

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Do you really know the person you are working with? Do you really know the person sitting next to you in the office? Do you know what is their story? It is very human to only see the success that one projects to the world (and in the office) and it is easier to share success stories than to share the real stories, behind-the-scenes stories.

This circle will focus on celebrating individuals who have demonstrate heroic strengths in their personal lives, and yet still able to achieve their huge career ambitions in their work lives.

### "Everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story."

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.

BT

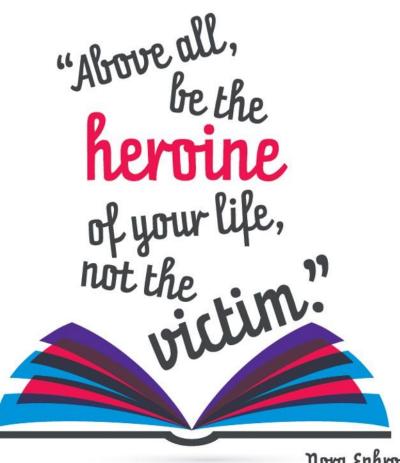


#### **Heroes-in-Us**

Our aim is... to break the stigma of sharing personal heroic stories in the corporate world.

We believe... "It takes more courage to be vulnerable than to be brave."

# **BI-WEEKLY** F2F MEETING WITH INTERNAL & EXTERNAL SPEAKERS



Nora Ephron

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.





Welcome to our 1st Lean-In Meeting "Heroes in Us" 15 Aug 2018 "Heroes in Us"
Lean-in Circle
#1
15 Aug 2018

### "Hair-Fairy Godmother"

**Lucinda Ellery** Founder of Lucinda Ellery Consultants UK and USA







Christina Chan Head of Marketing, M&PS, BT Founder and Band Manager of Change Bandits Founder of "Heroes in Us"

## LUCINDA ELLERY

**Lucinda Ellery** Founder of Lucinda Ellery Consultants UK and USA

#### The Story behind her company

Just like many other women in Britain, Lucinda Ellery experienced the physical and emotional turmoil of hair loss at a young age due to Alopecia Areata (AA). She lost her father when she was just 10 years old and her hair immediately started to fall out.

In a society where looks can mean everything, Lucinda had first-hand experience of the effects that hair loss can have on a woman's life, and how many people do not fully comprehend the deep personal impact of the condition.

Lucinda's own personal challenges of using wigs on a daily basis inspired her to research how to provide women with more permanent hair loss solutions – something that could be worn 24 hours a day, something that looked natural and also that could be looked after like your own hair.



#### https://www.lucindaellery-hairloss.co.uk/

Sadly, chronic hair loss is not something that can be magically cured by your GP, and all too often it seems that the medical profession does not take the condition seriously enough.

This inspired her to create a unique hair replacement system to improve the density and appearance of a ladies hair.

She first started working with hair extensions in 1984 and this enabled her to look after ladies who wanted to add more volume to their hair. She then met her first client with Trichotillomania and this meeting resulted in Lucinda creating and developing the revolutionary Intralace System<sup>™</sup> which is now used by ladies managing various hair loss conditions

### "Godsend to women"

## LUCINDA ELLERY



If I am a superhero, I am... Hair-Fairy Godmother



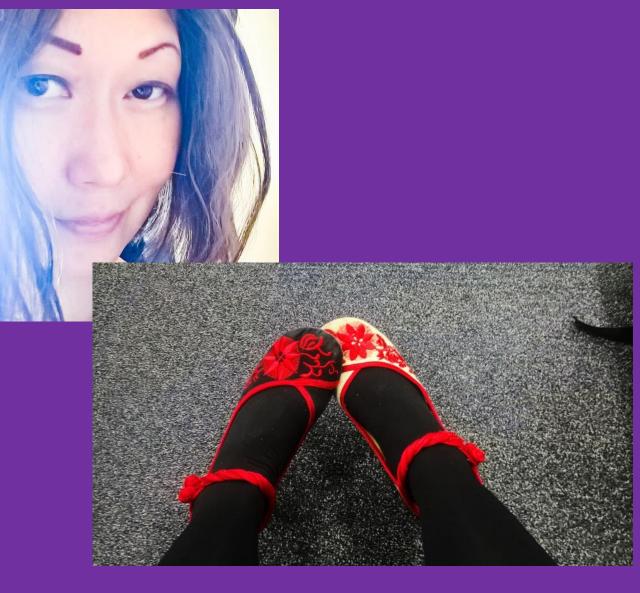


Lucinda's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion
1. Follow your intuition – it's your guiding compass
2. A thought is a tangible thing – you can change it!
3. If you love what you do and do what you love, everything you want can come to you

## CHRISTINA CHAN

Christina Chan Head of Marketing, M&PS, BT Founder and Band Manager of Change Bandits Founder of "Heroes in Us"





## **CHRISTINA CHAN**

#### Mystique from X-Men.

She is a mutant. Her mutant power is the ability of shape-shifting, being able to turn into anyone. Mystique assumes all physical attributes of those she is mimicking including finger prints, retinal patterns and she can shift her vocal cords to match their voice. However, she cannot replicate powers of people she copies. Her mutation also slows her aging process. Mystique is an extremely skilled hand to hand combatant and also highly proficient with a wide variety of weaponry. She is a brilliant tactician and strategist in terrorist and commando operations, and adept at martial arts and information technology.



### If I am a superhero, I am... Mystique

My Story in 3 parts:

(1) how I met Gollum from Lord of the Rings and then met Lucinda, my fairy godmother

(2) how I know the best times to get hospitalised in an NHS hospital

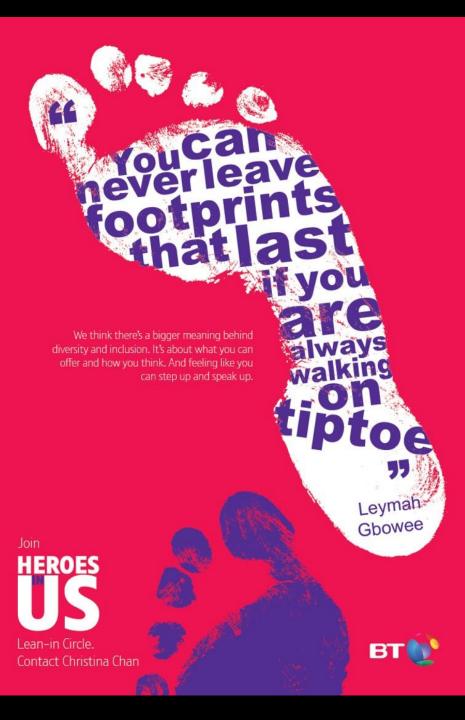
(3) how I learnt the best hide and seek places

