



The Royal Academy
of Engineering



Equalitec Diversity Forum

Diversity: Changing Corporate Cultures

Summary report

Thursday 30 November 2006





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Chair: Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These are the proceedings of the third Equalitec Diversity Forum - *Diversity: Changing Corporate Cultures* which was held at the Royal Academy of Engineering on 30 November 2006.

The Ingredients for a Positive Corporate Culture is investigated through case studies of Citigroup, Microsoft, BBC News Interactive and West Dunbartonshire Council. This is underpinned by the research report *Widening of Employment Opportunities in ITEC: Professional Advancement through ITEC Skills*.

A keynote address by Meg Munn MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Women and Equality) sets the Equalitec Initiative in the context of the wider government policy laid out in the Women at Work Commission Report *Shaping a Fairer Future*.

Further examples of Organisational Best Practice are developed from case studies presented by Sopra, Newall & Budge, Fujitsu Services and Roehampton University.

Note: This report is published to inform partners and the Chatham House Rule should be observed in the further dissemination of any material contained in it.

Previous reports are available on the Academy website (www.raeng.org.uk) under Diversity Programme in the About Us section.

INTRODUCTION

The programme for the Forum is attached at Annex A and the list of participants is at Annex B.

Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng: It is fantastic to welcome you back again, those of you who have been here before, and also to see some new faces. This is the biggest audience we have had, so welcome to the partners participating and all those attending for the first time.

Here at the Academy we are interested in this topic generally, but it is all about the economy of the nation. We are wasting so much of the potential workforce because of the fact that we have so few women in ITEC. Of course, we all know that women possess these aptitudes and skills in abundance and I am particularly interested in the fact that we have to 'fill the pipeline' and we have to get young women into engineering and the ITEC field. I am also particularly keen in keeping those women and getting them to a point where they attain senior management level, because so many women become unhappy or dissatisfied along the way, and they do not progress up to the higher levels. This is why the career path issue is so important.

Of course, you are not just here to listen but you are here to speak, and we have tried to build time into the programme so that you can ask questions. There will be a session at the end of the morning which is for that purpose. A good deal of the networking is already happening - that is always a problem with workshops attended by a lot of women, because people do not want to stop talking. Nevertheless, that is what we want to encourage, so use the breaks for that.

We have had two forums now. The first was about Advancing Women in ITEC, and the second was Productivity through Diversity. We are becoming more and more experienced in understanding what the issues are and, today, we are looking at **Changing Corporate Cultures** - which is so terribly important and we all understand that. It is all very well encouraging women to get into engineering but then they go and work somewhere and find that it is a dreadful place to work and it puts them off completely.

We are expecting the Minister, Meg Munn MP, to be here at 1340, after Question Time and a meeting with the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. She is a very busy lady, so we must keep to time and get through to lunch so that we can be back here promptly for her to give us her talk.

Without further ado, let me hand over to the woman who has inspired all of this - Elizabeth Pollitzer, who is the chair and director of Equalitec.

KEYNOTE UPDATE ADDRESS

Dr Elizabeth Pollitzer - Director, Equalitec

Hello, everybody, and thank you very much for coming.

Achievements to Date

This is our third meeting and we are learning a great deal. For those of you who are new to Equalitec and to these meetings, perhaps I could just introduce our achievements.

Equalitec is a three-year project, funded in part by the European Social Fund, up to about 50 per cent, with the remaining 50 per cent coming from partners. We have now acquired 24 partners in order to help us to raise the other half. The whole project was originally worth £1.8 million, so there was a good deal of income to be generated in other ways. It has been a huge experience of personal growth in trying to know how to persuade organisations to take part in this.

We have a **job-based training placement scheme** for women returners and this is really to persuade industry to look seriously at the talent that is available out there, and especially at the women who have been trained in science, engineering and technology, or who have management experience and have taken a career break and are looking to come back. Quite often, those women require technical and some other kinds of training, so we provide them with the opportunity to acquire those skills and advise them on careers.

We run **mentoring circles**, which are an incredibly efficient and effective way of giving women the confidence to take their ideas and put them into a specific action plan so that they have some very clear career goals.

With the Royal Academy of Engineering, we run these diversity forums and produce reports from them.

We have created the **ITEC Innovation Award** and we run innovation workshops. This is really to raise the profile of women's creative capacity and innovative contributions.

We produce **career guides** and we will create a **career portal** which will provide services for women and organisations. The career guides will look specifically at the needs of the returners. They will also try to encourage students who are at university and perhaps not studying IT, but who have the huge opportunities while they are there studying whatever - for example management or biology - to look seriously at acquiring ITEC skills. We strongly believe that ITEC skills can only enhance employability and career opportunities in the future.

We **conduct research** which, most of the time, is funded by the DTI. We have a number of reports, one of which will be discussed in some detail today by Juliet Webster. This is about the widening of employment opportunities in ITEC. As ITEC plays a bigger and bigger role across many different industries, employment opportunities are growing and we want women to take advantage of that.

We do **evaluations** and produce reports. We have 24 partners, as well as a

whole range of organisations who we have persuaded to contribute in one way or another to the project - either by coming and giving talks here, or giving their time, or giving training. There are many different ways in which they can contribute.

We have also been used as an example of good practice on an international scale. This is all really quite positive at the moment.

Implementing Diversity Policies

Because we have so **many partners**, and because we have made contact with so many different organisations, we **look very carefully at their diversity policies**. Of course, everybody has one, which is usually on their website with some statement along those lines. When looking at all of them, they can be compressed into this statement: 'At the core of [company name] mission and values is our commitment at all levels to recruit, retain and advance a diverse, talented team of highly motivated professionals to solve critical challenges to the benefit of our customers, suppliers, employees and the communities in which we live and work.' This statement is very interesting because it basically spells out all the key drivers for diversity. There is **recruitment, retention, advancement** and the **need for diverse talent**. There are the constraints of working with a particular set of customers and/or suppliers. There is the profile of the employees and the communities in which the businesses and their employees live and work.

Drivers for Diversity

Basically, the diversity policies have Suppliers, Customers, Directors, Management, Employees and Communities as key drivers and, because each of those involves people, they each involve culture. We have many very complex cultures and changing all of those, individually or together, is virtually impossible. Therefore, when we looked around at what companies are actually doing and how they are trying to make progress on diversity, it was clear that there are quite a number of initiatives taking place. We shall be hearing about the more interesting of those here today. It is obvious what is happening and where successes are occurring; it is where organisations have identified some shared values between the different key groups that influence them and their success in the economy. On the basis of that, they have created some initiatives and tried to make advancements.

Creating Shared Values

The whole trick here is to recognise that the key drivers are not completely overlapping, because that would be a monoculture - and we do not want that because it is against diversity. We have to align them in such a way that one can identify which are the shared values that will deliver the right impact, and then which of the initiatives, that have already been proved to work, would then fit in within the organisation. We shall be hearing about those today, and they are also transparent in the report that Juliet Webster has produced, about the widening of employment opportunities. There are organisations that are succeeding in attracting women and retaining them, and women are succeeding in creating excellent careers within those organisations. This is what we would like to promote.

Gender Diversity: Recognising Talent

What is not happening, despite all this effort, is that the number of women working in IT is not increasing, but decreasing. We have thought about this really hard. The range of competencies that companies tell us that they are

looking for, when they are looking for talent are **professional** (Planning and Organisation, Strategic Thinking, Commercial Awareness, Analytical Skills, Business Focus, Technical Skills, Cost and Profit Management) **social** (Communication, Building Relationships, Effective Use of Resources, Building People Capabilities, Teamwork and Cooperation, Influence, Negotiation and Impact, Service Focus) and **engagement** (Personal Responsibility, Leadership, Managing Change and Innovation, Decision Making, Initiative & Proactivity).

Men and women share these competencies, so you cannot discriminate against women. In fact, if I look at this, I think that our women returners probably have a pretty strong range of these competencies because, when you take a career break and bring up children, or you take on caring responsibilities, your capacity to build relationships, and build people's capabilities, teamwork and cooperation can only be enhanced.

So the question is, what gets lost in translation? When someone comes with this fantastic kind of diversity statement, someone tries to put something in at the bottom, but the result does not come out. This is really what we would like you to focus on today - about the shared values and what is lost in translation, and how we can make that process better.

Wendy Hall: Without further ado, let me introduce our first speakers, Lene Bisgaard and Sharon Pagram, who are from Citigroup. They will tell us about Citigroup's experience of promoting women in leadership.

THE INGREDIENTS FOR A POSITIVE CORPORATE CULTURE

CITIGROUP - PROMOTING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Lene Bisgaard, Head of Cost and System Management, within Voice and Networks and Sharon Pagram, Senior Recruiter

Sharon Pagram: Thank you very much indeed. I am the recruitment manager for the Corporate Centre at Citigroup and I look after the Europe, Middle East, Africa (EMEA) region. Elizabeth kindly invited us here today and has asked us to share with you some of the initiatives that we have been running on the recruitment side, so I will talk you through those. I will then hand you over to my colleague, Lene Bisgaard, who will tell you about our **'Coaching For Success'** programme.

Overview of Citigroup

First, let me give you a quick overview of Citigroup. Some of you have probably heard about Citibank, Salomon Smith Barney, Schroders - we have a number of different organisations that sit beneath the Citigroup banner. We are the largest financial services organisation with over 200 million customer accounts in more than 100 countries and our history has been 200 years in the making.

We employ over 330,000 people in more than 100 countries, which is quite a large number of people to manage. For simplicity, we can say that we are organised into three major businesses: Global Consumer Group, which you will recognise as our retail part of the business, with our branches on the high streets and our cards organisation; Corporate Investment Banking, which is our Salomon Smith Barney/Schroders organisation, and Global Wealth Management. All of these different families need to attest to our shared responsibilities.

Chuck Prince, who is our chairman, aims to make sure that we are not only the largest financial services organisation but also that we are the most respected. All of us, as employees, have to attest to our shared responsibilities. Those are our responsibilities to the organisations, the franchise through to our clients and also to each other, to make sure that we recognise and respect diversity - which also includes gender diversity.

Citigroup Technology Infrastructure

This then links on to Citigroup Technology Infrastructure (CTI). That is the technology infrastructure part of the business where I am responsible for managing recruitment. We love acronyms in Citigroup, so I will refer to it as CTI from now on. CTI is one of the best technology platforms within the market place. It operates Citigroup's voice and email networks; data processing, and internet access. We have over 10000 staff, 2000 of whom are actually sitting within the EMEA region. This is quite a large organisation.

Within the working environment, each individual has an annual budget of £800 to pursue external training. Each individual has an annual allowance for ten days' training. Eight per cent of employees are currently benefiting from some kind of flexible working arrangement, whether that be working from home, or through changed working hours, or through a shortened week. That culminates in an **incredibly low turnover of four per cent**. When you benchmark that externally with the IT services industry of 15.5 per cent, or finance at 16.1 per cent, that says that people do not really want to leave.

Moving on to the recruitment strategy, as a result of four years of initiatives, the graduate team have been able to increase the representation of females from 25 per cent in the 2000 to 2001 class, to 45 per cent in the 2005 to 2006 class. That is absolutely phenomenal in four years and we have done that through a range of initiatives. Looking after the latter recruitment, this is something that I am really trying to emulate. So 2006 for me has really involved pushing a range of initiatives to help us effect our representation of females within our technology organisation.

Some of those initiatives have been 'Girls for IT'. In May 2006, we took part in a video-conference which was broadcast across all the different schools within London, primarily targeting girls aged between 12 and 14, and encouraging them to keep on with their technology studies. Helen Brooks, who sits within the technology infrastructure world, actually took part and was talking about how technology had enabled her career. The most commonly asked questions by the students were 'How much are you earning?' and 'How easy was it to get where you are?' However, we had some very positive feedback.

In June 2006 we co-hosted an event with Women In Technology called **Mentoring For Success**. The event was concerned with trying to give individuals tools about how to become a mentor or a mentee, to help progress their career within IT.

We also advertise all of our roles on **WhereWomenWantToWork.com**, which is an online site focusing on progression for our brands. We have also most recently started a relationship with Equalitec. So all of our vacancies within CTI that are released externally are now being released through Equalitec. We hope that these initiatives will help to increase awareness internally within the organisation, but also to promote our brands externally. We have actually had some success and, looking at 2005, out of our hiring, 18 per cent of our hires were actually females and, in 2006, we have increased that figure to 20 per cent - which brings us to one per cent below the DTI's industry average for IT.

Let me now hand you over to Lene Bisgaard, who will talk you through our Coaching For Success programme.

Coaching For Success

Lene Bisgaard: I am a senior vice president within Citigroup, or CTI as we like to call it.

I currently run a small team of 20 people within Voice and Networks. Our areas of expertise are within system and cost management. I have been asked to be here today because I currently hold the role of co-chair for Citigroup Women's Diversity Network.

One of the initiatives that we put together back in 2002 was a mentoring/coaching programme which was aimed at Assistant Vice President ladies and newly promoted Vice President ladies. We chose this because there was a significant drop-off in percentages from those two levels and we needed to find out what was driving that.

This is a programme aimed at investing and developing these high-potential ladies and it runs over seven months. It gives them a relationship across businesses as well as an ability to learn more within their own career. However, it is mainly in association with driving their own career. One of the things we

were doing was practically just **increasing their confidence** because that seemed to be one of the major issues for them - learning and taking on the fact that they needed to drive their own careers in order to progress. This was built upon a **practical design** which takes **lessons in classrooms** as well as **one-to-one coaching with senior management** within different businesses. It was quite important that we made sure that there was safety within that closed-door environment, so that they could discuss any problems, issues or concerns widely, without feeling that that could have a detrimental impact on their career. More importantly, there were the **networking opportunities** that we created within this programme: after each of their training programmes we set up senior managers, and other invited senior management from across the businesses, to come along, have a drink and socialise with these women.

The statistics of this programme are quite important. The first four programmes were run within Technology and Operations and it is important to say here that they were run by all the volunteers that are part of the women's network. That, in itself, is very powerful because it meant that senior ladies, like all of us here, were printing labels, ordering the food, bringing coffees around and doing all the other logistical things that are necessary to run a programme like this.

We were incredibly proud when it was decided by HR to adopt this across all of Citigroup and the last two programmes have been across all of the businesses. We can therefore say that it has become part of the DNA of Citigroup now.

There have been 143 graduates so far and the retention is quite incredible. We have **90 per cent or more in terms of retaining these ladies**. This has been going since 2002 and we will obviously continue to measure these statistics but, so far, it appears to be having the desired effect, which is to retain the ladies. The other important factor here for promotions is that, in the mid-thirties, as far as the percentages are concerned, to ensure that these ladies have already progressed on after they have taken this pause.

Another major point is that 25 per cent of these ladies have said that **they would like to increase and take more job responsibility**, so they are actually **taking care of running their own career and making sure that they are seen and getting the visibility**.

Something that has come out of this is **job satisfaction** because all of a sudden, when you are driving your own career, everything is a little more interesting.

Throughout the whole programme, we ask all participants and the coaches or mentors to give us constant feedback. One of the strong threads you see through all of this is that they have all **increased their confidence levels - and this seems to be generic, for women to progress**.

Another point is to **increase your peer network**, so that, across all businesses, you feel better equipped to do your job, let alone on the personal front, where you are also finding more friends. The other aspect is the **ability to drive their own career**.

The feedback from our mentors has been incredibly positive. It is seen as a win/win situation. In the beginning, we thought it would be difficult to get mentors to allocate the time - perhaps two or three hours a month, to help these ladies along. We used to have a ratio of either 3:1 or 2:1, where each mentor would take two or three ladies. As it is turning out, with the last one

that we have just done, we have a 1:1 ratio, because so many mentors put up their hands - as this is also seen as part of their development.

Coaching For Success - Women of the Future Awards 2006

I would like to finish on a nice note: we have literally just won the corporate award for Women of the Future, with regard to Coaching For Success. This is seen as one of the things that you can actually make a difference with. Just to brag a little, this is actually our second award - the other was won in 2005 by Opportunity Now, for commitment to female talent.

The judges summarised our Coaching For Success by saying; 'This is a major investment and a truly powerful initiative that produces real results.' That is why we all feel incredibly proud of this programme.

Questions and Answers

Gill Hunt (Skillfair Ltd): You had some numbers which do not quite add up, which showed how many people had been promoted and how many remained at the same grade. What happened to the people who did not remain at the same grade or were not promoted?

Lene Bisgaard: This is why I dreaded doing this presentation in front of so many clever women - it is always the detail. As I said, when we first started doing this, it was through a voluntary network. Our statistics at the time were rough and since then we have had to keep in contact with the participants and there have been some drop-offs, and some people not replying. There are some things that we can do via HR, but not much of it.

Much more of this has now become true and accurate statistics, in terms of HR running it. That is the difference between HR running it - they do it for a living - and the rest of us doing it on a voluntary basis. That is one of the reasons.

Eileen Brown (Microsoft UK): I noticed that only eight per cent of Citigroup do flexi-working, which is a terribly low figure. What are your plans to address this?

Sharon Pagram: I should make it clear that the percentage I was referring to is purely Citigroup Technology Infrastructure. The organisation is very large, and that is just the area that I am looking after.

We have a number of initiatives that have come out from the United States and also that are EMEA-led, whereby we are actively going out and promoting this to the organisation. Some of this is a mind-change, and it is actually encouraging employees to put their hands up and say that this is something they would like to do. We have the framework there for individuals and, although I say it is eight per cent, when I was actually working with HR to get that figure, we know that there is a larger number than that who are working on less formal schemes, but which would be classed as flexible working. They may be working one day from home, although that is not on a formal basis - they are taking that day off from time to time, or they are actually working flexi-hours.

Helen Toogood (Unilever): What is the ratio of females at the most senior level in the CTI group?

Wendy Hall: Are there any women on the Board?

Sharon Pagram: We have just gone through a reorganisation at CTI and I am proud to say that we now have two very senior members who are direct reports to the head of EMEA for CTI. That is, of the seven direct reports, two are female. That is a big achievement this year.

Lene Bisgaard: It is worth saying that one of these ladies will be working remotely- both use flexi-working as well as using other means.

Sharon Pagram: Yes, and she will actually be working from Scotland whilst playing a major role in the CTI organisation. She is working flexi-hours and she is working remotely, and that has enabled her to take on a position of the size that she has.

Wendy Hall: Thank you very much. That was great.

I am beginning to realise how important awards are. There are more and more award ceremonies that are profiling women. You don't always want to win an award just because you are a woman - although that is good, too - but profiling organisations that are doing good things for women is a really positive step forward. There are more and more of them coming along.

Now let me turn to the people who will not be worried about the technology. We will hear from Susanne Brealey, who is Project Manager for Women in Technology at Microsoft, and Helen Duguid, a Creative Consultant from Microsoft.

MICROSOFT - WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

Susanne Brealey, Project Manager, Women in Technology and Helen Duguid, Creative Consultant and Partner to Microsoft EMEA

Helen Duguid: Wendy has set me up for disaster because although I am in technology, and I love the power of what technology can do for me, it does not mean that I am deeply technical - but I have a real affinity with technology.

Let me start by saying thank you to Elizabeth because it is a real privilege to be here. For me, life is one learning laboratory and we have a great opportunity to learn from each other today. Charles Kettering*, who happened to be a male engineer once said, 'My interest lies in the future, because that is where I am going to spend the rest of my life', and I tend to agree.

As a former employee of Microsoft, I was head of Great Leaders in Microsoft UK for seven years before being seduced into the world of EMEA, developing great leaders in the pipeline across EMEA for Microsoft. I then left three years ago to take a year's sabbatical, but that never really materialised. I have been partnering back to them ever since, but in a wonderful position where I take three months off a year to do other things in which I have real interest and passion. It is fantastic to feel that I am still part of Microsoft, but to be a partner. Susanne will be joining me at the table when we have the questions session later on because she is the internal expert, along with Eileen Brown, from whom you have already heard, on what is happening today. I am facilitating positive change for women in technology, on behalf of MS, through research studies, coaching and mentoring and, the design and development of a new website coming soon!

Why Does Diversity Matter?

Why does diversity matter? First of all, we all have a very different definition of what **diversity** might be and, to me, **it is about valuing and celebrating difference**. The three key drivers from a business perspective are all about **innovation, the customer** and about the **talent and the future pipeline**. The **customers are becoming incredibly diverse** and they are more global than they have ever been, but they still **want us to treat them like individuals**.

From a talent perspective, I will share some data with you - very current data, in terms of females in technology at Microsoft. We also have a chance to talk about the opportunity that is presented to us for the future, because women are the economic engine of growth for the world. It is great to see some men here, and I am sorry that I am not including you in that, but the future belongs to *us*!

The Generational Challenge

There is an incredible generational challenge. Lots of people talk about generation Y (<30), generation X (30-40), the boomers (40-55) and traditionalists (>55). Personally, I would like to change the word 'traditionalist' to the 'fountains of knowledge and the sages', of which there are both men and women. I would be quite interested to know today how we are represented here. If Y generation are aged under 30, and if you are brave enough to put your hand up, could you just share with us if you are generation Y? You are the emerging talent pipeline.

* Charles Franklin Kettering (1876-1958) Head of research at General Motors for 27 years.

Those of us who are a little more mature, with a little more wisdom, from our lessons of experience and our failures, are generation X, in our thirties. Could you share that with us? So we have more of generation X.

What about the boomers - those wonderful individuals who have lived a wonderful life, but still have most of their lives yet to live, and are in their forties? It is fantastic to be in your forties. My mother always told me that I could sell anything to anybody but, when you get to be 40, you realise that you can actually say what you think, with some experience and wisdom.

