# JUMP

*Promoting gender equality, advancing the economy*

## JUMP Corporate Hub
### 27th September 2016

## How to attract women: best recruitment practices

## Summary of the session

## Introduction

This lunch and learn event brought together 3 speakers and 25 participants from 14 companies reflecting a diversity of industry sectors, experience and perspectives. The focus of the session was how to attract the best female talent and share best practices on top female talent acquisition. The main questions were:
• What are the best sourcing and recruiting methods to ensure workplace diversity?
• How can we optimise the hiring process to attract more women?
• How can we making recruiters, hiring managers, and executives accountable for diversity in hiring?
• How can we attract women in male-dominated sectors? How can we increase the size of the talent pool?

## 1. Welcome

**Arnaud Spirlet, managing director of Cisco Belux** welcomed the participants while highlighting the increasing importance of being engaged in driving diversity and inclusion. A diversified approach is indeed a source of added value. He also pointed out he was satisfied to find men within the attendees to the event.

For men who attend these events this is a glass elevator not a glass ceiling. They gain in visibility here, explained **Isabella Lenarduzzi, JUMP**.

Isabella went on to introduce the topic. When we look at diversity, we focus on "no discrimination". At entry level discrimination is reduced with at least 60% of young graduates being female. The question today is to achieve equality as a share of the power.

Recent studies by Goldman Sachs and Credit Suisse, show an enormous potential of ca. 14% of GDP being lost due to discrimination in the form of pay gaps, part time work or differences in career progressions. In France, for instance, they have also found that there are several levels of discrimination: starting with women, followed by discrimination against North Africans and the black communities.

Discrimination comes in many forms. One of them bias and knowledge gaps. Recently, when Isabella was attending a gender equality event for IT professionals, someone shared that 70% of graduates in IT were women. Her instinctive reaction was to think that the HR manager who shared this number had meant 17%. This triggered one of the questions that brings us here today: How to get good action plans such gap of knowledge about the talent pool exists?

In IT specialisation in Namur, women used to represent 30% of graduates. Today this rate has dropped to about 3%. The problem is only getting bigger, making recruiting harder as the pool of women in STEM shrinks. The responsibility in tackling this problem lies beyond companies, with the government and public institutions.

**JUMP** has been part of many task forces to recruit women into science.

Sometimes lack of goodwill slows the progress. In one taskforce, companies joined to share best practices, but the regional public bodies were less enthusiastic. Brussels and Wallonia joined but showed limited participation. Flanders, more active on the topic, did not attend as they perceived the other regions as potential competitors and did not want to share their best practices. This is one of Belgium's challenges and why so many projects are put on hold: the regional split.

Another example of involvement was with Siemens. They came to **JUMP** to request support with achieving their quotas. They had taken up innovation as key word. A communications campaign was designed targeting girls studying engineering. The campaign used the idea "we need you, women, to keep Siemens as top innovator". This was also accompanied by an event where high-profile women spoke to students on how to answer to sexist aggression in male dominated environments.

But not all campaigns show the desired outcome. "**Science is a girl thing"** was a communication campaign designed by the EU Commission. A video was produced to support it but due to last minute logistics it was not checked by the task force. As it turned out the video used stereotypes which proved humiliating to women and alienated the very audience it was trying to reach. Instead of taking the opportunity to learn from this and see how difficult it is to tackle stereotypes, they simply withdrew.

So even where there was a good will, budget and a great deal of energy, handling stereotypes is a difficult job. We are here to support companies to understand the tools to make this happen and to enable them to become great talent magnets.

## 2. Presentation: The Diversity and Inclusion Talent Challenge

**By Sara Vermeir, Executive search consultant at Russell Reynolds Associates**

**Sara Vermeir** gave a brief overview of her findings as an Executive search consultant at **Russell Reynolds Associates**.

There is an important disconnect between reality and perception. Company spending is lost with no increase in the number of women at higher level positions. Thinking of diversity is a good intention but you also need to look at inclusion. It is not about getting to a 30% ratio of women but about helping them progress. A crucial part of this change is by making companies aware of the need for a hard-to-achieve culture change.

