



Women in
Business

WINTER 2018 | ISSUE 18

Magazine



**“I believe
passionately
in the power of
possibility and
potential”**

Marie-Therese McGivern
Outstanding Business Women
of the Year 2018



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Chairs Message

As we welcome in the new year, so we welcome a new calendar of events; our first ever tech conference in collaboration with Tech Companies from all over NI; another female entrepreneurial conference; seven programmes and lots and lots of networking opportunities and that's only taking us up to March!!

Still without a sitting assembly and with a weakened pound, with the potential for an increase in interest rates and an NHS under severe pressure we try to look to the positives... as women we are less likely to be exporters than our male counterparts but with the benefits of a weaker pound for exporting and with all the fabulous entrepreneurial, growth and business enabler programmes being run all around the province, now is the time to step up and make the most of the opportunity.

With the internet, the world has never been so close, exporting so easy and the world our oyster.

Looking to our councils, the banks, the enterprise agencies, Invest NI and organisations like Women in Business we are all here to support you in your endeavours. Make good use of them. See what programmes and events they have lined up and go for it!

At Women in Business with our network of 2500 members and our Mentoring Programme, there are always plenty of people to talk to, to ask questions of. This is true regardless of whether you are running your own business or if you are an employee. We are there to help you at whatever stage in your journey you are at.

The key is to invest in yourself, take the time for personal development; take the time to expand your network. Learn, be engaged, support other women (and men) be an enabler. Never stop asking and we will do all we can to answer your questions or point you in the direction of someone who can...

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Imelda McMillan

**Partner O'Reilly Stewart Solicitors
Chair of Women in Business**



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It came as the most delightful shock to discover I had been named Outstanding Businesswoman of the Year at the recent annual Women in Business Awards.

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Marie-Therese McGivern
CEO of Belfast Metropolitan College

I was so honoured to be recognised by an organisation that from its beginning, had huge ambitions and confidence in women, to bring a new dimension to business success in Northern Ireland. The Women in Business network developed and led by the amazing Roseann Kelly has gone from strength to strength. It has underlined all the evidence that the more business embraces women, the more successful it is likely to be. The more diverse the better the decision making. The more diverse the better use of talent, the better solutions created and so the more likely the success.

I am currently Principal and Chief Executive of Belfast Metropolitan College. It is a large College, one of the biggest in the UK with over 1000 staff and nearly 17,000 students. It has been my great privilege and joy to lead the College since 2009. When I joined, the College faced a number of significant challenges and I worked hard with the dedicated and very talented staff to turn the College around and utilize its huge asset base. The College was founded by Belfast Corporation in 1906 to train the skilled workforce the city then needed in textiles, engineering and shipbuilding. Now 110 years later the College is still at the forefront of training the workforce in the new digital and creative skills and upskilling in the older but equally vital areas of hospitality, retail and social care.

Like many women my journey to the College was not a straight one or in many ways a very well planned one. While my first job was as a lecturer in Rupert Stanley College (now long gone –absorbed into the Belfast Institute) after a number of years I left to join the voluntary sector, working with young unemployed people to give them the skills to succeed and reach their full potential. From that I was seconded to the Northern Ireland Civil Service, to the Urban Regeneration Initiative, Making Belfast Work where I spent a number of years in the 1990s working with communities across the city to transform their lives. It was a short step across then to Belfast City Council in 1999 where I spent 10



marvellous years working again with communities, with business and with politicians as Director of Development working to transform the city economically, socially and culturally.

In all those roles and in my current one the key thread that runs through them all, is my desire to transform things for the better and to do this with others. I believe passionately in the power of possibility and potential – I am a glass half full person and I am energised and motivated by working with others to achieve real change in people's lives. Here in Northern Ireland I believe we face a lot of challenges. However we have faced challenges before and our tenacity and resilience has brought us through. At the current time our lack of Assembly is not helping us to move forward and deal with the impact of Brexit, of falling resources in the public sector, of difficulties in health care and of closing the gap between some of the best educational outcomes in the UK and some of the worst. When I meet and talk with women in networks like Women in Business I know that collectively in Northern Ireland we have the courage and ability to shape a new successful region, which reaches out to all. We need to grasp this together.

Within us all lies the ability to lead, to make small and big changes. In my own experience in my career I have found that people work harder and feel more confident, the more they are given responsibility and control to make, discuss and create change. As leaders sometimes we find it difficult to let go and let others have control. A good way to start is with small tasks leading to greater as your own confidence grows in the power of others to take a thing and shape it successfully. Letting people grow and have ownership has been my greatest lesson when it lessens my burden of leadership and creates lasting and sustainable positive change. It is the ability to connect and create common ownership that truly leads to success in every enterprise.

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Marie-Therese McGivern

Not great expectations for 2018

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Richard Ramsey, Chief Economist NI, Ulster Bank

2017 was undoubtedly a better year for the economy than many had predicted. A wide range of indicators improved during the 12 months, including private sector employment (now at a record high), construction activity, and both tourism and trade. However, many other indicators declined, and there are also some clear warning signs that the economy will begin to slow down this year. Here is a flavour of some of the key trends we saw in 2017 and some of the things we can expect to see in the 12 months ahead.

Public finances: Northern Ireland has entered the New Year with public spending already dominating the headlines in the form of pressures in the NHS, and this could well be one of the key themes of 2018, as the cuts over recent years begin to really bite. This will only become a bigger story. We have already heard much about overspending in education, and we should expect more news in relation to the two biggest spending departments – education and health.

Trade: 2017 was largely characterised by sterling getting weaker against a range of currencies, which provided a significant boost to Northern Ireland's exporters. Indeed, a number of our major exporters reported record profits last year. We also saw some areas of manufacturing activity at its highest ever levels, including manufacturers of metal products and pharmaceuticals. Linked to this higher level of trade, Northern Ireland's ports have been busier than ever. We should expect these trends to continue in 2018.

Retail: The retail sector has had some major headwinds and tailwinds. On the positive side, retailers particularly in border areas have benefited from the exchange rate, making shopping this side of the border very attractive to consumers from the Republic of Ireland. On the other hand, consumers in Northern Ireland have been squeezed by rising inflation and subdued wage growth, impacting on consumer spending. In addition to impacting on the retail sector, this has also been evident in new car sales which have fallen at their fastest rate in six years. The squeezed consumer will become more of a theme in 2018. We will also likely see one or two moves by the Bank of England in relation to interest rates.



Tourism: It's not just shoppers that have been crossing the border to benefit from the exchange rate, tourists have too. And it's not just from the Republic of Ireland. The local tourism industry has posted record highs on a number of fronts ranging from visitor numbers to cruise ship arrivals. As a result, the hotel and hospitality sectors have been thriving. Meanwhile Northern Ireland was Airbnb's "fastest growing" UK visitor destination in 2017. Not surprisingly, the accommodation and food services sector (effectively hotel and hospitality) saw the largest increase in employment of any sector. The buoyant tourism sector is also largely responsible for Belfast's crane-cluttered skyline, with the construction industry benefiting from the increased demand from overseas visitors for hotel accommodation. We will probably see more record numbers on this front in the year ahead.

Construction: Other areas where construction activity has been taking place include offices, student accommodation, and infrastructure with for instance the long overdue A6 road upgrade. There has also been a much-needed pick up in house building with housing starts at their highest levels in seven years. However, supply constraints remain, which are acting to push up prices. New build properties have seen prices rise 18.5 percent over the year to Q3 2017. Construction employment has risen in line with rising activity, however the number of people employed in Northern Ireland's construction sector is still only three-quarters of what it was a decade ago.

Labour market: The labour market has seen an overall improvement. Private sector employment continues to rise and set fresh record highs. And the unemployment rate has fallen to a nine-and-a-half year low. IT was the fastest growing sector of the jobs market in 2017, with the number of jobs rising by around eight percent. Manufacturing has also posted strong jobs growth over the past year, with employment now back to where it was a decade ago. This is despite a number of high profile job loss announcements, most notably the closure of the JTI factory in Ballymena.

Overall, the economy moves into 2018 with some momentum after a better than expected past year. But looking at the projections in the recent UK Budget, it is clear that the outlook for the economy has been downgraded significantly, and anything other than an economic slowdown in 2018 would be a considerable surprise.

Energising Tomorrow's World: Digital and Diversity in the workplace

.....

Together with our partner, leading ICT solutions provider Fujitsu, Women in Business sees the opportunity for Northern Ireland's economy to be fuelled through harnessing the unique approaches and abilities of everyone in society. As we celebrate the first ever 'Women in Tech NI' Conference, Sinead Dillon, Principal Consultant at Fujitsu, explains how diversity is essential to energising the digital transformation of every workplace.

Sinead Dillon,
Principal Consultant, Fujitsu

Understanding the components required to achieve transformation will be key to digital success.

While organisations want to make the most of digital technology, many are uncertain on how to successfully implement digital change. Only half of those surveyed in our newly released 'Digital Transformation PACT' Report for example, state that their organisation has already implemented a successful digital transformation project. Moreover, nine in ten business leaders (90%) say their organisation has a clearly defined digital strategy, yet three quarters (74%) say that projects are often undertaken that aren't linked to the overarching business strategy, and two in three (66%) say the cost of failure has made them wary of future digital transformation.

The pace of technological change is extraordinary and leading economists are predicting that a century's worth of progress will take place in the next decade alone. Building on the economic, social and cultural change that technology has already brought about – from revolutionising how we communicate to how we buy and sell goods -

digital innovation will undoubtedly continue to radically transform our personal and work lives.



So, even with a digital strategy, companies are still finding it difficult to transition.

Through accompanying customers on their digital journeys, we have learned that it is only through harmonising four ingredients - People, Actions, Collaboration and Technology - that organisations can thrive in this digital era. What is more, people form the most important component. The report reveals, with 31% of the vote, the 'People' factor as one of the most impactful when it comes to businesses realising their digital strategy, and it's easy to understand why:

without talented and capable people to use them, the best technology and devices are meaningless.

This is a sentiment echoed locally with recent industry analysis reporting a lack of ICT skills as one of the biggest challenges brought about by the pace of technology innovation. 8 in 10 of those surveyed in our Digital Transformation PACT Report also admit that a digital skills gap is the biggest hindrance to their cyber security – a shocking statistic when you consider almost half of UK businesses have experienced cybercrime, with legal and accountancy firms in Northern Ireland among those hit hardest.