And what about those sages, those fountains of knowledge, who are over 50?

It is interesting when you look at the representative group here today to see that we span those generations, but there is a real challenge. Microsoft faces this, along with other organisations, in that we are far too heavily reliant on the boomers and on the generation Xs. We have a real desire in the future, first to think about how we can retain our real boomers and our fountains of knowledge, and also how we can attract more youngsters, especially female talent into the pipeline. How do we really attract and seduce those generation Y women into the industry? Attracting them and retaining them are the key challenges which Microsoft is looking to address.

Influence through Numbers

Susanne and I, along with Eileen and other evangelists of the talent pipeline in Microsoft, are very keen to effect change. In a man's world - and I apologise for generalising - you usually have to do that with numbers and data. We have, therefore, spent some time collecting data to try to effect some real change. There are not many great data points out there, but there are some very meaningful data points that encourage a compelling case for change. If you look at Diversity Inc, a global organisation that appears to be US-centric - and many organisations tend to operate in that way, saying that they are global when they are actually US-centric, they identify three noteworthy companies for diversity in the IT world, HP, Accenture and United Technologies. Frankly, I do not think that is good enough.

In Europe, of the eight major groups affected by diversity issues, females are the largest group to whom we need to pay attention. Susanne and I have spent the last three years, along with Eileen, designing and facilitating creative, productive **dialogue sessions for girls in IT forums at conferences** - mainly the Microsoft IT forum in Tech-Ed. Over the last three years, we have not seen a significant change in the numbers. Of usually **4000 attendees, about ten per cent are female, and so they are noticeably absent in those technical communities.**

In some research that we have been doing recently at Microsoft, we looked at the number of **technical evangelists:** of a total of 182 only five are women. Eileen is one of those - one of the five females who happens to be a technical evangelist within Microsoft. We talked about the fact that she is an intimate story-teller, who bridges the language of technology with the language of the real world. She is a natural translator and storyteller.

When we looked at very recent data from Microsoft internationally, outside of the US, **only ten of the 92 country managers are females. We therefore have an opportunity for change.**

Overall Per Cent of Female Employees Still Low

We also know that, overall, the female employee base is low (per cent female is 31 in generation Y 18 in generation X and ten in boomers. Across EMEA it is quite frankly not good enough and there is an opportunity for change.

MS is Out of Synch!

We are out of synch when we benchmark ourselves in EMEA against some of our counterparts and competitors. We are lower than the average (38 per cent female) in terms of the numbers of females that are employed in the IT benchmark companies and yet in Microsoft that figure is only 26 per cent female - 12 per cent below the benchmark. For an organisation that likes to be an unquestioned leader in the forefront of change, we are lagging behind. We are an also-ran, and this is an opportunity for change.

Imbalance is natural, and there are imbalances everywhere. The Council of Europe notes that: 'Imbalances between women and men continue to influence all walks of life and it is becoming increasingly clear that new approaches, new strategies and new methods are needed to reach the goal of gender equality'. When I read that it took me back to an article I read in the *Economist*. Does anyone here subscribe to that? A few of you. This was a wonderful, wonderful article, entitled *Womenomics and the importance of sex!* (A guide to Womenomics, The Economist, 12 April 2006.)

Why Can't a Man be More Like a Woman?

When I read this article, it reminded me of the production, *My Fair Lady*, with Professor Henry Higgins, when he is trying to teach the poor female to be 'more like a man'. However, when you read this article in the *Economist* on 12 April 2006, it talks about 'why can't a man be more like a woman'. It talks about the importance of sex. When I saw that as a title in the *Economist*, I thought I had picked up the wrong magazine. However, this was a great article about some of the numbers. **Only seven per cent of global directors are female. Only two per cent of open source developers are female. There are great opportunities for change, given that in the last three years, women are changing their lifestyles to spend more time online.** The growth in the percentage of hours spent online by females - blogging, shopping, doing business - is 63 per cent, which is phenomenal. There is thus a real opportunity for change and to embrace some of these women in terms of attracting them into IT if they are not already here.

Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, wants to be the unquestioned leader of diversity. Microsoft has a long way to go, but it is aspirational. The one thing I love about having been associated with Microsoft is that I have been with an organisation that realised its vision in my lifetime, when Bill Gates said, 'I want to see a PC on every desk and in every home.' Who would have thought that, only ten years ago, that today we would be walking down the streets talking to ourselves on mobile phones?

What is Microsoft Doing About It?

There is a real aspiration to effect positive change for women at Microsoft, so what is it doing? A few years ago, it set up a **Diversity Executive Work Group**, so that **business leaders are driving the change**, and not HR. This is a partnership.

Many organisations in my experience - and Microsoft started out this way - when they looked at diversity, they looked at score cards and they looked at

what other organisations were doing, but failed to ask the most important resource it had, which was its women. "What did they want?"

EMEA HERstory Project

Simon Brown is the general manager for DPE (Developer and Partner Evangelism) and he is looking to attract more females into technical evangelist roles. He has a huge passion for women - and men, in fact, as you would expect of a leader. He has been helping by investing time and thinking about what it is that women want in the industry, and what they want at Microsoft, at different levels.

He commissioned a research study called HERstory, driving generational change for women, through women and through technology. I am a real fan of education, and fortunately I have had one, and I am sure that, if a female had been developing the curriculum at school, then history might have been called herstory.

Microsoft is trying to get in tune with the young talent in the pipeline. It is hosting 'girl geek' dinners - we have just recently run two in Barcelona, working with the London girl geek dinner foundation. These are incredibly effective. We are trying to look at smart ways - we are not doing everything, but we are trying to find one or two things that we can do well.

In surveying our women, the one thing that we hear time and time again is that there are **not sufficient female role models**. There are **not enough females in high-profile jobs**. **Women do not have equal opportunities**, and they do not have access to senior mentors as they could and should. **Women sometimes find it difficult to manage the work/life balance: 85 per cent of the women surveyed said this is actually significant.**

In general, and not just within Microsoft, we are hearing time and time again that there are **not enough role models**, which is why awards are fantastic for women. There are **not enough mentors available to women**, to help them to develop in their careers, and there is a **lack of flexible working**. Equally, what surprises me is that in the IT industry, smart women are saying that there is **not enough access to good online tools to support career development**.

The one thing that we know from our women at Microsoft is that there is a very high belief that opportunities will change and that the future looks bright.

Women @ Microsoft Want

What women are telling us that they want, when you think about the top three wants from women at Microsoft, is **more mentoring programmes**. They have an internal mentoring programme - they do not just want access to Microsoft mentors, but they want **access to the best females in the industry, in society**. **They also want to volunteer their time to help other women, younger women, to come into the business.**

They want **more productive networking**. In the UK, it is great that Maggie is here with Women in Technology, which is a fantastic forum for networking. Microsoft has its own, but we are trying to encourage more networking across the business. **We are obviously reviewing our flexible working practices and policies** and Eileen is a fantastic example of how to manage the work/life balance. She is a stunning example and so, if you are looking for tips and tricks, connect with Eileen in the break.

For Girls and Women in Education and the Industry

That is all very well and good and it is the sort of thing that we know, but in the industry Microsoft also wants to play its role in trying to be imaginative about how it can encourage young girls into IT, and how it can influence the world of academe. How can it provide sponsorship? It has established Imagineering Projects, Bursary Programmes, e learning programmes and encouraged networking and mentoring for students. **One of the things that it can do today is perhaps provide online tools to promote networking and great mentoring, and provide the generation Y with access to those boomers and that wealth of experience of women in technology today.**

Positive Next Steps for Women @ Microsoft and Beyond

There are some amazing things that Microsoft are looking at doing, and have been doing, but they are absolutely dedicated to **building an inclusive culture** which is a positive environment for men, women, people of all different nationalities and different thinking styles, to realise their potential at Microsoft.

In terms of the talent pipeline, they are looking at **new and imaginative ways of attracting female talent** - both young talent and women returners. It should be a place where great women can realise their full potential. The most important thing will be to **listen to the voice of the women**, understand it and then act on it.

Rather than act on everything we have heard, and Simon Brown in particular, we have gone against convention and have created a whole new business called Evetechs. This will go live next month and it is for the industry. It is very much in its infancy. The first thing this website will offer is a **mentoring portal for women in EMEA**, across EMEA, so it is cross-gender, cross-cultural, cross-boundaries - **cross-everything**. As Elizabeth says, it is a **social experiment**, and Equalitec is keen to be part of that research with us.

Our offer to you today is that, if you are interested in exploring mentoring and being part of creating something pretty exceptional for women, young talent and women returners in EMEA and the UK, **we are looking for partners - anywhere in the industry**. We are looking for collaborators, and we are looking for participants, both mentors and mentees. It should be live within a month and it is coming soon. Susanne and I are really excited about it because we think it is time that somebody took off that competitive hat and said, 'Come on, Microsoft, we need to do something here for the broader society.'

Think Different

When I think about the 90s and the Apple campaign, 'Think differently', that advert scared me because it was predominantly male. It was about history. Today, I know for a fact that if Steve Jobs were to invent Apple again, he would probably use images like 'our heroines today and tomorrow'. It would be 'herstory', such as Ada Lovelace (worked with Charles Babbage on the first calculating machine) and Grace Hopper (a pioneering computer scientist and admiral in the US Navy). Also there was Dr Anita Borg, a rebel in the technology field, looking to ensure that technology had a positive influence on society, founding in 1997 the Dr Anita Borg Institute.

Dr Jacqui Edwards had a wonderful quote. She was an inaugural winner of the Blackberry technology awards last year and her quote, which I particularly liked, was about the future, saying: **'Women need to be part of designing the future or it won't suit us.'**

Gillian Kent was the Blackberry award winner for Women in Technology and Corporate sector. Then there is Professor Wendy Hall, who was awarded the 2006 Anita Borg Award for Technical Leadership for the Women's Most Respected Technical Leader - a fantastic accolade. We should be proud to celebrate the achievements of women.

To learn a little more about Wendy I went to a website, where I saw this great quote: 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' (Proverbs 29:18)

What is important to me is that we should keep the vision of attracting more women into organisations and IT. Let us keep it alive and be part of it. If you want to be part of it with us, please see us at some point during today. We are happy to talk about partnerships and about participating, but let us work together to help realise the potential for future female talent in IT.

Thank you.

Wendy Hall: Thank you - I am very embarrassed by that!

Let me take chair's privilege and ask about Evetech. There are a number of mentoring networks - I know about MentorNet. Having Microsoft backing something as cool-looking as that could make a big difference, because of the name. How will you launch this and make the best of what is already there?

Helen Duguid: That is a great question, Wendy. Interestingly, MentorNet has been one source of our inspiration. It is a US organisation who talk about having a global offering but it is interesting that women in EMEA with whom we are working say that they want something that is more international. MentorNet has received funding from Microsoft so it is in partnership. It is almost as though the challenge that we have is that, when you go to the website - is anyone here using MentorNet - again it feels US-centric rather than international. For me, it was probably the best online resource that I came across. However, Simon Brown is commissioning www.evetechs.com as one way to attract more younger females into IT, to show that it is not just publishing, media and online businesses that are hip and cool businesses to work for today and tomorrow.

Wendy Hall: There is so much there that I would like to talk about, but let me take some questions from the audience.

Terry Marsh (WISE Campaign): I just wondered how much this will all cost for me, or for someone who is part of Evetechs.

Helen Duguid: At the moment, because it is so early, Microsoft are funding it totally. We are not asking for any monetary contributions at all. We want women to work with us, as well as the industry and organisations, in order to help us determine what the business model could be. At the moment, however, it is funded totally by Microsoft, for women in IT and the broader society.

Wendy Hall: That was a fantastic presentation. Thank you so much.

Next, we will hear from Christina, from an organisation to which I am very grateful, because I have had a good deal of publicity through them lately: News Interactive from the BBC. Christina will tell us how they handle diversity, in an industry that has many women at the front line.

BBC NEWS INTERACTIVE

Christina Scott, Head of Software Development

I was asked to come along today by Elizabeth. I must admit that I have struggled somewhat with what to talk about, because I am not really here to present the formal face of the BBC. We have a diversity department and lots of HR people, who could all do that much better than I. Elizabeth has therefore asked me to present my own personal perspective, my own personal experience. Please feel free to chip in with any questions, because I am sure it would be very dull if I just talk about myself. These will be my views, rather than those of the BBC.

Introduction

I have not included any statistics - you may pick up a few about the BBC, but not about women, so you cannot pull them to bits.

I am Head of Software Development for BBC News Interactive. I manage a team of about 70 software developers and project managers, and I have also been managing a team of operations people, taking my team up to about 110.

BBC News Interactive is obviously a technology place, but I do not think that the BBC believes that they are in technology - it is very much that they are about television and that is still the case. BBC News Interactive is a little bit of technology within the big BBC.

I joined the BBC 18 months ago, after having had my second son, Oliver. I started off doing mechanical engineering at Newcastle University.

When I was doing my A levels, someone asked me if I fancied doing engineering, and I said no, not really - but they encouraged me to think about it, because I quite liked science and maths. They suggested that I went on a 'Women in Engineering' course, which was run for 16 and 17-year-olds. I went off and spent a week with all these young women and met a number of female engineers. It was very inspirational and I think that was the only thing that made me go into engineering.

I went off to work at Esso, at Fawley refinery. After a while, although I enjoyed the engineering aspect, I decided that it did not pay very well, so I went off to London and joined Accenture. As soon as I did that, I was sent to a project at Shell, because I had been at Esso, and I then went to Seeboard and Warner Music.

I then decided that I actually quite liked IT, and I liked software development, so I went to ITV Digital to run the software development team there. Sadly, the company closed down. I was pregnant and had Alex, and then went to News International, doing a similar job; had Oliver, and went to the BBC. So I have flitted around.

I work full-time and I have two children. My husband works in Cambridge and so, although we try to share things like nursery runs, I probably do about 85 per cent of that. Although I shall be talking about the BBC, which is a very positive employer, I am not saying that these other employers were not positive. Truly, times have changed. I have worked for 14 years and I remember that, the month after I started at Accenture, all the ladies at Accenture obtained written permission to wear trousers. I find it incredible - that was in 1995 - that when I

joined Accenture, we were not allowed to wear trousers. Thankfully, things have changed a good deal. As it happens, I am wearing a skirt today, but I often wear trousers. Things have definitely moved on.

Largest Content Website in the UK

Let me say a little about News Interactive. I am sure that I do not need to tell you much about it. My team is responsible for the news website, the sport websites, BBC Newsround website, and the websites in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian. We are very proud of our website and many people say that it is their home page. It is very well-known and recognised, and we win lots of 'webbies' and so on.

News Interactive

People often do not think about the other parts associated with News Interactive. Twenty per cent of my team are focused on the website, but we then do digital text; Ceefax on television; news to mobiles; email news; broadband video. Broadband video is where the television people have suddenly started to 'get it', and they have suddenly realised that the web is there and that you can do TV on the web. They have started to show a great deal of interest and we are getting much more funding because of that.

There is podcasting, blogs, syndication - I could go on. We are doing many different things.

My Experience - Working Mother

To talk about my experience as a working mother, I cannot stand here and say that I have got it all right. The same also goes for men, and I think my husband feels like this.

It is definitely my choice that I work. We could probably live quite happily out of London on my husband's salary. My mother did not work, nor did my grandmothers, and they think it is quite bad that I work, and they do not agree with me working. This is definitely what that generation did. I work because I want to work, but that does not mean that I do not rush around, nor that I do not feel guilty that I do it. All any employer can do is to try to support women who feel like that, and try to help you as much as possible.

Diversity Success Six Pebble Model

When deciding what to talk about, I came up with a model - because I knew that Microsoft would come up with lots of lovely, flashy models. I did not know any for diversity, so I have made one up based on **Flexibility, Opportunities, Understanding, Tools, Culture and Support.**

What is really important to me? First, **flexibility.** This is planned flexibility, so that if I wanted to do reduced hours, I could obviously agree what hours I was going to work - perhaps if I was going to work four days a week. However, there is also the flexibility that, if the nursery phones, I can just leave work. It is the flexibility regarding my son, who is now at school where, next Tuesday the hours are half-ten to two, because it is their Christmas party, and on Friday it will finish at 1130, because it is their Christmas play and it is the end of term. It was quite a shock that it will be the end of term on 8 December. It is that sort of flexibility, and not just being able to say that I will have every Thursday off, or that every Thursday I will work from home. It is a matter of having the flexibility to control my work and my life.

The second point that is important to me is that I work. Yes, I can do a job, and I can do a job for money, but what I actually want is opportunities for a **career**. I do not want to feel as though I am a second-class employee because I am a working mother. I want to feel that, if I go for an interview for another position in the company, that I have as much right as the next person to get that. That is very important. Many companies perhaps recruit people because they want their statistics to look good, so they recruit working mothers because of the statistics, but they are then not really prepared to invest in them and give them a career. All of the companies here are of course exceptions to that.

Next, there is **understanding**. I want to feel that my colleagues will not be saying, 'Oh, Christina is leaving because the nursery has phoned again', but I want them to understand. Actually, many of the men have exactly the same problems, but it is just a matter of understanding and empathy for other people's problems. This does not just apply to working mothers but it is about people who look after their parents or people with disabilities. We need to understand each other. As a manager, it is very important that I understand other people, who may have disabilities or other issues in their lives, which they have to cope with.

On the question of **tools, I do remote working**. I have **broadband** and I have a laptop. I am also the only person in the department to have a Blackberry. I know that people hate them and think they are evil, and that they cannot get away from work, but I asked for a Blackberry and it was not forced upon me. I just find that it helps me a little: if I have to run off, I can still keep in touch with people. I obviously have a **mobile phone**, and I also have a car-parking space, which is absolutely at a premium - it is the sort of thing you do not tell anyone else that you have, because everyone is so jealous. However, when I was recruited, they recognised that I had to drop my kids off and pick them up, so they gave me the parking space.

It was really important to me to feel **part of the company culture**. I want to enjoy the company and to enjoy work, and that is extremely important.

Finally, there is **support**. As anyone is aware, you will potentially need days off because your child has chickenpox. It is very important that your manager supports you in this, and that you are not scared to tell them that you have a problem. It has to be about more than just policies. You can write all the HR policies in the world but, if your managers do not support those policies, they are useless.

What does the BBC Offer?

I will say a little about what the BBC offers. It is a huge organisation which does so much that it was very difficult for me to cover everything. I will tell you about the things I am aware of, although there are probably many others.

You can ask for a **career break** at any time, and there are two categories of these. There is a career break where they will give you a job back if they have jobs available, which is not that good. Most people go for a category one career break, which basically means that you will get your job back. People really take advantage of this, and have six, 12 or 15 months off. I had somebody who went round Germany in a Volkswagen for six months because that is what he fancied doing. It is very important to be able to give people flexibility and to know that you will support them through that. If they have time off, they will still receive all the communications from the BBC, so that they know what is going on whilst they are away.

We have an **on-site nursery**, which is great. I have a guy in my team who has twins who use it: it means that he can come to work and drop the twins off, and he can go and see them if they are ill. That is a real bonus for many people and I am not sure why more companies do not do it. This is the first company I have been in that has had this, and it is a great benefit.

We offer **flexible working arrangements** as you would expect. These include reduced hours, remote working, doing your five days' work in four days, and so on. Many people really take this up. I have a guy who is a tennis coach, with incredibly complicated flexible working arrangement, depending on whether it is the summer or winter season, and whatever he is doing. There are people with childcare, or people who are studying. The good thing about our flexible working arrangements is that they are requested via HR, because sometimes it can be difficult to go to your manager to ask for these things. Requests are made quite formally through HR, who make it very difficult for you to turn these down unless you have a very good reason. The onus is then on the manager to say if something is really not possible. This means that most of the flexible working arrangements are agreed.

I am sure that **remote working** is fairly normal these days. I work from home and I can access everything from there.

I love the **holiday purchase scheme**, where you can buy an additional five days a year. This is open to everyone. You can also sell five days a year, but I do not think anyone really does that. This is just another good way of giving people greater flexibility.

There are other small things, like the **on-site dentist**. It can be a nightmare to get a dental appointment and take all that time off. I find that having a dentist who is just around the corridor from my office saves so much time. My children come in and go to him - and actually he is a great dentist too, which really helps. There are **on-site dry cleaners** and so on. We also have **beauticians** and **hairdressers** and all **sorts of facilities**.

Opportunities

In terms of opportunities, **the training is very generous**. They take their training very seriously and we have very good training budgets. We have online training, and **face to-face training**. The great thing about much of the BBC internal training is that it has a lot of role play, and there are a number of actors who come in to do things, which is quite good fun.

There are **attachment schemes**, whereby you can go to a different area. You either swap with somebody, or you go and work in a different area for six months. That is all very normal, and also encouraged.

As you would expect, the **recruitment practices are very good**. They are very transparent and fair and we follow them religiously. **All openings within the company are advertised** so that, whatever position becomes available, people are not just promoted into a position. That can be rather a pain if you want that position, because you have to go through the interviews, but it means that it is open to everyone and it is done on fair selection.

Tools

In terms of tools, as you would expect at the BBC, the **accessibility standards** are of the best, and we are really driving those. We have standards for our

audience - so, for the website, for disabilities, there are those standards there - and also internally. If you have a developer with a particular disability, we have tools and equipment which will allow them to do their work. The equipment is built into that.

The **diversity database** is quite interesting. I have not used this but it is mainly for the people on the television side. This is useful if you need an expert in a particular minority, or if you need a company who specialises in recruiting a particular type of person. I must look at that, but I only found out about it yesterday. This basically includes all the information you need about minorities, how to get into those communities and how to obtain more information about them.

