Speakers:
Sarah Churchman PwC,
Julie Taylor, Home Office

1. PwC

PwC is a large professional service with 180,000 partners and staff worldwide. In UK there are 17,400 partners and staff. 47% of women are staff, 16% partners are women.   However the board in 2009 was all male, not reflecting the gender mix of the organisation. In addition the board makeup was in contrast to the strong emphasis PwC put on the importance of diversity in the organisation.

Internal research found
- A lack of proactive consideration of females for major assignments
- A lack of gender consideration in succession planning
- Reticence among senior men to mentor women at the leadership level

PwC actions
- Executive board commitment to mentoring and a programme that focused on 'Insights, Aspirations, Qualities – Sponsorship'

The board member mentor role was to get to know their mentee, make them more visible to executive board members, to teach them the unwritten rules, take to clients and big events.

Insights, Aspirations, Qualities programme focused on developing and communicating women's

- Visibility
- Networks
- Profile
- Development plan
- The unwritten rules

Action learning groups were set up. 26 women met on a quarterly basis and this enabled networking and relationship building.

Results
Of the 26 women on the programme:-
- 2 on executive board.
- 2 on leadership team, global
- 15 of 26 have moved up

In addition
The programme demonstrated the value of being open-minded, valuing difference. Impact on the board – the programme did a lot to open the mind of board members. The project was now being rolled down to junior grades.

Open mind training – opening minds that diversity is good for growth. A video was commissioned to demonstrate unconscious bias and its negative impact (for example, assuming and prejudging).

2. Home Office

The starting point was the 'need to provide fairness for the individual and to make the most of the talent we employ.' With regards to gender diversity the Home Office had a 'history of achievement'. However the effects of economic change and austerity measures had led to a steady decline in female representation at senior level executive grades, and the Home Office was below its 38% target for 2013. Furthermore internal analysis highlighted a downward trend.

The Home Office had a strong pipeline so the question they needed to examine was why there wasn't a conversion of women from senior to executive grades - why women weren't progressing.

Why women aren't progressing - Academic, expert group, private sector findings

- Perceptions – women's beliefs about senior roles
- Applying – reasons women didn't apply for senior roles
- Selection – the reasons reported by senior leaders as to why women were not being selected.

Principal barriers to increasing numbers of SCS women based on research and Home Office evidence

1. Unconscious bias in senior recruitment and selection processes
2. Perception of male talent being 'manoeuvred' into key posts
3. Nature of the roles
4. Lacking sponsors and role models
5. Predominant leadership characteristics
6. Unsupportive corporate culture
7. Work life balance, long hours culture, flexible working
8. Lack of information/skills re SCS assessment process
9. Females feeling they have to meet _all_ job criteria before applying
10. Perception of seeking and valuing external candidates for SCS posts
11. Perceived unsupportive SCS environment with stereotypically male behaviours prevalent

Eight areas have been identified as ways to tackle barriers.

- Target setting
- Raising awareness
- Mainstream Agile working
- Changing behaviours
- Talent pipelines
- Women's voice and platform
- Tackling unconscious bias
- Mentor's, sponsors and role models

What the Home Office are doing – 'Talent Package'

Focused on succession planning and pipeline, the objective of going from 1 in 5 to 35% women in SCS roles.

* _Identifying top talent_ – Monitoring, Investment, Pipeline
* _Career planning offer_ (including sponsorship) – Visibility, Improve career self, Access
* _Understanding of and accessibility to the SCS_ – Role modelling, Bias, Culture

Plus a focus on inclusion – to show what impacts on inclusion.

Learning points/areas of reflection/further consideration.

1. The importance of having specified tangible outcomes. Whatever one thinks of targets, setting them does proved a marker by which to ascertain progress, or lack of it, and a rationale by which to make changes. (This applies to diversity in general – class/race/gender/age/disability).
2. Use the 11 factors identified as the principal barriers to increasing numbers of SCS women to assess the culture of organisations I work with, and teams I am part of (including CIPD), and use the 8 factors as a framework to tackle barriers to equal opportunity and inclusion.
3. Look at engagement and the impact of perceived inequality on levels of engagement and on performance levels, and identify the business benefits of removing barriers to workplace progression and workplace equality
4. Investigate whether there a link of perceived inequality/equality levels and trust levels
5. That it is extremely important to career progression to be 'visible'

About the Reviewer - Krista Powell Edwards

Krista is a very experienced and highly qualified consultant, coach, facilitator, trainer and author.

She uses her experience and expertise to support individuals and organisations to enhance their effectiveness and performance.

Krista is currently writing her first book on how to effectively communicate credibility.

Expertise and experience

Krista has developed her expertise through

- An extensive track record of supporting organisations in the UK and internationally since 1995.
- Masters level research in the factors that affect the achievement of workplace performance.
- Extensive Continuous Professional Development (CPD), (including regular attendance at conferences and development programmes).
- Research of 'best practice' consultancy, facilitation and learning and development
- Qualifying as a Master Trainer, Master Practitioner and Practitioner in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).
- Designing and delivering 500+ training and development programmes.
- 20+ years as Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) volunteer - branch chair, council representative - supporting the CPD and performance of 7500+ HR professionals.
- Lecturing at a university (International Human Resource Management).

Specialist areas

Krista specialises in three main areas:-

Credibility - How to communicate credibility for influence and positive impact in the workplace
Credible HR - Enabling HR to add value to the organisation
Personal Effectiveness Skills - Support in developing confidence, credibility, influence, time management and assertiveness and conflict management skills so that individuals and teams are able to perform effectively.

Services

Krista offers support in **workplace performance improvement**.

Tailored, cost effective
- Consultancy and Research
- Coaching
- Facilitation
- Training and Development

Contact Details

✉ **Krista@theCredibilityExpert.co.uk**

☎ **07804 956007**