For this talk Sara focused on the diversity and inclusion talent challenge and best recruitment practices during the attraction and selection phases. Russel Reynolds looks at 6 key elements to drive this:

1. **Make D&I part of your brand**

Russel Reynolds has created a Culture Analyst and Inclusion Index to determine whether a candidate fits a culture in the form of a 121 question survey. This tool allows companies to compare the culture they actually have with the culture that they wish to have. It is also a tool to evaluate the candidate's aspirations in terms of inclusion culture and compare this with the company's culture. This survey evaluates several areas such as: fair treatment, decision making, and other core competencies. The survey is used by being sent to a full team or to managers of a same division.

Once a company is using the tool, one of the challenges in the selection process is whether to choose a candidate who aspires to an inclusive culture that the company aims for in the future or whether to choose the one that matches their existing culture and develop with them? The risk of the first scenario is that they might lose the candidate if the company does not evolve fast enough in terms of its D&I strategy.

## 2. Be more visible to women and cast a wider net

In today's market competition for talent is hard. It takes long term thinking to drive a lasting recruitment strategy. As a company, an idea is to try to get on list of top 50 companies for executive women, 100 best workplaces, and other highly reputed recognitions for inclusive workplaces – this helps attract female talent.

Companies have gone beyond with campus recruiting and events during the university years to make sure students perceive them as potential employers. In the tech industry, Google even went as far as partnering with Hollywood to get more female characters represented in their movies.

Other areas to explore are programs supporting return-to-work after maternity leaves or incentives tied to referral programs with a higher bonus for female recruitment.

## 3. Ensure neutral job specifications

Language is a powerful tool when used in the right way. Recruiters and managers should be aware of the impact of their choice of words. The same vocabulary appeals differently to men and women. Sara shared a list of examples (see PPT).

There are several online tools to support professionals in having gender neutral texts such as gender-decoder.katmatfield.com

## 4. Undergo training for unconscious bias

Ensure your management and decision makers are aware of their biases and have them check themselves in daily decision-making. Undergoing an unconscious bias training can facilitate managers' perception of themselves and help them develop empathy as well as performance-focus. Correctly used in the hiring process, this can enable them to go beyond common performance questions such as who they need to do the job and what they need, to connect to the people they are interviewing.

One of the many tests available on the market is Harvard's "Implicit Association Test" (see link in Useful Readings).

## 5. Insist on inclusive slates of talent

People have a bias in favour of preserving the status quo; change is uncomfortable. When there is only one woman or minority candidate in a pool of four finalists, their odds of being

hired are statistically zero. When there are two female finalists, women have a significantly higher chance of being hired.

(cf. detailed report in Useful Readings)

### 6. Ensure a diverse hiring panel

People tend to hire candidates like themselves. Ensure different perspectives to the jury and listen to the input. Likewise, candidates want to come into an environment where they see others like themselves.

Best practices in the hiring panel – how Google does it
- Do not only include bosses and peers in the panel, but also subordinates or someone from a different department who will not be working with the candidate
- Use a well-prepared and structured interview guide with questions that are the same for all candidates to remove any bias
- Maintain a comprehensive and objective scoring grid
- Invest time at the end to make sure that the candidate leaves with a good feeling about the experience (even if they are rejected, as this impacts the goodwill towards the company and the company's external image).

Sara concluded with a list of questions to your executive recruitment partners, to ensure their commitment to the same issues as you:
- What is your commitment to the D&I issue?
- Have you followed an unconscious bias training?
- What is the gender diversity amongst your successful candidates?
- What is the gender diversity in your company?

*(cf. More details in the PPT presentation)*


## 3. Presentation – How to design behavioural interventions

### By Tinna C. Nielsen, Founder of Move the Elephant for Inclusiveness

**Tinna C. Nielsen**'s talk covered the next steps to unconscious bias and how use behavioural techniques to create effective inclusion nudges in the hiring process.

Following her own experience in the corporate world, she came to the conclusion that talking and training over inclusion issues were not advancing the issue. This led her into a journey which crystallized in the creation of her non-profit organisation "**Move the Elephant for Inclusiveness**".

In an ever more global environment where change is happening faster than ever, our mind looks for ways to adapt. She uses the image of the brain like an elephant with a rider. 90-95% of what happens is controlled by the elephant, which represents the unconscious mind where like, feel and safety processes take place. The rider stands for the rational mind, what we understand and think about.