There are **disability factsheets** so that, if I am employing someone with a disability - something like epilepsy - they provide all the information and make sure that I am comfortable that I have everything I need to employ those people.

When it comes to **understanding**, the BBC is very good at getting people in for awareness talks. This is also in their interests because, as my part is a news organisation, we have people coming in to talk about the Muslim community and explain what is going on, and what are the feelings there, and what their faith is. That is very good and it is open to everyone in the BBC. They have **online courses** about many things - about different religions and different countries - which provide a great deal of information. This gives a greater understanding of other people's cultures.

For community involvement, there is a huge part of our internal website that allows you to become involved with the community on all sorts of different levels. This is definitely encouraged.

Support

In terms of support, we have **mentoring schemes, coaching schemes** and **action learning sets**, which you may or may not have heard of. You get peer groups together, probably with about six people, and you are free to discuss any issue - which could be about work, or about balancing your work and life. We use that a good deal. There are **work/life balance workshops**, and there are various **staff networks**. There is a gay and lesbian staff network, and an Asian staff network.

Family life solutions is actually an internal counselling centre where, if you have any issues - if you are a carer or if you have issues with your children or anything like that - you can go to them and it is all free.

Culture

The BBC has a very strong culture. When you join, you go on what is called an **'up front'** course, where you meet all the other people who are joining at the same time. Whatever you are going to do at the BBC, you have a go at doing the cameras, and you have a go at presenting on-screen. You are given a very good sense of what the BBC is about.

We do something similar with a **News and Sport Tour**. We go around the country, and also internally, and tell everyone what we are doing within News and Sport.

The **announcements** are great. Being a television company, any announcements are made all over the place - there are screens throughout the BBC, and you can watch them on line. Everyone really feels as though they have all the information about what is going on.

We have many **festivals**, when outside speakers come in and talk. We do a news festival, and have very interesting people who come and talk to us.

There is a very active **BBC club**, with gyms and various sports clubs. We have a bar in every building.

Then there are the **BBC values - Audiences** are at the heart of everything we do; Creativity is the lifeblood of our organisation; **We are one BBC**: great things happen when we work together; **We respect each other and celebrate our diversity** so that everyone can give their best; **Trust is the foundation of the BBC**: we are independent, impartial and honest; We take pride in delivering **quality and value for money** - which I am supposed to know off-pat, but I do not. I looked them up, and one of the BBC values is about celebrating diversity and respecting each other. These values are included in our appraisals and they are taken very seriously. They look at everything we are doing, ensuring that we are doing them to these values.

Is it all Lip Service for the Licence Fee?

Finally, it all sounds rather glib, does it not? As I said earlier, it does not really mean anything if the people you are working with do not understand and support you.

What has happened to me? I was recruited after my second maternity leave, which was good. That was a time when there was the most upheaval: you go to work and your child is always sick and you are always having to run to the nursery, or you are always having phone calls. I think they showed a lot of faith by recruiting someone straight from maternity and it is good that they do that.

My management team has been great in supporting me throughout anything. I was promoted after being there eight months, which is another sign that they are really committing to me as an employee. I have received lots of training - there was the Upfront course that I mentioned. There is fair selection during the recruitment, and there are appraisals and management training.

I have a coach for the first time in my life. I have to admit that I am a little unsure about that: it is the sort of thing that I would encourage everyone else to do, but I am not really sure about it myself yet! Everyone says it is a very good thing to have, so I am trying to coach.

I am involved in an action learning set. I do not have a mentor, but I am a mentor to someone else within the company.

I have recently started a flexible working arrangement that is not really a formal one, but which is something that I have agreed with my manager. I pick my child up on a Wednesday afternoon and take Wednesday afternoons off - and I just make the time up whenever I can, at evenings and weekends.

I have a laptop and Blackberry for remote working.

I attended a work/life balance workshop which, again, is a very brave thing for a

company to do, because it really makes you examine your life. Many people may come out of that saying that they are not sure that their job is so important to them - they may decide to go off and do something completely different. It is very good that they get you to think about that, and to concentrate on what is really important to you.

I have already mentioned car parking, and the last point is the culture. I have taken my children into CBeebies and they were shown around. There are things like Children in Need, where all the staff appear and their children are all around. There is not a day that I have been at the BBC when I have not seen somebody's children in the canteen, or just generally around. That is great and it is really encouraged - it feels very much like a family company.

And?

Just to summarise, I feel part of the BBC and I enjoy going to work. As I said earlier, it is not all perfect. I was late today - things happen, and you wonder why you are putting yourself through it. However, I enjoy what I do and I also feel as though I have a career - but I do not feel that that is detrimental to me being a mother.

Questions and Answers

Wendy Hall: We do not have time for lots of questions. I would love to ask you about how you build the websites, but I will not.

You are in an organisation which actually has media, it is big, and it has lots of women, as compared to a technology company, where you are starting from a very low base of women. In your software team, what is the ratio of men to women?

Christina Scott: I knew you would ask me that and I should have added it up. I have to say that it is fairly abysmal and I think it would be less than ten per cent. Something interesting that we are doing at the moment is that we are centralising technology, and this is where the push has to come from. It has not really mattered too much: I have been trying to get more women in but - because we work very much with the rest of the News, where there are more than 50 per cent of women overall in the department - there has not been that much focus. Apart from me, there has not been much high level focus but now that they are centralising technology, they will suddenly have 1300 people, and I can bet that does not include very many women.

Wendy Hall: They need a campaign - but you are a fantastic role model. I will talk to you more about the technical stuff at lunch time. Thank you very much.

Next, we will hear from Angela Clements, Head of IS, who will tell us about best practice at West Dunbartonshire Council.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Angela Clements, Head of IS

I am the head of ICT and Business Development at West Dunbartonshire Council. I have a colleague here with me today, Linda Butler, who is the Quality Management and Training Supervisor.

I shall cover three main strands today. The first is about the Council, just to give you a general background about where we are and what we actually do within the authority - we are one of 32 Unitary Authorities in Scotland. Second, I will look at ICT and business development, specifically as an employer. Then, third, I will tell you about my personal experience as an employee within the Council of West Dunbartonshire.

Our location is from Loch Lomond up to the River Clyde. That is the area that is covered by West Dunbartonshire. It has industrial areas, and also scenic areas, and has been very well known for ship-building, manufacturing and heavy industry in the earlier days. Obviously, with the decline in those activities, it has become one of the most deprived areas in Scotland, second only to Glasgow, which is quite close by.

Corporate Perspective

As an employer, there are many initiatives within the Council that support what we have within ICT and business development. There is a very effective equal opportunity policy within the Council. There are various corporate support options, many of which were mentioned by Christina earlier. We have an on-site nursery, a welfare officer and counselling. It is not as glamorous as the things Christina was talking about, because we are a local authority - it is the government, and it is not quite as fancy as that. We do not have any beauticians, dentists or anything like that on site, but we do have the flexible initiatives - with flexible working and special leave initiatives. All of this is used very well by the staff who work for me.

Within ICT and business development, we are very pro-active in taking advantage of these support options that are available within the council.

In our **career development**, we run the BCS career developer, and in fact we won the award last year for that at the BCS awards.

The Council now has a PDP, a **performance and development plan**. Our **Professional Development Scheme** was used as a measure for that, to bring it throughout the council. We also have agreed roles in terms of broadbanding for all staff - again, we are the only group within the council that uses that.

All managers are fully trained in the procedures and policies of recruitment and selection. There is no gender identification on the job applications, no age and no religious identification. In our particular case, the 'no religious identification' quite often refers to a name of a school - and there is no requirement to enter the name of the school that you attended, because quite often you can identify by the school whether someone was, for example, a Catholic. We do not have that within the Council either.

There are very clear procedures that all those involved in interviewing have to follow. For example, there is what they call a gender balance as part of the

interview panel, so there has to be male and female on all the interview panels. You would not have an all-male or an all-female panel.

There is continuous equal opportunities monitoring that goes on in the background through a sort of core corporate personnel, just to make sure that everything is being followed properly and done in the right manner.

My Culture

For me, and from the point of view of ICT and business development, **I look at the individual** and at **their specific circumstances**, and **how we can adopt the procedures** and the **policy for the council to manage** that. Through that, we **value the contribution of individuals** and, because of that, we look at the **work/life balance**. In many of the areas that Christina talked about earlier, we have employees in very similar circumstances. We look at that in terms of the best way of ensuring that they achieve the work/life balance that suits them.

We **incorporate flexible working** to a large extent and we have also developed the **business skills for IT staff** - not just on the technology side, but also on the business side in terms of moving forward with the local and central government agendas.

My Commitment

In terms of my commitment, based on the **equality and inclusion** for all staff - this means, for example, even the staff who work for me who are not specifically technical staff but those who work in the more administrative, purchasing or secretarial roles - are also included on the career developer, the **British Computer Society Career Development Scheme**. That is quite unusual and in fact I believe that we are one of the only Councils in the UK that does that because it tends to be used only for technical staff. A large percentage of those who are in the administrative roles are female, so this accommodates them.

There is the **broad band pay scale**, which is for all staff - including those who are non-technical - because everybody is part of the career developer. This allows them to move on and to advance through their career with a very specific plan. We use Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) for the career developer at the moment, which we have moved on to.

Women in Senior Executive Positions

Questions were asked earlier from the point of view of women within the areas where they are, in terms of numbers and percentages. Very briefly, as Head of Service, these are the **senior people** that I have working for me in the extended management team at an executive level, about **66 per cent of the management team are female; 60 per cent of the senior staff are female; and 54 per cent of officers throughout ICT and Business Development are female**.

Investing in Our People

There was favourable comment that came back from our feedback during the **Investors in People audit**. This, from our point of view, was good - and certainly from my point of view, in that it was almost like an external validation of what I believed had been achieved among the staff and with diversity within ICT and Business Development. These were obviously individuals who were interviewed on a one-to-one basis with the assessor for Investors in People, and

these are the sort of comments that came back. These were probably specifically for females more than anyone else.

There was the situation, in fact, where we had a female who moved into our department from another department of the Council, from another job into a temporary job within ICT and Business Development, which was very unusual. We asked why, because we thought it was rather strange to have someone going to a temporary job, but it was mainly because of the initiatives that we had in place in the way we supported our workers. They felt that it would be a much better environment in which to work. So there is a reputation throughout the Council, about the way that we work and value people individually, and particularly because of the opportunities that are available.

Valuing the Individual

I mentioned earlier about valuing the individual and looking at that. These are some of the areas at the moment that we look at within ICT and Business Development. They have **career breaks**, and these are the areas where we have people with career breaks currently. There is **mobile working, home working and off-site working, there is flexible working and special leave**.

Flexible

In terms of flexible working, one of the ways of showing that it works is that we went from two to ten in a number of years, but we also have someone who has come back after maternity leave. She returned part-time, and then after having two children, she returned back to full-time within ICT and Business Development.

Open Communication

I believe that communication is very important in allowing this to happen, by ensuring that there are adequate **team briefings, newsletters, bulletins and staff gatherings**. There are **one-to-one meetings**, for example, for all the staff. I think this mix ensures that there is the opportunity to accommodate individuals and that those, for example, who are on flexible working, or those who are part-time, are kept fully informed and up-to-date, just as much as the staff who are there full-time, and that they are not in any way valued differently.

One of the issues that some departments had was that, because someone was 'only' a part-time employee, they might be considered to be not at quite the same level as those who were full-time. The staff gatherings, events or team briefings could be on days when they were not there, because they do not work on those days, but we deliberately specifically arrange these on days when we know that the part-time workers are also on-site. If they have different work patterns, we ensure that they are able to manage at least some of those, and then ensure that they receive written information such as newsletters and staff briefings that are sent to staff, to make sure that they are fully up-to-date. They are kept just as informed as other staff who are working full-time.

Wider Impact and Results

The circumstances have not only benefited us but also the wider Council in a number of ways. There is certainly support from the highest level in terms of the members of the Council. Our achievements are recognised throughout the Council. We have a number of quality standards and various other awards, which I will discuss later. Awards have already been mentioned here today, and how important they are to services.

In terms of our Investors in People, we had that in 2002 and then we were profiled in 2004 in the top 25 per cent. We then received our charter mark in December 2005.

Internal Impact and Results

As to the impact for us, it has certainly **reduced recruitment costs over time**, and we can see that as a pattern developing. **Staff with key skills are choosing to remain within the service**, as can be shown by our statistics. We have also been in a position to support many of the government agendas. We have a number of projects running at the moment, in terms of transformation or modernisation, in terms of the government. We have a partnership programme at the moment, which is probably one of the main and the largest corporate projects that we have, in dealing with a **contact centre, a one-stop shop for the council, involving all departments**. It is a female who is heading up that particular project and other corporate projects as well. They seem to have the breadth of knowledge, in terms of the business and the understanding, which perhaps people who only have the technical skills specifically, who have not had that break and all that experience they have brought back with them, will not have.

Many of the females have been promoted within IT and Business Development to the positions that I mentioned earlier, in terms of the 60-odd per cent within senior management. Many have been progressed within the broadbanding, from the point of view of the BCS career development.

Award Winning Service

We have won a number of awards over just the last couple of years including: Winner BCS Professional Development Award 2005, Medallist in the Women in IT 2005 and 2006, Medallist in the Director of the Year 2005, National Business Awards for Scotland Finalist 2006 - Business Improvement Through People, Best Practice Award Finalist 2006 - Delivering quality services and building relationships in the community and the COSLA Bronze Award 2006 - Securing a Workforce for the future.

What the Staff Say

In the feedback we are hearing from the staff, this is one comment from the Investors in People assessor when she came in to speak to the staff. She felt that the females thought **their contributions were valued** and, whether they were part-time, full-time, in job shares, flexible working or whatever, they felt that their career development framework was looked at and recognised in that way. **They also thought that they were thanked**, which is very important in terms of being recognised, for the work they were doing and the role they had to play within ICT and business development.

The Way Forward

From the point of view of the Council and ICT and Business Development, and the way forward, these are the advantages that we have from the perspective of being efficient and effective, to deliver value. It is a source of excellent best practice. We have already been down to the Houses of Parliament, along with the Scottish Executive, to show them our BCS career developer, so they can look at that in connection with the way forward.

You will notice on your agenda that I am shown as Head of IS, which is Information Services. We have now restructured, however, and this has become ICT and Business Development. This brings in more of the work that is

required from the point of view of transformational government and the role that we have to play within that - to forecast the future and ensure that we have a workforce for the future.

Customer satisfaction can be seen from the Charter Mark that we recently achieved. I basically believe that we have a more rounded and wider contribution to the Council, because of the policies and procedures that we have, and the way that we have adopted them within the ICT and Business Development, and how they have benefited the citizen as a whole.

ICT and Business Development - As an Employee

Moving on to the third area, I said I would talk about this as an employee. This is always much more difficult, because it is more difficult to talk about yourself than to talk about something objectively. I have worked in ICT for over 20 years, both in the private and the public sector. I worked for Digital for about eight years, and I have worked for a number of local authorities - the most recent one being West Dunbartonshire, a Council that I have been with for about eleven years now.

My Personal Experience

I have four children, ranging in ages: Andrew is 14, Fiona is 13, Peter is eight and Christopher is just six - and a handful. Andrew is profoundly handicapped and is dependent on my husband and me for all his daily needs. My husband Ian gave up his work to care for Andrew not long after he was born and, for that length of time - and one reason why I have stayed with the Council that I have worked for for so many years - is the policies they have in place, particularly in relation to the flexible working and special leave.

I have often been required to attend hospital appointments with paediatric consultants, therapists and so on - a whole range of services that I have required to use. There has been time when I have required special leave and I have to say that the Council has been very supportive in affording me that time off. It is the same as I have afforded to my own staff, plus some additional. There are times when I have worked from home, or there are times when I have worked from the hospital, simply because there are times when children require their mother to be there. The support that I have experienced is the same support as I have then afforded to the staff who have worked for me. I believe that is why West Dunbartonshire Council has been so effective in what they have done.

To Conclude

To conclude, this is the situation for about half of the females within ICT and Business Development. This has been evidenced by the number of females who have chosen to remain within ICT and business development, and the quality of service and the awards that we have achieved. It is not just the females that I have talked about, in terms of those who work for me, but also myself as well.

Wendy Hall: I know what an amazing job Angela has done up in Dunbarton because I have seen all of this stuff. She is very humble about it but, considering what she deals with at home she sets a wonderful example. We are just in awe of you! And you live in such a nice place too!

I will hand over to Elizabeth to introduce Juliet. This report has been a long time in gestation and is now being launched. This is a great day.

Elizabeth Pollitzer: I had this idea, because my own background in IT has confirmed that it was really important to recognise that a woman working in IT is not recognised as a woman working in IT. Also, there is obviously an impact that technology is having on all the other areas. You cannot do science without computing now - you cannot do a lot of stuff without computing. We have persuaded the DTI to fund this one piece of research, which is about the widening of employment opportunities in ITEC. I specifically picked Juliet to do this, because she has done a great deal of research previously about women in ICT, so I knew it would be in very good hands. She then went around and basically talked to all the women who we thought should be represented - and of course, Christina was one of those, and there are some others here who will ask questions and also contribute to the discussion. It was a very good job, and we are really pleased with it.

FOCUSSING ON OPPORTUNITIES IN ITEC - NEW REPORT

Dr Juliet Webster, Business Development Director, IPA

Thank you very much, Elizabeth, for that very warming introduction. In this part of the day I shall talk a little about the report, which is in your packs. *Widening of Employment Opportunities in ITEC: Professional Advancement through ITEC Skills* - Equalitec/DTI September 2006. This is the report to which Elizabeth referred.

The purpose of the report was to identify new areas of work in sciences and technologies and, in particular, to identify positive cultures and employment cultures where women could enter and feel at home. You have heard about some of those positive cultures already, from Christina and Angela, both of whom feature in the report. I am really grateful and pleased that they are here today, to tell their own stories.

Today, I will just take a little time to think about the connection between some of the structures and practices that are going on in the organisations, and the organisational cultures - the softer, more difficult, more indefinable stuff that is done in some of the organisations in this report. I will try to tease out what a woman-friendly organisational culture might look like. I hope that might start some discussion.

Emerging Opportunities in ITEC

First, the report covers **a whole number of different new and emerging IT and technical and scientific occupations**. In other words, as Elizabeth has just told you, we are trying to push the debate out of thinking about IT in perhaps the traditional sense, to thinking about a whole range of other computer, science-based, technical and media-based occupations that it is possible to enter now. Of course, that range of occupations is growing massively because, as we have already noted, technology is embedded in, and encroaching in, almost every area of the economy that we care to think of.

In the report, we have covered: the development and implementation of standards for radio frequency identification, (RFID); Angela Clements's work in local government service provision; weather forecasting and meteorology; digital art galleries; digital libraries; bio-imaging; IT security; and a whole range of new and different occupations.

The Calculable ...

To start with, let me identify some of the **calculable issues** with which organisations grapple. These are the **structural, numerical initiatives that they make**, in order **to get more women in, to retain more women, and to increase women's representation**. I will then try to make the link between that and the cultural underpinning that helps to sustain, because that is the more difficult project that we must probably now come to grips with.

We all know very well what needs to be done, and we have plenty of good examples. However, just to recap on some of those, what we have in the report is a number of **new occupations** that offer **very flexible entry routes**, first and foremost. Those new occupations, those new areas of the economy, new application areas, help to **widen the pipeline**. **It is no longer the case that you can only get into these areas of work with a particular background in computer science**. That is still one route in - and Wendy and I

have had a long debate about this - but there are many others now, which is extremely encouraging for women. The pipeline is starting to widen, and there are initiatives that can be and are being taken by employing organisations, to continue that widening process, and to carry on doing so.

When we come on to look at **organisational cultures, that is really the challenge that employers must come to grips with.** For women, **what matters is how their employers sustain them, retain them, help them to progress and give them job satisfaction.** How does the organisation listen to them, reward them, value them? Those are issues that have come out of this morning's session already.

There are of course **huge implications there for the ways in which recruiters apply their strategies, and the pool of talent that they look for when they go into recruitment.** There are also huge implications for the way in which careers advice is designed and dispensed. I still do not think that careers advice has begun to rise to the challenge to the way in which the world is moving, in terms of new technologies.

Then there is the issue of **clarifying and improving career pathways, to improve progression opportunities.** In the case studies in the report, there are many good examples of where this has done well, particularly in terms of **valuing non-traditional skills and seeing the transferability potential of the skills** people hold.

One point that came out very strongly was that **clarity of progression, of opportunities, was vital.** This is a very powerful impetus to improving quality and diversity. There is a case study in the report from a part of the NHS, the NHS Informatics Service, which has developed an extremely highly articulated model for mapping the career routes that could be taken by people coming from a number of different backgrounds and going through into a number of different information systems, information technology and information management professions within the NHS.

Another parallel is the **skills framework for the Information Age**, which is also being developed. The important aspect of those initiatives is that they remove the hidden element, or the implicit element, in what is needed to progress within a profession or within an organisation. They make those things explicit and clear and open - and, as we all know, that is one vital element of good equality practices.

When we are talking about **improving retention at senior level, and promotion to the very top**, we know that there is still a huge problem. We have heard from the colleagues at Citigroup this morning, and there are other well-known examples that others have identified, of a huge problem in retaining women in senior positions in mid-life. We still do not understand quite why that is so, although a number of theories abound about why women tend to drop out of these kinds of occupations in mid- to senior-career. There is a good deal of work still to be done, and much effort still to be made, within the employing community.

