

Frequently Asked Questions



We already have a ‘women in leadership’ programme within our workplace, so why should we engage with balancetogether?

We need to improve representation across all minority groups. Why do you only focus on gender?

- While we applaud the fact that you are investing in your female talent, there is also work to do on the organisation’s side. You can train women to be more assertive, confident, etc until you are blue in the face, but if the organisation that she works within is not willing to accept cultural change at every level, then your training programmes will not be successful. At balancetogether we believe in ‘fixing the culture, not fixing the women’.
- Gender-balance is our passion and area of shared expertise and experience, but much of what we do focusses on the creation of inclusive cultures. We firmly believe that equality is not about sharing out a cake. If an organisation becomes more embracing of women, then that does not mean that there are less opportunities for men, or for any other protected characteristic.



***How do we convince our HR team
that this is a strategic priority?***

- **The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) flagged EDI as a key priorities for HR moving towards 2030. 'To thrive in 2030 and beyond, the people profession should:**
 - **Use expertise on people and people management practices to develop effective D&I strategy. .. include influence senior leaders and the organisation to champion equality, adapt current ways of working and people management practices to progress D&I.**
 - **Be curious and keep knowledge on D&I and demographic shifts up to date – this is a complex and evolving area, so people professionals will need to be equipped with up-to-date understanding of D&I to create meaningful change.**
 - **Look outwards to understand the systemic barriers to D&I; challenge existing and emerging biases and consider what the barriers are outside immediate organisational contexts.**
 - **Take an evidence-based approach, especially when it comes to forecasting and understanding demographic shifts.'**
 - **Prioritise and dedicate resource to D&I; while D&I is not something 'done' by people teams in a vacuum, the people profession have a key role to play**



How do we convince our senior leaders of the value of engaging with balancetogether?

We've had consultants in before; their solutions are put forward, but nothing ever changes.

- The proof is always in the pudding. We won't embark on any activity without a clear understanding of how we are going to measure the impact of what we do. We can work with your HR and Finance teams to understand what management information is available, or design new KPIs that evidence the impact of all your hard work. Our ambition is to support you to identify new levers for growth in your organisation by untapping the potential energy and results to be gained from better gender-balance
- We share your frustrations and our business is focussed on delivering practical interventions, linked to KPIs, that will deliver an impact on your business. We have worked in operational roles ourselves and understand the necessity of targeted work that delivers value



How does your pricing work?

- **We charge a staggered fee for our diagnostic work, depending on the size of the organisation. If you want us to deliver and implement solutions into your business, this is priced on a day-rate or a project basis.**

Who do we need to engage from our senior team?

- **Achieving gender-balance is good for business; it's a proven fact. We therefore request to have access to your senior team. While our fact-finding meeting may take place with the Director responsible for HR and senior members of the HR team, part of our process is making sure there is engagement from the top. We want to see Board level commitment to improving gender-balance.**



*We already run an engagement survey.
Why do you suggest that we undertake a
further diagnostic exercise?*

*Why do you want to hold focus groups
with our people?*

- Our diagnostic specifically addresses gender and how gender has a bearing on different points of the employee lifecycle. It's impossible to gauge this level of detail from a standard engagement survey. Our diagnostic presents information from a different angle, giving you ideas for new levers for growth and new solutions to old problems
- While the diagnostic survey secures us our quantitative data, we need to qualify this by speaking to targeted groups of people, for example, we might choose to speak to a group of senior women, a group of parents, a group of people recently back from maternity/ shared parental leave, etc. We can hold focus groups, and/or individual/paired interviews, depending on the organisation's needs, in the fact-finding meeting, or responses from survey.



How can we reassure our workforce that survey responses are confidential?

Do we have to follow your method end-to-end?

We have a very capable internal OD team, and we just want to run the diagnostic to understand what our priorities are as an organisation and where we are going to have the most impact.

- **Our survey is hosted on a 3rd party platform, ensuring the best possible security and confidentiality for users. Ideally you provide us with your people's email addresses for us to upload into our survey tool. Your people then receive an email link to click through to the survey. Alternatively, you can send out the survey link in an email from your HR team. In our experience, people are more willing to complete a survey if it comes from an external source, as it's perceived to be more confidential**
- **When we analyse the data, we look for trends across groups of no less than 7 to protect confidentiality of individuals.**
- **We completely understand and while we would love to work with you through to completion of your projects and to review the impact of your work, we also pride ourselves in being able to leave you with a highly practical set of recommendations that your internal OD team can work with.**



We don't really have the internal resource to project-manage the recommendations and actions that come out of this.

Help!

Some of your solutions would represent major change projects for us.

Where do we start?

- Steps 5-7 of our method are designed to take the headache away from you. While we will need internal people to work with and share tasks out to, we can project-manage the activity and keep you updated on progress. Step 7 is all about evaluating the progress that you have made as an organisation and how this is impacting your data.
- Our diagnostic exercise will reveal where your biggest barriers are and will give us a prioritised list of recommendations. We can start with the area that we think is going to deliver the biggest impact and then evaluate over time to get round to all the areas that need addressing



Some of your solutions don't really seem gender-specific, so how can I be sure they are going to get the results that we need to see?

Can you work in my sector?

- Exactly right, but if your performance review process is found to be ineffective in supporting women to progress, then it needs to be addressed. Hopefully everyone in your organisation will benefit from more effective people management practices, but we should start to see that women are getting more recognition through a better way of managing performance and this is an important organisational touchpoint to address. There is no point developing new skills and behaviours in your female population if the mechanism for them to get recognised and promoted is ineffective
- With over 20 years' consultancy experience we have worked with around 100 different clients from diverse and wide-ranging sectors and are extremely proud of our results.
- Our clients are always impressed with our ability to work with their industry experience, combining it with our expertise to create meaningful impact.

Meet the team

Christine Gilkes

A change and leadership specialist, Chris brings the know how to shift cultures and change behaviours



I'm a facilitator at heart and love to explore options with my clients. But don't be fooled, as I am also a hard task master and establishing your purpose and goal achievement are critically important to me, as is delivering and getting a return on your investment.

I am curious about organisations and how they work, I ask a lot of questions and reflect on the best approach to working with clients, and ultimately the best solutions to drive organisations forward. I am practical and pride myself on tailored and applied next steps



Karen Milner

Former HR Director on a gender-balanced Board, Karen brings a wealth of knowledge and practical experience