#### Christina's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion

- Being so intensely driven at work may not be a bad sign... sometimes it is the only thing you feel you are in control of when everything else is going wrong
- 2. Words can carry different meanings to different people... so, take the time to know the person to get it right
- 3. Everyone has a different interpretation of work-life balance... don't generalise



### Welcome to our 2nd Lean-In Meeting "Heroes in Us" 20 Sept 2018





## Super-mom"

# Ction Themas Berry



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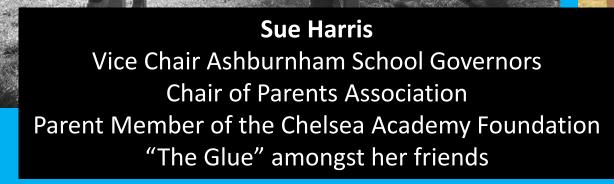
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### "Super-dad"

#### Sue Harris Vice Chair Ashburnham School Governors Chair of Parents Association Parent Member of the Chelsea Academy Foundation "The Glue" amongst her friends

Phil Baulch CIO of M&PS, BT Drummer in Change Bandits (Best UK Band) Diversity & Inclusion Champion, BT Felix's Champion

## **SUE HARRIS**



## "Super-mom"



## **SUE HARRIS**



"I obviously had to enlist the help of the boys who have decided that I am Mary Poppins, with my healthy disregard of rules and regulations, and my large handbag full of stuff"

If I am a superhero, I am... Mary Poppins



Sue's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion 1. Don't be afraid to put your hand up! 2. Get involved in your local community

3. Be clear about what you really want to get out it

## PHIL BAULCH





Phil Baulch, CIO of M&PS, BT and drummer in Change Bandits (Best UK Band)

## "Super-dad"

### **PHIL BAULCH** If I am a superhero, I am...

... someone who could make others see the strength in people. Felix is a disabled child and for me, it's about what he can do and not what he can't.

Everyone is too quick to judge and make opinion – but inside every person there is a person, with real strength and qualities to be cherished.

Sorry it's not a real movie character but most of those are physical in nature rather than being able to change perception or thoughts.



TO WORK

BTO

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NE M

#### Phil's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion

- 1. Never give up, just keep going!
- 2. Focus on what you can do, not what you cannot do -
- 3. Make sure you have space to be yourself



Welcome to our 3rd Lean-In Meeting "Heroes in Us" 14 Nov 2018





Marcus Veda Famous DJ #goodlordveda Rocket Yoga Instructor Rocket Scientist Black Belt @Bujinkan Yeo Dojo Student of Art of Yinja Philosopher Macha-latte fan & promoter Father of Phoenix Veda

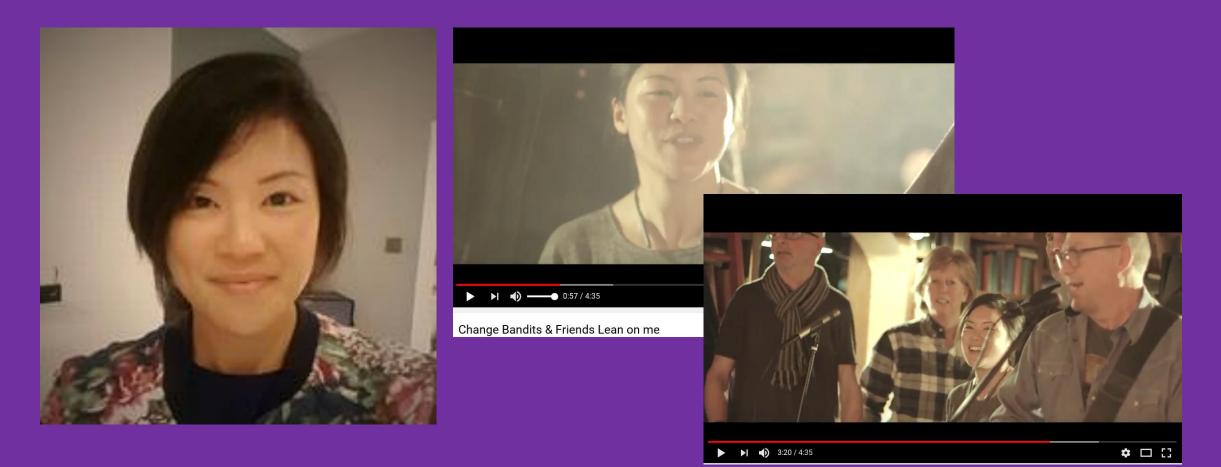


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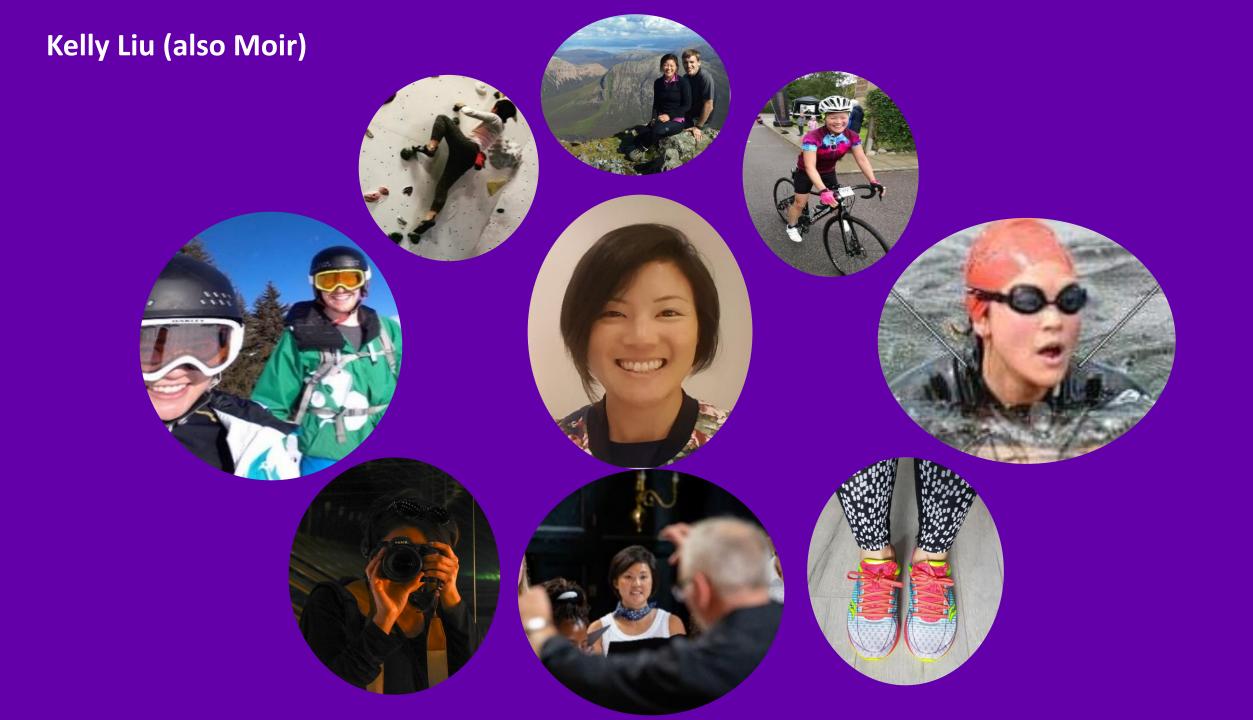
Kelly Liu Head of Pricing, M&PS BT London Choir Ironman Triathlon Competitive Sports Athlete Swims, cycles, runs Has long term relationship with sports Her husband is as sporty as her A winner