Addressing **working time arrangements** is another practical initiative. We now have legions of good examples of innovative things that are being done by employers to do precisely that, in order to respond to individual circumstances.

I do not know whether anyone else saw recently that *Personnel Today** has published a survey which said that women are most keen to work in two sectors now - financial services and IT - because of flexible working arrangements. If that had been said ten or even five years ago, I would have fallen off my chair, because neither of those sectors were particularly noted for their flexible working arrangements. This possibly says something about the progress that has been made, which means that they are now starting to carry with them a very different image as employers who actually offer working time arrangements that are attractive to women.

... Supports the Cultural

I said earlier that I wanted to look at the way in which those **practical structural arrangements intercept with or support cultural changes**. It is really the cultures of the different employing organisations that the report tries to showcase, and the way in which the employees that are showcased experience those cultures. What unites most of the case studies in the report is precisely that - **they have particular cultural approaches which seek to value, promote and highlight women**.

What also unites them is the leadership of the organisations - **the leadership that is shown at the top**. That has been key to introducing and maintaining cultural change. We all know how difficult it is to achieve cultural change in an organisation - it is the most difficult change to make, and much more difficult than practical changes. Nevertheless, some of these are the sorts of things that come out of the case studies, and they indicate what positive cultures for women might look like. They help us, perhaps, to take away some images.

First, there are **cultures that value and seek women from non-traditional backgrounds**, which is terribly important. It is worth highlighting two examples that appear in the report. One is the example of the NHS, which is drawing in women from quite diverse backgrounds and showing them quite clear pathways through into an information system, information management and information technology set of career profiles.

The other example which rather struck me was that of the Tate Gallery, which is digitising its art collection, and has recruited a team of people led by a woman, who is in the report although sadly not here today, to do that. She originally came from a non-technical background in publishing and developed her technical skills in her working life, prior to joining the Tate Gallery. The point was that, in recruiting her, the employer signalled that it was quite happy to take somebody and develop them and apply their skills - because she had relevant skills, although they did not necessarily come with a particular formal qualification.

Those kinds of organisational cultures that value and seek those kinds of women are terribly important. There is also a point to be made, which we could discuss later, about the way in which occupational cultures and organisational cultures intersect. In other words, some of these new media occupations have very different kinds of occupational and professional cultures than those attached to the old IT world. I just throw this in as a speculative remark, but they might perhaps be more open to and encouraging to women - less closed.

* www.personneltoday.com/Articles/2006/10/17/37713/what-women-want-at-work-how-the-best-firms-keep-top-female.html

See also *Where women want to work*, The Times 4 October 2006 (www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,31909-2381991,00.html)

Learning cultures which allow ability to be recognised and to flourish are terribly important.

I was very struck by the example that Angela Clements has already talked about in West Dunbartonshire. Angela was terribly modest about what they do there, as Wendy has already said, but their career developer programme, among other things, has been fantastically important for signalling very strongly to women, throughout the Authority, that they are eligible to move into some of those IT professional roles, from quite different backgrounds - including secretarial backgrounds, and including call centre work. That message that is being sent, that you belong here and you are eligible for these posts and we will help you, is an enormously cultural signal. Once again, it is very closely linked to the way in which leadership is practised and the agenda is shared.

Open cultures, which do not protect what I call disciplinary fictions - disciplinary fictions meaning the kind of culture which says that 'this is a profession which has a mystique around it, and you cannot understand it', or it has certain exclusive factors and there is a very clear divide between this and another discipline. **Cultures that are open are vital.** Again, the NHS example is important because the real, necessary skills for progressing within an IT profession there are laid open and are clear for all to see. They are not hidden and they are not mystified. I guess I am making a plea for the demystification of knowledge and of skills progression routes.

Cultures which value creativity. In the report we have the example of another woman who, sadly, is also not here today, who works in the bio-imaging field. She takes specimens and puts them under a microscope, and then transmits the results to schools locally, so that they can teach local school children about biological sciences, how to look at specimens and so on. Something that has come out of her work, and which she has been encouraged to do, is to send these specimens to art galleries and to explore the artistic potential around these very beautiful things. The organisation in which she works has promoted and encouraged this. Once again, this is widening out and not narrowing down the potential for exploring different forms of knowledge, creativity and self-expression - in the case of this woman, self-expression has been all important.

There are **cultures which empower employees.** Once again, this is terribly important because that is about the way in which agendas are shared and responsibility is shared right down through the organisation. We need cultures which validate women in a central place in ITEC work, and do not treat women as outsiders or non-contenders, because of an image of who is allowed to progress, who is allowed to be senior within an organisation and who is not.

Having **creative approaches to working time and place** is terribly important. You have heard one or two really inspirational examples just now, when we heard from West Dunbartonshire and the BBC. The BBC is a very special example, with all the initiatives that Christina talks about - but, sadly, those are not available to most of us. I so wish that we had a hairdresser in IPA! Nevertheless, these are important issues. It was terribly significant when she talked about the fact that there are children all around the place, because that is the kind of thing that says to women, 'You belong here, and you belong everywhere here.' I was very struck by that.

Referring back to this survey which was recently published by *Personnel Today*, things are beginning to change. We might have said a few years ago that this is the sort of thing that you really only see in the public sector - the Local

Authorities, the likes of the BBC and such, have been terribly good at attending to issues of work/life balance and so on. They have been much more constrained by their public sector role, their community role, their accountability to a wider constituency than the private sector. However, the division between the private and the public sector is beginning to erode and, as we have seen already, there are beginning to be some really exciting developments in other areas of the economy, rather than just simply the public sector.

There is plenty more scope for good practice than the legislation on flexible working affords us. The BBC example makes that point very clearly - there is much more scope, but the legislation is perhaps a start.

Finally, I want to highlight cultures of well-being and work/life balance, although this goes slightly beyond the issue of flexible working but it is aligned to that idea of always being in a hurry, always being under pressure and always juggling. An organisational culture that values the wellbeing of its staff is one that will try to support women so that they do not feel that kind of punishment at work, so that they have some kind of work/life balance despite their personal circumstances. Once again, this *Personnel Today* survey has identified the Royal Mail as being one of the best businesses in which women can thrive, because it is trying to foster a wider culture of wellbeing. For me, that raises issues of healthy working, wellbeing at work, which go beyond simply working time but are something much less definable but nevertheless terribly important.

What is to be Done?

What is to be done? There are obviously many things and I have just chosen to focus on what could be done by employers, or what could be done by what we might call intermediary organisations - professional bodies, employers' associations and trade unions. I suppose I want to emphasise the fact that we have heard a good deal about what individual employers do, but we cannot underestimate the importance of activity by those other groups, such as the BCS, the engineering employers, the trade unions and others - all of whom are involved in the project of improving working life for their members, or improving organisational performance amongst their members.

Thinking about **employers** first, once again it seems to me that **legal compliance** is a basis for a start, although many employers have gone beyond legal compliance already. However, the **gender equality duty** obviously provides an opportunity to **address practical employment** arrangements but, on the back of that change project, some of the less easily definable elements of **cultural change**, and what we might call **gender cultures in organisations, can be revealed, reconsidered and addressed**. Considering **changing gender cultures as part of the customer service project is one lever**. I think it was the colleagues from Microsoft, although I am not quite sure, who talked about the fact that more and more the customer is diverse and so, too, the employment profile also has to be.

As far as **professional bodies** and **employers' associations** are concerned, that importance cannot be underestimated. They have a vital role to play in encouraging their members and assisting them to **introduce and develop good employment development practices**. There is real scope for activity in that area among intermediary organisations, to pull the whole lot together. They can monitor gender balance among members, promote cultural change,

challenge the culture of some ITEC professions which need to be challenged, broker learning networks, organise incentives for change and foster connections, and so on.

In the report, you will find many positive cases that help to give some ideas about what is to be done which, hopefully, you will be able to take away and use. Thank you.

Wendy Hall: Thank you, Juliet. This is a great report. I saw it in its draft form, and it looks even better now. It is a fantastic piece of work and you all have a copy to read. Several of the people featured in the report are here today, which is fantastic.

Let me hand over to Jane now for the discussion. Everyone who has spoken this morning will effectively be on your panel to take questions.

Questions and Discussion

Facilitator: Dr Jane Millar, Research Fellow, UCL

Jane Millar: It is my job to give you your say and ruffle you up a little, because you have become very comfortable, sitting there. Some of you have come a very long way and I know that you are itching to chat, and to share with us your experiences. I want to focus what you have to say about changing or challenging corporate cultures. I invite you to create your own presentation, although I will suggest the title, which might be 'Equal from Entry', or 'Equal from Approach', or something like that - and you can challenge that too. Drawing on what Christina says, something that always strikes me is when people start talking about cultural change. This is a huge subject, but drawing on Christina's approach - although she said it was rather a flippant title - the idea that these can be little pebbles of ideas, little pebbles of things that can make a world of difference to the experiences of women in ITEC-related work. I would therefore invite you, under the rubric of 'Equal from Entry', or 'Equal from Approach' or whatever, to share with us some of your 'pebbles' which you think are vital in facilitating women to be recruited, to be retained, and to find appropriate pathways and be rewarded effectively in their jobs. I throw the floor open to that. You may also want to direct comments to Juliet's report, although some of you may not have had the chance to read it in full. I am sure that Juliet will be happy to take some questions too.

Pam Wain (Mentorset): I would like to suggest possibly the title of 'Unequal from the Start'. From the latter presenters in particular, the eye is very much caught by the major problems of mothers, but it is very important that we do not forget the evidence of underlying difficulty. Statistically, women are doing badly, whether or not they have a caring role. Many of us do not have children and for those of us who do, it is only a small proportion of our working years when we have small children. The evidence is that, with no caring responsibilities at all, women are disadvantaged. Yes, it is very important that mothers have fair treatment, but it is very important that those of us who are not mothers of small children, or carers of the elderly, also have fair treatment.

Penny Jones (First Group): There is an old adage about little acorns. One of the biggest problems about attracting women to ITEC is in schools and in encouraging girls - very young girls - even to consider it. I am a school governor and I hear from my daughter's class that their aspirations are, 20 years

later, still hairdressing and nursing and, if they are really, really ambitious, they might want to be an air hostess. Unfortunately, however, the majority of them think that their career option is to go away, have children and acquire a Council house. That depresses me. I am a senior director in IT. One of the things that was said in the BBC presentation, which fascinated me, was the issue about the number of children. The comment was raised that that was great, because it meant that women understood that they were part of it. I think that what is more important is that the children also understood that they could be part of this. I have taken my daughter into my office. She has seen my desk, she has seen my colleagues, and she has seen the seniority at which I work. She wants to be a judge. Let us start down there. At the moment, we are focusing a great deal on what we can do for ourselves - well, we are big people, and we can do that for ourselves. We should now focus on the next generation, because that is how we can make the difference for all the futures.

Leah Prevost (e-skills uk): I would like to encourage everyone in this room to go and research Computer Clubs for Girls, and make sure that you can get Computer Clubs for Girls in any schools that you know. If there are any governors here, it is just that small step. I have been with the project for three years and I have seen a difference in the girls' confidence. We are not quite seeing them enter the industry just yet, because they are still a little too young, but the more we can do today then, in five or ten years' time, they will be with us in the industry.

Eileen Brown (Microsoft UK): I was amazed at the comment about getting to people in school. After I left school, I had quite an unusual initial career. I was the first woman to join the Merchant Navy and I was a Navigating Officer on supertankers for ten years. When I approached my careers officer at senior school, he was very concerned about my ambition and wanted me to take a secretarial course or at least learn to type. Actually, the typing has come in quite useful now, but one of the key things was that nobody ever told me that I couldn't do something. I am the only technical woman - I am a deeply technical person - in a team of 75 people. I look around and I see women throughout the department, but I do not look at the fact that they are not technical. Nobody has ever told me that I cannot - so your attitude about getting people who are very young and making them believe - I came into IT at 33, because nobody told me it was a man's role. This is the sort of culture that we need. I recognise many faces in this forum. We should be encouraging people to get out there. As many people who are female and in IT roles - they should be out there, evangelising to anybody they can, showing them that being in an IT role is an OK place to be.

Helen Toogood (Unilever Global plc): Just to build on your point, it is up to us to do something about it. I do not think it is just girls but it is boys at school as well. There is a rumour going around that they have seen us working so hard in trying to make it, and they do not want that. They think that, if it has to be as hard as that, then they will not go for it. That is a real worry that we should probably address with the Minister this afternoon because it is something that it will take more than us to do. On our side of it, we run programmes within IT in Unilever and we have had people from all around the globe come in. I do the opening speech and the closing speech. I work three days a week - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - but the opening speech is usually on a Monday and the closing speech is usually on the Friday. So, on the Friday, when I go to do the closing speech, I take my two boys with me - they are aged two and four. They play in whatever the environment is, whether we are in a hotel or in our own management consulting base that we have.

Everyone gets to meet them afterwards when we have finished, and when we have lunch together my children come as well. I have said that that is the way I will do it, because I do not want to leave them at home on a Friday - well, I cannot. Again, that creates that environment where people see that it is OK to have children around you. We have to try to do something about that.

Jane Millar: I would like to comment on that. It has struck me that, in the initial presentations, you said that some of the questions you are asked are things like, how much are you paid? And, how easy is it? We are in an 'I want it now' culture amongst young children. How appropriate are our recognition and reward schemes, to give, say, little bite-sized chunks, not big career ladders with a major salary or pay reward at the end of it, that take some long staying power to get into? Are there different structures available that will satisfy the younger generation's need for rapid recognition, with rapid little rewards, perhaps, on the way to a more fundamental promotion. What do you think about that?

Marjan Kuyken (Fujitsu Services): I wanted to say something about the girls in schools. It has already been mentioned that this does not just apply to girls but it is boys as well. I have a son, and I am fortunate to live in a mainly middle class area. Most of the other mothers do not work and I am one of the only working mothers there. Those who work tend to have professional careers as lawyers and the like, but my son has had stand-up arguments with people, saying that girls can do anything that boys can do. It is not just a question of getting the girls to want more, but it is also important to get the boys to understand that. My son is about to go to secondary school and it is very interesting that the teachers at his primary school are all female, whereas in the secondary school you see many more male teachers - so there are role models there from the very start.

Jane Millar: So there are very long, sustaining images being passed through the generations of future leaders, about what the world might look like in their future.

Gill Hunt (Skillfair Ltd): As the mother of two sons, I think we have to educate the boys and the men as well. It is not just about educating men to understand women's aspirations, but I am sure that the boys in your daughter's class want to be train drivers and window cleaners, like my two did. Having segregated roles is not good for boys any more than it is for girls. We need Computer Clubs for boys as well, please, because there is not enough of that going on in schools generally. There are no Computer Clubs in the school my son attends, but he loves computers. ICT GCSE is a complete and utter waste of time for him - he is not doing it. All his mates want to do sports science, but they cannot all be sports coaches. We need to educate all our young people about what a great career ITEC is. You earn more in IT than you do in many other professions, so why do they not want to do it.

Mounia Lalmas (Queen Mary, University of London): I come from a very different perspective and I can claim to belong to an ethnic minority. If you look at this the other way around, girls want to study, and girls want to go into IT. When I studied in Algeria, 50 per cent of the students were girls and they wanted to continue. Of course, in Algeria, you are a lawyer, a doctor or you go into IT and other jobs were not allowed, to some extent. Many of them really wanted to continue, and I see that a good deal at Queen Mary. There are other issues to be solved. I believe that there is a strong cultural element. When I wanted to study, I did it. I am not sure how to address that, but I find that this

is very particular to Europe, with girls saying things like, 'I want to be a hairdresser', or whatever, but that may not be the case in other countries.

Penny Jones (First Group): We are talking about what can be done about corporate culture, and you have mentioned legislation. I work in a corporate culture that is incredibly open. It is not just for women with children, or men with children, or people with caring responsibilities, but it is for everybody. It is simply done, without legislation, and it is not formal - people do not have to go to HR to request it, but they talk to their managers. There is no constraint to you needing to go if your granny is ill, or if your child has chickenpox, or you actually want to attend their Christmas play. It is just to do with the home/life balance of the individuals in the team, to make sure that they are happy and constructive in their working life, so that they are not feeling a constant pull away from that. When I started with that company, it was the first company in which I had worked in ITEC where one of the first conversations I had when I arrived was about my boss's kids. He was really sorry that he had been late that morning, because of the nursery run. That was just unheard of for me. And the worst job I ever had was when I was working for a woman who, if I was two minutes late from my nursery run, gave me nothing but grief: 'Where have you been? What time is this?' Some of our worst detractors are colleagues of our own sex, and that is bad - we need to educate them too.

Terry Marsh (WISE Campaign): I would like to continue on the corporate culture issue. Obviously, the leadership in the company that the previous speaker was talking about has to come from the top. You cannot build that sort of culture from the ground up. We talk a good deal about changing culture but actually the culture that we have to change is one that does not cope with change in many cases - certainly in the cultures that I have come up against. You do not have to change the culture but you have to change people's ability to want to change, or their ability to cope with change. Then, if they are a company that can cope with change, it glides in reasonably easily that they start coping with women's needs. However, if they are a company that cannot change, who say 'this is how we do it round here - if we started doing that, everybody would want it' - just about silly little things, they cannot change on the tiny things. We therefore have to look at whether there is a culture, in certain companies and certain sectors, that cannot cope with change at all. We have to teach them how to be able to change.

Jane Millar: That is really important. The feeling I am getting is that we are very fortunate, because we are big people and we can do it for ourselves. We know what all the issues are but it is just that there are some people for whom it is not working. However, the real implementation difficulties of moving from where we are to where we want to be are something I would like to hear more about. I do not know whether you have been warned already, Rosemary, but someone suggested you might be able to talk about these issues. Would you mind doing that?

Rosemary McNaughton (Hampshire Police): I work for Hampshire police, in a very male-dominated environment, particularly in the IT department. On the infrastructure side, I think there are three women out of a staff of about 30. On the softer skills, on the service management side, there are a few more women but the server builders are predominantly men. My experience has been that the men with whom I work are very technology driven, with less of the human aspects - they would rather talk to a computer than to a person. It has been a very difficult environment in which to work. With the projects I have worked on, I am working with police officers, who have rank above anything else and

so, if they do not like it, they will tell you. It is quite difficult and diverse, dealing with people like that, and you have to tread on eggshells. It is quite an interesting environment, albeit very difficult to work in. The men with whom I work are IT specialists and they have been there for ten years or more. It might be the cultural backgrounds that they come from, but they are against change. I was interested to hear what you were saying about that. I find it is a very interesting environment, and a very difficult one too.

Jane Millar: Thank you Rosemary - I apologise for putting you on the spot. So how do you tackle that change-averse culture? Do you have any insight there, Helen?

Helen Toogood (Unilever Global plc): One of the things we set up in Unilever was reciprocal mentoring. One little aspect of that was something called 'courageous conversations'. It is very difficult - we are going through a couple of those at the moment - but we have to start calling things when they are not going right. We have to start calling the culture. When we have stated that we want a culture and then people are breaking that, we have to call them and we have to have those conversations. It is difficult for the individuals and they need support in doing that, and that is probably where we are battling and struggling, but we know we have to go through it, from some senior levels to some junior levels. For the junior levels, we have a women's network in IT and we have an HR panel coming up in December, where we will be asking questions about some of the myths and rumours in our organisation. You will not understand the work levels but, for example, if you are part-time at work level X, is it true that you cannot then be promoted? Or are you not on a list because you are part-time? We are getting people to start asking those questions, and this is recorded and open, to play back to the whole of the organisation. What are those underlying myths that we think are there, but we are not sure? Let us get those out. This is tough, however.

Jane Millar: That is what we want to hear more of. We want to hear that it is tough, because it is tough. It is impenetrable and hard to just identify even the smallest thing, so that is what we want to hear more about.

Ryan Edwards (Cabinet Office): I would like to pick up on a couple of points that many of the guests have spoken about today, about women as role models. For example, the Cabinet Office has recently launched Trading Perspectives, which is an interesting diversity programme in which you partner with senior people across different areas, who are senior to you, but you are the mentor - so this is changing roles. I spoke to one woman recently who said she felt rather a fraud because, as a woman she did not think that she was part of a minority group. That was an interesting observation. Just to throw open a thought to everyone here, do you feel that, because women in senior IT positions are in a minority - and this follows on from the point about the woman boss who thought being two minutes late was a bad thing - that you almost have to be tougher? Is this perhaps not proving to be a good aspirational role model for children, for example? There are some interesting thoughts concerning the notion of women as role models.

Nicola Hills (IBM): One of the biggest challenges we face, talking about girls and right through to women in the industry, concerns producing girls and women with confidence. It might involve a girl having the confidence to say, 'I can do this subject. I can sit in a classroom full of boys. I can achieve this. I am as good as the geeks in there,' or a woman saying, 'I can take on this opportunity. I can be that manager. I can step forward'. Certainly, our

experience has been that if you get into the male dominated culture, then sitting back and waiting for someone to notice you is not necessarily a successful strategy. It takes confidence to step forward and say that you can do something, and we see that lacking in girls in this industry. It is not necessarily that they are not interested but they do not have the confidence to believe that they can enter the industry and can be successful. The same is true for women who are travelling through career progression. One of our biggest challenges is in how to instil confidence in both girls and women in the industry.

Jane Millar: You are right - and it is not only confidence but the ability to self-promote without embarrassment.

