bring employees together and create a space where they can share tips and offer support to one another.

Managers and Leaders of businesses should also set an example and be open about their commitments – they shouldn't shy away from talking about their children just because they are in a senior position. Lead by example and promote a culture where it is okay to talk about or take time out for family.



Eliminate Bias

If a business is not perceived to be an inclusive employer, job motivation will decline. Companies need to ensure all employees feel seen, that includes working parents.

Raising a family is hard, try to understand the perspective of these employees and be patient.

Try to eliminate any negative unconscious bias; just because one employee leaves early to pick up their children from school, it doesn't mean they are not working just as hard as other employees.



Make Employees Aware of Your Policies and Offerings

So, your company has implemented a number of offerings for parents and caregivers – Brilliant! However, do employees actually know about them?

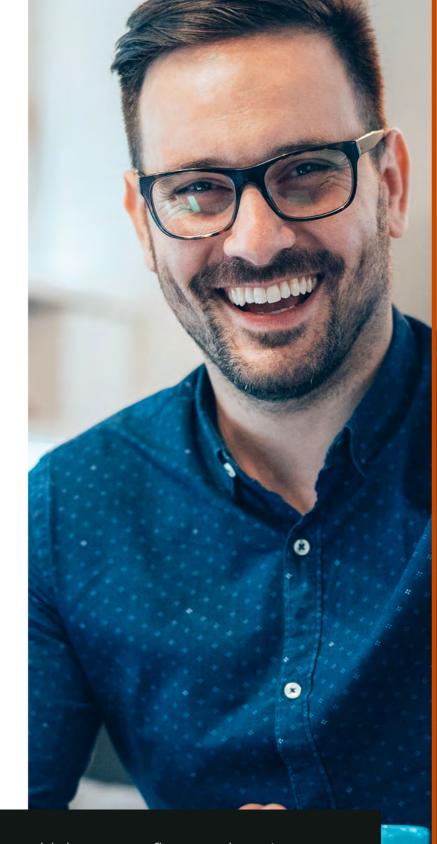
Many employees do not realise the supportive programs within their business exist or they don't quite understand exactly what they are entitled to. Communicate often and make it really simple for employees to discover the benefits and support available to them.

By showing parents and caregivers they are supported, valued and included; businesses can have a highly increased positive impact on employee morale and productivity in general. In addition, this culture will help to attract and retain exceptional diverse talent, to create a more innovative and successful workforce overall.

How Flexible Working Improves Retention

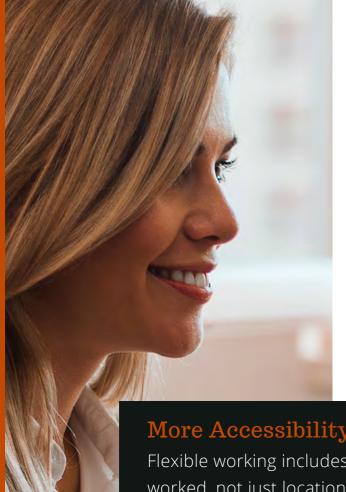
Flexible working is a hot topic.
Bright Horizons recently reported that companies without flexible working options risk losing employees who have benefited from a healthier work-life balance during lockdown.

In addition, their report found that over half of employees would like a combination of home and office working to be the way forward. For job seekers, two thirds of working parents will seriously consider working arrangements before applying to a job. Therefore, the leadership talent you are seeking, could be deterred from even applying if flexible working is not an option.



Unfortunately, the current working world does not reflect employee's aspirations. CIPD research reports just under half (46%) of employees do not have flexible working arrangements in their current role. Businesses need to act swiftly to offer flexible working as standard, or potentially risk losing their valued employees.

But, what are the benefits of moving to flexible working? We take a look at just a few of the highlights.



Wider Talent Pool When Recruiting

Flexibility on location allows businesses to hire from a much wider geographical area. This results in a much larger talent pool and gives companies access to exceptional candidates they may never have reached before.

Diversity and Inclusion Benefits

A move to more flexible working arrangements will assist in retaining a more diverse workforce. Flexibility on working hours and location will also support diverse recruitment efforts, advancing business engagement and profitability.