## **KELLY LIU**

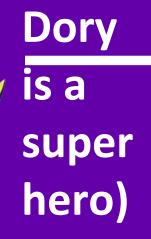


### "Ironwoman + BT London Choir"



#### If I had to pick a hero...

# HEROES WIKI



(Yes,

When life gets you down, do you wanna know what you've gotta do? Just keep swimming!

DORY, FINDING NEMO

Adult	Teenager	Young	
Full Name	Dory		
Alias	Little Blue		
Origin	Finding Nemo (2003)		
Occupation	Friend of Marlin and Nemo		
Powers/Skills	Bilingual (can speak English and Whale)		
Новву	Singing, having on jellyfish, swi on the currents tles, forgetting "P. Sherman, 4	mming, riding with the tur- stuff, saying	

Way, Sydney"

Goals	Help Marlin locate his missing son, Nemo ( <i>Finding Nemo</i> , succeeded) Find her family ( <i>Finding Dory</i> , succeeded)
Family	Jenny (mother) Charlie (father) Nemo (adoptive brother)
Friends/Allies	Marlin, Destiny, Hank, Bailey, Crush, Bruce, Anchor, Chum, Squirt, Moonfish, Whale, Ni- gel, Becky, Otters, Teacher Ray, Tad, Sheldon, Pearl
Enemies	Bruce (formerly), Anchor (for- merly), Chum (formerly), An- glerfish, Jellyfish, Seagulls, Cleveland Truck Drivers, Gi- ant Squid, Police Officers
Type of Hero	Hero with Mental Illness, Am- nesiac Aquatic Hero, Pure of Heart, Optimist, Fish





#### "anything is possible"











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HACE

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### Kelly's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion

- 1. Anything is possible! The body and mind are capable of amazing things, so believe you can and commit to a plan. If you think you aren't an endurance runner, read "Born to Run" by Chris McDougall
- 2. Make time for regular positive pep talks to quiet those negative nae-saying thoughts. It might be going for a run, swim or cycle allows that time or go spend time with positive people.
- 3. Seek inspiration and remember that you will be inspiring others. When you see others who have overcome challenges to succeed it can provide you that drive you need to achieve your goal. Ahead of my Ironman, I joined a Facebook group for women triathletes and there were amazing tales of overcoming broken bones/ bereavements/ obesity to complete triathlons and it was just such a boost. And if you remember that the journey you are taking will be inspiring others then you'll feel like it was all worth it.





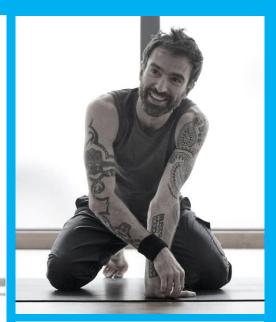
## **MARCUS VEDA**





#### www.marcusvedayoga.com

## "Rocket Yoga Master"



#### Intro

- Yoga Teacher at triyoga
- rocket scientist at Yogarise Peckham
- Black Belt at Bujinkan YEO DOJO
- Certified Yoga Instructor at Yotopia
- Ego Reaper at Dead Yogis Society
- 🚊 Yoga Teacher at Indaba Yoga
- Yoga Teacher at Marcus Veda & Rocket Yoga London
- Former Yinja and Rocket therapist at Light Centre
- Former Yoga Teacher at The Power Yoga Company
- Studied Art of Yinja at The Yoga People

## **MARCUS VEDA**

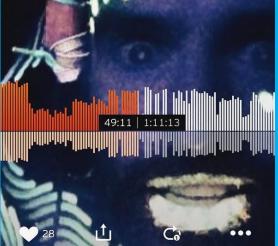


### If I am a superhero, I am... #goodlordveda



#### From music...

Marcus Veda YoGa MiXes Summer Love in Shoreditch71 MiXx - Marcs Veda & Saucha Beats

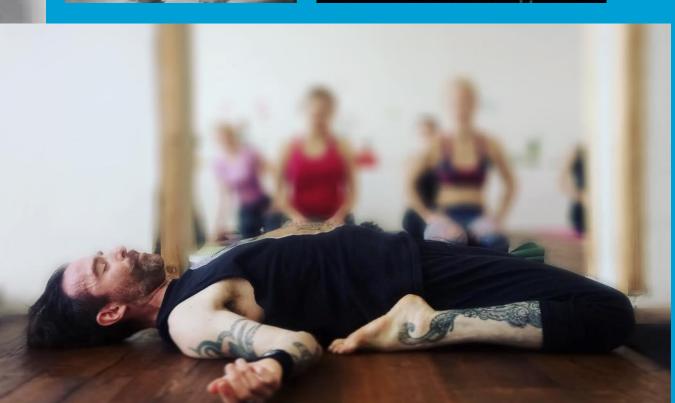


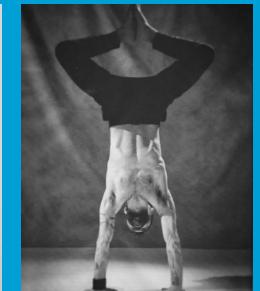






#### ... to rocket yoga







#### Huge followings – in London..

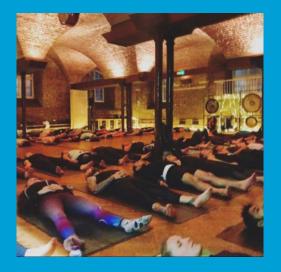
What does Dead Yogis Society mean to you? 100 like-minded people moving as one, lifting up, falling out but always in it together from the first salute to the last gong. Tribal breath cannot be beaten to nourish the soul.









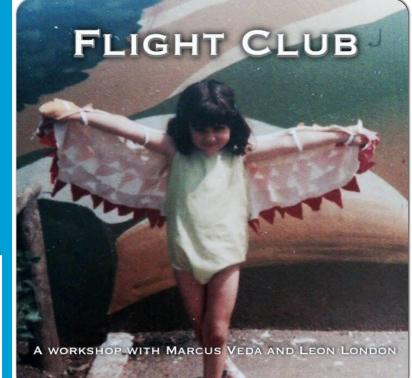


including workshops and retreats (UK and abroad)

tri**yoga** talks...