Sue Black (London South Bank University): I am a Reader in Software Engineering at South Bank University and also chair of the British Computer Society Women's Group, BCS Women. I set the group up in 2001 to support women like Rosemary, who were working on their own or in isolation in different companies. This is an electronic group and so basically anyone who is part of the group can send an email speculatively to the group, and they will be informally mentored, in a way, by other people in the group. You could send in a question, saying that you have a really technical problem at work and that you do not know what to do about it and, with 800 members, there will probably be at least two or three who can come up with a solution. Within an hour, therefore, they will probably receive several emails saying, 'When I had that problem, I did X!' We also support each other through the group. People might send an email, saying that they do not know whether to apply for a certain job, for one reason or another - and it is the whole confidence issue. They will then have informal mentoring from people who will say, 'When I applied for that type of position, I did X, Y and Z!' If anyone would like to know about the group, please come and talk to me.

Helen Duguid (Microsoft): I am talking as Helen Duguid and not as Microsoft. I concur with some of the comments that have been made and, in particular, the one from IBM. Personally, I worry about us talking about culture change and what organisations have to do. Cultures are made up of lots of individuals, of which we are them - and it starts with us. We have to make some of those step changes. As an executive coach, mentor, and of young talent in business, I am amazed at how many people lack encouragers in their life - who are not concerned about what they are not good at in school, but concerned about what they are good at, and how they can get better at it, thus building on strength and playing to strength. This is really interesting, because it tends to be more prevalent with girls or women who do not stand up or speak loudly about what they are good at. There is a new book coming to market next year - not mine, and not Microsoft's, but it is by a lady called Margot Katz, called *Me Jane: thriving in the corporate jungle* (see www.MeJane.biz). This is relevant for guys as well as for women and it is not gender-exclusive. She asks what are your encouraging strategies, and how do you as an individual encourage others, based on your own success and lessons of life? There are some basic, fundamental underlying themes that you should consider for differentiation, both when you coach and support others, and for yourself. You should understand what you are superlatively good at, and then turn the volume up and talk about what it is you are superlatively good at. We are all good at something but we just do not tend to promote it as much as men do.

She also talks about the importance of having self-belief, and Eileen raised this point - that you should have some belief in your natural talent. You should find

people and surround yourself with others who encourage you to play to that strength and work to realise that talent. She tells you to stand up for what you believe in. I see a number of females in business who do not stand up and support others because, at senior level, they have actually become more like some of the men - and the men would actually prefer them to be women, and vice versa. Margaret Mead was a social anthropologist who had a wonderful quote. She said we should 'never underestimate that a small group of citizens can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.' I would encourage everyone of us here to think about change we can help initiate and what encouragement we can give to ensure that the workforce of the future is diverse, that it is not exclusive but it is inclusive, and that it leads for a great UK plc, or EMEA plc, which is a great place to be.

Jane Millar: I shall have to call this discussion to an end because it is time for lunch. Thank you very much for participating, and thank you to all our speakers this morning.

Wendy Hall: It gives me huge pleasure to introduce Meg Munn. Meg was elected in June 2001 as the Labour/Cooperative MP for Sheffield Heeley. She is currently in the Department for Communities and Local Government but, prior to this, she was in the Department of Trade and Industry. So I guess that women have moved from Trade and Industry to Communities and Local Government. I am not quite sure what that says, but I think it says something quite profound.

Meg was previously Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for Children, Margaret Hodge, and chaired the Women's Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and chaired the Cooperative Group of MPs. She is therefore used to chairing women's committees, as many of us here are. By background, Meg is a social worker.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Meg Munn MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Women and Equality)

Thank you. Yes, it is interesting to see where the women's brief is placed. We were at the Department of Trade and Industry when Patricia Hewett led that and then, in 2005, when I took on this role, it continued there while they thought about it for a while. It was a very good placement for the women's area because there was a very clear interlinkage between the issues around women in the workplace, and also women in science, engineering and technology work, which is led out of the DTI.

When we moved to the Department of Community and Local Government, this was an attempt to bring more of the equality issues together and also, very helpfully, to link that to local areas and local government, and how things happen there. We now have responsibility not just for women and sexual orientation, which are issues for which I have had responsibility for a while, but also for race, faith and cohesion issues too. That is important when you are looking at issues of faith.

When I moved, I was determined that I would not lose that very important link between women in the workplace - and particularly those areas around science, engineering and technology. That is not just because I think those are important for women, but I also enjoy getting involved in this area too, because it is one where there is huge potential, and where there is a great deal more that we can do. As you may be aware, Malcolm Wicks, who I was with at the DTI and who was the Energy Minister, has now taken on the brief that Lord Sainsbury had before. We have already spoken about sitting down and talking through that, because I have continued to take that interest, formerly with the agreement of Lord Sainsbury but now with Malcolm Wicks, into the new department. I worked very well with Lord Sainsbury and I am delighted that Malcolm Wicks is taking on this brief.

Malcolm is being very supportive of the gender agenda and, because of the historical link, when we do questions in the House of Commons, there are 50 minutes of DTI questions and then ten minutes for Women and Equality and they have still not realigned that. This means that this morning we were doing questions and, when Ruth Kelly and I arrived at about 1115 ready for our questions, the DTI were still ongoing - and Malcolm is the one Minister from the DTI who always stays, because he sees the gender part of that as being very important. That is a very strong message, and one that I welcome enormously.

After that little preamble, let me just thank you for inviting me to speak at this third meeting of the Equalitec Diversity Forum. I congratulate Equalitec and the Royal Academy of Engineering and other partners for putting together today's event.

The Information Technology, Electronics and Communication sectors are some of Britain's most vibrant industries and they employ over one million professionals. Despite this, only one-fifth of the workforce are women. If these industries want to remain successful and, indeed, if we as a country want these industries to remain successful, then we have to develop strategies to tackle the under-representation of women in this important range of businesses.

It is a fact that skills shortages are higher in sectors where one gender is dominant and so improving the diversity of a company's workforce is a proven method of tackling these shortages. It will help to improve growth, productivity and the bottom line. I believe it makes good business sense.

Looking at the bigger picture, addressing these skills shortages will help the UK economy to thrive and improve our competitiveness within the global market. The under-representation of women in technology is simply something that we cannot afford to ignore. Our labour market is becoming older and more diverse, with more women and greater numbers of older people, and more individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds.

I understand that in today's conference you have had some insight into recruitment procedures and the impact of these on the recruitment and retention of women returners. If the UK is to further develop and sustain a flexible, highly skilled workforce - one that is able to cope with the twin challenges of globalisation and rapid demographic change - then we have to ensure that all our talented people are involved.

Sadly, women still face barriers in employment. Our pay, on average, is still only 87 per cent of men's, and mothers are at a disadvantage when returning to work after having children. This situation needs to change. We have to ensure greater equality of opportunity in the workplace. It is an issue of changing demographics but it is also an issue of fairness.

We are tackling the barriers that prevent more women from working in the ITEC sector and advancing their careers. We are working to increase the recruitment of and retention of women in IT by supporting:

- the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology
- Intellect's Women in IT Forum - the trade body for the UK's high-tech industry
- The Daphne Jackson Trust, which helps women IT specialists to return to work after career breaks
- Equalitec, the women's returners network, who organised today's event, and
- funding a study by Roehampton University into successful methods of recruiting highly skilled women and then disseminating examples of the best practice to the sector. I understand that you will be discussing this later today, and I encourage your involvement in this work.

You may know that in 2004 the Women and Work Commission was set up to examine the continuing problem of the pay but also the opportunities gap. As part of their enquiries, the Commission brought together small and big business, the public sector, trade unions, education specialists and the voluntary sector. They undertook a detailed examination of the problem, commissioned new research and also went on visits across the UK to look at examples of good practice in different sectors of the economy.

Their report estimated that increasing women's participation in the labour market and removing barriers to women working in occupations traditionally filled by men could be worth between £15 billion and £23 billion a year to the British economy, and that is up to 2% of GDP, which is a staggering amount. We often do not know how much that is. Someone at a conference I attended

recently said that if you counted to a million, with one digit for every second, it would take you 11 days; to count to a billion, it would take 33 years. I do not think anyone has ever done that, but we are talking about really significant amounts of money here. We therefore have to remove the barriers that women face and create a more level playing field.

The Women and Work Commission's report offers a wealth of recommendations - practical and acceptable to all key players. This was enormously important, to have a real platform on which everyone can get together and move forward. These will help to address the major issues, including the really important start of where girls decide what they will do. What are the issues concerned with really informed choice at school? Then, later in life, there are issues of combining work and family life, lifelong learning and training, and also improving workplace practice.

The Women and Work Commission report is not just about fine words and a discussion of the problem. It also leads the 'Exemplar Employer Initiative'. This is an initiative where companies sign up as exemplars of best practice for the advancement of women in the workplace, and it is also for addressing the causes of the gender pay gap. It is for employers from across the private/public voluntary sector and those who have signed up have initiatives covering a wide range of issues including:

- working with schools to inform girls about careers in their sector
- undertaking their own equal pay reviews and, importantly
- setting up women's networks to support women both currently working for them but also support for women returning.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask employers who are here today to give serious consideration to becoming an Exemplar Company. Signing up says a lot about your company and about how seriously you take the issue of women working in the technology sector. We already have large organisations such as IBM and Microsoft, who have made this commitment, and they are beginning to reap the rewards. I hope you will consider doing the same.

I have also discovered a website that has recently been set up, called WhereWomenWantToWork.com and there is a link to that from the UK Resource Centre's website too. Companies are starting to realise that women are becoming more discerning about where they want to work and are really being empowered to ask the kinds of questions which mean that they can combine work and the other aspects of their life - whether that is family, caring for young dependents, older dependents, or even taking a greater part in civic society, being magistrates and so on. Or it might be just that they actually want to have something outside work. There is a real power there of women coming together and actually demanding to see how companies will accommodate them and enable them to work.

It really does not take a genius to see that tomorrow's workforce will not be the same as today's, and still less the same as the workforce that we had 30 years ago. Businesses that adapt to this when recruiting for the most important resource that they have - their workforce - have a greater chance of succeeding in what will be an even more competitive world than it is now.

A key part of the challenge for them will be in adapting to ensure that they include women - not women just for women's sake but because women, equally with men, have talent and leadership. I really want to ensure that UK companies look to the future, and that is a win/win situation for us all. Thank you

Questions and Answers

Elizabeth Pollitzer: The Women and Work Commission focused on the role of Sector Skills Councils in overcoming gender segregation through the better provision of apprenticeships to women. Does the Minister see a similar role that professional bodies could play in relation to higher level managerial and leadership job roles? I am thinking about women whose careers have been fragmented or broken.

Meg Munn: Thank you very much. I definitely see a role for professional bodies in facilitating women's access to high level leadership and management roles. I have actually written to every professional body, asking them to consider offering cheaper membership and training for part-time workers or those on career breaks. I have asked them also, because they may well have ideas and initiatives through which they can do things for women in a way that we do not know about - and, by asking them, perhaps we can see some good practice develop, which will then also be something that other people can learn from.

One of the shocking facts that informs the work that the Women and Work Commission did was that over 50 per cent of women in part-time work are actually working below their skill level. Their current skills are not benefiting either them or the people for whom they are working, or the economy as a whole. So we are really looking at the professional bodies and what they can do to promote that and get to grips with this because it is enormously important.

Judith Glover (Roehampton University): I just wanted to ask Meg about the concept in the Women and Work Commission on quality part-time working. Could you say a little more about that and what initiatives you are bringing about to foster that concept? Could you also say a little about how you are evaluating any initiatives that you are putting in place?

Meg Munn: Essentially, what we mean by quality part-time work is about addressing precisely the issue I have just described. On an anecdotal basis, I go round the country and meet women and talk to them about what they are doing, in all sorts of circumstances. You often find that a woman who has perhaps had a pretty high paid, responsible job in a company - I spoke to one woman in Sheffield, in my own constituency and she had been the accountant for a very dynamic engineering company, not surprisingly, since this was in Sheffield but now, with two small children, she said that she really did not think that she could operate at that level any longer. She said that the company had been very good and that she had gone into another job at a lower level which did not really make the most of her skills. To me, that is a real lost opportunity - the company has had the sense to hold on to her, but they are not getting real value in terms of what she has to offer.

We see that there are very few jobs in the higher parts of organisations which are done part-time. Part-time, just in its general sense, is seen as something that is not as valuable or worthwhile and so, by calling it quality part-time work, we are talking about the opportunity for people who have those skills and have been doing those jobs, and may even be seeking promotion, to do it on less than a full-time basis. We are trying to lead the way in the public sector as well.

When I worked at the DTI, Alan Johnson was Secretary of State and his principal private secretary did not work full-time in terms of hours.

We are also trying to foster a culture that is different within work places. We are so used to having this concept of jobs. People think, right, we need to fill a job - we are going to advertise it, and it is 40 hours a week or whatever, and that it has to be done like that, but we really want a cultural change whereby people stop thinking about whether this is a job. People ask me whether I am talking about a job-share, and I say that that is one option. It might be appropriate, if you have to have a role that covers a particular function, and then you might well want to look at a job share - but it could be that somebody does three-quarters of the cover, and someone else does a quarter of it. It could be all sorts of things but, equally, we want organisations to think, 'What is the job of work we want doing here?', rather than, 'What is the job?' You are getting somebody to do a role, some work.

Earlier this week I was with a technology company and they were talking about how - because they are a technology company - it enabled people to work at home and to do things at different hours. So it is not about clock-watching, but about what is the job of work, and what does a company really want somebody to do. We are really trying to foster a culture around that.

We are working with Opportunity Now to develop the Exemplar company initiative. We are putting together all these companies who can then demonstrate in what way they are doing this, and in what way they are supporting that. We are trying to achieve a cultural revolution in the workplace so that it will deal with not only this issue, but one of the things which really gets in the way of women progressing, which is this idea that you are not doing your job if you are not at your desk at eight o'clock and if you leave before six. They call it 'presenteeism'. There is a huge amount to do in changing our cultural expectations about that, but I think it would benefit us all in all sorts of ways. It would also benefit men, too - as with many of these things, it would enable men to take advantage of these issues too.

Wendy Hall: Could I give a little anecdote there, about something I am dealing with at work at the moment in academia? I have a new professor who has come in, a man, a star researcher, a very important guy, and his secretary is a job share post. He thinks that we are giving him second rate service, and I have a meeting with him tomorrow to explain to him that that is not the case. He is just assuming that, because it is a job share, these two people are less satisfactory. The fact is that he will get more out of two. I am looking forward to that meeting.

Jeanette Forder (Opportunity Now): This follows on quite nicely from what the Minister has just said. We obviously all welcome the Exemplar Employer Initiative and, at Opportunity Now, we are delighted to be working alongside you on that. As an aside, if there are organisations here that want to know more, you now know who I am, so come and see me afterwards and we will be very happy to talk to you and get you signed up with your Exemplar Employer Initiatives. Following on from that, I just wanted to ask the Minister whether there are any plans to extend the project or to run further Exemplar Employer Initiatives in the future, so that it does not become a one-off initiative?

Meg Munn: We do not have particular plans at the moment, in term of extending it and moving it forward. However, this is the start of something - I do not think it is the end of it by any means. When you do this, you do it because

you need some extra support or leverage into it. When we will start to be successful is when we actually get companies starting to do this themselves, without the assistance of Opportunity Now or whatever. We obviously hope that you will continue to work with companies and persuade them - but without government actually insisting on that - and that other organisations take this up because, actually, it is just one way of delivering this issue, although there are lots of other ways. For example, I talk to my Regional Development Agency a good deal because they are in contact with a great many organisations and they are looking at how they can develop organisations. That is something that I want to get into their head - in fact, I am trying to sign them up as an Exemplar Employer. Given that they were one of the *Sunday Times* 100 best places to work - and that is *Yorkshire Forward*, by the way - then that should not be too hard.

In the future, we may look at it and say that we need to do something specific. We are always open to hearing that from people, but it is about getting the ideas and then looking at how we can translate those into the mainstream programmes of what people do. That is when we will start to make the real difference. It will also be when the private sector itself - as I say, the website, **www.WhereWomenWantToWork.com** is a really good example of that, where the private sector itself starts to open up, and people start to realise that there are market advantages for them in doing that. It will make a real difference to them in that way - but keep in touch.

Wendy Hall: Yes, I support the comments about WhereWomenWantToWork - everyone should look at that, if they have not seen it. Glenda Stone and Aurora are behind that.

Penny Jones (First Group): I am a school governor and I am also a senior executive in IT, I work full-time and I have two young children. I quite often have parental forums as a school governor. Many of the women there say that they really want to work, and they want to work full-time. They do not want to work part-time and they do not want a job share, but they want to work full-time. I know that the government has been doing a great deal about wrap-around for morning and afternoon childcare provision in primary schools, but that does not help with the enormous school holiday period. This impacts women as primary carers enormously. It impacts on them as professionals enormously. I am certainly looking forward to my daughter being 11 very soon and thinking, now what will I do? What plans does the government have as regards plugging that particular gap, to enable this enormous workforce of some very talented women to get back to work?

Meg Munn: That is a very good question. Someone who works for me has young children and the holidays are always a difficulty, because largely I need her to work as well - apart from taking her holiday.

If we look back, the provision of childcare and support for families was very poor and a great deal has been done to put in place a whole range of childcare support. This includes encouraging more child minders. I know, because I used to work in this sector, that when we were first charged by the incoming Labour Government in 1997 to look at where childcare was, most cities found that it was perhaps in one or two areas, but it was not accessible. Particularly in poor areas, there were often very few registered childminders, so that women who were trying to get onto the first rung of getting into work were unable to do so. There was no way, on their wages, that they would be able to get across town and leave their child somewhere. We have therefore built up from a very low base. Obviously, as you say, the wrap-around care, and those kinds of

things, are a further development of that. We know that we need to do more on that, and we have a ten-year childcare strategy for that.

We are also looking at what might be the employers' role in that, which is why employers can choose to pay some of the salary to staff in terms of childcare vouchers, so that they can purchase childcare. That is one of the mechanisms that we, as MPs, often use with our staff in the summer, because we are able to do that.

There are also things like the childcare tax credit, which is again looking at how we can provide that support, so that families with children have that additional amount. We also need employers to say what they can do - and, for some people, they can do more around annualised hours. This depends entirely on the business and I am not pretending that it is the answer for everybody - I am not pretending that there is an easy solution. However, we have to look at whether there are flexible ways in which employers can build support to enable them to hold on to their employees, and to recruit them. This is why it is a real opportunity to change things, because people need to recruit employees, so they may want the opportunity to do those different things.

There will not be just one answer, and we are always open to more suggestions about what more we might need to do on that. However, we have made good progress but it is not fully there for people by any means and we need to do more. We will keep working on that.

Bob Ditchfield (Royal Academy of Engineering): Working with schools to inform girls about careers in science, engineering and technology is a high priority to all of us here. Is the Women and Work Commission planning to make a formal input into the recently launched DfES/DTI Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programme?

Meg Munn: The Women and Work Commission was a one-off, in-depth look at the issue about the gender pay gap and it is not ongoing. They will be meeting one year on from when they published their report, to see how things are going in relation to that. They would not specifically be having an input into that. However, the report on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programme - and I have banned acronyms from my office, apart from the most familiar - the programme report, which DfES and the DTI published, talks about that widening of participation. They are looking at initiatives that will provide greater opportunities for girls to become involved in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. They will be looking to try again and, rather than making this just a one-off initiative, see how they get that to be part of what every school does, to give every young person an opportunity to learn through that way. Like many of these things, we can have initiatives which are great for getting things going and great for finding out how things work but, ultimately, they will only make the kind of change that we really need if it is something that is done much more widely. That is the benefit of DfES and DTI when they are working together.

Liz Ince (IBM): As a mother with a teenage daughter, I have become increasingly interested in careers advice for girls at school. Because of this, I am a keen supporter of the 'take our daughters to work' programme which has been running. I have been running the event at IBM Bedfont Lakes for the last four years. However, my concern is about the lack of appreciation of the schools in the area of this event, where most of the headmistresses and headmasters tend to want to mark the children down as having 'unauthorised

absence' for the day that they are spending at IBM, where we are trying to teach them the advantages of following a career in science and technology. There seems to be a great disconnect, or lack of appreciation by the schools in our local area. I find that this is repeated across IBM in the places where we run the 'take our daughters to work' programme. This is a disconnect that I am quite seriously worried about now.

Meg Munn: Thank you for raising that with me. Going back to the Women and Work Commission report on this, they identified the real importance of opportunities for both boys and girls to look at a whole range of options in the workplace, rather than just thinking about one place that they might want to go to. There has been some very good work up in my part of the world, where Sheffield Hallam University worked with local schools across South Yorkshire, for girls aged 15 to go and look at work in some of the traditional engineering and steel works in the area. It has been very successful and we have to build on that.

I will feed your comments back to colleagues at DfES, that that is not being appreciated. We have to change that mindset and persuade people that this really is a very important aspect of children's education, to go to work and see what other people are doing.

Something we need to look at more strategically about that - and what worries me about it - is that although it is great that people take their daughters to work, this then also relies on the fact that your mum happens to have a good job, or has some kind of opportunity. On the other hand, it mitigates against the pupils whose parents do not have such good opportunities. We would want schools to think more widely about how they ensure that the advantages that are really good for girls who have working mums in interesting environments can also be passed on to others as well. Thank you for raising that issue - I will take it back with me.

Jan Peters (British Computer Society): I work for the British Computer Society, for whom I manage the Strategic Panel on Women. Many women manage their family and work by stepping away from formal employment and offering their skills and services on a freelance basis. I have been approached by a number of women who are freelancers and, because they are not on the PAYE scheme with an employer, they are not able to take advantage of childcare vouchers or salary sacrifice schemes. Are there any plans to extend the tax benefits that are available for childcare to these women?