More Accessibility

Flexible working includes hours worked, not just location. Flexibility on hours can be a huge bonus for those employees with caring responsibilities. We explore this in more detail in our previous chapter: Cost Free Ways to Support Parents and Caregivers in the Workplace.

Improved Mental Health

Autonomy over when and where employees work can provide them with a better work-life balance. A good work-life balance plays a huge part in managing stress and overall mental health. A reduction in stress and an increase in mental wellbeing, will result in less time off work.



Environmental Impact

If your business is looking to reduce its carbon footprint, offering home working is a great place to start. An employee's daily commute accounts for 98% of employees work-related carbon footprint. Through offering homeworking, businesses could save on average 3.2 tonnes of CO2 per person every year and retain employees that are more environmentally conscious.

Flexible working has a multitude of benefits for employers and with employees and candidates overwhelmingly in favour of this shift, it is clear that flexibility is the way forward.

Menopause:
The Silent
Contributor
to Inequality
and What to
do About it



Menopause. It's a taboo subject for many.

But why? It's a natural part of ageing for half of the population. So why aren't we talking about it in the workplace?

The gap between men and women in senior positions is often attributed to caregiving. It's widely acknowledged that women tend to be the primary caregivers and are more likely to leave work to take care of children or elderly relatives. However, what is not often discussed is how menopause may also be contributing to gender inequality in the workplace.

Most women will experience the start of menopause by the time they are 51. In addition, 1 in 100 women will experience symptoms before 40 years of age. This is well before the age of retirement, however a lack of support for people struggling with the menopause means many women retire early.

In truth, nearly one million women have left the workplace due to menopausal symptoms in the UK alone.

So, just as women are reaching executive and board level positions which usually come with years of experience, menopausal symptoms could push them to leave. This is a huge loss for businesses and has a massive impact on workplace diversity.

With retirement ages increasing, and more women in the workplace than ever before, this natural part of aging can no longer be ignored. It is estimated that in 2030, about a quarter of the world's female population will be turning menopausal.

So, now is the time to put in place some practical initiatives to support women experiencing menopausal symptoms at work. And here's how...





Listen and Learn

It's difficult to provide support if you don't first understand the struggles. Nearly two-thirds of women who experienced menopausal symptoms said that this impacted them at work. But what are the symptoms of menopause?

Common symptoms can last up to 10 years and include hot flushes, difficulty sleeping, low mood, anxiety and problems with memory and concentration. Just as you may implement equality, diversity and inclusion training, it may be worth considering training on the impacts of menopause for your employees.

Through understanding and listening to the experience of those experiencing menopause, businesses can begin to implement practical steps to provide the support required.

Be Open

Emotional intelligence is a must for business leaders and can go a long way in encouraging open conversations with teams. Managers should do everything they can to ensure that employees feel comfortable expressing their needs.

If someone is struggling to work because of their menopausal symptoms, they should be able to communicate this without feeling embarrassed. Make sure your employees feel confident that their issues will be taken seriously and that support will be provided without question.

Be Flexible

Flexibility at work provides huge support for women in the workplace in general. But for those who are menopausal, it can mean the difference between working or not. Sometimes symptoms are so debilitating they may prevent you from leaving the house. In this instance the opportunity to work from home would be helpful. In other instances, swapping one long break to additional shorter breaks but more frequently may assist people manging with symptoms.