In addition to an overall scarcity locally, the percentage of women working in the technology sector stands at 16% - limiting the pool of talent and creativity available to those seeking to innovate in the sector. A recent study conducted by everywoman – a forum for like-minded women to share experiences, opportunities and ideas - found that the lack of female role models as well as outdated workplace cultures that limit female progression to be the two main barriers to women entering technology. These and other issues will be keenly discussed at the upcoming 'Women in Tech NI' Conference in Titanic Belfast where local technology companies and businesses will come together to promote a positive workplace culture and have visible and active mentors.

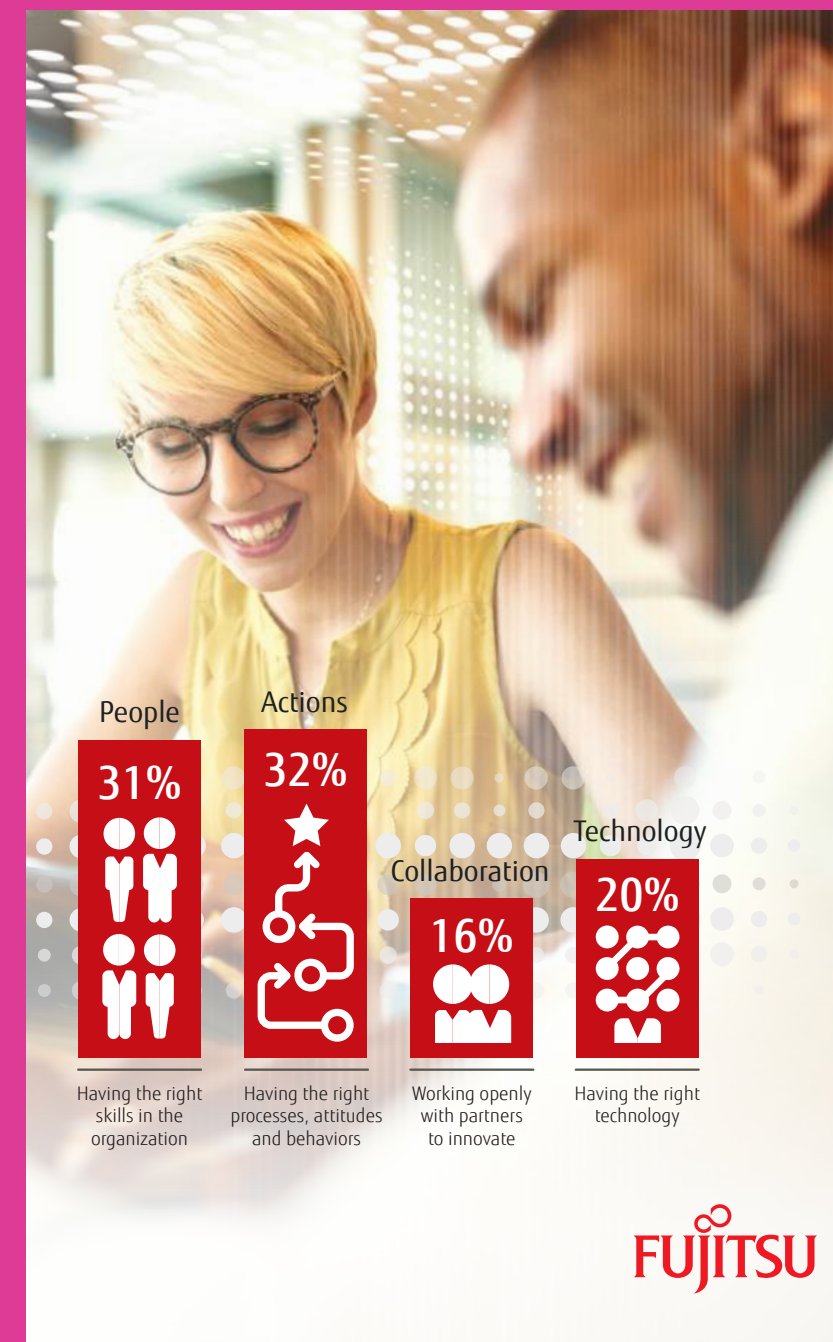
In the last number of years, we have increased our outreach activity with local schools, youth organisations, libraries and universities to showcase the benefits of a career in ICT. Activities such as coding workshops, showcases at career fairs and hosting Open Days are all essential if we are to inspire the next generation of digital innovators and technologists. Thankfully the number of young people studying computing at GCSE and A-Level in Northern Ireland is on the rise – an increase of 21% and 29% respectively in the last year alone

While the percentage of girls studying computing also continues to rise within this, computing is still the A-Level subject with the greatest gender imbalance. There is therefore an imperative for businesses, industry and educators to showcase and promote career opportunities and role models in the digital space. We can help increase the number of women in technology at a senior level by celebrating inspirational female innovators and promoting them to the next generation.

At NI's inaugural Women in Tech Conference we will discuss the issue of female progression in technology and I look forward to hosting a talk on when and how to identify the opportunities for career advancement and promotion in technology organisations.

While we and other technology companies continue to work with education providers and government to promote STEM as a subject area to young people locally, hiring appropriately skilled graduates and diversifying the talent pool at an early stage and promoting female leaders does not fully solve the 'People' component. Businesses also need to look internally to upskill or retrain current employees or returning employees through continuing professional development (CPD) courses, external training or via internal experts.

If we look again at the four vital ingredients to succeeding in the digital era - People, Actions, Collaboration and Technology – we need not just tech savvy people but also strategists, business and industry experts, managers and creatives. Transforming the number of women in business with a knowledge or understanding of technology and ICT is essential if we are to fully capitalise on the opportunities brought about by digital transformation.



Inspirational Women Recognised for Business Achievements



Women in Business recognised outstanding business women from across Northern Ireland at the 7th Annual Women in Business Awards in November 2017.

The Awards, presented at a gala evening, recognise the hard work, dedication and progress of local female business women and this year received a record number of entries.

Eleven inspirational women together with two organisations, were acknowledged for their outstanding contribution to business in Northern Ireland with Marie-Thérèse McGivern receiving the accolade for Outstanding Business Woman of the Year 2017.



The winners included:

- Award for Outstanding Business Woman of the Year 2017, Marie-Thérèse McGivern
- Award for Young Business Women of the Year 2017, Rachel McCully, BTY Cosmetics
- Award for Outstanding Innovation, Katie McKinley, axial3D
- Award for Best in Professional Services, Maurica Mackle, Mackle Communications
- Award for Outstanding Management and Leadership, Carmel McKinney OBE, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
- Award for Excellence in IT, Joanne Kearney, GlowMetrics
- Award for Best Exporter, Celine Grant, Re-Gen Waste Ltd
- Award for Best Customer Service, Cathy Coomber, axial3D
- Best Small Business, Irene McAleese, See Sense
- Award for Best New Start Up, Laura Briggs, Jack Straws Ltd
- Award for Best Small Business Marketing Campaign, Lora White, Budget Music Videos
- Award for Best Corporate Marketing Campaign, Visit Belfast
- Award for Advancing Diversity in the Workplace, Deloitte



Imelda McMillan, Women in Business Chair explains, "We are delighted to honour these women, they have demonstrated not only high levels of skill and business acumen, but the tenacity and determination required to succeed in their area of business. Although women are excelling in business they continue to face obstacles and unequal opportunity in the workplace. We encourage everyone to continue to tackle these issues through education, mentoring and discussion. Through the Awards I have met so many inspirational, motivated and dedicated women who have set out to chase their dreams and achieve their goals. It is wonderful to be able to celebrate their achievements and acknowledge their drive, grit and determination. Without these women, businesses would not be thriving as they are, girls would no longer have inspirational female role models and workplaces would be a much duller place. As women and women in business, we must continue to strive to reach our goals and lift each other up by celebrating each other's achievements, of which there is an abundance."



Our Fabulous Autumn Events

Over 1,400 members and non-members attended a Women in Business event from September 2017 to January 2018. During this events programme, over 25 events took place ranging from networking mornings and evenings to masterclasses specialising in relevant themes and topics such as cyber security, social media strategy and advanced LinkedIn techniques.

The successful Spotlight on Success series has also attracted many attendees who have heard from business leaders from the corporate and entrepreneurial world that have climbed to the top of the corporate ladder or founded, grown and lead their own business. These talks were inspirational and informative with each speaker sharing their success stories.

Below are a range of images from the latest Women in Business events programme:



Chair's Lunch 2017



Effective Communication Masterclass -
Crowne Plaza Belfast, November



October Networking and Cyber
Security Event - The MAC, September



Presenting the Perfect Pitch Masterclass -
E-Spark at Ulster Bank, September



Pre- Christmas Fair & Networking Evening
- Babel at Bullitt Hotel, November



September Networking Morning -
Ormeau Baths Gallery



Regional Networking Breakfast
- Bank of Ireland, Lurgan October



Spotlight on Success, Crowne Plaza
Belfast, October 2017



Spotlight on Success, QUB,
January 2018



Start your Social Media Strategy
Masterclas, Malone Lodge Hotel,
November

February 2018

Women in Tech Conference 2018

Date: Thursday 8th February, 08.30 - 16.00
Venue: Titanic Belfast
 Northern Ireland's first Women in Tech conference
 In partnership with everywoman

**Business Owners' Networking Evening - Can you have it all?**

Date: Tuesday 13th February, 17.30 - 19.00
Venue: Beyond Skin Clinic, Belfast

GDPR Training

Date: Thursday 15th February, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: The Merchant Hotel, Belfast
Speaker: Michael Green

Pitch Perfect

The Art of Persuasion
Date: Tuesday 20th February, 18.00 - 19.30
Venue: Royal Courts of Justice, Belfast
Speaker: Danielle Black/ Jill Comerton

Planning for Success: Why, How & What!?

