

# INCREASING GENDER DIVERSITY IN TECH...

...and why it's important.

**Natalie Whittlesey, Director, CIO Practice**

**HARVEY  
NASH**

The Power of Talent

# COVERING



**Natalie Whittlesey,**  
Director - CIO Practice  
Harvey Nash

- The contributors at the cooler
- The present state in tech
- Why is diversity important?
- Personal journeys of female Tech Leaders
- CIO actions that made a difference
- Takeaway summary – what can you do?
- Q&A

# THE CONTRIBUTORS



**Alex Butler,**  
Chief Digital &  
Information Officer,  
University of Bath



**David Palmer,**  
Strategy &  
Innovation  
Director, Kingfisher



**Emer McNally,**  
Chief Information  
Officer, Meggitt



**Adam Banks,**  
Chief Technology  
& Innovation  
Officer, Maersk



**Jayne Glasgow,**  
Chief Digital &  
Information Officer,  
Leicestershire  
County Council

# THE CONTRIBUTORS



**James Longmore,**  
Interim,  
Aston University



**Kathryn Downs**  
Director of  
Technology &  
Transformation,  
Midland Heart



**Diarmaid Crean**  
Chief Digital &  
Technology  
Officer at Sussex  
Community NHS  
Foundation Trust



**Steve Homan,**  
Chief Technology  
Officer, MetaPak  
Group

# THE PRESENT STATE IN TECH

“Many people think the battle is won and over.. The amount of people who don’t see an issue, or actively push against it, is astonishing!” – Jayne Glasgow

**12% of Tech Leaders are women**  
in 2019 – no change from 2018

**22% of tech team members are women** in 2019, up from 21% in 2018

**Only 26% of tech leaders feel ‘very successful’** with the promotion of diversity & inclusion within their tech teams

Statistics from Harvey Nash / KPMG CIO Survey of 3,600 people, 2019

---

**Diversity a priority for 78% of recruiters.**

**Gender the highest priority at 71%.**

Statistics from Global Recruiting Trends LinkedIn Survey of 9000 people across 39 countries on, 2018

# WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

## PERFORMANCE

“Many studies have demonstrated the **productivity** gains from a truly inclusive culture and workforce..”  
- Jayne Glasgow

“Research suggests that teams with equal gender **out perform** teams with lower levels of female participation.” - Kathryn Downs

“I have worked with male and female dominated teams and without exception have found they work **less effectively** than balanced teams.” – James Longmore



# WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

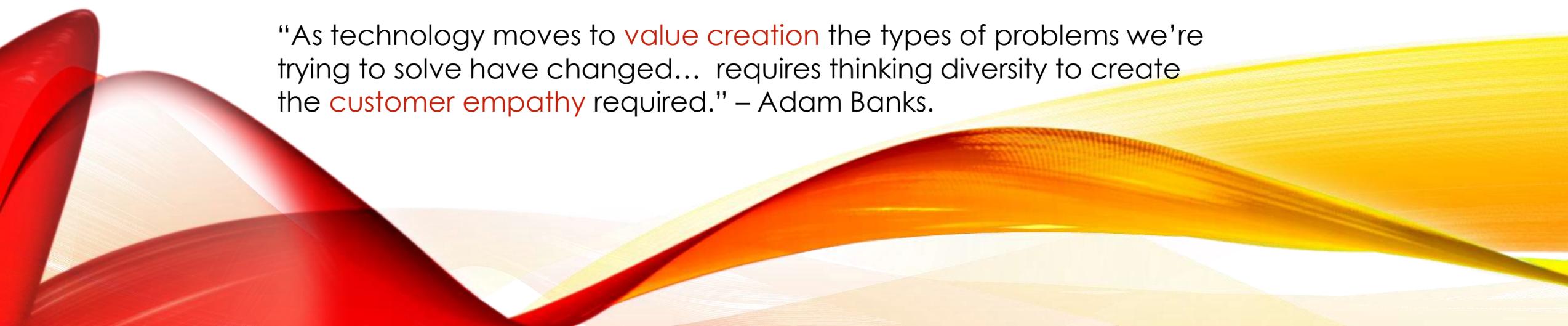
## UNDERSTANDING OF CUSTOMER

“Specifically in relation to tech teams, male-dominated teams can lack an understanding of the broader *customer base* and can place a barrier there.” – James Longmore

“Diverse teams will provide an *empathetic* understanding of the context in which the *end-user* is working and re-imagine how technology can evolve to benefit end-user experience.”