The existence of this dual system has been verified via experiments. For instance, one research looked at the design of a menu where payment was voluntary. They alternated

weeks with flower patterns and weeks with eye patterns. Results indicated that when the eyes were displayed on the menu design customers tended to pay higher prices as they felt observed. The reaction was not stemming from the conscious mind as most customers stated they had not seen the change in design patterns. This type of behavioural technique has also applied to voting campaigns where voters who participated in earlier elections were sent letters with an ending with "We hope to see you again this year", leading to higher participation.

Many more examples exist on how to drive deep behavioural, cultural and systemic changes. One such case is behavioural economics, a new discipline which challenges the classical economic models by *stating how human* behaviour is driven by 'bounded' rationality (irrationality), 'bounded' willpower and 'bounded' selfishness. Another example is the "nudge", a behavioural intervention that influences the choice and behaviour of people in accordance with their own interests or good intentions. The aim is to guide them towards an answer while leaving them with a free choice.
Nudges have been used in the Health sector. Instead of telling people to eat less studies have changed the size of plates, making them smaller. Therefore a smaller portion will look like it fills the dish and people eat less while keeping a similar level of satisfaction.

If you are going to use the inclusion nudges please do not make it into a buzz word, it would be counterproductive. Nudges are about "don't tell but show". If people are aware that they are being nudged they will not like it and the effect will be gone. This needs to remain non-intrusive.

## THREE TYPES OF INCLUSION NUDGES

### (1) 'FEEL THE NEED' INCLUSION NUDGE (Aha moments)

This is intended to make people **_feel the need for change_** _(motivation)_ rather than rationally understand, in order to get buy-in and motivate the behavioural changes.

One interesting case of this type of nudge was shown by the misalignment between bias and intention found in the Basketball League of America. This became a high profile case in the media when statistics showed a racial bias on referee foul calls. A few years down the line the same study was conducted and the foul calls were found to be equal no matter what the race of the player. The media interviewed League representatives to understand what measures had been applied: but they had done nothing. The new outcome was showing a behavioural reaction. Referees who considered themselves high-standard neutral professionals were so shocked by the racial bias they had been accused of that they double-checked their behaviour after the media splash. This was not a conscious change: it takes milliseconds to call a foul – it is a blow of a whistle and consciousness cannot act so fast. But because their reputation had been challenged, their behaviour changed.

The same happened when Tinna was invited to a meeting at the company she worked as Diversity Officer. They had been looking at the employee engagement and inclusion numbers for years and it was not improving. They had requested her to present a new business case for Diversity & Inclusion. Instead, she decided to write the 1st person stories of the workers, and printed them in big speech bubbles which were placed around the room. When the managers came in she announced: "your people have something to tell you". The managers read in silence. After a while they started talking between themselves. They felt outraged, frustrated, angry and disgusted. These were their people and they had not managed to protect them. This intervention allowed managers to feel instead of being told what is happening. Such a method stopped them from adopting rational defensive positions regarding sensitivity or conceptualisation of harassment. This intervention made the men

lean in to stop a behaviour they could not accept themselves. It was no longer about shooting the messenger, or manager vs. HR, or about women issues, it was their own people talking to them.

You can also use this technique by building reverse business cases: for example, for talent management, provide data on the cost of losing employees rather than recruitment. This is based on scientific findings by which human beings have a stronger emotional reaction to losing something they already have.

Instead of conducting D&I audits you can ask 2 questions to your organisations:

- How would you like that working at your company makes you feel?
- How does it actually make you feel?

When using these questions, the gap found is often significant and involves things such as decision-making power, or someone caring about employee's career progression. People's feelings of inclusion are at the core of Inclusive leadership.

Another example of "Feel the Need" nudge was used by Lisa Kepinski, from the Inclusion Institute. She proposed a sponsorship program related to talent reviews. This process is mainly about visibility, networks, clubs, and even more so in big organisations. When she first presented the idea she was immediately shut down and the idea was called as one of the most ridiculous ever heard. She tried again, this time using pictures of high potentials leaders. Managers were challenged to name as many people as possible on the slide containing 130 close-up photos. Most of them succeeded in naming quite a few and even became competitive about it! But when the slides changed and she showed only the women, they knew few of them or did not recognise them. The managers were appalled by this and immediately asked for what could be done. Lisa requested them to advocate for these female leaders and make them more visible.