Date: Tuesday 27th February, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast
Speaker: Gillian McLean

March 2018

Regional Networking

Date: Tuesday 6th March, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Southern Regional College, Newry
Speaker: SRC Representatives

Annual Female Entrepreneurs Conference 2018

Date: Thursday 8th March, 09.00 - 16.00
Venue: Galgorm Resort & Spa
Be Bold for Progress
 An opportunity to collaborate, learn, and hear insights from thought-provoking speakers and honest advice from business leaders

**Mail Chimp/Digital Marketing Masterclass**

Date: Thursday 15th March, 09.30 - 12.45
Venue: Crowne Plaza Belfast
Speaker: Simon Harper

WIB Networking Morning

Date: Wednesday 21st March, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Issac Agnew, Volkswagen Mallusk

Top Strategies for being a Powerful Leader

Date: Thursday 22nd March, 09.30 - 12.00
Venue: Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast
Speaker: Anne Dargon

April 2018

Spotlight on Success

Date: Thursday 19th April 12.00 - 14.00
Venue: Crowne Plaza Belfast

Planning for Success: Why, How & What!? In partnership with Omagh Enterprise Company

Date: Tuesday 17th April, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Omagh Enterprise Company
Speaker: Gillian McLean

WIB Networking Evening

Date: Thursday 19th April, 18.00 - 19.30
Venue: Convergys Belfast
Speaker: Paula Kennedy Garcia

PGR Masterclass Business Basics

Date: Thursday 26th April, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast
Speaker: Suzie Arbuthnot

May 2018

SRC Masterclass - Cyber Security

Date: Thursday 10th May, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Southern Regional College, Newry
Speaker: SRC Representatives

Social Media Strategy: Content Management

Date: Tuesday 15th May, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Crowne Plaza Belfast
Speaker: Denise Cowan

Rise and Shine with Confidence

Date: Tuesday 22nd May, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast
Speaker: Sinead Sharkey

First Trust Women's Business Evening

Date: Thursday 24th May, 18.00 - 19.30
Venue: First Trust Bank, University Road Branch

June 2018

WIB Networking Morning

Date: Tuesday 5th June, 09.30-11.00
Venue: Pinsent Mason, Belfast

**Spotlight on Success Conference**

Date: Thursday 7th June
Venue: Crowne Plaza Belfast

Planning for Success: Why, How & What!? In partnership with Causeway Enterprise Agency

Date: Tuesday 19th June, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: The Lodge Hotel, Coleraine
Speaker: Gillian McLean

Regional Events

Women in Enterprise Gala Evening

Date: Thursday 8th February, 18.30
Venue: City Hotel Derry ~ Londonderry
Speaker: Leeann Monk-Ozgul of Elemental Software

Regional Networking

Date: Tuesday 6th March, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Southern Regional College, Newry
Speaker: SRC Representatives

WIB Networking Morning

Date: Wednesday 21st March, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: Issac Agnew, Volkswagen Mallusk

Planning for Success: Why, How & What!? In partnership with Omagh Enterprise Company

Date: Tuesday 17th April, 09.30 - 11.30
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Speaker: Gillian McLean

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Date: Tuesday 19th June, 09.30 - 11.30
Venue: The Lodge Hotel, Coleraine
Speaker: Gillian McLean

Virgin Media Business is delighted to be partnering with Women in Business Northern Ireland in 2018.



Digital evolution is impacting every organisation – regardless of sector and size. The pace of change is rapid. We see this as a significant opportunity to transform the way we do business, especially in Northern Ireland, which has a reputation for innovation.

We want to invest even more in Northern Ireland and build closer relationships with our customers and local partners. We want to understand your particular challenges, and we want to know the opportunities you see for our economy as a result. During our partnership, we'll explore and celebrate how digital technology is bringing new opportunities to Northern Ireland, and how you can unleash your digital potential.

We look forward to working with Women in Business and meeting you all during 2018.

Seamus McCorry
 Head of Northern Ireland
Seamus.mccorry@virginmedia.co.uk

Value for money and benefits galore.

Often we are asked the true benefits of being a member of Women in Business. Like most things in life, the more you put in, the more you get out and we would be big advocates of getting as involved as you can.

We are, at the heart of it, a network of over 2000 supportive women who all want to network; make productive, positive contacts; upskill and help ourselves and each other move forward in our careers and businesses. But practically, day to day, what does that look like?

Engage with the Network

Well as a new member (or a not so new member), you are encouraged to send us your profile. This 300 word write up with a photo or a 90 sec video will then be sent around our £26K followers on social media and put on our website for the perusal of all, on our Members' Monday. It is a great opportunity to introduce yourself to everyone, becoming a more familiar face synonymous with your business or company. For those of you who are constantly trying to promote yourselves or your business/ place of employment, you would be hard pushed to get this level of coverage for £35, anywhere else! And this is just one of so many complimentary benefits of being a member.



There are lots of other ways to promote yourself/your business/ company to the membership. We have our monthly ezine that gets emailed to 8,500 recipients. This has a section for member's news so if you have any news to shout about, start hollering now!! With our website having a bit of a spruce up, the members' news is more prominently displayed on the home page and a dedicated page for all the news. Lots of stories of interest and of note, so start contributing and get your good news stories out there. We have networking events every month. These are free to our members and provide another great opportunity for telling us about you and your company/business through the 1 minute elevator pitches at the start of each session. They are harder than you think but short and snappy and very memorable. Are you game?

A fabulous choice of Programmes

We have seven fabulous programmes that will offer something to everyone within the membership no matter where you are in your journey. Your Voice is a great programme for anyone who wants to improve their presentation skills. Grit & Grace is a fabulous 3 day intervention for ambitious leaders; it delivers skills and inspiration in spades. If you are off on maternity and wanting a bit of support to help ease you back into the workplace so you return informed and energised with a new support network of Mums in the same boat, then look no further than the Back to Business programme. For anyone wanting to network in a more informal, relaxed way, we have our Women in Business choir. It is great fun, the music is brilliantly chosen by our Director Katie Richardson and the craic is mighty. The singing is pretty good too!

Join up now for only £35
www.womeninbusinessni.com

Exclusively for Women in Business members, our Mentoring Programme is absolutely FREE. Sign up and you will be allocated a mentor for a year to help you with wherever you are in your journey. The mentors are all experienced senior business executives and business owners who will challenge or encourage as required!

A great range of events.

In addition to all this, we also have events running throughout the year! Advanced LinkedIn Techniques, Canva techniques, GDPR training masterclass, pitch perfect – the art of persuasion to name but a few. Being a member comes with significant discounts on these events, from 50-100% off!

Value for money

And I haven't even touched on the conferences and Chair's Lunch, the WIB Awards and our fabulous lunchtime Speaker Series – Spotlight on Success. We have had fabulous speakers, Darina Armstrong, Catherine Toolan, Elspeth Beard who all talked about their journeys and achievements at Spotlight on Success; Lady Chanelle McCoy spoke at our Awards; and we had three members of the Irish Women's Rugby Team who spoke at our Leadership Conference and so many more. They offered inspiration by the bucket, tough lessons they learned, their motivators, their achievements and they offered this with grace and tenacity. And if you can't make it to the events or programmes during the day? What then? Do you still get value for money? Of course! We have evening and lunchtime networking sessions and events. You can engage and interact with members in the emails/social media dialogue. You can contribute to our weekly guest blog. Often you can arrange for a mentor to meet you outside of core working hours or lunchtimes. And as a not-for-profit organisation, by paying £35 you are also helping us to develop the network, providing more members more opportunities for positive interactions. You are contributing to support other women and helping to build a new economy.

Invest in You

But remember, Women in Business is all about you investing time in you. Your personal development. You need to take time out of your usual working schedule to meet new people, expand your network, upskill, be inspired. To see what the next steps are and know what you need to do to get there. So the question isn't so much do you get value for money (which you do!) the question is really, can you afford not to become a member? So many benefits! So join today, just go online to www.womeninbusinessni.com/join or if you are already a member, make sure you are getting the most of your membership.



New Marketing & Communications Consultancy Launched to Support and Inspire SMEs

Multi-awarding-winning Director, Gillian McLean, has founded a new marketing and communications consultancy to support, inspire and transform SMEs across Northern Ireland.

'Thrive Marketing & Communications' offers independent, objective advice. The consultancy builds practical, actionable, marketing transformation solutions – getting businesses more marketing for less money. Thrive challenges perspectives, gains alignment to business goals, creating simpler, more effective marketing operations, strategies and plans. Thrive takes away the hard work, giving companies peace of mind that their projects will succeed.

Gillian has over 22 years practical marketing and communications experience within the public and private (FMCG and industrial) sectors. She has extensive national and international experience in engineering, tourism, arts & culture, horticulture, defence and leisure marine industries. The diversity of this experience is what makes 'Thrive Marketing & Communications' unique.



Gillian has helped companies across Northern Ireland deliver outstanding, award-winning marketing communications that drove the customer experience across multiple touch points. An accomplished business professional, she is highly regarded for her expertise in developing and executing successful strategies targeting key business and consumer segments. In her leadership roles within industry, she built teams, structures, and the environment to liberate creative problem solving, whilst developing new innovative business models - helping some of Northern Ireland's leading companies diversify into new business sectors.

Gillian commented, **"Thrive Marketing & Communications offers flexibility, creativity and passion to our clients. We apply hands-on experience and in-depth knowledge to insights and strategy. Our business is focused on building relationships with our clients, to truly understand their business and then working collaboratively to deliver results. We listen to the needs of our clients and tailor our services to each individual situation."**

'Thrive Marketing & Communications' provides businesses across Northern Ireland with specialist integrated marketing and communications support from marketing strategies and plans, strategic reviews, market assessment and evaluation, market research through to integrated marketing communications campaigns and operational support and delivery.

For more information, or to get in touch with Gillian to discuss how 'Thrive Marketing & Communications' can help you to achieve your business goals visit www.thrivebusiness.co.uk



Angelina Fusco

A thousand business women from all parts of Northern Ireland and yet, despite being in the media business for 30 years, I knew so few of them. I was really surprised when I attended my first Women in Business awards a few years ago. I should have had no excuse since I was Head of Television News at BBC Northern Ireland and had been a journalist in the BBC NI newsroom in Belfast for a lifetime.

Why was it always so difficult to find women to speak on radio and television – I realised they were just getting on with their jobs, lacked confidence and were uncomfortable to be in the spotlight. Too many women regularly referred journalists to their male counterparts. How could we change that mindset! I decided to develop my own skills as an L&D practitioner completing CIPD Diplomas at Levels 3&5 in Learning and Development at Belfast Met. I have used that knowledge to, in turn, help to develop confidence in the women I meet as well as sharing skills and knowledge about how to get key messages across on all media platforms – traditional (TV and Radio) and digital/social media.

Working with other experienced trainers at the long-established Belfast company Channel56 we encourage women to seize opportunities to highlight their work whether in business or communities. It has been a privilege to see and hear individuals get their message across in a fluent and confident manner. Channel56 programmes include Keep Cool in the Hot Seat media training, Crisis Communications, Presentation Skills, social media,

press release writing as well as filming and editing on mobile devices. Our clients who are from across the public, private and community sectors say they appreciate that our training is tailored to their needs. In a digital world the media landscape has irrevocably changed so businesses need to be flexible and adaptable using all the digital tools available while keeping safe. It also helps that Channel56 has sister companies, Visionworks TV which offers full video production for tv and online; Visionworks Interactive which is a full web design and digital marketing agency; Archer Advertising, a full-service design and advertising agency.

