

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Amanda has worked in Procurement for over 15 years for brands such as JP Morgan and The Body Shop and now works to develop and execute a global commercial strategy for laboratory services.



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Have you ever experienced workplace inequality?

Given only 12% of Chief Procurement Officer roles (as compared to 51% at the profession's entry-level) are filled by women I think we have to face reality and realise that most women in my profession are affected by workplace inequality in some way whether or not they are aware of it. I'm fortunate in that I've never been explicitly affected by workplace inequality but I have definitely found that I often have a more upbeat communication style to men, which in the past has been interpreted as my 'lacking gravitas'. To overcome this I follow Margaret Thatcher's example and drop the pitch & pace of my voice in meetings, but should I really need to sound like a man to be taken seriously?

What's your biggest frustration when it comes to workplace inequality?

My biggest frustration is that whilst flexible working is becoming more commonplace, this culture is rarely followed at the very top of the organisation; leaving middle managers wondering if they really want to make it further up the ladder and defending their team's working style to their boss.

Where does your passion come from to create an equal workplace?

A more diverse and happy workforce that represents the diversity of its customer base makes for a more successful company! Why wouldn't you want this?!

What can people do?

Be open and honest. The more senior managers who talk about the fact that it's acceptable to move your hours around to attend your child's school play or to go to the gym to train for that sponsored marathon the more normal that type of inclusive workplace will become. I think that cloud of 'being seen at your desk' is still there for most companies so it needs people to be proactive in making that cultural change.

What does flexible working mean to you and your team?

Being empowered to work when you're at your best. Flexibility in when and where you work but with a strong team culture to make sure you come together regularly as a group as well. 'Face time' is still a really valuable part of being a team even if it is via video conference.

What piece of advice would you give your younger self?

If things aren't going as you'd expected it may not be you that's at fault. Finding an employer who offers the right culture for you to thrive in is really important to your career.

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