This has also been demonstrated during the recruitment process. A set of recruiters were asked to answer: How likely are you to hire this candidate? What they did not know was that they had been provided with the same CV and only changed picture, name, gender or skin colour. The results showed a large difference in terms of selection based on gender or race, and supported in the removal of such information in evaluations.

We can nevertheless be aware of our own bias and try the "flip it" tactic to avoid the pitfalls of discrimination. This consists of asking yourself questions such as: "If this person had another accent would I have listened more?" or "If she was a he would I have reacted different?" You need to spot your own patterns and ask those questions.

## (2) 'PROCESS' INCLUSION NUDGE

This is intended to help the brain ***make better decisions*** *(ability & simplicity)* by altering elements in organisational processes, such as hiring, performance review, promotions, decision-making etc.

Process inclusion nudges has been used for a long time in other areas such as in the blind auditions for orchestras. They got as far as getting carpeted floors added to avoid being influenced by the sound of the heel while candidates walked. Yet while two thirds of D&I professionals have heard about this technique and one third of managers, we do not see it applied on regular processes.

The recommendation for recruitment process is to provide a clear structure with 5 to 6 sufficiently different criteria. If you add too many it becomes confusing and results are not satisfactory. You need to make sure your interviewers are using the questions provided and that results are comparable. Interviews should also be conducted in 2 times, 5-10 min of questions, followed by a break to evaluate answers and cross-check understanding, and then a final session of the interview. This helps eliminate bias on observations such as "sweaty candidate". You should immediately discuss these perceptions and decide whether they are important for the job. If the candidate will be in IT and sitting behind a computer this fact should not affect his capacity to obtain the job. At the end of the process, you should select the candidate with the higher total score.

You can also use Opt out instead of Opt in processes, as in the case for the organ donors system in Austria. Or in succession planning formulation of questions: instead of asking "Who is ready?" assume "All are ready now" and instead of asking "Why?" ask "Why not?".

## (3) 'FRAMING' INCLUSION NUDGE
This is intended to make people ***perceive the issue differently*** *(perception)* by altering the frame or the anchor of the thought process.

This is about shifting the focus. In the case of the composition of a team, discuss performance rather than minorities. Rather than communicate that you aim to have 30% of women in a team, communicate on the fact that high performance teams are composed by a maximum of 70 % homogeneity (gender, race, generation, other).

We can use this framing also in career development questions. Most women will often answer negatively to a question: "Are you internationally mobile?" whereas we see an increase of up to 25% positive answers if the same question is restated as: "Would you consider an internal assignment within the next few years?"

Another good example is priming via the use of words and colours. Prisons have used this by painting their walls pink. They then activate a social norm: You don't hit girls. This causes inmates to hit each other less; also less of them come back to prison due to the disconnect with their unconscious profiles.

In general, you should stay away from colours or get them right. Be aware of what each colour represents and when to use it. If you want to address gender equality, you should not use pink or mauve as these represent women only and not both genders.

Words can also have a big impact. Studies show that telling a person to go pick the elderly candidate, will cause them to walk slower.

Other studies have also found a positive correlation between women's performance and exposure to role models. When a woman sees another woman speak confidently, she will likely make a longer and stronger talk. Whereas men's behaviours were not affected by wathcing another man or woman speak confidently.

In summary, there are 4 key principles to inclusion nudges

1. Motivate both the automatic & reflective systems of the brain
2. Target specific behavioural driver
3. Do not forbid or punish
4. Keep it simple

If you would like to learn about other examples of Inclusion Nudges, you can visit the website or get the book which contains a collection of 70 practical examples on how you can apply what other professionals have already tested.

*(cf. More details in the PPT presentation)*

## 4. Presentation – The Female Talent

**By Pastora Valero, Vice President, Public Policy and Government Affairs for Europe, Middle East, Africa and Russia, Cisco Systems, Inc.**
**Pastora Valero, Cisco** told us about her journey to becoming Vice President with only five other women at this level within her organisation. She highlighted that women in senior leadership roles should act as role models and support in making the road easier and safer for talented women.