As well as being involved in media and communications training, I also keep busy as a member of the Board of Tourism NI, the Heritage Lottery Fund (NI) and Visit Belfast. It is great to see the transformation in individuals, local businesses and communities because of funding and investment from these organisations. I would be delighted if you think my colleagues and I can help you drive forward your business dreams.

Channel56, 56 Donegall Pass, Belfast BT71BU Telephone 02890241241 or through our website <http://channel56.co.uk/> follow us on Facebook Channel56 and on Twitter @fuscoTV or @ChannelFiftySix



Brownstone Estate Agents

Brownstone Estate Agents are an exciting newly formed estate agents based in Cookstown and are a trading name of Tullycoose Ltd who have been established as a property developing business since 2010.

When you delve into the background of this new venture it's easy to see why these two sister-in-laws decided to form their own business! Property and building has been in the family for generations, which inevitably left Dianne Brown and Catherine Brown with little choice than to channel their passion for property into selling the family's finished portfolio of buildings. However, it hasn't stopped there. With word spreading fast in the local area, more and more people have asked this pair of dedicated businesswomen to market their properties and have been delighted at the fresh and friendly approach which these ladies have in abundance! All of this teamed with professionalism and determination has been well noted by their clients.

Dianne and Catherine have been fast tracking their skills, in order to meet the demands and needs of a competitive market. They have been back in the classroom gaining the necessary qualifications to succeed in their new careers.

The pair have been busy managing viewings of up to 4 building sites at a time and swapping their high heels for Site Welly's has

been a welcome change for this pair. Catherine comes from a long background in banking with a vast knowledge of Financial products and assisting Mortgage teams over the years giving her an edge in this category. Dianne has a lengthy background assisting in her husband's architectural business and has a real insight on the "in's and out's" of the construction process from start to finish!

When we caught up with the two sister-in-laws this week, they were keen to point out that they have no intentions in taking things slowly! They are both focused on growing the business to its maximum and have a few ambitious plans up their sleeves. Although they have a strong emphasis on the new development market, and are encouraging any local contractors and developers to contact them for their unique sales package, they also want to bring their personal touch to the private sector and enhance the buying and selling approach to individual home owners. We are sure you will agree that these pair of ambitious women have far to go and have already proven they have got what it takes in their short transition into the property market.

So, if it's residential lettings, private houses (buying or selling) or property developments in any location, please get in touch.

Ewards & Co Solicitors

Julie Tierney and Carla Fraser make up the Family and Matrimonial Department at Edwards & Co. Solicitors. Julie is ranked as a leader in her field in Chambers and Partners UK and is an accredited member of the Children (NI) Order Panel. Julie and Carla have outstanding expertise in all aspects of Divorce and financial matters, particularly in advising high net-worth individuals, complex matters involving assets located outside the UK together with cases involving business interests and agricultural assets.

The Department also advises clients on all children's law issues arising post separation and both Julie and Carla have exceptional experience dealing with the issue of domestic violence, with Edwards & Co. Solicitors offices having attained 'Safe Place' accreditation, so clients can be assured of a safe and secure environment.

SME's and start-up businesses form a significant part of Edwards & Co. Solicitors client base. Edwards & Co. has developed a number of initiatives over the years to add value to the usual legal services available to business clients, ensuring that particularly small businesses and start-ups have access to an affordable and complete service dealing with all aspects of their business and any issues that may arise.

The Family and Matrimonial Department at Edwards & Co forms part of these initiatives, assisting business owners in the unfortunate event of the breakdown of their marriage. Divorce can have a dramatic impact on any business, not just through the distress and distraction for those involved, but particularly through the cost of any final settlement. Julie and Carla have extensive experience in dealing with businesses in the wake of separation and work closely with all business clients to minimise any impact separation or divorce may have.



Partner's News

For our latest Ulster Bank Boost Index, we wanted to test a theory – getting under the skin of a 'two track' approach to business growth that's become clear to me since we launched the programme six months ago. Many sectors are in good health – but there's an important distinction that we've seen at work.

The Boost Index – which is made up of interviews with the owners and directors of SMEs with between five and 50 employees across a range of sectors – paints a positive picture overall. 38% of respondents have increased sales in the past 12 months, most of the remainder (53%) having seen sales stay the same. More than half of firms (54%) said that they had experienced growth in the past year, with most of the remainder (43%) describing their business as stable. But the real divergence is between men and women.

Women-led small businesses in Northern Ireland are less likely to be exporters and female business leaders are less likely to consider investing and expanding than their male counterparts. This is disappointing, but also a real spur to action. It gives me real determination in my role, as a Business Growth Enabler, to tackle the real and perceived barriers to entrepreneurship among both women and men.

One of the most interesting insights to come out of the research this time around was that time to think and develop a strategy would be one of the biggest boosts to small businesses growth and development. In the haste to keep 'doing', we don't only lose sight of new opportunities – we lose confidence in our ability to even develop new skills, and this may be what's affecting our female business leaders.

So I enjoy making things that are complex seem more simple, and building that confidence back up.

Exporting doesn't necessarily mean investing in large and complex supply chains. It could mean something as simple as creating a simple website from a template and taking orders via email. It also doesn't need to reach every market around the world – there are plenty of near-market opportunities in the rest of the UK and Ireland that are there to be seized.

Ultimately, there's no magic bullet for solving an issue like this. We know that there are many studies that show different attitudes to risk between women and men, and that the nature of the businesses that they own and operate can have an impact on appetite for things like export. But by continuing to make these opportunities available, and having an open and honest debate, we at Ulster Bank hope to provide the platform and support to help those businesses thrive.

www.ulsterbank.co.uk




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Lisa McCaul
Business Growth Enabler

 **Ulster Bank**

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Help for what matters

 **Ulster Bank**

Kelly sisters create a space for companies to land and expand in Belfast, one office space at a time.



The way that modern businesses work is changing – and Belfast is embracing that change. With economic growth predicted to rise in 2018 and an increase in companies setting up and expanding in Belfast, the need for office space will increase. Facilitating these needs is the dynamic Irish company Glandore, led by three sisters and their father.

On Arthur Street in Belfast, Glandore's Arthur House and Arthur Place serviced offices and coworking spaces can accommodate up to 600 people. These two family-run buildings offer fast-growing companies peace of mind that their space requirements can all be accommodated with maximum scalability and flexibility. It is not only physical space Glandore provides, the company is passionate about building long term connections and relationships and strives to create an environment that encourages, inspires and supports the growth of the companies they house. With member events, perks and wellness programmes, Glandore is a family-led business who treats the companies they house like one of their own.

Michael Kelly founded the company in 2001 when he noticed a gap in the market for flexible office space in Dublin. Operating in Belfast since 2006, in that time Michael Kelly says he's seen gradual growth year-on-year. Even when the downturn hit the city it was able to keep moving forward.

"Belfast has so much going for it. It's always had to fight hard for what it has. The work of Invest NI in attracting companies has been immense in recent years," he said.

"The costs of doing business in Belfast are considerably lower than in the likes of London and businesses are waking up to that in the wake of Brexit."

As Glandore grew so did the team. Over the past number of years Michael's three daughters, Fiona, Clare and Rebecca joined the business and are now directors of the company. Fiona leads the project management side of things; Clare focuses on business development and marketing, while Rebecca manages sales. Although many of us may dread the thought of working with our siblings Fiona, Clare and Rebecca flourish in the family-led environment. Clare lists the opportunity and confidence to bring your whole self to work as one of the biggest advantages to working with her sisters. "Being able to bounce ideas off my sisters, however trivial or serious and at any time is such a huge advantage," she said. Fiona and Rebecca both agree, with Rebecca even going so far as to say having family support while at work is something she now couldn't do without.

Each sister agrees that they are quite similar but they also have their differences. Fiona believes their differences are reflected in the roles each has taken on, which they have formulated based on their strengths. "This has given each of us a different area of focus which has in turn developed different skills in each of us and different levels of expertise in certain areas," she said.

It is clear that with all similarities and differences included the three sisters get along and enjoy each other's company. Creating an atmosphere of support, care and empathy, it is this type of environment they also strive for in Glandore and for the businesses they house. "We are a very affectionate and demonstrative family and this has bled into the team...we believe that if you care for your employees they will care for each other and in turn demonstrate compassion and empathy for your customers," Clare said. As Rebecca says, "I don't think there has been a better time to be a woman in business. That said there is still an incredible amount of challenges for women in the workforce. Women are wearing more 'hats' than ever before with increasing pressure to have, and do, it all. I think understanding the societal shift that has taken place in recent decades is important so that proper support can be shown to families by governments and employers.

A belief shared by both of Rebecca's sisters, Fiona believes that "companies need to adopt strategies and policies that support both men and women to participate more equally" something Glandore is proud to do for their employees. As they look forward to 2018 all three women are excited to expand their growing business. They will be rapidly expanding their team, community, coworking and event space in Belfast. Growing their Glandore Business Network in Belfast in 2018, something that was started in 2017 and was a highlight from the year, is also something they are working towards.

With a busy 2018 ahead, it can be difficult to see where the three sisters find time to relax and enjoy each other's company away from the office. Nowadays all three sisters make an effort to leave work at work. One thing is clear, Fiona, Clare and Rebecca are "sisters first and business partners second".

Glandore is proud to be a partner of, and the home of, Women in Business NI in Belfast. At Glandore, we create space for business to grow with serviced offices, coworking, flexible workspace and an exclusive members network. If you'd like to find out more about us and how we can help your business grow, visit glandorebelfast.co.uk.

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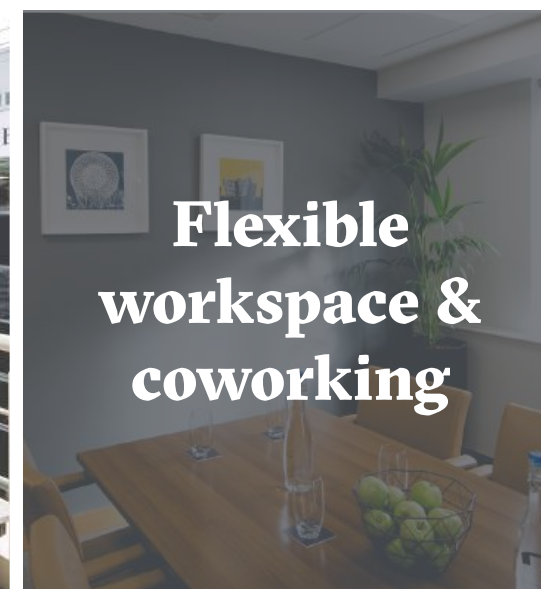
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Is a shrunken gender pay gap the mark of a successful company?

