

Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace

A special meeting of the Women's Business Club was opened up to all members, and explored the topic of why diversity matters to businesses

The session welcomed as guest speaker **Leng Montgomery**, Diversity and Inclusion Lead **Cushman & Wakefield**, and was hosted in the offices of **Reed Smith LLP**, represented by **Tamara Box**, Managing Partner – Europe & Middle East.

In a presentation that was equally inspirational and informative, Montgomery spoke about his own experiences transitioning from a woman to a man, and his own professional journey to becoming a diversity and inclusion leader and Trans specialist, who actively engages and consults with private and public sector companies.

A regular speaker within the LGBT field, Montgomery has appeared on BBC radio, and other media outlets. He has also written policy and delivered keynote speeches to many organisations for UK and Global audiences. In 2014, he was the first openly trans contestant on BBC's Masterchef and, for two years running from 2014-2015, he was listed on the Independent's Rainbow List in the 'Ones to Watch' category.

Gender identity and sexual orientation

According to a recent Deloitte report, fifty percent of millennials say that gender is a spectrum, and it is vital that businesses be better attuned to the needs of more than 20 percent of millennials who openly identify as LGBTQ+.

Indeed, the business case is clear, and Montgomery reported that more diverse firms are more financially successful. The session heard that the most diverse workplaces are twelve



Leng Montgomery

percentage points more likely to outperform their industry average than the least diverse workplaces.

Estimates place the cost of discrimination against ethnic minorities at £2.6bn based on a weighted average of unadjusted wage gaps, and the unadjusted gender wage gap multiplied by the number of female employees yields an estimate of £136bn of lost labour income. Estimates show that the LGBT pay gap results in lost output worth up to £2bn.

Reduction of workplace discrimination would not only help raise the incomes of many groups but also benefit the economy substantially. ■

Case study: A role for data in diversity

'Tracking the data of applicants and looking at employee lifecycle will enable us to look more closely at attraction, retention and drop off rates as well as representation of people in position of company.

The organisation Monitoring Ethnicity are proactively gathering data on a ethnicity pay gap information this year as a 'dry run' before UK government looks to implement this in the next year. This is something all countries should adopt as, usually, if there's a bias in gender pay, there will be one when it comes to ethnicity and also other groups.

By monitoring using some social mobility questions we will be able to identify and assess if there's also an issue with the social demographic of employees and if there's any unconscious bias hotspots within your organisation or divisions within the company.

By monitoring across the employee lifecycle from attraction to onboard to a colleague leaving company Sainsbury's was able to identify areas of the organisation that weren't being inclusive enough towards women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. As a result, more unconscious bias training and inclusive leadership modules were rolled out and the following year saw a 7 percent increase in BAME hires into Food Commercial and D&T and 13 percent for women.'

Source: Leng Montgomery, 'D&I Insights,' 2019