Meg Munn: This is when I look over my shoulder to see whether Gordon Brown is in the room. There are no plans at the moment but, once again, this is an area that it would be worth looking into. This is something that I can take back as an issue. Increasingly, whether it is freelance or more women setting up in their own enterprises, which we also know is happening, we can look into that.

We would probably want to see that this is not just an issue for women, but it is an issue for parents. The more we can involve men in taking responsibility for the family as well, with this being something that they do as well, that is really important. Once again, we know that one of our big problems is that women overwhelmingly - despite the fact that they now represent nearly 50 per cent of the workforce, and that this figure will continue to grow - still take on the majority of caring. We will do anything that we can do structurally to encourage that sharing. For example, we are bringing in the right - after the first six months of maternity leave - for the additional leave to be either for men or for women. We are really trying to redress that, too, and so that is another area there.

Gordon Brown is very strongly behind this whole agenda of getting women into the workplace and supporting them there, where that is their choice. I will raise this one with him but we are on a tight spending regime and so I am making absolutely no promises. However, it is always well worth raising these issues, looking at mechanisms to support our long-term goals and help the economy overall. We might not always do it quite how you would want, but this is an issue that it is certainly worth raising.

Wendy Hall: Thank you very much - that is all that we have time for now. We have a very full agenda this afternoon and the Minister has to go back and do her job.

We are very grateful for the time you have spent with us. It is particularly good to hear about some of the new things that are coming along. I was particularly pleased to hear that the new Minister for Science is sympathetic to the gender agenda, because that is very important.

We have had three forums now. We had Advancing Women in ITEC, then Productivity through Diversity, and this one today is about Changing Corporate Cultures. I believe that the next event will pull all of those together, and then we will be planning a big dissemination event, to which we will invite many more people - and many more men, of course, who are generally the people who are the employers these days, and which we are hoping to change.

It is very important and good for us to have heard the government's perspective and your ideas. It is also good that you now know what we are doing - and that is why it is important to have the Minister here because, through her office, there is a good channel for the dissemination of what we are doing.

Thank you very much indeed for coming.

Our next session will deal with Organisational Best Practice. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Sue Davis, who is Programme Director of Sopra, Newell & Budge.

ORGANISATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

SOPRA NEWELL & BUDGE

Sue Davis, Programme Director

This is only the second forum that I have attended because I missed the first one. I have enjoyed both today and the previous one. Following the forum in May, I have been engaged with Elizabeth, trying to see what Sopra Newell & Budge as an organisation can do as a partner working with Equalitec. She has asked me to come along and speak today and I shall be talking about a very specific thing that we are doing - which is not necessarily targeted at women but it is a way of getting different people into the IT workforce.

Sopra Group - Key Facts

Sopra Newell & Budge are a part of Sopra Group, which is a long-established, successful European IT services organisation. It is not that well known outside France and I had certainly not heard of them before we were acquired, but they have been around since 1968. They are based in Paris with operations in six countries in Europe. We do systems integration, outsourcing, business consultancy, and we also have an organisation called Axway, which provides middleware products, and some of you may have heard of that.

Sopra Newell & Budge

In the UK, Sopra Group trades now as Sopra Newell & Budge. Many of you will have heard of Newell & Budge, founded by Ann Budge and Alison Newell in 1985. We merged with Sopra Group Ltd following the acquisition last year and we are about to complete our first full year as a merged organisation.

Our focus, both within Sopra Group Ltd and in Newell & Budge, has been on building long-term relationships with our clients and we deliver multiple services to the majority of them. A clear market focus is that we have large clients in the finance sector, central and local government and telecommunication companies and so on.

Because everybody else has given some statistics, I will give you a few as well. About 24 per cent of our workforce in the UK are women. We have a female CEO - Ann Budge is still the chief executive of the organisation. I did a quick count round the senior management team, including myself, and there are four others - so, again, about 25 per cent of the senior management team is women. I cannot remember which one of you hit a figure of 60 - I have no idea how you achieved that, but I do not think that we are doing too badly for an IT services organisations.

We are also chock-a-block full of boomers and gen-X. I took a quick look at that, and 72 per cent of our workforce, as of a few months ago, was between the ages of 30 and 50. We recognise that as an issue, we want to keep the people over 50 and we want to attract the graduates in. Something I have been working on during this last year is bringing more graduates back into the organisation.

Business Environment

As an IT services company, we operate in a very challenging business environment. It is rather stating the obvious, but we have to deliver year-on-year sustained growth, which we do both organically and through acquisition.

We also have a huge number of competitors out there, a number of whom are here today, who will try to stop us growing quickly.

The business growth also means that we have continual demand for staff in what is, once again, a highly competitive market. We struggle to get quality staff in some areas all the time. My area of responsibility is recruitment and it is really hard to get certain types of skills that we need to deliver the business.

We need to continue to offer good pay and benefits and, critically, to give our existing staff the opportunity to develop their careers with us. Attrition is a real problem in IT services companies and it costs us a huge amount of money. To have career and staff development has to be within the context of the changing technology environment and, as our clients move with the technology, we have to move with them. Also, what clients expect of services companies like ourselves is continually changing and they are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their demands for the type of services we provide and the types of engagement they want with us, and the type of risks they want us to take as a services organisation. Our staff, and we as managers, have to move with those changes.

Testing Capabilities

One of our key service lines is testing, and I shall focus on that for the rest of my talk. The testing business is directly affected by those challenges that I mentioned, particularly in the area of recruitment and retention of people. It contributes 35 per cent of our revenue and it is delivered by over 300 staff here in the UK, in Europe and in India.

We are a recognised market leader in this space, but the market is growing quickly both in terms of the number of competitors out there, but also in terms of the types of engagements and the client sophistication. Competition for professional testers is very tough. We have been finding that we have been in danger of basically cycling the really experienced people around the key players in the market, but that is not good for them and it is not good for us as a business. We want to get them into our company, keep them and not lose them to the competition.

We have needed to expand both our testing training capability and to develop our existing staff, but we have also been forced to look to other sources for testing resources.

Testing Academy

Our solution to that has been something that we call the Testing Academy. This is an in-house programme through which we train between ten and 12 trainees who are specifically recruited into the company to attend the Testing Academy. I will tell you shortly about the type of people we recruit and how we go about it.

The Academy itself takes seven weeks, made up of courses, project work and workshops. All the modules are delivered in-house by our senior testing managers and testing consultants. They cover the obvious things, like how to do user acceptance testing and writing test scripts, but we also build in things like interviewing skills, how to interact with your project manager and so on. One of our senior testing managers runs the Academy and also provides mentoring to them during the first six months of employment with us beyond the actual Academy.

Once the Academy itself is completed, the staff are placed on projects within our business units as junior testers. Expectations are clearly set with our clients that these are less experienced staff coming onto the projects, but we tell them why we are putting them there and why they are an important part of our workforce. In the main, clients are quite happy to buy into that. Many of our clients have large graduate programmes and so on, so they are quite used to this kind of resource.

The career development of the trainees continues, using on-the-job training, and we put all of them through the exam for the ISEB foundation qualification in their first year. We expect them to achieve the skills and competencies of our test analysts within that first year also, and then they are into our normal career structure for testers. This means they would move on to senior test analyst roles and then make some decisions about whether they want to move into specialist testing consultancy roles, such as around tools, or perhaps in test management and then, I would hope, ultimately, on to our general management within our organisation.

Recruitment Criteria - Essential

How do we recruit these trainees? First, I would like to stress that we do not mandate that they are IT professionals or IT graduates. We are not out there, looking into what is a small pool but we are aiming to get into the wider workforce and to get people into an ICT career through testing. I am looking forward to reading Juliet's report, because she mentioned people coming in from different sources.

The skills that we look for when assessing successful candidates for the Academy are: the **ability to pick up new skills quickly**; to enjoy **working within a team**; to demonstrate **attention to detail**; the ability to **multitask**; to be a **problem solver**; be **interested in testing**; have a **lively mind**; have a **good appearance**; be **flexible** and to be **reliable**. You will note that they are primarily soft skills or competencies, rather than hard technology skills. These are about an approach to work, rather than technology. We found that personality is really important here. Our testing competency practice gives a very clear idea of what makes a good tester and what does not, and that is what we are looking for.

We also look for a real interest in the topic. We expect the candidates who come to us to have researched what testing is about, even if they are not in the ideal field. They should understand why it is important to us as an organisation and demonstrate that to us at interview. As I say, some of these criteria are important to us for all our candidates, regardless of what role they are coming in to. They include things like flexibility, having to put people to the work, rather than necessarily bringing the work to the people.

Recruitment Criteria - Desirable

Basic IT skills, familiarity with the working environment and ability to work under their own initiative are the desirable characteristics that are used when we have decisions to make between candidates. We have found that having some working experience is helpful, and some basic knowledge of PCs is also helpful, so that we do not have to worry about them getting used to being in a working environment, or used to using a PC, before we put them straight into learning about user acceptance testing.

Approach to Recruitment

In terms of recruitment, we aim to look locally where we will actually run the Testing Academy, and where we expect to place that group of trainees onto their first assignments. We have therefore been using local advertising in local newspapers, for example. We would post the ads, as we do for any recruitment, on the generic IT websites. The first two that we have held this year were done in Scotland and all the trainees have been placed on projects in the Scottish business units.

In the first Academy, we took in three people from our Spanish sister company. They are looking to establish a testing business and they have therefore sent these people over to be trained and to work in the UK in testing services for a period of up to a year, before they go back and form a nucleus of the delivery team in Spain.

Internal referrals have also worked well for us, with people recommending friends and family into this role.

We intend to hold several Academies next year. I have been in discussion with Elizabeth and Lynne about looking into the returner pool for potential candidates. Most of you in this room, when you saw that list of recruitment criteria, would say that women returners fit that to the T. We almost got there with one last time around, but then she decided to move to Manchester, but we were looking for Glasgow so unfortunately we could not take her in. She had an IT training background - she had done training in things like Excel and so on in a local Further Education College, although she was not actually an IT professional.

Staff Mix

Of the 20 people who have gone through in the two Academies we have done so far they were predominantly male, although 25 per cent were female, which is one per cent higher than our average within the organisation. They did not all have an IT background, although we attracted a few who did in these first two Academies. Obviously, the people from Spain had an IT background. They were ethnically diverse and it was probably a coincidence, and probably slightly biased by the fact that we had three people from Spain, but that is nevertheless a useful statistic.

Outcomes to Date

Overall, the programme has been judged a real success so far. We are planning to continue it as a mechanism for bringing people into the organisation in future. We have been very pleased with the standard and level of work that the trainees have been able to undertake as soon as they have gone out onto their projects. The individuals themselves have said that they felt very well-equipped to do the job and even those who have been out there and working for three or four months now are saying the same sort of things. They do not feel as though they were sent out there without sufficient skills and experience. Importantly for us, too, our clients are happy, and that is also helpful.

The expectation is that the trainees will sit the ISEB qualification. Two of them have done it so far and have passed the exam with higher than average marks than those which are seen for our other workforce members whom we put through this exam. The intensive training seems to have paid off there. I think we have another three or four going through it this month and we hope that they will all pass as well.

That was all I wanted to say. I have given you a very small example of a different way to bring people into an organisation. If there is time, I will be happy to take any questions.

Questions and Answers

Wendy Hall: What was it like, merging with a French parent company?

Sue Davis: I have to say that it has not been very difficult so far. Sopra Group seems to take a fairly federated approach to their mergers and acquisitions around Europe and they do not try to impose too much. The only challenge is that we only have one member of the executive team, who is actually from France and has been seconded over here, who speaks good French and they often send out their emails in French, which is a real challenge. He ends up getting them all to interpret, so that we know what they are asking us for. They have been asking us to work with their systems some of which, particularly on the HR front, where my particular responsibilities are, do not quite fit the UK market. We have to do our own spreadsheets and cut and paste them into theirs.

Leah Prevost (e-skills uk): I was very interested to hear about the testing and that you are getting people in to do that. Have you done that just for fun with some local schools or with schoolchildren at all?

Sue Davis: No, we have not, but that is something I ought to suggest. That is a good idea. But we are involved with Computer Clubs for Girls.

Juliet Webster: I am sorry if I home in on something which probably was not the central point of your presentation but I was very interested - as I am sure we all are - in the list of recruitment criteria that you set out for the software testing. You did not discuss it, but perhaps you could say something about the criterion of 'good appearance', which is third from the bottom on the list. I am not saying that this is what happens in Sopra Newell & Budge, but I raise this because we are obviously all aware that this can be an implicit ground for discrimination. It is certainly used, in certain sectors of industry, in order for companies to generate a certain type of workforce, with a certain kind of appearance and demeanour - perhaps even a certain way of speaking - which is inclusionary and exclusionary.

Sue Davis: I would probably say that a 'professional appearance' is what we are looking for. The majority of our staff will end up working on client sites. Within our own organisation, in terms of dress, we have a casual dress code - so that, in our own offices, can pretty much wear what they want and look how they like, without difficulty. However, when we are out on client sites, we have to conform to their own culture and style and it is very important that we do that. That is really what they are looking for there - it is just that people should come to an interview recognising that it is an interview, if you like. It is as simple as that - and that they should not just show up for a chat, but this is an interview for a job in an organisation for which you will be delivering services with clients.

Wendy Hall: Thank you very much. We will have to move on now and hear from Fujitsu, and I shall be interested to hear how much the Japanese culture extends into your work.

FUJITSU SERVICES

Marjan Kuyken, Practice Manager

I have worked with Elizabeth and she has asked me to speak, and I agreed because I felt I could talk about women in IT. Then I received the agenda, and saw all these professors, the MP and doctors, and questioned what I could add to this. One of our HR pointed out to me that, 'You do it for real!'

I was the first woman to take computer science and electronic engineering at UCL so that, from a degree point of view, I started off in the IT industry. I joined ICL and never quite moved on - I have stayed there all the time.

I am currently one of six practice managers for our project management community. I have about 140 assorted project managers working for me. When we first started having the unit that was just practice managers, we gave people the option of which practice manager they wanted to work for. It was interesting that most of the working mothers chose to be in my practice. This was not particularly because they expected anything different from me but because, should they ever have an emergency and not be able to come into work, they thought I would better understand what the issues were that they faced. I am a working mother, and I am a single mother. I do a number of other things as well, but that is my background.

I then thought about what I was going to say. Even when I walked in here this morning, I was not quite sure what I would say and so I have been making a few notes during the course of the day. This is the first Equalitec conference I have attended and so I have been gathering a feeling of what you were interested in during the course of the day.

Fujitsu Services - Recovery and Growth

I will start off by looking at why it is important to bring a variety of people into the organisation. If you look at Fujitsu Services, we were ICL and, in the name change from ICL to Fujitsu Services, we have gone from making a loss to making a profit and that profit has continually grown.

If you look at some of the large contracts we have won - NHS £900 million; Aspire (Customs and Revenue) £1200 million - you can see that we need an awful lot of additional people. When we first started our project management unit two years ago in April 2004, we had about 200 project managers but we now have 900. Those people have to come from somewhere, but all the other organisations in the same space are looking for those people as well. If you are going to go traditional, they are not out there.

Some Pools are Running Very Dry

To a certain degree, we are looking across the range of ability. We have never really limited by age, even before the age discrimination law came in. A number of people we took on said that we were the only people who had offered them an interview. If you want experience, unfortunately it takes time to get there. We have graduates who want to leap straight in and be the MD, but it takes a while to gain that experience. We have therefore always looked beyond the traditional workforce.

Talent Management

As an organisation, we are looking particularly at diversity, not just because of some of the numbers that are here. A higher percentage of the black minority ethnic communities are graduates than in the white community. Eighty per cent of the ethnic population is aged 16 to 35, and we have the same problems with a large number of the workforce being up towards the end of the age range and we do not want everyone to retire at the same time. In the past year, the employment of the over-50s has risen and we have been part of that. Eighty per cent of the workforce growth will be among women, and 80 per cent of the working population have a disability.

Interestingly, in terms of people with a disability, one of our call centres spent some time working with a disabled organisation to look for skills there to bring into the call centre. They found that they both retained those individuals better, and that they have less sickness from those individuals, and that they do the job as well as anybody else - which is what we knew when we took them on.

Measurement against Competencies

When we look at recruiting people, what we are looking for is the same, regardless of what the abilities are. We have been working with Equalitec as a source to get people in, and we will work with whomever we can, to get as many people in as we can. We are still looking for 50 project managers, and we are interviewing five days a week to try to get those in. As soon as we get those 50 project managers, I know that it will grow and we will need a great many more.

We have a number of competencies across the organisation. These are the competencies that we expect everybody in the organisation to have and, for each different level, there will be a different level against those competencies. There are then also some technical competencies for the particular role.

When we interview people, it is a competency-based assessment, normally with an interview, which is looking particularly at either individual situation or tasks. There are multitask-based assessments, so you want people to give a specific example of where they have been in a situation and how they went about dealing with it, and what was the end result of that situation, rather than just coming in and saying that they know all about something and here is what we do.

We also run an Academy. In project management, you need to know what you are doing and it is quite difficult to take people into the organisation at higher levels if they do not already have those skills. Two years ago, therefore, we started a PCO Academy (Project Control Officers). This is where we have been working with Equalitec and we have a number of people who have come in. I am seeing somebody else next week, where we are assessing. I am running Academy assessments at the moment on a monthly basis and the NHS is eating up the resource as fast as I can provide it, so that is likely to carry on.

We take people internally, from our helpdesk, which provides a career step there, as well as externally. We are now getting people more by word of mouth than anything else. I have people coming to me, and I am probably receiving a CV a day, from people telling me that they are interested in taking part in this. At the moment, our biggest problem is that we can only really provide roles in the Thames Valley, which is where most of them are. We have a number of people coming in to us, saying that they are in Manchester and that they would love to come and join us, but at the moment we do not have the roles there.

We did something quite similar with the previous Academy. We take people on who have the potential for developing into that role. Having taken them on, we put them through a number of training courses - in our case, we tend to put them through PRINCE Foundation, because we are looking at project managers. We spend several thousand pounds on training them and mostly this has been very successful.

What Have We Done?

I then had a thought about the kind of things we do within Fujitsu Services. When you look down the list, it is pretty boring and presumably everybody does that. However, when you look at things like the maternity benefits, I could not find anyone in HR who was old enough to know when this was put in place. In terms of **maternity benefits**, when people return to work, until their child is 15 months old, they receive 120 per cent of their salary to help with the initial **childcare costs**. For a more senior woman, that is much more money, but a more senior woman has a lot more invested in her in the skills and the training of the organisation.

We run an **employee assistance programme**. There is a standard price which Fujitsu Services pays for this. I was talking to one of our HR people who says that when he has come across women who are struggling with their work/life balance and with childcare, he regularly points them at the employee assistance programme. This is a programme which costs the company the same, regardless of how many people use it - there is nothing that comes back to the company in terms of who has used it. It provides all kinds of advice, whether it be legal advice or anything else, and it can be used not only by the individual but by the family too.

Flexible working: the majority of the people in the company these days will have a laptop and mobile phone, and you work where you need to. Much of the company works on an assignment basis, so you might be on a customer's site one day, and working from home the next.

I have a number of women who are still working for me. I have one particular woman who has a number of young children and she wants to work full-time, but she also wants to be there when they are awake. She therefore goes and does 'mummy stuff' for a period of time during the afternoon and then, when they have gone to bed, she turns on her laptop and makes up a couple of hours. This is genuine flexible working.

Part-time working works within the organisation, although not so well when it comes to bringing people in. Someone came to me and handed her resignation in. I had taken her on through the Academy and she had enormous potential. She had a young daughter and, at some point, she was going to go all the way - but she resigned, because she wanted to spend more time with her daughter. I asked her to work part-time, and she had not even considered it. Her assignment manager wanted someone full-time but, the minute he realised that she was going to go part-time, he said that he would rather have three days a week of her time, than full-time from somebody else. We find that, once women have a reputation within the organisation, part-time work is very easy. However, where it is more difficult is where we bring women in from outside the organisation, who do not yet have that reputation, and then people are a little more wary. Certainly for existing staff, however, that works well.

It is not all necessarily a matter of childcare. I have one woman who works four

days a week because she likes tennis. And it is not always women, because I have one man who is taking a career break for four months, because he wants to spend some time with his children, so he will be a house husband for four months on a career break.

We have a **family emergency policy** whereby, whatever the emergency is, time off is given. Flexible working is fairly standard.

There are a couple of other issues that I have thought of during the day. Something that happened to me, and which I have recently done for somebody else, is that I had a **promotion to a fairly senior position when I was eight months pregnant**, and I did the same just recently for someone who is going on maternity leave in January. The company does not see that as, 'You're going off to be pregnant. You are stopping and you are not going any further.'

I have another woman working for me whose father-in-law is not very well and she wants to be his carer for a while, so she is taking a **career break**. So all of these things are possibilities, and it is a question of having different ways of looking at what is possible. As far as the organisation is concerned, we have invested in people. We know that we need more people, and we need more good people. We need to do whatever we can to retain people, in whatever way we can.

When I was talking to the women from Roehampton, I realised that we had been doing a great deal of this for a long time. When I started thinking about it, I thought there was nothing special there. We have been doing much of this for a long time, and I got very excited when I pulled out this booklet which was produced in 1984, just when WISE started. It was ICL at the time it was put together. There are a number of senior women profiled in there, showing how they do the job. We had a number of **home-workers** then, and we still have them now. Some of them were crofters, but others were working parents, and that is still available. This is something that the company, as an organisation, has been doing for a long time.