Joris Minne, JComms
Editorial from board member

The corporate world is being shocked to its very foundations as the diversity question echoes around the corridors of power. Is diversity about to be recognised as the key indicator of companies' current and future success? Will investors ask for diversity stats before the P&L? And will women finally be paid the same money for the same job as men? Not quickly enough.

Frequent and regular articles about gender diversity are appearing in the mainstream media, and while most of these are still markedly hostile, they do highlight continuing issues. Also, they appear to be retreating now that the gender pay gap has become so pronounced and the cause now for some, albeit low frequency, outrage. What has changed and what is positive is that diversity issues are being regularly reported and clearly acknowledged as a problem to be solved.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies' (IFS) recent gender pay gap report revealed that women earn 18% less than men on average. It also found that the gap balloons after women have children, raising the prospect that mothers are missing out on pay rises and promotions. The positive here is that they are measuring it, they are publishing it, and the media are reporting it.

But how this story struggles to get air. Is this because the BBC has been revealed as a lead culprit of the practice? What did our local radio station do with this story when it popped up for the first time 18 months ago? It followed the same format as those perceived to be women's issues. They brought together two women with differing views on the accuracy of the statistics, encouraging the wrong argument. This has been the general media response. Get some old school female thinkers and pitch them against some third generation feminists and let the fight fill 4 minutes of air time.

Seriously, does it matter if the stats differ from other reports; they all agree there is a pay gap, after all. What would have been enlightening and informative would have been a discussion with people who understand the problem, and who have solutions or who want to find solutions.



We stumble along trying to get to grips with correctness. A recent article about Jeremy Corbyn's launch of a document detailing ten pledges to advance gender equality for women in the Labour Party got him into trouble when he talked about banning after hours drinking as this presumed that childcare was solely the role of the mother.

Labour MP Stella Creasy said while she agreed networking was gendered the answer was not ending after work drinks but for: "fathers to do equal childcare so mothers can go out and enjoy themselves".

It does not matter whose solution is right or wrong, it is some relief that its recognised as a problem at all and that people are seeking solutions.

Within one Sunday paper news pages were four stories related to gender. Nicola Sturgeon spoke about the baby she lost, about how she was hurt by assumptions that she decided to put her political career before having children. Although intensely private she went public as she is conscious of her responsibility as a role model - she does not want girls to conclude that women must sacrifice part of their lives to climb the career ladder.

Another story was on the success of the number of blogs and books celebrating the "imperfect mum", the "Brummy instead of Yummy mum" and the "Hurrah for Gin" mum (a reference to a new book). It is right to take the pressure off all mums working or not. If we took the pressure off trying to be the perfect parent then maybe more women would step up to higher roles.

On the front of the business pages was splashed: "FTSE firms face targets for women in top jobs".

This is the one that confirms that the future of successful business is diversity. It has been conceded by Sir Philip Hampton, Chairman of Glaxo Smith Kline that companies will have to set tough targets if the campaign to put more women in top earning positions is to succeed. This campaign although supporting gender equality is really about successful business.

The business case is driving the call for women at the top; the future of business is diversity. But lets get the pay gap sorted in the mean time.

Back to the Future

Anne McMurray
Anne McMurray Consulting



When I set up my business in 2000 I had to put into practice all the 'theory' about leadership I had been using as an organisational consultant. Define my Vision, Mission and Values. I was working across Europe, travelling, and juggling work, family and friendship commitments. The only spare time I had was on plane journeys to do my thinking and imagining. Things crystallised as I reflected on what mattered most to me.

My vision was to work all-Ireland. I had had enough of airports. 'Peace' had broken out in N Ireland. I wanted to develop my client base and work north and south of the border.

Secondly, my mission. What was the purpose of my work? What passion would it serve? Leadership. I believe that people suffer under poor leadership. They become demoralised and desperate. People go home despondent as a result of poor leadership in the workplace. My mission became clear: 'to strengthen leadership at all levels in different systems (whether economic, government, societal and/or political) so that they create value for society.' Finally, I knew that my core values were expressed in the work that I felt proud of: when I lived out Curiosity, Courage and Creativity. 18 years later, the vision is achieved; I am still delivering on the mission and in all things I am guided by my values.

In 2008 the Chartered Management Institute produced a report called 'Management Futures' which investigated what the world or work and leadership would look like in 2018. Intrigued in 2008, I am interested in 2018 to see what has come true.

The prediction was that by 2018 business models would be more fluid through technology and the workforce more diverse and transient. Traditional 'job for life' careers would be very rare. Dissatisfied employees would vote with their feet, changing jobs more often. The changing expectations of work and the impact of new technology would require leaders to develop new skills, such as emotional and spiritual intelligence, along with good judgment and creative thinking to improve productivity. While I knew about Daniel Goleman's 'emotional intelligence' the concept of 'spiritual intelligence' was new and fascinating.

'Spiritual intelligence' is the leadership ability to help people see the meaning and significance of their work. In addition to being fairly treated in the workplace, people want to feel their contribution and effort is valued. 'Leadership with Spiritual Intelligence' skills include story telling (to explain the why as well as the what), handling complexity (being open to exploring and experimenting with new ways of doing things); and fostering 'humanness' in the workplace. This means taking into account people's lifestyle choices and responsibilities and supporting them to fulfil these.

These findings chime with current theories about leadership. Jim Collins' theory of Level 5 Leadership describes the characteristics that what sustain long-term success: leaders who show humility, determination, resolve and give others the credit while taking the blame themselves. Otto Scharmer's Theory U emphasises leadership capabilities such as listening at all levels to what is 'meant', observing and suspending judgment, and using the 'head, hand and heart' to make sense of the patterns and opportunities that are emerging in the business environment.

Across all sectors, it is people who create value and economic wealth. Northern Ireland has a lower rate of economic activity than anywhere else in the UK (2017). This is especially among women. Whether as leaders of families, communities, private, public or social enterprises, or in government at local or Assembly level, we all contribute to creating value in our area of leadership.

Your leadership starts with answering the 'call to leadership'. This invariably means stepping into situations for which you may feel inadequately equipped. Don't wait until you feel confident enough to respond. Use your courage to step into your leadership. Use your creativity to imagine possibilities. Use your curiosity to explore new places and people with whom you might find new answers. 2018 is up and running.



**Gender Diversity
Charter Mark NI**

Be an Employer of Choice

**Recognise your commitment to progress diversity in your workplace.
Be accredited with the Gender Diversity Charter Mark NI.
Improving gender diversity is good for business.**

There is a correlation between gender diverse companies and better bottom line results:

- Greater gender diversity on the senior-executive team corresponded to the highest performance uplift: for every 10 percent increase in gender diversity, earnings before interest and taxes rose by 3.5 percent.
- Men and women have different viewpoints, ideas, and market insights, which enables better problem solving, ultimately leading to superior performance.
- A gender-diverse workforce provides easier access to resources, multiple sources of information, and wider industry knowledge.
- A gender-diverse workforce allows organisations to serve an increasingly diverse customer base.
- Gender diversity helps attract and retain talented women. Companies cannot afford to ignore 50% of the potential workforce and expect to be competitive in the global economy.
- It's the right thing to do. Prioritising gender diversity shows commitment to social responsibility which brings considerable reputational benefits.

Find out more

This Charter enables organisations to apply for a charter mark which will recognise their commitment to, and progress on, gender diversity. The Charter follows a methodology of self-assessment, target-setting and review, and it prioritises continuous progression with goals set by, and appropriate to, each individual.

To find out how your business can benefit contact

Pat Vance on 07730478343

www.chartermarkni.org

info@chartermarkni.org



Meet our Independent Charter Mark Assessors

Dianne Foster



Respect, fairness, kindness and empathy have been my guides as I've worked for some of the biggest household names in the varying industries of law, insurance, soft drinks and banking.

My current role is as an IT Director for Baker McKenzie who are one of the world's biggest law firms. Here we pride ourselves on prioritising innovative ways of growing and retaining talent - things like our diversity & inclusion policies, agile working and our whole approach to help people bring their best selves to work and be true to themselves.

I hope that by getting involved with the Gender Diversity Charter Mark as an independent assessor I can bring both a global outlook and a local view. Because as well as simply being the 'right thing to do', I believe that companies that proactively manage gender diversity and have a long-term commitment to it can reap crucial competitive benefits. People are the lifeblood of any business - whether you're a global law firm with 13,000 employees or a local start up with 3. Nurturing talent and celebrating diversity helps grow creative, thriving businesses - with happy employees. If 40 years in the workplace has taught me anything - it's exactly that.

Deb Lange Evans



Ms Lange is a Certified Public Accountant with a lengthy career in international business and tax, working with Arthur Andersen in London, Hong Kong and the United States. She also worked for almost 20 years with Oracle Corporation in California as their Senior Vice President of Tax where she was involved with site selection, mergers and acquisitions, establishment of shared service centres, corporate governance and risk assessment in addition to being responsible for the company's global taxes, customs and duties. Deborah has also been a board member with two software companies, and was Chair of the Silicon Valley Tax Directors Group for 10 years.

Deborah returned home to Northern Ireland in 2010. She is currently on the boards of Invest NI, the Belfast Harbour Commission and Queen's University Belfast Foundation. Deborah is also a member of the Board of Governors of Holywood Primary School.

Deborah is delighted to be an Independent Assessor for the WIB Charter Mark to help promote the benefits of equity in the workplace to both individual employees and the employers.

Kieran Harding, Managing Director, Business in the Community



Kieran has been with Business in the Community since 1990, he took on the role of Managing Director of the organisation in January 2011. He has played a leading role in the organisation's growth and been instrumental in helping to stimulate and foster interest in corporate responsibility in Northern Ireland. I very much welcome the opportunity to help raise the bar in terms of Gender Diversity and recognise examples of best practice in workplaces across Northern Ireland.

Kieran is a non - executive director in a number of charitable organisations and has recently been appointed to the Board of Sport NI. He is a former Irish League footballer and was until recently Coach of Portadown Football Club.

Judith Gillespie



Judith Gillespie joined the RUC GC in 1982, working in a variety of uniform and Detective roles. She made history by becoming the first woman in RUC/PSNI to become an Assistant Chief Constable in 2004, and gained a Masters Degree in Applied Criminology from Cambridge University one year later. As a Chief Officer for 11 years, she helped steer the organisation through significant change, including leading on the PSNI's Gender Action Plan.

She became Deputy Chief Constable in June 2009 also acting as Chair of the 2013 World Police and Fire Games Company Board, and is very proud that Belfast delivered "the friendliest and best Games ever".

A graduate of the FBI National Executive Institute, she was awarded an OBE in the Birthday Honours list in June 2009, an Honorary Doctorate from Queen's University in July 2012, and a CBE in the Birthday Honours in June 2014.