SCHOOL





#### FLYING WITHOUT MOVING: A YIN YOGA GONG EXPERIENCE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2018 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM TRIYOGA SHOREDTICH (MAP)

Thy will be still. A 2hr journey into yin followed by (more than just) a gong bath to take you into a deep, transcendent meditation. With 3 master gongs, shamanic drums, singing bowls and a menagerie of unusual and rare instruments, Cherub and Tim create a sound exploration of heavy therapeutic vibrations as Marcus leads the extended practice.

#### ROCKET ON TOUR - SLOVENIA

SAT, DEC 15. 2018, 11:30 AM - SUN, DEC 16. 2018, 5:30 PM NATARAJA STUDIO (MAP)

Return to the Europe's best kep secret city - Ljubljana - for a weekend of workshops in Rocket and Yin

#### https://www.marcusvedayoga.com/workshops/



#### ROCKET & RESTORE

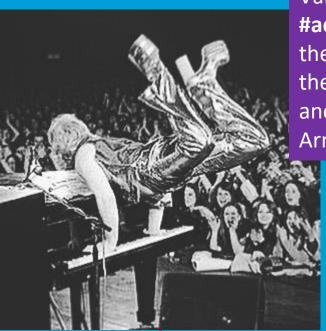
lbiza, 5 nights √ 24th April 2016 A lush opportunity to let go of winter blues and 'Rocket' yourself into Spring on the iconic Island of Ibiza.

> 4 choi his inselling sond has to other your be cased in a beautiluty darked lowly inso insotional faminouse. Vested amongs 25,000 acres of private land, it soads amozing views, a staming post numerous encose, lowing areas, of view the groves, nammock spats and a purpose built geodesic yogo dome. Visit are so enchanted they raren' want to leave, built you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on put if you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on put if you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on put if you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on put if you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on put if you do, speatcacture hill water tota are on

your doorstep and 5 minutes drive takes you to a overly local iberiaan wilage. Ibiza's best beaches, cates, boas and clubs are no more than 10/15 mil brive away, with the arpart being within very

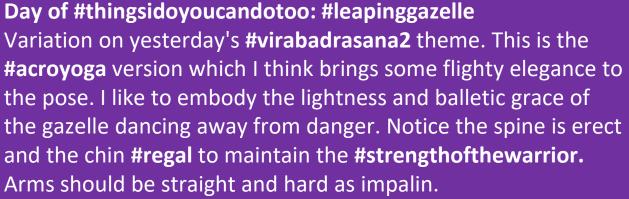






What was your favourite subject in school and why?

Art. For the freedom. I loved pretty much everything except maths to be fair which is why I'm trying to right that wrong in my classes these days **#yoganometry** 











#urdhvamukhapaschimottanasana on a #bench with a #dog in a #park. Nobody remembers the name of this pose in class, fewer ppl can do it. Including me, so I use a bench to hold me up and scenery to distract. Snowboat is no joke. 🛞 Continuing the seasonal series of #nothotyoga. Today we have #navasana with #nasikagra #drishti. Focus on the chimney nearest the tip of your nose and float your boat til your cheeks freeze, or you reach samadhi (whichever comes first.)



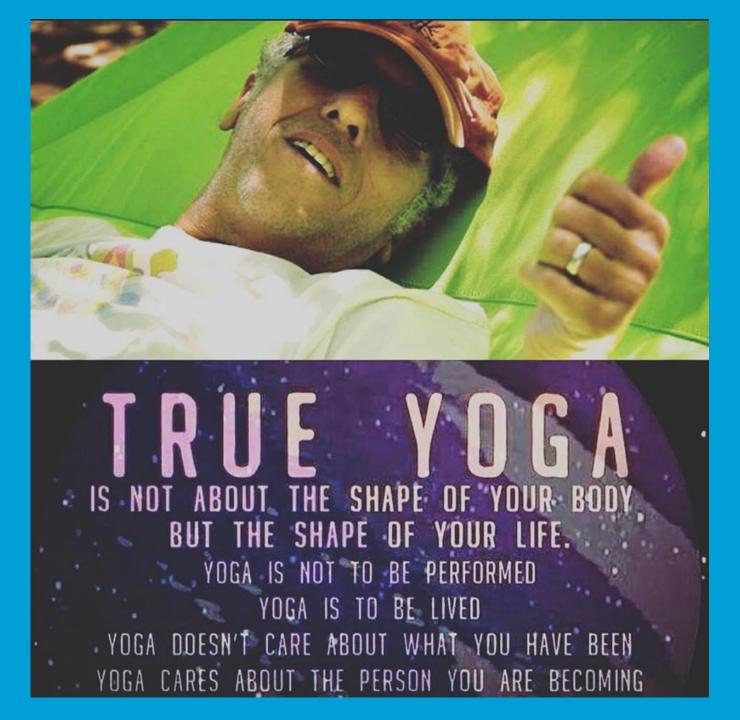
What is your strongest memory from when you were in school? Autumn term football training in the freezing rain in tiny shorts. The Win Hof started early.



Asana tips: Clearly I'm looking good in this pose, but what is my intention? Alignment



From our founder Larry Schultz... the <u>#rocketman</u>.



## Healthy in mind, in body and in

soul

FAIRTRADE

: saclema

100% pure white tea matcha



40ge



OMBA ACAL 8 BLUEBET

OMBAR

COCONUT 60%

Organic raw chocolate infused with smooth coconut cream BIO LIVE CULTURES



Who are your teachers? The list is endless but right now I'm learning a lot from Phoenix Veda