Throughout the organisation, about **20 per cent are women**, and that goes from the very top. The organisation is split into three business units and then one core unit. The **director of the largest business unit is a woman**, and she is **championing diversity** and inclusion within the organisation. We are now starting to become a little more formal about this because we are finding that, as we are responding to tenders, **various organisations - and particularly government organisations - want to see formal processes put forward for diversity and inclusion**. They want to know specifically what we are doing, so we need to standardise and put those processes in place a little more.

In terms of our graduates, about 30 per cent of those are now women.

There was one year, I am told, when we almost hit 50 per cent, but the figure is currently 30 per cent. From a project management point of view, I find it quite interesting because, previously, I got whoever was left. We assessed all the graduates and they all knew where they wanted to be and, if you were left over, you were sent to project management. Last year, we took on 12, all of whom wanted to do project management; this year we again took on 12, and next year we are looking for 25. We are finding that as these young people are coming out of the universities, they increasingly understand that there is more to IT than just getting into the technology, getting into the server racks and programming - but that there are areas there where softer organisational skills are needed. We are finding that people are starting to come to us, wanting to

do that: they are not strictly IT based at the beginning but they are looking to come into the IT industry.

To sum up, I personally believe that one of the reasons why we do not have as many women in the IT industry as men is because it comes down to **confidence**. I have never been stopped from doing anything I wanted to do. I wanted to go and do a computer science and electronic engineering course, (a) because I thought it would pay me lots of money and (b) because I knew there would be lots of boys there, but I was offered lower grades than the men who took the same course as I did, because UCL was so desperate to get a woman doing that course.

I sailed tall ships - I was the first female bosun, because I went and said, 'I can do that job. Let me do it!' Most people did not think women wanted to do it. I am a rugby coach, and a rugby referee. With all of these things, I have just gone and said, 'Can I do it?' Nobody has questioned whether I am able to do it, but they have just offered it to me.

Also, when interviewing, I regularly see two equally capable candidates, a man and a woman. A man will say, 'I am a programme manager and I'm worth this much money.' A woman will say, 'I think I'm just about a project manager, and you can give me that much.' It is completely different, although they both have exactly the same level of competencies when you have assessed them - but they have completely different approaches. I take great pride in working with many of the women in the industry and developing that confidence within them. Much of it is innate and comes naturally and, therefore, they do not value it as much. If something comes naturally to you and you have those skills, you do not value as much, and you need someone to tell you, 'Actually, do you know what? You're very good at that job.'

Thank you.

Questions and Answers

Helen Duguid (Microsoft): Thank you, that was wonderful. I knew I was going to like your presentation from the start when you talked about 140 *assorted* project managers. You did not even use the word 'diversity' or anything. Tell me, what does *assorted* mean to you? I thought of 'Liquorice All Sorts'.

Marjan Kuyken: That just about describes them! It literally goes from project coordinators to programme managers, and across the range of cultures, men and women - whatever you want, I have it.

Jane Millar: I really loved your presentation. I understand that, like many companies in IT services, a good deal of your growth is from TUPEing people in from other organisations. Can you say a little about that, and the challenges that that involves for maintaining your gender balance?

Marjan Kuyken: I have some experience of two different TUPE situations, although not a huge amount because I do not work in a part of the organisation where we tend to have people TUPEed in.

I was involved with the London Borough of Lewisham account. As an organisation, we talk a great deal to people. We recently put out a communication to everybody, where everybody receives a DVD or CD which gives information about the company, and this had an example of a TUPE. This was a woman who was talking about how, initially, she had not realised,

because everything stayed the same, and then they moved into a Fujitsu building and now there is additional training and she really feels part of Fujitsu. It is all about communication.

At the London Borough of Lewisham we transferred a whole load of people over to us when we took their account on. They were a different organisation which had done an awful lot of work with local government. One of the reasons why the name was changed from ICL to Fujitsu was because ICL was seen as local government and mainframes, and we wanted to get away from just doing that.

We had those people working with us and then we lost the contract. I had CVs coming out of my ears, of all the people at Lewisham who wanted to stay with us, and wanted to come over as project coordinators, or were absolutely desperate for any kind of role they could get with us. So the company must be doing something right if people want to stay on.

At the moment, a contract that we recently lost, that we are in the process of transitioning out, is DCA, the magistrates courts. There, we have people saying that they want to stay and that they want another assignment now, but we are having to tell them that they must stay until the end, and then we will look at bringing another assignment.

So those are two different situations but, in both cases, people want to stay within the organisation.

Naomi Elliott (Fujitsu Services): I was TUPEed in to ICL so I have some personal experience of that, from a relatively small organisation. I would say that some of the things that Marjan was saying, about the organisation having had a lot of these policies in place for so long that we cannot really remember where they came from, are very natural to the way that we work. That is borne out by my experience, having worked in a number of different companies previously - and, a long time ago, in very large and male dominated engineering companies.

There is certainly no question that the kind of things that we have in place in terms of policies and approaches and procedures are just natural to the way that we work. We are very good at the way in which we communicate those things, and support TUPE transfers. As Marjan said, we do a lot of stuff around communication and we become involved in getting people like me, who have been TUPEed in, going and supporting communication events and so on.

Marjan mentioned the call centre environment, which is an area we bring quite a number of people in through, in TUPES. We see quite a number of people, and particularly women, taken out of those roles and developing their careers through what we call Project Pipeline. This takes not just women, but many people, through into new areas of employment opportunity which probably, had they stayed with their original employer, they may just never have had.

Wendy Hall: You ought to have a look at Marjan's booklet during the tea break because it is a fascinating piece of history.

Our final speaker this afternoon is Professor Judith Glover, who is a Professor of Employment Studies at Roehampton. Judith is very well-known as an academic, writing many papers and books and is also Assistant Dean. She will tell us what happens at Roehampton.

ROEHAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Professor Judith Glover, Assistant Dean (Research) and Professor in Employment Studies

Recruitment of Women to ITEC: Organisational Policies and Practices

First, I will say a little about Roehampton University to locate it for you. Roehampton was until quite recently the University of Surrey (Roehampton) and was in a federal relationship with the University of Surrey. In the last 18 months or so, Roehampton has become autonomous and has remained so. It sees itself as a small, specialist university, specialising in the area of social justice. Not all of our work is in that area but certainly the School of Business and Social Sciences, of which I am a part, sees itself as the centre of work in the area of social justice. For example, we have a centre of excellence in teaching and learning, and human rights, with £4.5 million from HEFCE. That is just to locate it for you, in case some of you are wondering what Roehampton is and where it is. It is located in South West London and we hope to go from strength to strength.

We are very pleased to have entered into a project which is being carried out for Equalitec and is funded by the DTI. This is very much a work in progress. I shall explain to you what we are doing and why, but as it is still work in progress this will be just a flavour of findings, which are rather tentative at this stage.

We only just started this in the autumn and so we are three months into it and we have a further two or three months to go. This is a short project on a rather small scale, and I would like you to view it in that light.

Some members of the team are here today - Yvonne Guerrier and Cornelia Wilson, who is our researcher, and Christina Evans. There are about five members of staff involved in the project in the School of Business and Social Sciences. When it comes to questions, if I have something that I cannot handle, I may pass queries to other members of the team.

The **focus is on highly qualified women**, although not exclusively women with IT related degrees. I will come on to that point later because people have been saying that we should be looking at this more broadly - and that is certainly something that is coming across in our project. So they are highly qualified women, graduates or equivalent, and we are looking at both new entrants and returners. There has perhaps surprisingly been very little talk today about returners, and this is something to which I shall return.

The context of this research is that there is past research that was carried out by Jane Millar (past research on women in ITEC courses and careers carried out by the Women and Equality Unit - recommended employers review recruitment and selection practices. Millar, J, & Jaggar, N (2001) *Women in ITEC Courses and Careers*, London: DTI/DfES) and her colleague in 2001 which carried a recommendation that employers should review recruitment and selection practices. All research comes from somewhere and I guess that that is the main route of it.

Project's Aims

The aims of the project are to carry out research - referring obviously to highly qualified women in ITEC - which first seeks to identify the methods and practices used by employers to identify and fill skills gaps. In other words, this is a roundabout way of saying, what are the various stages in the

recruitment process and how does that relate, in your organisation's experience, to highly qualified women in this area.

We are also charged to look at **organisations' views about the effectiveness of different recruitment methods and practices in addressing skills needs**. It is important to underline that these are their views because it is one thing to say that we believe this works but it is another thing to show that it does. Of course, there is a whole area in the social sciences of evaluation and research, which seeks to make the link between somebody thinking that something makes a difference, and actually showing that it does. This is a small-scale project and we are really not in the business of establishing in any kind of concrete way that particular measures make a difference. We are really focusing on what organisations think makes a difference.

We are also asking organisations about the **cultures**, which we are defining as policies and practices of employment, which they believe influence the recruitment of women to ITEC roles. I am particularly interested in this area - the **role of intermediaries in the recruitment process**. The kind of intermediaries that we are talking about are recruitment agencies, rather than the kind of intermediaries in the sense of careers people. It would be interesting to look at them but, in our case, it is a specific kind of intermediary - the role of recruitment agencies and the way in which they may be advising their clients, whom they see as their clients, and their particular role in influencing who they put forward as clients to organisations. That is a particularly interesting area and one which I am glad Elizabeth underlined - we are certainly finding that quite intriguing.

Who Are We Researching?

Who are we researching? **The brief is to establish examples of good practice** and it logically follows from that that we are **focusing on organisations that are already, or which see themselves as, successful recruiters of women in this area**. This is not research in the sense of having some kind of random sample, but this is a sample that we would call purposive, I guess. It has a specific brief in mind, to establish examples of good practice which may be useful to a range of agencies and people. I will finish with that point, about who it might be useful to.

What we have here is a sample of organisations, some of which are already known to Equalitec, and which were handed on to us as examples of people who had interesting things to say. We have also found organisations who are recipients of awards for IT and/or good practice in the employment of women. The kinds of awards that we have looked at are the GSC Women in IT medallists, and the 2006 BCS IT professional awards. We have also seen, as a kind of sampling frame, so to speak, the local government IT Excellence Awards 2006. We have also looked at *The Times* Where Women Want to Work Top 50.

As social researchers, we are used to people being rather unwilling to be interviewed but we have found that many people have been very willing to be interviewed - perhaps particularly in the large private sector firms. In *The Times* Where Women Want to Work Top 50, however, they have been rather more reticent, with some feeling that they do not have much to say that is positive about their record, in terms of women and IT. They obviously have this prize in general terms but, when it comes to women and IT, they felt they could not really put themselves up as examples of good practice. That, in itself, is interesting.

The coverage is private sector, both large and small, so SMEs are in there as well. I have already mentioned SMEs.

Recruitment agencies - just to be specific there - have a specific role as intermediaries, helping organisations sometimes to shape their recruitment strategies and processes. Are they acting in an advisory role in that way, and are they helping them to define their selection criteria? What exactly do they see as their specific role and how might that influence who arrives in front of the interview panel?

As I say, it is small scale and the idea is to establish 15 organisational case studies that can be put up as examples of good practice.

And How

Within each organisation, we are conducting **in-depth interviews with two people**. On the one hand, there is the senior HR manager and on the other, there is a senior line manager charged with project management and involved in the recruitment of staff in the IT area.

Other Kinds of Data

We are also gathering other sorts of data, including in-house statistics on the numbers of women recruited to particular roles over the past decade. That is perhaps rather aspirational. We need to be ready to have a fairly patchy picture here. It is possible that HR departments in particular will have collected data over time, but it is also possible that they will not have. It is also possible that, even if they have, they will see that information as commercially sensitive. We need to be aware, as does the DTI, that this may be a patchy picture, but we are certainly asking for this information.

I would like to underline the importance of data gathering in this area. This, in part, links to the issue that you cannot actually show that something has had an effect unless that is backed up by rigorously collected data. I was very impressed by Citigroup's example of their data collection. In the end, you need to have a longitudinal research design, which they had. It was small scale, but nevertheless it was longitudinal, which follows through with the same group of women on the effect of particular measures. If any of you have any kind of influence in this area, it is particularly important to be gathering data pretty systematically, to show that certain things actually have an effect. Otherwise, it is all in the area of a wish list in a sense.

We are also carrying out some kind of background analyses, using secondary analysis of the labour force surveys, looking at the latest and past labour force surveys and trying to establish trends in employment. I do not know whether people are familiar here with the ONS standard occupational classification, but this is the classification that is used by the government in all their employment surveys. We are looking particularly at five standard classification job titles in the area of IT, and they are in a kind of hierarchy. There are the IT managers and then there are two professional IT roles, which are professional in the sense of being degree level, and then two associate professional roles, which are strictly speaking sub-degree level. That is the kind of background data that we are also exploring through secondary analysis.

A Brief Flavour of Early Findings

I said that I would give you a brief flavour of some early findings and I really need to emphasise that these are very early days. Although we have made

some very good progress with our interviewing, we are really not strictly speaking at the data analysis stage. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to give you just a flavour of some early findings. These are in the area of what organisations believe makes a difference. I would underline the point that this is what they *believe*, which is a large step from saying that they actually do make a difference. **This is what they believe makes a difference.**

First, what seems to be coming across, and they would see this as good practice, is that, **when drawing up competency frameworks, to emphasise behavioural skills as well**, which are sometimes called 'soft' skills - and I am not so keen on that terminology, but let us call them behavioural skills - they should emphasise those as well as technical skills. So you have both of those skills in competency frameworks and job specs.

You also have some examples of organisations believing that, if they **pay attention to their image, through their website, recruitment literature and recruitment fairs**, that that will make a difference. I am not so sure that I feel great about this recruitment literature constructed as young women's magazines, but I am reporting what firms have told us they believe makes a difference.

That raises quite a few issues, and perhaps it is quite revealing about the target audience that many firms have. They really are focusing, as we have been for much of today, on young women. There is an issue there. If firms are serious about attracting returners, then how does that square with having **recruitment literature** which, in appearance and content, is rather like young women's magazines.

Another thing which organisations believe makes a difference - which has come across as a very strong strand today - is that being able to **offer flexible working** makes a difference. We are, however, picking up that they are using flexible working more to retain staff than to attract them in the first place.

As a social scientist, I cannot stop myself adding a little rider here, which is that there is a growing body of literature which is critical of the kind of assumption that flexible working is always good for women's careers. There is a growing body of literature which says that it may be fine in the short-term, because it improves quality of life but, in the long-term, and particularly if it means a reduction in hours - and that is the main form of flexible working - then it is not good for women's employment prospects, because it has an effect on their income in the long-run. As a social scientist, I just need to say that. However, I have to say that firms are not saying that - but, as you would expect, as an academic I felt the need to make that point.

Further Issues Emerging

Some further issues are emerging. These are not issues that are coming out as examples of good practice, but they are examples of further broad themes.

The first one that is coming through is that, whilst organisations are interested in talking to us about their recruitment practices, they are also saying, 'Yes, but - if we are going to strengthen the pool of available labour, it is also important to look at the **pre recruitment stage**.' Quite a number of them are saying that they **need to look beyond the IT pool**, if you like, and that is another strand that has come out today. They feel that they should be advertising more strongly the opportunities for graduates with non-IT degrees. This theme is coming across quite strongly.

Another theme is that there may be a **kind of distinction, or a dislocation if you like, between what senior management are saying about equality and diversity, and what is actually happening in terms of decision-making on the ground with line managers.** Once again, this is a theme which emerges from a good deal of the literature - that the role of the line manager is crucial. In the end, it is a matter of who is staffing the interview panel which actually makes a difference. You can have senior management make all sorts of statements about diversity and widening the pool, and widening demographic characteristics and so on. However, if that is not actually carried out at line manager level in terms of making the day-to-day decisions, then there is a dislocation between those two. There is the message on one hand, and the actuality on the other.

There is a similar theme, which we have heard frequently today, about the **need for cultural change in organisations.** People have told us that it is all very well - you can have an individual hiring or line manager who is making a particular decision, but if that is not replicated in the whole of the organisation then it becomes rather less meaningful. Cultural change is a very big, knotty problem.

Returners

Another theme that is coming up is that of returners, although we have not talked much about that today. One of the points that is coming across is that we need to make a distinction between **returners to an organisation** and **returners to the industry.** In terms of reintegration to the labour force, it seems that returners to the organisation is a much more straightforward task - talking about having people back after maternity leave and giving them flexible working and so on. The other category is returners to the industry who have perhaps had a much longer time out, and that is a much more difficult task, or at least the former is the more straightforward task for organisations than the latter.

Just very briefly, on recruitment agencies, we are having some interesting conversations with them about the **industry returners, my second category, needing to take responsibility for their own updating.** Recruitment agencies see that they have a role in terms of giving advice there.

Who will find the Research Useful?

There is a whole range of people and agencies and areas which we hope will find the research useful including: Organisations, Recruitment Agencies, Government Departments, Trade Unions, ITEC Professional Bodies and Women with ITEC qualifications.

If you are aware of an organisation that you feel that we should research, then I would remind you that we are looking for examples of good practice. People are putting themselves forward. Please contact a member of the team today, or there is the email address for our researcher, Cornelia Wilson. Thank you very much for your attention.

Wendy Hall: We look forward to reading the full report.

WhereWomenWantToWork has come up a good deal. Do people know about this? This is Glenda Stone of Aurora who had the amazing idea to make it competitive amongst firms to tell people about their practices, or about what they do, to encourage women to work in their industry. This has taken off in a big way, and she is going to do this Top 50 with The Times. She is also making a business out of it and she has just become chair of the DTI UK Enterprise task

force. We ought to get her along to one of our events. It is just this idea of best practice and she has made a business out of it.

David will now facilitate a question and answer session.

Questions and Discussion

Facilitated by David Yeandle, Deputy Director of Employment Policy at the EEF

David Yeandle: First of all, thank you very much for inviting me. I almost feel that I am the token man here. I have listened to a number of interesting and, I have to say, very different presentations on a very interesting subject.

Before encouraging you to ask questions of any of the speakers who have been here and are still here, or to make comments, I would like to mention a few themes that I have picked out today, in no particular order.

A message from before lunch is that, in today's global economy and the very changing society that we are facing, **all organisations, large and small, need to be able to cope with change if they are to survive.** That is a real challenge for organisations. It is a challenge for employers and managers, but it is also a challenge for employees within those organisations managing that change. However, we should also try to look at it from the other end of the telescope and, whilst it is a challenge, it is also an opportunity which we should seek to grasp.

Secondly, a number of people from various places today have stressed the **important role of careers advice and guidance** and I entirely share that view, as does EEF, because it was very much a key theme of the response that we made to the Women and Work Commission. However, it is not just about young people and, picking up on something that the last speaker said, it is about making sure that good career advice is much more widely available for returners and, increasingly in our society, for older people. We will find many more people having that third or fourth career and we need to find that careers advice. We will have to think very differently about careers advice.

That brings me to my third theme, which is that as **in so many areas of business, we really need to think outside the box** - and a number of you have clearly demonstrated that you are doing so. Juliet's report was an excellent piece of work and a very interesting analysis, which showed some of the thinking outside the box that is going on in many organisations. It actually made me think because it demonstrated that there is a whole range of careers that I had not really thought about, which are IT related. They are the sort of careers that probably did not exist five to ten years ago, and then there will be new ones, which we probably have not thought about, which will exist in another five or ten years. We therefore need to be really innovative in our thinking.

The fourth theme is something that I keep picking up when I am talking to companies in a whole range of areas, which is that **we need lots of examples of good practice.** There have been many examples of good practice here today, many interesting things. Many of those were not the 'usual suspects', and we need to move away from those. **Particularly, when I go out talking to small engineering companies, they want to find examples of companies that are their sort of company.** They believe - quite wrongly - that they can only learn from their type of company but, in terms of getting that mentality over to them, you need to have those examples.

The final point, which I do not think has been touched on very much - although the last speaker mentioned it in a throw-away line - is the real issue that faces not so much companies but a great many managers within companies, and particularly line managers and first-line supervisors. These are a group of people who are often forgotten in all of these debates. **How do you actually manage a diverse, flexible workforce?** This is a really difficult problem and, in my experience, companies do not train people in doing that.

I will just give you a very specific example from our own organisation. We have a small team of employment lawyers who work just up the road in Broadway House. Three years ago, they had five full-time, permanent employment lawyers, three male and two female, based full-time at Broadway House. We now have the same number of people - five - three of whom work on a part-time basis. One of those happens to be effectively operating out of Rutland, so operating remotely. They are all women, and we have two other full-time women, one of whom has many family responsibilities. Managing that group is a hugely different challenge, compared to managing the previous group.

This forces us to think much more about managing not on the basis of inputs, and what people are putting into the system, but what are the outputs. That is a completely different change of psychology in terms of management, and it is a much more difficult job, managing in that environment. We sometimes forget about that, and there is a real challenge in terms of helping managers and particularly first-line supervisors. There can be a dysfunction between what the senior managers are saying is the company's ethos, and what is actually happening on the ground, and that is a real problem. The first-line supervisor is often forgotten.

That is all I wanted to say - you did not come here to listen to me. I would be very interested to hear your comments on what I have said, but equally any of the comments or questions that people have.

Let me go first to the other token male in the audience.

Graham Steel (Public and Commercial Services Union): I work for the Public and Commercial Services Union and I lead the section of the union that deals with the private sector.

I will put a wet blanket on things in a way, picking up on your point about dislocation, and David's point about front-line manager versus director and company policy, because they are not the same. You tend to go to these things, which might be about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or about skills or equality, and in fact all the employers are fabulous - but that is not necessarily so.