On leaving PSNI in March 2014 she became an independent leadership advisor, was appointed to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, and most recently to the Garda Policing Authority in Dublin. She chairs the Careers Advisory Forum, is a Visiting Professor at Ulster University and works on a voluntary basis for the Marie Curie charity.



Lynn Carvill is Chief Executive Officer with WOMEN'STEC, a charitable organisation based in North Belfast which helps women from across the city and beyond access the skills needed to move into non-traditional careers.

WOMEN'STEC engages women who are unemployed on employability programmes in the area of non-traditional skills e.g. plumbing, carpentry, tiling, electrics, paint & decorating, horticulture and Information Technology. These programmes are complemented with a wide range of confidence building and wider educational programmes, providing a holistic and rounded experience to students. High levels of pastoral care and support are embedded within all programmes and are a key element of the organisation's ability to attract women onto programmes and help them progress onto further education, training and employment. Free onsite childcare is also available to mums who need it to access the courses.

As Lynn explains:

Our objectives are clear and ambitious. We are challenging gender stereotypes and gender segregation in the labour market. Girls continue to choose gendered traditional career paths, such as Beauty, health & social care etc. WOMEN'STEC is working with the wider construction, Information Technology and telecoms industries to open up opportunities to non-traditional careers for women and girls. Moreover, these careers are more secure and lucrative in terms of earning capacity in comparison to many of the traditional career pathways chosen by girls and women. We are working to address the skills deficit across non-traditional industries, continually tweaking our programmes to align with industry needs in these sectors. There is a growing awareness amongst industry leaders that a diverse workforce greatly enhances productivity and profit.

Leading an organisation like WOMEN'STEC is a hugely rewarding experience. Widening opportunities and empowering women and girls to consider a different career path can result in a beneficial life changing trajectory.

Taking a wider view, these are interesting times. Gender Equality is a hot topic at the moment. Daily, the media reports on the persistence of gender pay inequality. The media maelstrom surrounding Harvey Weinstein and the powerful #metoo social media campaign has called out the misogyny impacting many women in Hollywood and across other industries. Questions continue to be asked as to why equal numbers of women are not represented in the upper echelons of industries, in board rooms and in public and political life.

Locally, a key issue persists in the lack of childcare provision across Northern Ireland, presenting a major obstacle for women who want to (re)enter work or access training or education. It is entirely feasible to solve this issue but it requires political will and focus and, of course, a functioning Assembly and Executive. Childcare, although often viewed as a female issue is of course a parental responsibility and as such we should all be advocating for accessible, affordable childcare provision to enable equal access to work.

For more information on the work of WOMEN'STEC
Lynn can be contacted on 02890749810 or
lynn.carvill@womenstec.org

WOMEN'STEC
Enabling women into non-traditional employment



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Steven Creighton, Neueda CFO, with Paula Owens, Business Manager, Danske Bank

Danske Bank

Making more possible

Brexit: The Current, The Possible, The Likely



Anthony Soares, Deputy Director,
Centre for Cross Border Studies

The Current

Preparations are currently underway for the second stage of the negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU, which will deal with any transition period and the framework for the future relationship between the UK and EU. It will also settle the issues addressed in the first phase, which include the very particular circumstances of the island of Ireland. So, what can we be more or less certain of as the negotiations enter this next phase, and where the island of Ireland will continue to act as a microcosm of the enormous challenges before us? Firstly that we must not confuse the discussions on the framework for the future relationship between the UK and EU with a Free Trade Agreement; that can only be negotiated once the UK has definitively left the EU, although the framework could set out the broad parameters of what such an FTA might look like. Secondly, the EU's position is that during any transition period the UK will have to continue to follow all EU principles, regulations and standards (the EU acquis), including the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). We can also be certain the EU will continue to defend the integrity of its Single Market and Customs Union. It will not contemplate a framework for future relations offering the UK the same level of access to the Single Market it currently enjoys or that other non-EU countries may have (and Norway, which is in the Single Market but not the EU, is already making it clear it would demand improved conditions in its own agreement with the EU if the UK were to achieve a better result than what the Norwegians have now).

The Possible

We can also be certain the UK Government will continue to pursue its prime objective – a unique and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement – while keeping to its position it will not remain in the Single Market or Customs Union or under the jurisdiction of the ECJ, leaving it free to pursue free trade agreements with other countries. At the same time it will have to show how it will put into post-Brexit reality what it agreed in the first stage of the negotiations in relation to Northern Ireland and Ireland, which includes the guarantee of avoiding a "hard border", safeguarding all aspects of the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, maintaining the Common Travel Area, and protecting continued North-South and East-West cooperation across the full range of

political, economic and other contexts. But this is precisely where we can see the incompatibilities between the UK's intended objectives and its guarantees on Northern Ireland and Ireland. They are incompatible because leaving the Single Market and Customs Union will necessarily disrupt the North-South flow of goods (if not of people) as controls will have to be introduced with the consequent costs to businesses and consumers, even if physical infrastructure at the actual border may be avoided. Such an outcome would not only be economically damaging to Northern Ireland, but even more so in political terms, as would the alternative of introducing barriers between Northern Ireland and Great Britain in order to avoid a hardening of the Irish border.

The Likely

While both the UK Government and EU have repeatedly stated their commitment to protecting the particular circumstances of the island of Ireland, there is nevertheless the possibility that no final withdrawal agreement will be reached, and the UK will crash out of the EU and revert to World Trade Organisation Rules, with all that implies for businesses and citizens across the island of Ireland and Great Britain. At the other end of the spectrum, there is the possibility mounting public and political pressure will force the UK Government to hold a second referendum, with the result that the UK reverses its decision to leave the EU. However, the likelihood is we arrive at an outcome where the UK nominally leaves the Single Market and Customs Union, but continues to adhere to EU regulations, standards and its tariff regime, and to participate in a range of EU programmes by making the necessary contributions to the relevant EU budgets. This would reduce but not entirely eliminate the barriers to post-Brexit trade with the EU (including between Northern Ireland and Ireland), and ease the continued operation of the North-South implementation bodies created by the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. Such an outcome would not avoid all the potential negative impacts of Brexit on Northern Ireland, which can only be avoided if the UK remained in the Single Market and Customs Union – the position argued for to differing extents by the Scottish and Welsh Governments in their interactions with the UK Government where there is the resounding absence of a Northern Ireland Executive.

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Anthony Soares



Skills Northern Ireland opens its doors to inspire young people about future careers



Skills Northern Ireland, took place for its second year at the Titanic Exhibition Centre on 18 and 19 October 2017, with over 80 organisations and around 8000 visitors over the two days. The event is aimed at 14-19 year olds, their parents, teachers and influencers and helps enlighten them about jobs and careers choices, apprenticeships, growing industry sectors and training opportunities.

NIE Networks has been the headline sponsor for the event since it began in 2016. HR Director at NIE Networks, Gordon Parkes said, "We were delighted to be headline sponsor of this important careers event that showcases the careers available in the marketplace in Northern Ireland."

"It is extremely important to our society and our economy that young people possess the skills required by employers. The current position is far from satisfactory with many employers unable to source individuals with the appropriate skills and numerous young people still unemployed. There is certainly a 'skills mismatch', which needs to be addressed collectively through an integrated approach led by employers and supported by local government, schools, colleges and universities.

"NIE Networks provides highly qualified skilled apprenticeships and graduate programmes, however each year we struggle to obtain the required numbers to take up these positions."

Melissa Graham, a second year Underground Cable Jointing Apprentice, represented NIE Networks on its stand at this year's event and found the experience developed her confidence.

Melissa Graham said: "Skills Northern Ireland was a great experience for NIE Networks to promote the company and our apprenticeship and graduate programme. From a very young age I had an interest in tools and mechanics from being out on the farm with my dad. When I completed my A Levels I decided that I wanted a 'hands on job' so the apprenticeship at NIE Networks was perfect for me. Although when I told people they were quite surprised when I told them it was a cable jointing apprenticeship! I'm really enjoying it so far, in fact to say I'm enjoying it would be an understatement! This event gave me a good opportunity to talk to other girls who hadn't thought about an apprenticeship. We had so many young people interested over the course of the event."

The next Skills NI event will take place on the 7-8 November 2018. For more information visit <https://prospectsevents.co.uk/>.



Apprenticeship opportunities

At NIE Networks we have over 40 years experience training apprentices in our in-house facilities.

Our apprenticeship is now open.

Find out more and apply online
nienetworks.co.uk.



WIB Mentoring Programme

The Women in Business Mentoring programme, sponsored by Advance Coaching, is available free to network members. The growing team of skilled mentors are drawn from a wide range of business and professional backgrounds and work with mentees for around twelve months, assisting in career or business development.

Now running for over two years, our experience has shown the programme brings significant positive career development for both mentors and mentees. The benefits for mentees are obvious- a challenging but supportive mentor, who can be a confidential sounding-board and support personal and professional development. Mentors too report how rewarding they find taking part. They've reported huge personal satisfaction contributing to another woman's development. It helps build their own leadership and interpersonal skills. Taking part in the Mentoring Programme offers networking opportunities and the chance to complete an optional ILM Certification - Introduction to mentoring. The Women in Business Mentoring Programme can significantly contribute to your career development and progression.

Niamh Shiells, Managing Director at Advance Coaching delivers training for new Women in Business mentors and mentees. Advance is a team of expert career coaches and mentors, supporting career development and transition success for over a decade. Here, Niamh gives us some of her top tips for career success:

- 1. Do a SWOT analysis:** What are your strengths and how can you capitalise on them, your weak spots and how do you mitigate or work on them? What are the opportunities and how can you be mindful of any of the threats that may de-rail you?
- 2. Do a PEST analysis** – Stay on top of any of the political, environmental, social and technological changes that are happening in your organisation and industry that could impact your career.
- 3. Write an elevator pitch** – shape your own 60 second pitch on who you are, what you have achieved and what you have to offer at the next level.
- 4. Define your networking strategy** – Where do you need to be visible on and offline, who do you need to connect with?

5. Manage your online footprint – google yourself and assess if this is really what you want people to see and work out what you want to change.

6. Training & Development – what do you need to stand out from others and really excel in your role? Be prepared to invest in yourself.

7. Seek out Sponsors – Reach out to role models and people of influence in your organisation or industry, share your career ambitions and invite them to sponsor you and offer your support to them too.

8. Secure a Mentor – Seek out mentors, be clear what your desired mentoring outcomes are and stretch outside your comfort zone to achieve them.

9. Get on with people – The quality of our dialogue with others, creates the quality of our relationships and it's our relationships that really support great career and business outcomes.