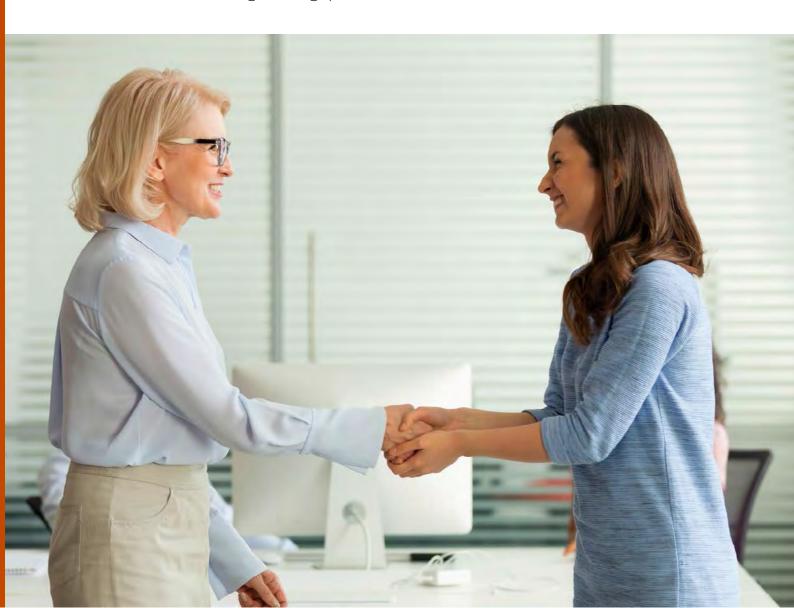
Revise Your Office Set Up

Can temperature be controlled in your workplace? Apart from the toilets, are there spaces designed for privacy? If not, these are great places to start in terms of physical changes you can make.

Try providing portable fans or moving desks away from warm areas to ease the intensity of hot flushes. Take a look at your office spaces and provide somewhere easily accessible where doors can be closed to ensure privacy if someone is experiencing high anxiety.

These are simple changes that could prove to be a lifeline for someone experiencing menopausal symptoms.

These physical and flexible changes in the workplace could have a huge impact on the business's retention of senior female talent. And whilst they may seem like small changes, they can go a long way to address the current inequality issues and close the gender gap.



About Harper Fox Partners

Who We Are

Harper Fox Search Partners are a purpose led business, providing leadership talent and executive search solutions for the global energy, engineering, manufacturing and utilities sectors.

As an ethical search agency we do things differently, led by exceptional and inclusive practices we bring perfect fit leadership talent first time businesses, endorsed by our 98.9% client service excellence record.

Our Services

- Leadership Search Solutions
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Leadership Talent Assessment
- Succession Planning
- Interim Management

Our Disciplines

- Manager/Director Search
- Executive Search
- C-Level Search
- Board Composition
- Interim Management

About Harper Fox Partners

We Do Things Differently

We are a new generation of transparent, forward thinking executive recruiters; inspiring change whilst adding value to businesses, through outstanding deliverance. Our team of accomplished Search Consultants, Senior Partners and International Research Professionals share the vision to inspire a truly inclusive and sustainable world, though unearthing leaders and elevating businesses.

Our Team combine years of experience from Corporate, SME, Executive Search and talent recruitment environments. Offering a wealth of knowledge, we deliver quality talent acquisition solutions, leadership assessments and workplace diversity and inclusion advisory to enable companies to achieve their business goals.

Our Stats

- 97% Candidate Retention Rate
- 98.9% Service Excellence Record
- 31% Increased Diverse Talent Representation
- 6 Month Candidate Replacement Assurance
- 100% of our clients would recommend us

Our Values



Inspire: dynamic, passionate, advocates of change



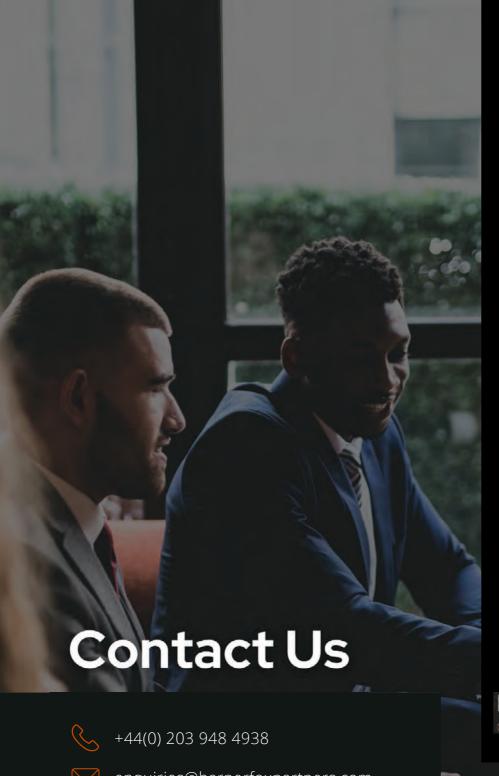
Ethical:honest, open, fair and respectful



Exceptional:
Innovators, adding
value through
outstanding
deliverance



Inclusivity:Proud to embrace and represent all



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