Inclusion has become a business imperative. Despite this, data is still showing significant gaps in female talent pipeline, which become bigger the higher up you go in the corporate ladder, according to WEF 2016 future job report. These results should not overwhelm us into inactivity. On the contrary we should draw inspiration and follow the words of Marian Wright Edelman: *"If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time."*

Cisco has taken this to core of their leadership. Their newly appointed CEO is setting the tone in terms of diversity by having a board composed of 40% women.

Over the years Cisco has created several processes and tools to ensure diversity and inclusion. Some of them are:

- Transparent Hiring process
- Diverse interview panels
- Fair Pay
- Increase presence of female role model in IT events
- Manager 'Biased' Training is mandatory to all management
- Data transparency solutions – inclusion dashboard, interview dashboard
- Diverse candidate pools

Regarding brand presence, Cisco has also worked on initiatives to increase women ratios in STEM: Greenlight for girls, IT Rocks or DARE just to mention a few.

As a technology company they are alsp empowering workplaces to increase their flexibility. Jobs are no longer a 9 to 5 office hour reality. Today we have tools which help us to create more inclusive ways of collaboration. This is very impactful in the retention of millennials and for employees at advanced stages in their career. Other relevant trends are virtual teams, consumer driven innovation and the interplay between professional and personal lives.

Cisco is also making their efforts visible by subscribing to different initiatives regarding fair pay such as the White House Equal Pay Pledge, Employers for Pay Equity Consortium and their internal initiative for Global Pay Parity.

Pastora finished her intervention, by an inspirational thought: "Simply put, once women connect, they engage; once they engage, they embrace; once they embrace, they drive. And that's the future. It is the Internet of Women!"

## 5. Attracting More Women: An Open Discussion

**Christine Cecil, JUMP** moderated a lively conversation with all participants sharing best practices. Many good ideas were shared.

A lot of the discussion centred on the importance of role models. One participant encourages female technical leaders to go to universities to talk to students, and recommends conferences and events to attract diverse talent. Another mentioned that they ensure a careful selection of speakers for Campus recruitment events. They have found that having women at these events makes a big difference. It was also said that social media should become more frequent in showcasing successful women.

It was remarked that there were too few women in technical degrees, so it is already late to focus activities there. Actions can be taken as early as middle schools. In the Netherlands, for example, IT was not a mandatory subject. Cisco contributed to building an IT educational program that was carried on by the Dutch government.

Another participant emphasized the importance on bringing HR on-board. It is important to guide them in the right direction and ensure they come to their own conclusions, so that they feel ownership and to avoid any resistance. She also recommended to avoid having D&I teams, but to share the responsibility between everyone.

The constitution of an interview model that ensures interviewers agree on a final score is the other part of the system to fight the prejudice that holds women back.

It was said that having the company speak publicly about diversity, using gender neutral words as well as producing videos to showcase diversity could make good publicity to attract women.

An interesting comment was made from a participant who worked during 25 years in an American multinational where she used to be the manager of an all-female team. She had inherited the team as such. One of her first goals was to get a man in until they reached a fair 50-50 split. Diversity is also about ensuring we have male representation in typically female dominated professions. Do we really want to have a society where all primary school teachers are women?

A good practice for succession planning meetings: Start with a reminder of Do's and Don'ts when having a career discussion, such as excluding irrelevant personal information or making general statements (nice guy). Appoint a gatekeeper with a red card who is charged with raising inappropriate comments were made. This raised the quality of discussions for the company that implemented this. They also tried to completely blind the profiles but were met with strong resistance from the managers who looked for the information via other sources. Something else proved successful: having senior female leaders showcase their differences. This enabled younger diverse talent to feel welcome.

Diverse recruitment requires substantial effort, it was noted. This should be accompanied by strong retention and development initiatives, as hiring costs more than retaining.

A male participant recommended that every male manager should attend a Jump Forum – encouraging them to arrive very early to get this uncomfortable feeling of being the minority in a sea of pink and women. He told the story of his experience to a female colleague and she replied: "That is how I feel every day, I feel like the odd one out!"

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**Christine Cecil** thanked all the participants for their contributions and reminded them to contribute with ideas for future hubs and to subscribe to the next **JUMP Forum taking place in March 21st, 2017.**