- Diarmaid Crean

“As technology moves to *value creation* the types of problems we’re trying to solve have changed... requires thinking diversity to create the *customer empathy* required.” – Adam Banks.



# WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

## ROUNDED PERSPECTIVES

“It’s not just about performance, it’s about bringing ideas and **perspectives** and reflecting the people we serve.” - Kathryn Downs

“Single gender dominated teams lack a **rounded perspective** and are more likely to suffer from ‘**Group Think**’.” – James Longmore

“A **representative** set of voices are required to tackle our challenges particularly when deigning solutions that cut across every socio-economic group.”– Jayne Glasgow

“Better products are delivered if there are more **diverse views** in teams working on them.” – Emer McNally

“Real transformation requires a change in mindset – making sure we have a **balance of views**, approaches and ways of working.” - Alex Butler

“Diversity brings a different set of **perspectives**, a more social and engaged team.... Recruiting ‘similar’ types leaves huge **blind spots** and limits ability to resolve problems.. and makes **engagement** with other business units or organisations challenging.”  
– David Palmer

# WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

## IMPROVED CULTURE

“It’s energy and passion toward a **common purpose** that’s important, regardless of gender.”  
– Steve Homan

“Women often come with a aptitude to **collaborate, build coalition and solve problems.**”  
- Alex Butler

“It’s about driving a **genuinely inclusive culture** that values diverse teams.” - Jayne Glasgow

“**Better team working culture** if more representative of real world...” - Emer McNally



# WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

## WIDER TALENT POOL

“...brings a wider talent pool.” – David Palmer

“It’s also a pragmatic way to open up the talent pool to a wider community.” – Alex Butler

“Access to a wider talent pool.” – Emer McNally

Global Recruiting Trends  
LinkedIn Survey, 2018

Key drivers are:

- improve corporate culture (78%),
- improve business performance (62%)
- better represent customers (48%)

# PERSONAL JOURNEYS

“My mother had the biggest impact.. Her mantra was ‘if you work at it, you can do it’. I never felt that girls should do different things to boys.”



**Emer McNally,**  
Chief Information  
Officer, Meggitt

“I didn’t plan to be a tech leader, I studied maths and science at uni and moved into tech as they were encouraging numerate people to apply. I gave it a go and it worked out!”

“I’ve struggled with finding the right balance between bring an effective and empathetic leader. As a female I don’t want to be seen as a ‘soft touch’, neither do I want to come across as a ‘ball breaker’ – not easy finding the right balance.”

# PERSONAL JOURNEYS

“I worked with some strong, inspirational female leaders at Tesco. They helped me realise I had what it takes to be a great leader.”



**Kathryn Downs**  
Director of  
Technology &  
Transformation,  
Midland Heart

“After university I pursued a career in marketing and PR. My employee spotted something and asked me to help install a new EPOS system. Trouble-shooting my way through, I discovered a passion and decided to pursue tech certifications... the rest is history!”

“My biggest challenge was confidence – I didn’t think I was cut out to be a leader because I was too empathetic and sensitive when it came to handling tricky situations. I now realise this is my greatest strength as a leader.”

# PERSONAL JOURNEYS

“If anyone said I’d be running a technology team of 200 when I started my career I wouldn’t have believed them!”



**Alex Butler,**  
Chief Digital &  
Information Officer,  
University of Bath

“I had careers in marketing, then advertising and am completely self-taught... these days employers are looking for CIO/CDOs who can capture hearts and minds and can move cultural adoption of tech forward, while building teams who have in-depth technical knowledge and background.”

“I’m as terrified as the next person of the rate of tech change, but I’m driven to keep learning to help me have control over my life and career.”

