

FTSE Board Stories



A Non-Executive Directors Perspective

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It is testament to Burberry's open and inclusive culture that it has been placed in the FTSE 100 top twenty best performers for many years and this year is ranked in 5th place with 45% women on the Burberry Board.

Burberry has a strong track record of gender diversity, and I am proud to serve as a Non-Executive Director. I am one of five women on Burberry's 11-person board, which includes one woman Executive Director. A third of Burberry's executive team are women and there is a continual focus on ensuring that there is a pipeline of female talent to continue to develop this.

During my time leading and serving as an Executive and a Non-Executive on Boards, I have experienced first-hand the benefits that gender balance brings. Diversity in any form leads to more rounded discussions and better decision-making and this is of course good for governance.

There is no question that women in senior leadership positions inspire future women leaders and we need more of them. The pace of change needs to be much faster. I also believe in creating a meritocracy that works for all.

Women make up 70% of Burberry's more than 3,000 strong workforce in the UK, and among them there are talented individuals who have the potential to be the next generation of board members at Burberry and other FTSE companies.

As leaders, we have the responsibility and privilege of helping to ensure there is a strong development framework, mentoring and the right culture that encourages women to stay and progress.

Companies that are agile and find ways to help employees balance work and family retain that important pool of talent that is women – and men with kids. We also need to ensure that when we are making appointments we have diverse shortlists and are widening the pool we search in.

A recent study* showed that if companies hire and promote women and men to manager positions at equal rates, we will almost close the gender gap in management in the next 10 years. That will take a lot of hard work and it will require leadership and cultural change. The work Burberry is doing puts them in a strong position to achieve that.

*<https://womenintheworkplace.com/>