When I look at equality there are really two issues. Firstly, there is pay. In the IT industry, they routinely pay women less than men and that is a fact. Secondly, flexibility - which is also an awkward issue. It is often linked to grade. If you work in a call centre, your chances of having flexible working are much less than if you are a graduate trainee and on the management track. That is a fact, and it is just unfortunate, but that is real life experience.

Something else that we are thinking about, which nobody has mentioned, is that one of the things that technology is doing, particularly at lower levels, is that it is sometimes throwing up some barriers to flexibility. I am talking particularly about the public sector. We are seeing technology breaking up

end-to-end processes for product development or service delivery. When somebody is only doing a part of a job, or a part of a process, it is very hard for the employer to let them work flexibly, because of the knock-on to the rest of the process. This is a fairly new phenomenon but we are finding more and more that flexible working is becoming difficult for people at lower and middle levels, simply because the process does not allow for it to take place. That could be worth thinking about. However, the biggest issue lies in big company policy versus the micro-delivery of it. Certainly, front-line managers are routinely turning down applications for flexible delivery because of the pressure on them to keep the business flowing overall.

David Yeandle: Yes. Just to pick up that point, they are under pressure. You have certainly caused some controversy there.

Jeanette Forder (Opportunity Now): I would like to pick up on one of your comments, and also one of Graham's.

First, there are the line managers, and we used to euphemistically call them the permafrost, because they never got the message. Last year, we ran a huge piece of research, looking specifically at line managers and what they need to make diversity real, and to help them to manage flexible working. We have a large piece of research on our own website which is a real toolkit of practical best practice case studies of how different organisations in different fields have done it.

The point on which I would like to challenge, Graham, is the idea that flexibility in the work place increases more as you get up the line, as opposed to lower down. We run a benchmarking survey of up to 350 organisations every year and flexibility at the lower levels, from what we see - and this is quite a stringent marking with evidence - is that actually it is dead simple. It can be done. When you get to the more senior levels, then forget it, because you have to be there all day, every day. We see that the Civil Service struggles to get their real senior people working flexibly, and we see it all around. Some companies - and I know that Microsoft have done some case studies recently - are really good at it, but our evidence shows us that the problems actually lie higher up the line.

David Yeandle: I will allow Graham to come back later if he wants to.

Helen Toogood (Unilever): Just to build on that point, one of our suppliers, BT, are renowned for being the biggest in flexible working, because their call centre is flexible. The women work from home and they link in to the call centre. Hopefully, in the future, we will see much more of that as well. Then this means that the call centre and the lower work levels will become even more flexible. I am afraid that I agree with Jeanette. It is much easier for us in our organisation to create flexible positions at a lower level than it is at a more senior level.

Marjan Kuyken (Fujitsu Services): Coming from Fujitsu Services, I would also challenge the idea that it is harder to manage flexible workers. The point about flexible workers is that they want to work.

David Yeandle: I was not saying that it was harder, I was saying that it was different. There is a fundamental difference -

Marjan Kuyken: No, you said that it is difficult.

David Yeandle: No, it is harder because it is a different mindset.

Marjan Kuyken: You will find that people who work flexibly want to work. They want a career and they realise that they may be, for whatever reason, in a period in their life when they will not be able to gain as much experience as quickly, so they are slowing down a little, but they want to do that work and so it is actually easier to manage them.

David Yeandle: Just to come back on that point - I am not saying that it is harder but I think it is different, and you need a different skillset to manage it. This is not the conventional way of managing.

Helen Duguid (Microsoft): David, I want to come back to your theme, and take you out of that uncomfortable situation for a moment. I love seeing men being challenged - it is wonderful! Most men enjoy a challenge, because they end up marrying women, so it is quite good really.

I want to come back to the general theme you picked up about change. How many people here have had a baby? Well, research - not from social scientists, but just research generally - suggests that it takes nine months to have a baby, no matter how many people you put on the job. Change takes time. A point I wanted to come back to you about was your idea of changing our attention, perhaps, from the younger generation to the boomers, which I suspect is a personal request for yourself, given that perhaps you are not in generation Y. It just made me smile. There is something around change and diversity. As I listened to a number of the presentations this afternoon, it made me think of one of the senior executives with whom I am working, Guido, who comes from Hewlett Packard and has been at Microsoft for a while. He is quite provocative - as many of the presentations here have been, which is great. He has challenged me. His first question to me in a phone call was, 'Helen, can you tell me who are the companies that I should be learning from, who have best practice in diversity?' I told him that there were many good companies but that perhaps we should be asking a slightly different question. He was considering that diversity might be hiring a monk, because that would really set the cat among the pigeons in the business. I liked his out-of-the-box thinking, but I suggested that perhaps the question we should be addressing was where are the companies that truly value diversity of thought? How might we find out more about them and what they are doing? Which might not be about score-carding the best practice in diversity, but might be a very different way of viewing about the mindset. It sounds to me as though much of the change will come from attitudinal change and people's desire to want to effect change. This is a general request to everyone: does anyone here know of organisations where they are really celebrating and embracing diversity of thinking which is leading to good practice?

David Yeandle: That is a really interesting idea, but I do not have an answer to that. I have not come across a company or organisation that is really thinking in that particular way. That is not to say that such organisations do not exist, but I have not come across them.

Helen Duguid: If anyone has one, please let me know.

Wendy Hall: Google might be a company worth looking at, because they have a very flat structure. They have a very different type of management practice.

Elizabeth Pollitzer: They allow 20 per cent of people's time to be spent on their own projects. So if you work five days, you are allowed one day to do what you want to do, although it has to be approved by a manager.

Lynne Bailey (Equalitec): I want to make David feel better by saying that I agree that most people probably do find it more difficult to manage people working flexibly, because that has not been the norm.

David Yeandle: Exactly, that is my point.

Lynne Bailey: It is not because these women work any less hard - they work much harder. Being one, Elizabeth, I know full well that I do. It has been alluded to quite a few times this afternoon, that we have to get away from presenteeism and that you are working hard if you are at your desk from eight until six - but you are not. People are now having to judge based on deliverables and, all of a sudden, they are having to change round the appraisal scheme and the way they think about things. It also comes into the process management that was mentioned here. How do you fit all of that together? It is harder in terms of the process and all the mechanism around it. The very fact that it works is probably due to the fact that the people who work flexibly are prepared to work hard to try to make it work.

David Yeandle: In my personal experience, you get more out of the pint pot, when you have people working flexibly. You get more than the eight hours, or whatever you are trying to get out of them.

William Coupar (IPA): I have a slightly different tack, which I would like to follow up. Several times, particularly this afternoon, I have learned something that I did not know before in terms of how you recruit people into this sector. The assumption that I had always made, which was that there is an enormous premium on technical knowledge and technical skill, is not strictly speaking true. I think this was shown in the last presentation, where it was referring to the importance of putting greater emphasis on behavioural skills in the competency framework, and also in the Fujitsu presentation, talking about the kind of recruitment pool that was being recruited into the Academy. It seemed to me that that was a very important piece of knowledge to learn. It suggests that the kind of very picky image which the sector had does not have to be the starting point from which much of this debate takes place. Perhaps, therefore, the issues about where you advertise - and the debate earlier was about advertising in young women's magazines - may actually be where one needs to go. It is essential to pull the sector away from being seen as a techy, toys-for-boys sector.

Sue Davis (Sopra Newell & Budge): To some extent, we are being driven to it because of the small pool of technical resource available to us, but we are also being driven to it because of the type of services we provide - and I think Fujitsu Services are the same - means that we need that wider breadth of skills. If you have done testing, which is what I was specifically talking about, you do not necessarily have to understand what you are testing, but you have to understand the context of what the system will be delivering in the business process. The skillsets, the knowledge and the understanding are quite different. We need to look outside of that. Given that IT graduates are scarce, then that drives us as well.

Pam Wain (Mentorset): Mentorset is funded partly to provide mentors for women in isolated circumstances and particularly for small businesses. Today,

understandably, much of the focus has been on big business. I am glad that you mentioned other sizes. I remember the days when Newell & Budge was an SME. The figures I know at the SEMTA end and they are more extreme for IT, but the SEMTA figures are roughly that only 50 per cent of their engineers work for engineering employers, while 80 per cent of their engineers work in SMEs and most of those in micro-enterprises. I am really asking for a little bit of thinking about how what we have thought about today can be spread to the many people who are not in receipt of good employment practices from large employers.

David Yeandle: That is precisely my point about the role models. We need the right type of role models. Rightly or wrongly, my experience of talking to small- and medium-sized companies is that they believe that they cannot really learn from the large Fujitsus. That is not to say that they cannot, but you have to get through that mindset of the owner manager, who really has to believe that he will add something to his business. He thinks he needs the role model - so we really need role models of a wide variety of types and sectors.

Juliet Webster (IPA): The point I would like to make relates to something that I touched on this morning and I would like us to revisit it if we can. As Graham quite rightly said, we have heard many stories about good practice and the challenge now is to disseminate the good practice and spread it - otherwise we are just talking to ourselves.

What I am interested in knowing - and this is perhaps a question for David or Graham - those of you working in the trade union movement, and what we might call the intermediary organisations, the employers organisations, what do you think you can do to foster some of this? It seems to me that you have a fantastically important role to play in getting the various shades and dimensions of good employment practice disseminated. How do you think you could contribute to that project?

David Yeandle: The key is to have these examples of good practice. My experience is that you can only get these messages across through examples of good practice. The government has done a number of things in various fields of disseminating good practice, and they just need to work more on that. That is a methodology that one can use and in my personal experience I find it works quite successfully. It is a challenge, when companies have so many things that they have to think about today. There is just so much on the business agenda, whether it be from pensions, right through to equality issues and to coping with the latest piece of legislation, to wondering whether they will have a business to manage next year because of the global economy. These are huge issues and getting companies to focus on what is seen as 'not today's problem' is actually a real problem.

Ryan Edwards (Cabinet Office): This is just a quick, shameless plug, I am afraid, about government case studies and championing good practice. The government IT profession does champion good practice across the sector, whether you are a woman, man, alien or whatever, and about how varied a career it is.

Helen Toogood (Unilever): You might regret letting me speak, because I am going to challenge what you have just said. You said that people have so much to look at, about how their business is running and so on, and that they have things to focus on today, and not long-term things. I believe - we believe - that we have to start looking at diversity as a business issue. If you have a

disproportionate leadership team making the decisions on how you run the business today, then you will have a disproportionate way of solving any problems or any opportunities in the future. Within Unilever, we are trying to focus on the fact that diversity is a business issue - rather than talking about it as something that can be left for a while. It has to be dealt with now because, if we deal with it now, it will help us to solve our other business issues in probably a very different and hopefully better way.

David Yeandle: Up to a point, I can accept that argument. However, if I take you to a small engineering company in West Bromwich, employing 50 or 60 people who are dependent on a day to day basis on the orders they receive from the local car factory, as to whether or not they have jobs for the people next week, I have to say that they do not think of it in that context. That is not to say that they should not, but you have to put yourself in their position. If I went along and said, 'I have been talking to someone from Unilever', they would say, 'Yes, Unilever - but they are a huge multinational with masses of resources, time, energy and so on. They can throw money at the problem but I cannot. I have just been told that I have to cut my prices by ten per cent.'

Helen Toogood: For me, it is part of the same issue. The people making those decisions are thinking in the same way as you have just said, the same as a small engineering company with 50 employees would think. It is not about the amount of money that is being thrown at it, but it is taking the scale of it to the different level. It is just the concept that, if you look at things in a slightly different way than you might have looked at them in the past, you might come up with a slightly different answer. Whether it is gender or whatever, it is a matter of saying that they should think with a different mindset. You said it - about thinking out of the box.

David Yeandle: Yes, but you see, that particular individual does not think, 'diversity'. He thinks about how he will manage the business. I know for a fact that that individual has about 80 employees and about 50 different types of working arrangements for them, to cope with all of their different requirements in terms of families. He has not thought, 'Gosh, I have to have a diverse policy!' He has thought, 'This is the only way I can manage this business.'

Marjan Kuyken (Fujitsu Services): Just to make a quick comment on that, Fujitsu Services have been doing a lot of this for a long time, but we are only just starting to get a diversity policy in place because otherwise we are not allowed to bid for certain government contracts.

David Yeandle: Yes, if you are dealing with the government, I can well imagine.

Jeanette Forder (Opportunity Now): I will follow on that, too. I just seem to be sitting here, challenging all the time today. Opportunity Now shares best practice and that is our reason for being. We have tons and tons and tons of it. A point to make there is whether disseminating best practice is making all companies clones of each other because, from my experience, many of them are doing more or less the same stuff. In some respects, we would like someone to come along and reinvent the wheel and make it square or something, because it will be different and perhaps it will work. On your point about small organisations, we know that we really cater for the big boys. We know that, and it is a failing. I work with the manufacturing sector and I have two extremely successful organisations that are SMEs, which work with me. There is one in the North-West and one in the East of England. Whilst they do not have the policies, they use diversity as their way of employing people and

of making money and making business. They see it as a business imperative. They have won awards and you can find out about them on our website and on the Working Families website. They have won the Best Employer award and all sorts of things. It can be done, but the issue is that we need to be able to help those organisations to think differently. It is about changing the mindset.

David Yeandle: Thank you very much.

Wendy Hall: I would just like to thank everybody for taking part today. I would like to thank the organisers, and Bob Ditchfield and his team at the Royal Academy. I would also like to thank Elizabeth and her team at Equalitec for making this all happen.

Thank you all for coming. We may send some evaluation questionnaires out by email.

There is a plan to hold the next forum next May/June. The idea will be to pull together what has happened at the three forums into something that we can put to a wider audience, which would be held at a different venue so that we could invite more people. We would hope to have a better balance in our audience, so that we are not just preaching to the converted but also the unconverted - the SMEs and the big companies which are yet to make headway on this. That is the plan for the next event.

After meeting note: The fourth Equalitec Diversity Forum will be held at 1030 on Tuesday 26 June 2007 at the Royal Academy of Engineering.

EQUALITEC DIVERSITY FORUM

DIVERSITY: CHANGING CORPORATE CULTURES

Chair: Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng

30 November 2006

The Royal Academy of Engineering 29 Great Peter Street London SW1P 3LW

1000	Arrivals/Coffee	
1030	Welcome	Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng
1035	Introduction	Dr Elizabeth Pollitzer: Director - Equalitec
1045	Ingredients for a Positive Corporate Culture	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CitiGroup - Promoting Women in Leadership • Microsoft - Women in Technology • News Interactive - BBC • West Dunbartonshire Council 	<p>Lene Bisgaard, Head of Cost and System Management within Voice and Networks and Sharon Pagram, Senior Recruite</p> <p>Susanne Brealey, Project Manager Women In Technology and Helen Duguid, Creative Consultant and Partner to Microsoft EMEA, Formerly Head of Great leaders at Microsoft UK</p> <p>Christina Scott, Head of Software Development</p> <p>Angela Clements, Head of IS</p>
1210	Equalitec: Focussing on Opportunities in ITEC New Report	Dr Juliet Webster: Business Development Director - IPA
1230	Questions and Discussion	Facilitator: Dr Jane Millar , Research Fellow UCL
1300	Lunch	
1345	Keynote Talk - Shaping A Fairer Future: Improving the Prospects and Career Options of Women in ITEC	Meg Munn MP Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Women and Equality)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech followed by short Q & A 	
1415	Organisational Best Practice	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sopra Newell & Budge • Fujitsu Services • Roehampton University 	<p>Sue Davis, Programme Director</p> <p>Marjan Kuyken, Practice Manager</p> <p>Professor Judith Glover, Assistant Dean (Research) and Professor in Employment Studies</p>
1515	Questions and Discussion	Facilitator: David Yeandle , Deputy Director of Employment Policy at the EEF
1545	Closing Comments and Announcements	Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng
1550	Tea/Coffee	

"New ITEC occupations are considerably more diverse than conventional image of ITEC work tends to suggest... There are many different entry points for new ITEC professions, and it is important that women considering entering them are aware that not all of these are conventional, formal educational channels... More clarity is needed about progression pathways and career development routes for ITEC professionals once in employment.... The most 'women-friendly' ITEC employing organisations are those which have clear, coherent and thoroughgoing equality or diversity frameworks."

(Widening of Employment Opportunities in ITEC, a new report from Equalitec funded by the DTI and produced by Juliet Webster, IPA)

EQUALITEC DIVERSITY FORUM DELEGATES LIST

30 November 2006

Chair:	Professor Wendy Hall CBE FREng	Head of Electronic & Computer Science School Southampton University
Keynote Speaker:	Meg Munn MP	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Women and Equality)
Presenters	Dr Elizabeth Pollitzer	Director - Equalitec
	Lene Bisgaard	Head of Cost and System Management within Voice and Networks - Citigroup
	Susanne Brealey	Project Manager Women In Technology - Microsoft
	Angela Clements	Head of IS - West Dunbartonshire Council
	Sue Davis	Programme Director - Sopra Newell & Budge
	Helen Duguid	Creative Consultant and Partner - Microsoft EMEA
	Professor Judith Glover	Assistant Dean (Research) - Roehampton University
	Marjan Kuyken	Programme Director - Fujitsu Services
	Dr Jane Millar	Research Fellow - University College London
	Sharon Pagram	Senior Recruiter - Citigroup
	Christina Scott	Head of Software Development News Interactive - BBC
	Dr Juliet Webster	Business Development Director - IPA
	David Yeandle	Deputy Director of Employment Policy - EEF
Partners	Lynne Bailey	Project Manager - Equalitec
	Rachel Burnett	Deputy President - British Computer Society
	Jane Butcher	Returns Programme Manager - UKRC
	William Coupar	Director - IPA
	Naomi Elliott	Customer Service Director - Fujitsu Services
	Dr Christina Evans	Senior Lecturer - Roehampton University
	Caroline Fox	Athena Liaison with RAEng - Athena
	Joe Gardiner	DTI Electronics & IT Services Unit Head of ITEC Skills Team
	Professor Yvonne Guerrier	Dean of Business and Social Science Roehampton University
	Penelope Harris	Fellowship Administrator - Daphne Jackson Trust
	Professor Mounia Lalmas	Academic Professor of Information Retrieval Queen Mary, University of London
	Marina Larios	Director - WITEC

Partners cont.	Professor Gillian Lovegrove	Manager Education & Training Forum British Computer Society
	Joan May	Policy Adviser - OSI/DTI
	Deena Nawbatt	Policy Advisor - DTI - Women's & Equality Unit
	Dr Niki Panteli	Senior Lecturer in Information Systems Bath University
	Caroline Parker	Junior Consultant - WITEC
	Dr Katie Perry	Press and Public Relations Officer Daphne Jackson Trust
	Dr Jan Peters	Manager Women's Forum - British Computer Society
	Steve Saward	Senior Policy Adviser - DTI
	Stelios Stylianou	Policy Advisor - DTI
	Debbie Tilley	Deputy Project Manager - Equalitec/Portia
	Helen Toogood	VP IT Academy - Unilever Global plc
	Cornelia Wilson	Research Assistant - Roehampton University
	Sophia Winterbourne	Researcher - Equalitec
Staff	Jayne Cahill	Fiona Shipley Transcription
	Dr Bob Ditchfield	Director Education Affairs The Royal Academy of Engineering
	Philip Greenish CBE	Chief Executive - The Royal Academy of Engineering
	Jane Sutton	Communications Manager The Royal Academy of Engineering
Guests	Dr Saher Ahmed	Diversity Programme Coordinator Institute of Physics
	Maggie Berry	UK Communications Director - womenintechology
	Dr Sue Black	Reader in Software Engineering London South Bank University
	Sally Brett	Assistant Editor - IDS Diversity at Work
	Eileen Brown	Manager, IT Pro Evangelist Team - Microsoft UK
	Linda Butler	Quality Management & Training Supervisor West Dunbartonshire Council
	Ryan Edwards	Stakeholder Relations Manager - Cabinet Office
	Jeanette Forder	Opportunity Now - Account Manager for Local Government, Manufacturing & Transport
	Florence Gallois	HRD - THALES UK Security Division
	Emma Haynes	ICT Manager - CILIP
	Nicola Hills	Middleware Services Leader North East EMEA - IBM
	Dr Katherine Hollinshead	Diversity Programme Leader - Institute of Physics
	Dr Gill Hunt	Managing Director - Skillfair Ltd
Liz Ince	Software Architect (UK Lead for Retail) - IBM (UK) Ltd	

Guests cont.

Penny Jones	Group Programme Services Director First Group
Neil Lancaster	Head of Talent Management - NG Bailey
Audrey Linton	Director - P3I Consulting Ltd
Terry Marsh	Director WISE Campaign
Georgina Mason	Technical Staff Recruitment - Bloomberg LP
Rosemary McNaughton	Hampshire Pnn Police
Louise Morgan	Policy Adviser Human Resources Directorate - CBI
Holly Morgan-Smith	Project Manager - Women in IT James Thornton Group
Dr Janet Payne	Women into Computing Bucks Chilterns University College
Leah Prevost	e-skills uk
Michelle Richmond	Director - Institute of Engineering and Technology
Dr Val Singh	Reader - Cranfield School of Management
Graham Steel	Senior National Officer Public and Commercial Services Commercial Sector
Dr Haifa Takruri-Rizk	Project Manager (WEWIN) - Salford University
Pamela Wain	Director - Daphnet Mentorset
Dr Yeliz Yesilada	Research Associate - Manchester University

The Royal Academy of Engineering

As Britain's national academy for engineering, we bring together the country's most eminent engineers from all disciplines to promote excellence in the science, art and practice of engineering. Our strategic priorities are to enhance the UK's engineering capabilities, to celebrate excellence and inspire the next generation, and to lead debate by guiding informed thinking and influencing public policy.

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