# PERSONAL JOURNEYS

“Women supporting women is a key part of ensuring the success of more women in our industry.”



**Jayne Glasgow,**  
Chief Digital &  
Information Officer,  
Leicestershire  
County Council

“I was lucky enough to have a truly inspirational mentor and boss who held a global leadership position within one of the organisations that I worked for...”

She took me under her wing and helped me develop better ways of navigating a world where many men are dismissive of female voices – more specifically how to achieve the most without losing my sense of self.”

# ACTIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

## IDENTIFY & ENCOURAGE FEMALE TALENT

“**Identify women with potential** and ensure they’re equipped to succeed and maximise their potential – targeted training, individual mentoring.” – Jayne Glasgow

“**Consciously recruited females into senior roles** which led to increased attraction for other women, and **increased role model pool** for junior women who could aspire to take on more senior roles.” – Emer McNally

“Offer **additional encouragement** to women if there’s the perceived barrier of a male dominated team. I appointed senior female leaders while in the NHS, creating well-rounded teams which improved team dynamics and cohesion.” – James Longmore

“Women can be the worst enemy of other women when it comes to **promoting people of their own gender**. They can be tougher on female team members, which seems to be born from their own history of having to struggle. I identified this and we worked on **re-framing this mindset** together.” – Anon

# ACTIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

## NON-TRADITIONAL TALENT

“When managing the implementation of new technologies this requires working closely with the business and third parties. We’re **attracting women into these roles**, recruiting **from an operational background and training them in the appropriate technical fields.**”  
– Kathryn Downs

“Recruiting people with the **right acumen to learn the ‘tech’** into BA, PM and Service roles”.  
– David Palmer

“**Creating roles in service design and data** increased female employee numbers.”  
– Diarmaid Crean

“We **offer women returning to work an accreditation** in data science or cloud technologies. Our investment in developing our own talent has worked really well.”  
– Alex Butler

# ACTIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

## FLEXIBILITY

“**Break down perceived barriers** to advancement, e.g. **flexible working.**”

– Jayne Glasgow

“We **promoted our family friendly environment, and facilities** like our creche – we find the right fit with someone and bend over backwards to accommodate them....”

– Alex Butler

“We shifted the male/female balance from 60/40 to 40/60....”

... offering people the chance to **work flexibly and remotely** helped with recruitment.”

- Diarmaid Crean

# ACTIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

## CHANGING THE DIALOGUE

“Open and active **discussion on purpose** attracted applications from proactive female applicants and a positive response from head-hunters”.

- Adam Banks

“As a major tech employer in a town in Western Poland with a finite talent pool we **re-energised the brand and engaged** deeper with the local university conference and town. This has led to a change in mindset from local talent and increased gender diversity.”

– Steve Homan

# ACTIONS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

## INCLUSIVE PROCESS

“Making the **process less gender biased** through non-gendered language in adverts and having mixed panels in interviews and selections.” - David Palmer

### Process check-list

- Check for gendered language on adverts, role-profiles
- Check your external image
- Have balanced panels
- THINK about the key requirements 100% vs 60%
- Interrogate the brief
- Challenge your search / recruitment partners
- Ensure stakeholders are engaged and aligned
- Train on un-conscious bias
- If you suspect bias - 'blind' CVs?
- Ban/test rejection based on 'cultural fit'

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Understand and promote the benefits of a diverse workforce :

- improved performance,
- improved culture,
- better understanding of customer,
- rounded perspectives,
- access to a broader talent pool

Assess whether you can do more

Pro-actively work on attracting, retaining and developing women – identify role models and mentors

Think about hiring based on aptitude and re-training – women often take side-ways steps into tech, think creatively

Understand perceived barriers to progression, work to re-frame them.

Offer flexibility, remote working, etc. if possible.

Change your dialogue and re-promote your inclusive brand

Ensure inclusive attraction and selection processes in place

The background features abstract, flowing waves in shades of red, orange, and yellow, creating a dynamic and energetic feel. The waves are layered and have a soft, ethereal quality.

THANK YOU

Q&A