Practice, practice and practice



## Marcus's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion

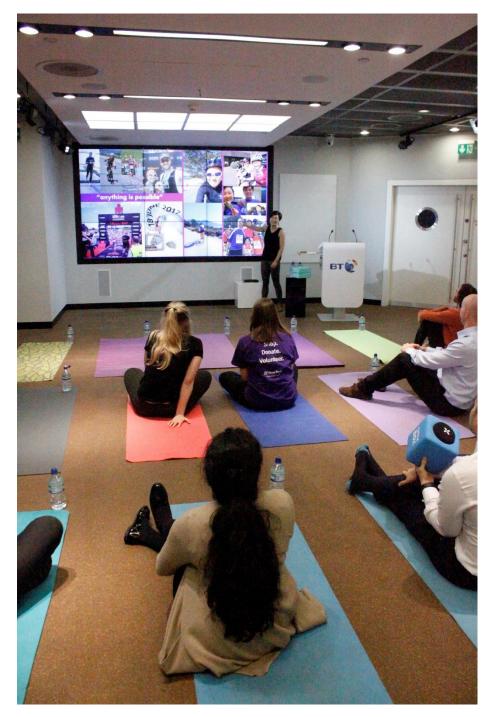
- 1. Don't be afraid of change. When I was a DJ, that lifestyle/job became all I knew and when I had to find something, it felt like starting from scratch in a totally different world, but I just looked to what (else) I loved doing and a job I never imagined slowly presented itself. Change is always scary but an inevitable and positive factor of life. The more you embrace it, the easier and more rewarding it will be.
- 2. Your "inner critic" is just a voice from the part of the brain that tries to keep you out of danger, but it focussed on the negative because we don't need to worry about the good stuff. So every time it says, "you can't do this" or "you're not good enough at this" acknowledge what it's saying and ignore it, just go and do the thing cos you have to fail at anything at least a few times before you can succeed but the critic doesn't want you to even try. You're good enough and you don't have to be the best to try your best.
- **3.** If you're not doing something you love for your work, do something you love outside of work and dedicate allocates time to it. Value what you love doing as equal to, if not more, than how you earn money. If it's not possible to combine the two, find a way to stress less about work-life and live real life more. Step back once in a while and ask yourself how important, really, is ANYTHING you do between the hours of 9-5 every day. Once you realise it's not, you can get on with it with less attachment, less pressure, less fear and probably better results.



# IMAGES FROM THE SESSION













"I hope the fathers and mothers of little girls will look at them and say yes, women can"

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.

Join HEROES US Lean-in Circle. Contact Christina Chan



Welcome to our 4th Lean-In Meeting "Heroes in Us" 18 Dec 2018



use bottle policy Next, she wants to fight against air pollution To minimise cars on the road, she walks to school Has a 5 year old brother, Ethan who wants to build a submarine to suck up rubbish in the ocean

BTO

**Alexis Ying-Ying Lloyd** 

7 year old girl

Changed the school's single

Ethan with his submarine idea

Amelia and her colouring bag

## "Conan the Barbarian"

Andy Taylor Regional Sales Manager, L&SE Surrogate dad for cubs scouts Fisherman Marathon runner Cycling Cross channel rowing School governor

Multi-charity fundraiser Raised more than £30k since 2000

Oliver and his mini pastry

Alexis with her 'save the whale from plastic'

**"Incredible** 

Hulk"

Exit

## **4<sup>th</sup> Lean In, 18 Dec** CHAMPIONS OF GREAT CAUSES

External speaker: **Alexis Ying-Ying Lloyd** (7 year old who changed the single use water bottle policy at her school)



# If I am a superhero, I am... Incredible Hulk



#### Alexis shared her story...

on how she convinced her school headmaster to change the school policy on single use bottle policy on school trips. Her quest started when she found out how a whale swallowed an average of 30 plastic bags!

Next she says, she wants to stop air pollution - and she has started doing her part by walking to school, instead of being driven to school.





**Alexis Ying-Ying Lloyd** 

7 year old girl Changed her school's single use bottle policy Walks to school Climbs trees, rollerblade, etc... Change Bandits Junior – lead singer Has a 5 year old brother, Ethan who wants to build a submarine to suck up rubbish in the ocean

#### Hello my name is Alexis.

This is a picture (show picture) that I made in art class. It's a picture of a whale... with 30 plastic bags inside it.

A few weeks after I drew the picture, I visited the Natural History Museum and saw an exhibition about whales. The exhibition was very interesting. Did you know that some whales can dive down 3000 meters? The exhibition showed the life and threats of a whale. One of the main threats that a whale faces is... plastic. I felt something had to be done.

After many discussions with my family on what I could do, I came up with an idea.

I wrote a letter to my headmaster. In my letter, I suggested that our school stop providing us with a single use bottle of water in our school trips lunches. Everyday, we need to bring our own water bottles to school, so why can't we bring it on school trips? I did some math and calculated that as a school we were using at least 400-500 single use water bottle for school trips a year. I explained that I wanted to do something about it to help the whales and other sea life.

I didn't hear from him for 2 weeks. And one lunchtime, my teacher announced to me that I have a special guest for lunch. It was my headmaster!!!!

He sat down with me and we talked about my letter. Although my friends were sitting around me, I was still feeling a little uneasy and nervous about my headmaster's presence. He explained that, the reason we were given those bottles is so that we could throw it away afterwards, to make our bags lighter. He also said that the single use water bottle will not leak and it is ok if it went missing. He said that we could put the bottles into the recycling bins when we got back to school. I sat and listened to him but did not respond. But this was what I was thinking.

#### **EXCUSES, EXCUSES, EXCUSES!**

If I could carry my sandwich, fruit, crisp, penguin biscuit and my drink for lunch, surely I could carry just my water bottle on the way back.

We could all check our bottles for leakage before our trip. If it does leak, it is only water and it will dry.

We would learn to be more responsible for our own things if we brought our own bottles.

My younger brother asked, where are the recycling bins in school? There was none! What we are taught is Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. We should be reducing first!

I thought if I could not change my headmaster's mind, I can spread the word of what I am trying to do. I talked to my friends and their family about my letter to the headmaster. They were very supportive and as passionate as me on this cause. That boosted my determination. I wrote to my headmaster again. In my letter, I told him I did not agree with his response. I suggested that instead of totally stopping to give out the bottles, at least give us the option to bring our own bottles.

He said that he will not stop giving out single use water bottles on school trips, as he thinks that his reasons were stronger than mine. There was a school trip to London Zoo after my letters to headmaster. My friends and I tried to persuade our teachers to let us bring our own water bottle but they did not allow it. Even though my teachers agreed with us, they had to follow the headmasters instructions. We felt annoyed, defeated, angry and confused. Why would my headmaster not allow such a small easy change that could help the sea life?

Over the next week, Blue Planet II was on TV. Everyone was talking about plastic and the sea life. The news reported that Natural history museum, London Zoo and even Buckingham Palace was looking at ways to cut down and even ban the sale of single use water bottles and straws. My headmaster still stood by his decision.

2 months past since my second letter. One day, my teacher announced that there was going to be another school trip. Before she could tell us where we were going, my classmates put up his hand and ask 'are you going to let us bring our own water bottles?'., and she said 'yes, you have the choice to bring your own water bottle.'

#### What changed my headmaster's mind? I will never know. But I'd like to think that my letter had something to do with it.

Now, my brother Ethan who loves recycling and rubbish trucks is asking the school for recycling bins.

One of Alexis' letters to her school headmaster, Mr Cozens

20/11/17 Dear Mr cozens? I went to the Lordon 200 tably. I had lots of fun but I was not entirely happy because I had to carry a single use water bottle. I brought my own bottle that does not leak , but my teachers did not allow me to bring it. Which bog is heavier? Chocotate crisp apple Sandwiches bottle I Fire I can carry this bag toto the thip I on I know the teachers are warried about leakages but if we all check our bottles there will be no leaks. Please stop giving us single use bottles! PSI My brother Ethan in nursery would like the School to have recycling bins He also says too much plastic is not good for the environment. press My Friends and their parents will help "Some the sea unimals. Will you help too? see you at lunch!