10. Be generous – Share your knowledge, skills, networks and support with others, this will make you happier and the feelings of reciprocity it evokes in others will bring good returns for you.

To find out more about the mentoring programme, contact Vicky Moore- vicky@womeninbusinessni.com



To contact Niamh, email niamh@advancecoach.co.uk

<http://www.advancecoach.co.uk/resources/career-resource-centre/>

Ask the mentors...

We asked some of our most accomplished mentors about their own experiences, and what they would advise others about career progression. As women who have achieved a great deal in their successful and varied careers, we thought they'd have some invaluable wisdom to share. **Karen Blair is Director and Chairman at Cleaver Fulton Rankin; Dolores Vischer is Business Engagement Manager, Queen's University Belfast; and Jill Minne is Strategic HR Director with NI Civil Service.**



1. What would be the first steps you would advise women to take when seeking to progress their careers?

KB- I'd advise women to enjoy the work they're doing. It is an important early step in your career to identify what aspects of work really motivate you- meeting people or solving problems, for example? Also look at the people around you. Who are those you admire and identify their traits that achieve results.

DV- Fresh out of university I worked as a book production clerk, where an editor mentored me and helped me to gain editorial skills. Being a mentor is a valuable development opportunity. It is great for anyone at any stage in their career to have access to a confidential, impartial and, experienced sounding board away from their work.

JM- Firstly, get a mentor, secondly, build your network and thirdly be a mentor.

2. What do think are the most important skills or attributes required for career progression?

KB- The most essential attributes are enthusiasm, energy and focus.

DV- Two of the most valuable personal attributes for career success are to be confident and believe in yourself with a very clear idea of exactly where you want to go. With these you can develop strategies for achieving your goals more easily.

JM- Without a doubt, the ability to honestly evaluate your strengths and weaknesses. Most people focus on fixing the weaknesses, but I think it's also really important to focus on building your strengths.

3. What is the best career development decision that you've made?

KB- My best career decision was committing to doing further study after I had already qualified as a solicitor. I became a Legal Associate of the Royal Town Planning Institute, specialising in planning and environmental law, which I really enjoy.

DV- When I was in a role that I was not enjoying, I took the decision to leave and set up my own business – after networking first to identify a few potential future customers. That was definitely one of my best career decisions.

JM- I started at the 'coalface' of HR, which helped me understand what people need from a good HR service. Secondly, I took on complex and difficult projects that others said couldn't be cracked. I was very lucky however to have the backing of my boss at the time. My most recent move to Strategic Director, HR and joint Diversity Champion for the NICS is a fantastic opportunity, which I am loving.

4. Knowing what you know now, what advice would you have given to your younger self about career progression?

KB- I'd tell my younger self to view every challenge as a new opportunity to learn, improve and develop.

DV- I'd tell my younger self- If you want something, don't be afraid to take a leap of faith!

JM- Don't compare yourself to others, find people who believe in you, help others instead of yourself, and talk to people you respect.

Becoming a parent needn't mean brain drain

How smart employers can invest in and retain their staff with Back to Business.



Following a successful pilot Women in Business is delighted to announce the roll-out of its maternity return programme- Back to Business, in association with Marcomm. Combining group workshops and one-to-one coaching, the programme ensures women transition from maternity leave, to their return to work feeling inspired, energised and ready to influence.

Going back to work after having a baby can be the most difficult period in a woman's career. Combining the demands of work with the demands of being a mum can be tough. Having a new baby is a period of huge transition. Whether it's a first child or not, everything has changed and a new baby can be exhausting both mentally and physically. Being a mum is the steepest of learning curves as well as one of life's most rewarding experiences. When a new baby arrives, work is the last consideration.

But when a woman's return date starts to loom on the horizon, how can employers support her through one of the greatest upheavals she can experience? As an employer, staff are your greatest asset and likely represent your biggest investment too. How can you ensure you support mums returning from maternity, through the transition without losing their skills, experience and knowledge?

Women can be supported to strike the right work/ life balance through family friendly work practices, including flexible and condensed working. But employers can also support women to fulfil their professional roles to the best of their ability too.

That's where the Women in Business maternity return programme, Back to Business, can help. Back to business directly supports women through their maternity leave, their return to work and in the weeks and months after their return.

The programme includes:

- 3 facilitated networking masterclasses on topics such as managing change, managing expectations and personal planning.
- 3 1-to-1 coaching sessions to give women tailored support to focus on their concerns and aspirations.
- Support, guidance and goal setting for career planning and personal development.

The coaching element is particularly valuable. Meeting on a one-to-one basis with an experienced qualified coach, allows women to speak openly and honestly about their concerns, but also to explore their ambitions. Speaking to a coach about your fears and aspirations in a risk-free environment is hugely empowering.

Women returning after becoming a mum have a new focus to their identity but that doesn't mean they stop being ambitious for themselves and their employers. Taking part in Back to Business could be an invaluable tool for both staff and employer- mums are valued and employers retain their most valuable and talented staff members.

To find out more, visit the Back to Business programme page- <https://www.womeninbusinessni.com/programmes/back-to-business> or contact vicky@womeninbusinessni.com or call 0845 6076 041.



Choir

Ultimately, singing is good for you, but here at Women in Business, we think singing is good for business too. Singing is scientifically proven to be good for your health. It increases oxygen in your blood, increases the flow of happy hormones and boosts good mental health. But the interactivity of being in a choir is also an ideal networking environment. That's the theory behind the Women in Business Choir.

The choir meets every Tuesday, ably guided by musical director Katie Richardson. Katie is an extremely experienced musician, having worked with Duke Special and Van Morrison. If you'd like to experience the joy of singing, and perhaps make some business connections at the same time, come along, we'd love to see you there.

Grit & Grace

Meryl Streep once described good leaders as having 'grit and grace'. Learning to be a strong leader but still being recognisable as you can be a difficult balance. The Women in Business Grit and Grace programme, developed in partnership with the William J Clinton Leadership Institute, is a hugely effective leadership programme. Designed specifically to support women to become confident leaders, building on their own strengths and values, the programme incorporates practical tools and skill-building sessions to ensure participants leave with strategies they can use every day to develop their careers.

Grit and Grace was designed and is delivered by Michelle Murtagh, a Chartered Occupational Psychologist who specialises in the development of resilient leaders and smart teams. To date more than 50 women have benefited from Michelle's expertise. The programme is also an excellent opportunity to connect with other women at similar stages in their careers.

To learn more, or to register, contact- info@leadershipinstitute@qub.ac.uk

Your Voice

Effective communication is at the heart of everything we do. How can we communicate with confidence whilst ensuring what we say resonates with our audience? Different circumstances call for different approaches, and truly effective communicators know how to tailor what they say and how they say it.

These are the principles at the core of 'Your Voice', Women in Business' 2-day bespoke communications and presentation masterclass. Designed and delivered by Andrew Toogood of Proclaim Consulting, Your Voice will give you the practical skills you need to make great presentations, but also to communicate more effectively on a day-to-day basis. The course helps you understand what audiences find most engaging, how they listen and what tools good public speakers use, and how you can put these principles into practice.

'Andrew was excellent and the material was excellent. I gained much more from this than I hoped or expected' Sinead- NIHE

Designed for anyone who needs to communicate effectively with clients or colleagues, Your Voice is an excellent course to learn how to get your messages across.

To register, or learn more about any of our programmes, contact Vicky Moore- vicky@womeninbusinessni.com

Danske Women's Network celebrates successful first year



Jill Robb, Origin Digital; Vicki Davies, Managing Director of Strategy and Corporate Development, Danske Bank; Caroline van der Feltz, HR Director, Danske Bank and Nuala Murphy, founder of 'Lean In' Belfast at the first-ever Danske Bank Women's Network event.

Launched at the start of 2017, Danske Bank's Women's Network was designed to help inspire, educate and empower employees through a comprehensive programme of activity.

Twelve months on and the Women's Network has had a very successful first year with over 150 Danske employees attending a series of Women in Banking events. Employees had the opportunity to hear from senior female leaders in the bank including Vicki Davies, Managing Director of Strategy and Corporate Development and Caroline van der Feltz, HR Director as well as a number of external speakers throughout the year. These included Nuala Murphy, founder of 'Lean In' Belfast; Sinead Doyle, NI Chair of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive of Belfast City Council. Alongside the internal events, the Women's Network also hosted a series of boardroom lunches

to recognise and celebrate local women of influence. The Network is looking forward to welcoming guests to its first Women of Influence lunch of 2018 later this month.

As part of Danske Women's Network's commitment to inspire, Danske Bank was delighted to support TEDx Stormont Women in November. This year has also saw Danske Women's Network introduce the Women in Business Mentoring Programme to Danske. In 2017, five mentees from the bank have benefited from the programme with the bank also providing six mentors. The Network is looking forward to growing the mentoring programme in 2018.

HR Focus for 2018: Closing the Skills Gap Tina McKenzie

Tina McKenzie is Group Managing Director for Staffline companies in Ireland, which includes PeoplePlus NI and Diamond Recruitment Group in Northern Ireland. Using her expertise in global employment strategies and over 20 years of experience in recruitment, Tina discusses how Apprenticeships training and creative workforce solutions can help employers meet their skills gap needs as Brexit and low unemployment introduce new challenges for local employers.

Businesses prosper and fall based on the strength of their teams. At the end of the day a business is a group of people working to achieve a goal and, if there is skills gaps in the team, business suffers. We know then that the recruitment process is crucial in finding those who can slot right into the team from day 1.

But is it that simple anymore?

Local unemployment is at 4%, the lowest point since 2008. Young people are increasingly studying at English universities, with less than a third of graduates returning to NI. With the uncertainty around freedom of movement, employers are seeing fewer applications from EU nationals. The pool of skilled employees is shrinking just as employers are experiencing new growth.

Long Term Skills Investment

When an employer needs to recruit, they usually think a few months ahead of the curve. But with the problems we are facing in Northern Ireland, employers need long-term strategic thinking. Rather than focusing on how to solve the problem in the immediate term, we have to think five or ten years down the line and consider our long-term skills needs.

Young people today are increasingly looking beyond university when it comes to developing their skills for work. While some industries have been quick to promote alternative training opportunities, it still needs said: university degrees are not the be all and end all when it comes to gaining the skills for a prosperous career.

The Apprenticeship Levy has sparked this conversation on a wider scale. Particularly when comparing the debt graduates have to the years of pay and experience an apprentice gains, the benefits to the apprentice and employer are clear. That being said, employers still have a role in persuading young people (and their parents!) that apprenticeships with their company will be a stepping stone into a sustainable career. Training a young person for two to five years will be an economical source of talent whilst developing a conveyor belt of talent for the local economy.