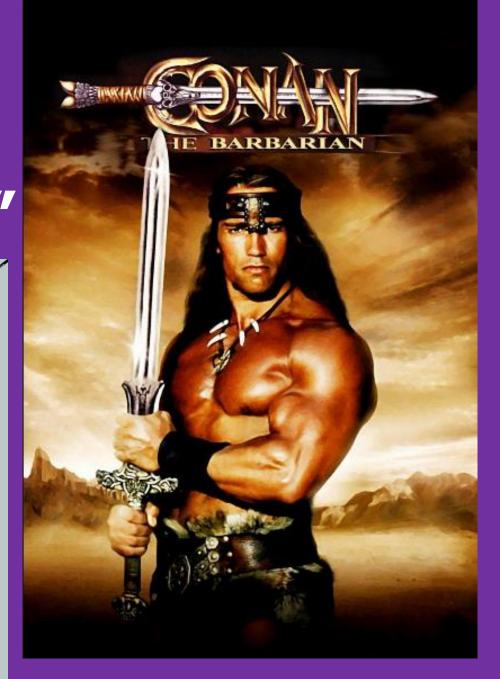
## 4<sup>th</sup> Lean-In, 18 Dec CHAMPIONS OF GREAT CAUSES

## Internal BT speaker : Andy Taylor (Regional Sales Manager, LSE + Multi-charity fundraiser)



## If I am a superhero, I am... "Conan the Barbarian"





#### 2000 - 2002

Acted as a "surrogate dad" for cub scouts who did not have a parent on father and son camping adventures

#### 2006 - 2018

Helped create a top rated carp fishery in Champagne-Ardenne France - built a fishing lodge and 1 bedroom chalet

#### 2006

Raised £5,000 for Breast Cancer Care

London Marathon **2012 and 2013** Raised £4,500 for NSPCC

#### 2015

Cross channel rowing and raised £11,000 for the Ahoy charity to aid children with disability to sail

#### 2016

Rode the Prudential 100 mile Olympic cycling route and raised £1,200 for Cherry Trees charity for children with disabilities and learning difficulties

#### 2016

Organised a charity golf day and raised £500 for the London Air Ambulance

#### 2017

Sponsored head shave for Helen Rollason Cancer Charity and raised £1,200

#### 2018

Organised a Summer Ball and raised £6,500 for Helen Rollason Cancer Charity

2018, Sept 18

Delivered BT phone box to Villiers-Pluich France to mark 100th year anniversary of WW1 ending

Almost forgot, I was also a school governor for 7 years ③







Andy Taylor Regional Sales Manager, L&SE Surrogate dad for cubs scouts Fisherman Marathon runner Cycling Cross channel rowing School governor

Multi-charity fundraiser Raised more than £30k since 2000

#### Andy's story and advice on Diversity & Inclusion

- (1) set yourself goals and challenges
- (2) doing something good for a cause/person makes you feel good
- (3) aim to lead and inspire others.

According to Andy, "the only person who stops you from doing something is yourself. If you feel that you can't do it, try it".



# IMAGES FROM THE SESSION



Connections that count. BT



## "Everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story." John Barth

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.

BT

HEROES US Lean-in Circle. Contact Christina Chan Welcome to our 5th Lean-In Meeting "Heroes in Us" 22 Jan 2019



#### Sarah Walker

Job by day: Sales Director, Major Corporate

Job outside of work: Avid volunteer champion of Isabelle's Legacy (all the way to pitching to David Cameron @No.10, Mrs Incredibles (ask her why ©)

Job that she loves the most: Her family, with her beautiful children – Joshua and Lily



#### Krina Patel

Job by day: Higher level LSA qualified, works in a primary school in Chelsea as a 1-2-1 for children with special needs and champions housing crisis in London

Job by night: There are no limits, anything for her boys... and sometimes for herself when she can get a babysitter ©

Job she loves the most: Her family, Single mom of 3 beautiful boys – Freece, Zayne and Mikael



## 5<sup>th</sup> Lean In, 22 Jan WHEN LIFE THROW YOU LEMONS, YOU MAKE LEMONADE

## Internal BT speaker : Sarah Walker

Job by day: Sales Director, Major Corporate

Job outside of work: Avid volunteer champion of Isabelle's Legacy (all the way to pitching to David Cameron @No.10, Mrs Incredibles (ask her why ©)

> Job that she loves the most: Her family, with her beautiful children – Joshua and Lily



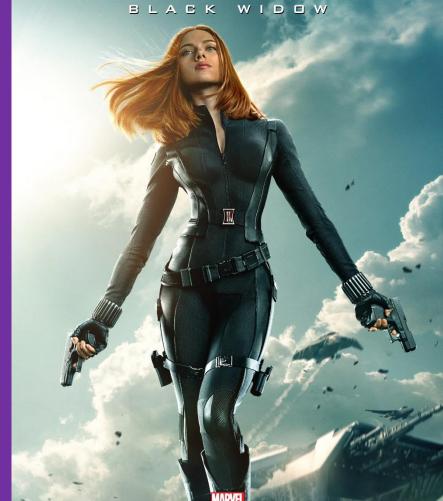
## If I am a superhero, I am... "Black Widow"

The Black Widow has been enhanced by biotechnology that makes **her body resistant to aging and disease and heals at an above human rate** - as well as psychological conditioning that suppresses her memory of true events.

Her agility is greater than that of an Olympic gold medallist. She can coordinate her body with balance, flexibility, and dexterity easily.

The Black Widow has a gifted intellect. She possesses the ability to quickly process multiple information streams (such as threat assessment) and rapidly respond to changing tactical situations. **She is an expert tactician. She is a very effective strategist, tactician, and field commander** 







www.sayinggoodbye.org





### A LEADER AT WORK, A LEADER OUTSIDE OF WORK



BEST MOMMY EVER – "WE GET TO PLAY IN MUD!" (WHILE HELPING MOMMY TO DRIVE CHARITY)









## JOSHUA & LILY FOLLOWING MOMMY'S FOOTSTEPS



### Sarah Walker

Job by day: Sales Director, Major Corporate

Job outside of work: Avid volunteer champion of Isabelle's Legacy (all the way to pitching to David Cameron @No.10, Mrs Incredibles (ask her why ©)

Job that she loves the most: Her family, with her beautiful children – Joshua and Lily

# Sarah's advice based on her own life story...

- 1. You can't chose what life throws at you, but you can chose how you deal with it, and even through the most traumatic experiences you can channel your energy to find something positive
- 2. Never be afraid to ask for help!
- 3. Talk it's therapeutic, and you never know how much your story may help someone else

#### And my extra one would be... ...do something really daft and complete

...do something really daft and completely out of your comfort zone at least once in your life 🐵

### 5<sup>th</sup> Lean In, 22 Jan WHEN LIFE THROW YOU LEMONS, YOU MAKE LEMONADE

### External speaker: Krina Patel

Job by day: Higher level LSA qualified, works in a primary school in Chelsea as a 1-2-1 for children with special needs and champions housing crisis in London

Job by night: There are no limits, anything for her boys... and sometimes for herself when she can get a babysitter ©

> Job she loves the most: Her family, single mom of 3 beautiful boys – Freece, Zayne and Mikael



## If I am a superhero, I am... "Wonder Woman" Or "Lucy"

#### **Principles of Wonder Woman – on life**

- Don't take no for an answer
- Find mentors who will push you
- Don't be afraid to venture into uncharted territory
- Know your strengths and when to let others shine
- Ask a lot of questions and speak up
- Learn to roll with the punches

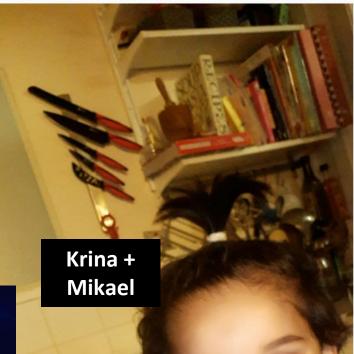


## KRINA'S FAMILY TIME AT HOME



Panorama: Britain's Hidden Housing Crisis

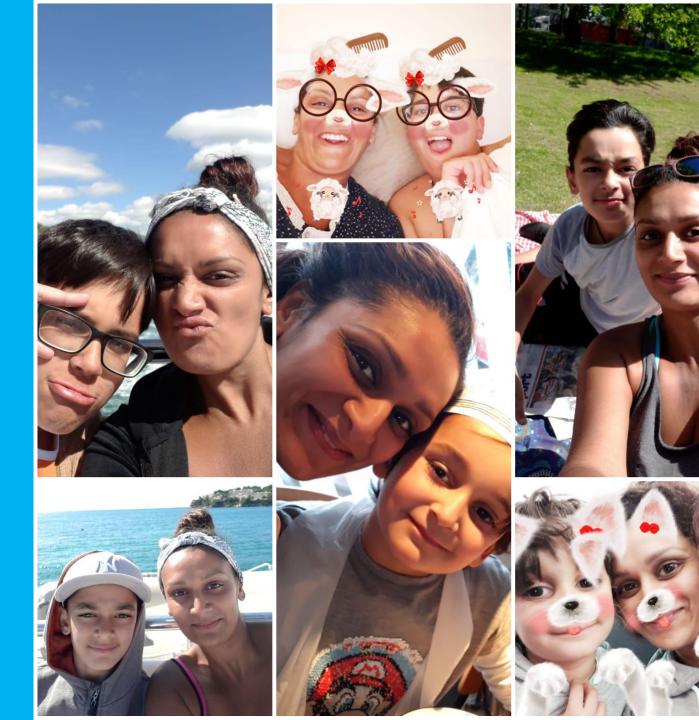
"I was interviewed and featured in Panorama – and that helped to open some doors for help"



15



"I built my new home for my boys one room at a time! We all camped in one room and put together everything DIY like a family project" KRINA'S FAMILY TIME IN THE SUMMER



"These are my boys. My story is about how I got evicted wrongly from my house and I learnt how to fight for a home for my family" KRINA'S FAMILY TIME OVER XMAS



"This was last Christmas – my boys, in our lovely new home"

# **Krina Patel**

Job by day: Higher level LSA qualified, works in a primary school in Chelsea as a 1-2-1 for children with special needs and champions housing crisis in London

Job by night: There are no limits, anything for her boys... and sometimes for herself when she can get a babysitter ©

Job she loves the most: Her family, Single mom of 3 beautiful boys – Freece, Zayne and Mikael

# Krina's advice based on her own life story...

- 1. When your life is at stake, don't take NO as an answer!
- 2. You can always turn the impossible into a possible!
- 3. There is no shame in asking and accepting help!
- 4. Talking to others helps venting out the inner debates in your head
- 5. Always keep your receipts safe-never know when you need them!
- 6. ... and don't forget to laugh!

# TESTIMONIALS



# Head of Marketing, M&PS

Christina Chan

#### #Heroes-in-Us

Meet

We all have an inner hero. A voice that reminds us we're strong and smart enough to achieve our goals. But it's not just about emotional intelligence. It's about an inner power that makes us unstoppable.

# "Meet the woman who started it all - Bring your true self to work" ~ Christina Chan ~

Christina Chan isn't just the Head of Marketing for Major and Public Sector, she is the genius behind all of the incredible diversity and inclusion campaigns in Enterprise – bringing to life the stories and journeys of what it means to 'bring your true self to work'. She wanted to create a safe space for people to share them at work without being judged.

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Christina's motivation behind driving these campaigns is rooted in her own experiences in life – with both her physical and mental health. As she was growing up and getting older, Christina started to suffer from health issues passed down genetically from her family, one of these being an autoimmune disease, which she was diagnosed with when she first came to the UK about 11 years ago.

Having always had waist-length long hair, the disease caused Christina to lose all of it when the symptoms were triggered by a personal trauma that led to severe depression. Describing the experience she says, "I never had depression before in Asia and the feeling is hornble – you wake up feeling so hopeless every day! I was more worried about surviving the day rather than caring about how I look. And if I do get out of the house, I just put on my hat or hoodie.





But one day, I looked in the mirror and I saw Collum from Lord of the Rings looking back at me. I was diagnosed with alopecia universals. Thank goodness, I met Lucinda Ellery who helped alopecia patients ike me. For the last 10 years, I have been wearing a very expensive, customised wig!"

However the disease affects more than just Christina's hair. As she deals with different stresses in her life, the autoimmune disease evolves and presents new symptoms. These don't get triggered from everyday life stresses, but from traumas that cause her body to respond in a 'fight or flight' mode.

Thinking that she has managed to cope with her hair loss, she encountered another, even more severe trauma, and this affected her mental health as well. It began three years ago, up until last April 2018. In terms of Christina's physical health, this trauma caused another symptom of autoimmune disease to present itself - as a doctor told her she was one element short of having Lupus. This symptom caused a rash outbreak which has to be treated with steroids that has side effects on her everyday health as well as her confidence.

This second trauma came from being involved in an abusive relationship and dealing with the effects of domestic violence – as her partner at the time was an alcoholic, an addict and bipolar as well

Coming from Malaysia and from a traditional Chinese family, Christina had never before encountered alcoholism, or what it meant to be an addict to recreational drugs - as back home alcohol was not something which was encouraged or consumed on a daily basis.