I can hear you now: "I'll train them for two years then they'll leave me to join my competitor!" That could happen, but five years down the line when you are recruiting for a different, higher level role and they apply to re-join the company, you will be grateful you invested in that young person. Your sector as a whole and therefore your company will be all the better for investing in future talent.



Workforce Flexibility

This isn't to say our only solution is long-term. Recruitment agencies have a role in helping employers fill critical gaps in their workforce, whilst adopting a flexible model allowing employers to flex up and down as requirements change. However, there are also some internal changes employers can make in the short to medium term and it requires some creative thinking in workforce management.

Whilst unemployment is at the lowest point in years, the economic inactivity rate tells a different story. Economic inactivity (which includes early retirees, students, those who are ill, and carers such as stay at home mums and dads) is at 28%, the highest level since 2010. Whilst many people in this group may be unable to work due to illness, disability or full-time commitments, this is a key talent pool with skilled prospective employees.

To some people, mental health issues are a barrier to full-time employment, but part-time work could actually be helpful to boost a person's confidence. For a full-time mother, full-time work would mean no one does the school run, but between the hours of 10am and 3pm she could have the perfect skills for your team. Convincing people who have been economically inactive to join the workforce requires a different way of thinking about how we organise work amongst our staff. You may need to reorganise the office desks to accommodate someone who occasionally uses a wheelchair. Job shares between two people can cover the 9am to 5pm working day whilst promoting a more inclusive workspace for working mums.

Sustainable Talent Pool, Sustainable Business

Operational changes are made daily to accommodate margin pressures, so when employers are facing pressure to meet their skills gaps, we have to think seriously about what changes we can make to invest in skills and build a more inclusive workforce.

Answering the problem of our shrinking labour pool will take years to address, but companies who succeed at investing in skills development whilst building a supportive work culture will reap the rewards for years to come through a loyal, sustainable talent pool with increased productivity.



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Social Media Tips for Success Niamh Taylor

Love it or loathe it, there's no escaping social media in business. You need to be where your customers are, and the research is overwhelming – no matter what your business is, your customers are online which means you need to be too. The social media terrain can be a tricky one to manage, with lots of opportunities but often not a lot of guidance on how to exploit these opportunities for your business. These tips will help you make more of your social media channels and get ahead when it comes to social.

Video Content

Video content is crucial for your social media channels, but if you think you haven't the budget for it, think again. You can use your mobile to create simple but extremely effective Facebook Live videos or Instagram Stories, and if you use apps and software like FilmoraGo (on mobile) or Filmora Wondershare (on desktop), you can edit your video content yourself without the need for a huge content budget. This is great for entrepreneurs, small business owners and even larger corporates who are constantly feeling the squeeze on their marketing budgets.

LinkedIn

Think social media channels and you automatically assume Facebook, or maybe Twitter and Instagram. Are you missing out on the opportunities on LinkedIn? This platform is essential if you are in B2B but even if you are a small business owner or entrepreneur, you can use this channel to build your personal and professional network for support and sales opportunities. Join relevant groups, contribute to conversations and find events happening which are of value to you. Don't neglect this channel.

Content planning

No matter what size your business or how many people are in your team, you should be planning out your content for social media in advance so that you achieve your objectives. You need to understand why you are creating your digital content and what purpose it will provide to your audience. Developing an agile content marketing calendar will allow you to plan more effectively but still react quickly to changes and opportunities.



Budget

There's no such thing as a free lunch, and while many people will tell you that social media is a "free" way to promote your business, don't be fooled. You need to dedicate time, resources and budget to your social media efforts. You also can't just post for free on Facebook and see lots of return - you'll need to have some kind of social advertising budget available. With the recent changes to Facebook's news feed announced, brands everywhere will soon be feeling the effect of having their posts removed from user's newsfeeds in favour of updates from friends and family members.

General housekeeping behaviours

Keep your social media accounts active with regular, engaging content and monitor them for comments, messages and reviews that need a response – this is essential practice no matter the size of your brand or the number of people in your team. This adds credibility to your business and today when online customers are so fickle this is a simple practice which can provide genuine returns in the form of brand ambassadors, customer acquisition and retention.

About the Author

Niamh Taylor is the Director of award-winning digital marketing agency, Digital Twenty Four. Based in Omagh and Belfast and serving clients all over Ireland, Digital Twenty Four provides email marketing, social media management, paid advertising, affiliate marketing and content writing services. She regularly mentors businesses, helping them improve their digital marketing skills and develop digital marketing strategies essential for business growth. Find out more at digitaltwentyfour.com



Roseann Kelly, Chief Executive of Women in Business talks about how Diversity is key to Northern Ireland's economy



Companies around the world are being affected by globalisation as it impacts on the ability to access a more mobile, qualified and skilled talent base. Competition remains fierce and research* indicates that diversity can be key to helping a company recruit and retain top talent.

As Northern Ireland seeks to compete in the global economy we must ensure our best talent is at the forefront of this effort. Equality and diversity, a topic that's relevant for all workplaces, regardless of size and sector, is vital to this and as a local business organisation that seeks to represent women and ensure they achieve their full professional potential, Women in Business is committed to driving the diversity agenda.

Indeed, with the evidence clearly recognising that businesses with diverse workforces, senior management teams and boards being more successful and profitable than those that have not, we were inspired to create a Gender Diversity Charter Mark for Northern Ireland which provides proof of diversity initiatives and ethical practises.

The Charter, the first of its kind was launched in October and was brought to life through working hand in hand with five local champions Malcom McKibben, John Healy, Ray Hutchinson, David Gavaghan and the late Paddy Johnston who all realised the importance of diversity and have protocols and practises running throughout their organisations and institutions.

Businesses that sign up to the Charter will commit to advancing gender diversity by addressing areas of unequal gender representation at all levels; removing obstacles faced by women at key points of career development; implementing structural and cultural changes that help advance gender diversity; and putting in place a strategy and action plan to effect change.

Locally large global companies such as Fujitsu, Allstate, Deloitte, and Citi are leading the way in gender equality and research carried out in 2017 by McKinsey Consultants suggested that there is a correlation between gender diverse companies and better results. These global enterprises are ahead of the game and are very aware of the benefits gender equality brings, not only in relation to improved bottom line results, but also alternative viewpoints and easier access to resources

Women in Business is committed to creating a new economy in Northern Ireland, one based on inclusive growth and we should be inspired by the great work that is already being done. I am firm in my belief that gender diversity in the workplace will encourage this growth and the Charter will support this by ensuring that organisations at the very highest level have embraced this cultural shift.

I would urge all local businesses to address the issue of diversity within their workplace and looking forward to 2018 sign up to the Charter at www.chartermarkni.org.

.....
Roseann Kelly

GDPR what is it and do we really need it?



Jenny Robinson
Cleaver Fulton Rankin

How can you prepare your business for GDPR?

If GDPR is not already a high agenda issue for your business then it should be. It is important that businesses start to prepare now and we would recommend the following steps:

- Carry out a data flow analysis
- Review IT and document management systems and data retention policies and procedures
- Review contracts with third parties to ensure that they are GDPR compliant
- Ensure policies and procedures cover the new rights for data subjects
- Consider the appointment of a Data Protection Officer
- Train all staff who are likely to be involved in the processing of personal data
- Introduce a Data Breach response plan to ensure that detection and breach notification to the ICO, where required, will happen promptly

This article has been produced for general information purposes and further advice should be sought from a professional advisor. If you require any assistance in relation to GDPR then do not hesitate to contact Aisling Byrne, a.byrne@cfrlaw.co.uk or Michael King m.king@cfrlaw.co.uk at Cleaver Fulton Rankin and we would be happy to help.

.....

Jenny Robinson

**Cleaver
Fulton
Rankin**

For those of us who are old enough to remember what life was like 20 years ago (no Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and tablets were only for ingestion) it is easy to understand why the UK Data Protection Act 1998 is now outdated and no longer fit for purpose.

The European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) is a European law designed to protect our data in an increasingly technologically advanced world. The GDPR will come into force on 25 May 2018. The UK government has confirmed that, irrespective of Brexit, it must have a data protection regime in place that enables it to trade with the EU and draft legislation is currently winding its way through the UK Parliament.

What are the key changes that businesses in Northern Ireland should be aware of?

The GDPR consist of 99 Articles and is 88 pages long! Although many of the key principles under the 98 Act remain, the key changes are as follows:

- **Fines:** The financial consequences of getting it wrong could be catastrophic. The maximum fine for a data breach will increase to Euro 20 million or 4% of annual worldwide turnover. Individuals who have suffered a data breach can also claim compensation for financial loss or distress;
- **Consent:** It will be more difficult to obtain and it must be as easy to withdraw consent as to give it.
- **New Rights:** The rights to erasure of data, data portability and to object to profiling activities are being introduced;
- **Data Protection Officers (DPO):** The appointment of a DPO will be mandatory for some organisations;
- **Accountability, Reporting and Privacy Notices:** Businesses will be required to demonstrate compliance with the GDPR to include maintaining records, conducting Data Protection Impact Assessments and issuing Privacy Notices.



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120 business women mentored



285 women supported into employment and self-employment



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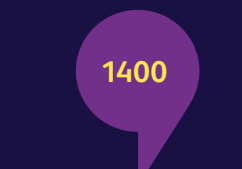
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1400 senior business women & men attend



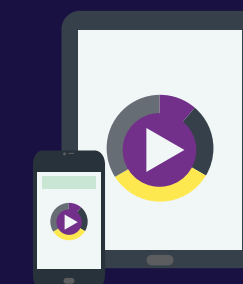
1 Awards Gala



1 Chairs Lunch



2 Inspirational Conferences



For the first time, the International Women in Technology Conference will be live-streamed to Northern Ireland



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An aerial view of a city skyline, likely New York City, with numerous skyscrapers. A large red semi-transparent shape, resembling a stylized 'F' or a digital interface element, is overlaid on the left side of the image. Inside this red shape, the text 'Together we can create new opportunities and value. We call this Digital Co-creation.' is written in white. Below this, three red curved lines sweep across the city, labeled 'multiple insights', 'digital expertise', and 'data' in white text. A bright red starburst or lens flare effect is positioned where these lines converge towards the right.

Together we
can create new
opportunities
and value.

We call this Digital
Co-creation.

multiple insights
digital expertise
data

Digital technology touches all of our lives. At Fujitsu, we bring together customers and partners from different industries and combine them with digital technology and expertise to create new value and opportunities. Find out what Digital Co-creation could mean for your business at www.fujitsu.com/digital-cocreation.

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