Christina shares her experience, "I felt like I was in a movie. I saw everything that you see on TV about domestic violence and it was happening to me, in my home. I was getting bashed and threatened in my own home. Coing home for me was a totally different experience to what most people feel when they go home after a long day of work.

Opening the front door and not. knowing what you will find, is something I went through everyday for 3 years. I learnt to hold my breath and I am constantly on standby mode. At times I would be fearful of going home but even more fearful that if I don't, I would make the situation worse. And sometimes when I am at home, I didn't dare to leave as the situation may also escalate. Sometimes, I am fully dressed (with jacket!) even when I am at home, just in case. I always have a bag ready to go, complete with shoes in case I have to dash out. Every single thing in the house was potentially a dangerous. thing to my safety. To survive, I learnt how not to trigger any situation at home - I rarely speak up!".

Christina coped with what she was going through by throwing herself into work. "A lot of people think I'm a workaholic, but back home in Asia it's the norm to work such long hours. We're very intense and that's quite normal, we're brought up that way. We're taught from very young to fend for ourselves and be independent... so we throw ourselves into work, extremely driven and aim for material progress. I have always been a high achiever all through my education years and at work - it was expected of me to succeed, as I do not have my family as my safety net".

Work during the 3 years of Christina's domestic violence was her "life saviour". Whilst things were chaotic at home, the only thing she could look forward to was when it would stop, so she could go back into her work mode ... it was the only thing that gave her a temporary sense of control. I was working in EE when the madness started and my line manager and head of department helped me through the very rough times. They did not question me when I ran to the office to hide at 3am! And then I endured 2 more years while I was in BT, but I couldn't tell anyone about it - I was pretty much on my own, alone.

Reflecting back, Christina says it's very different being in that situation yourself. "A lot of people could not understand why I didn't just walk away. But it's not that easy. As much as I've gone through counselling and had people telling me that 'this is not your fault', that advice doesn't really land when you're going through it yourself."

# BRING YOUR TRUE SELF TO WORK

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.

It was a light at the end of the tunnel moment for Christina when she saw that she was succeeding and making a difference at work, and was able to deliver things as she used to. She was able to be herself. It was something that she couldn't do at home, because at home she felt a failure in herself and in the stuation.

Her marketing achievements was what gave her the confidence to eventually walk away. Coupled with her new energy and passion in driving the concept of "bring your true self to work"

When it came to work colleagues, line managers and senior management, Christina experienced both positive and negative reactions. On the positive side she explains people were shocked when they found out, with many admining her by saying 'how did you even manage to get up and come to work and still deliver so much stuff?'

Here Christina explains that throwing myself into her work really brought out the best in her and saved her. Having gone through the experience of not being able to share without judgement at work, I wanted to create a space for other people to share their stories – and this is where the Heroes-in-Us Lean-In circle was born, to encourage other people to open up.



#### The insight for "Heroes in Us"

It is very human to only see the success that one projects to the world (and in the office) and it is easier to share success stories than to share the real stories, behindthe-scenes stories.

This circle will focus on celebrating individuals who have demonstrate heroic strengths in their personal lives, and yet still able to achieve their huge career ambitions in their work lives.

> nan-In Meetin "Heroes in Us" 15 Aug 2018

However on the negative side of work, when people didn't know Christina's story they would often makes comments about her being a workaholic, or too intense with ups and downs, or too emotional. All of this adding weight to what Christina was trying to achieve with 'bring your true self to work', as it shows you can't fully understand someone's motivations until you know more about their stories.

For Christina, she likes to work at night. "That's the time when I feel I have more control, for the past 3 years, as I was always awake at night after the chaos die down. So much so that during Christmas I volunteer at Crisis (the homeless shelter) and I choose the graveyard midnight shift that works into the morning".

Reflecting on the negative experience at work Christina also talks about the importance of choosing words carefully. "For me, some words trigger lots of emotions, which to expense the motions,

which to anyone else may not mean anything beyond the obvious, but to me, they bring a lot of flashbacks. Words like – 'this is all your own fault' or 'I won't leave this room until you are happy with my decision' and more".

As for what lessons she's learnt over her experiences, Christina says it's not the obvious ones that she would want to share onwards.

"Lots of people would tell her that what happened wasn't her fault, but that's not the lesson Hearnt, I knew what was happening and I was angry with myself that I couldn't stop it. At work, anything was possible for me and I couldn't understand why I couldn't stop what was happening at home.

#### As with everyone, we asked Christina what superhero she would be and why.

Whenever Christina meets someone for the first time she asks them who their superhero is, and she explains it makes them stop and think about who they are. For Christina, her Superhero is **Mystique from X-Men**, a shapeshifter who takes on the role of whoever or whatever for the situation she is in. "In my role I have lots of stakeholders and I have to deal with different topics all the time, so it's like wearing a few different hats. Just like Mystique".

The one thing I learnt came from the reactions of others when I started to share my story which was: **never put a label on a person**. It's not right if you don't know what that person has gone through and their stories",

Another key lesson for Christina was time helps. Having good friends who will listen (and really just listen and not judging!) also helps.

She also says that at the end of the day, confidence was key. For 3 years, she would find her confidence shattered every time she stepped into her house, and she would have to gain it back before she came to work the next day. Her advice is that "You are your biggest champion, bigger than even your family and friends, so you have to make sure your confidence is always intact. Build a big, strong wall of confidence and never let anyone pull it down".

Regaining her strength also plays a big part in Christina's view on life now. As a female survivor of a domestic violence experience, she felt like she had no strength, physically, to fight back. Not just mentally. As she grows older, she realises that strength can wane, this was made worse when she stopped taking care of herself for the last few years. She doesn't want to ever experience the feeling of being weak and helpless again so, she urges all women to build their strengths up and maintain fitness at all times.

What's clear to see from Christina's experience is that anyone can be a superhero in themselves, as long as you are willing to open up about you experiences and have the confidence to drive yourself forward. Also, if we are truly embracing diversity and inclusion, we simply cannot expect everyone to be exactly the same.



"Bring your true self to work"







# Head of Pricing, Enterprise

## Kelly Liu

#### #Heroes-in-Us

We all have an inner hero. A voice that reminds us we're strong and smart enough to achieve our goals. But it's not just about emotional intelligence. It's about an inner power that makes us unstoppable.

# UNLEASHYOUR

# "Meet the Jronwoman who shows that anything is possible" ~ Kelly Liu ~

Kelly Liu is a full-time ironwoman – at work and at home. At work she battles through the challenges that come with being the Head of Pricing for Major & Public Sector, and outside of work she pushes herself to achieve the greatest of sporting challenges.

She also has an unconventional hero: Dory. As in from Disney Pixar's Finding Nemo. Kelly says, "she's a beloved character who seems fairly unassuming but she's actually very goal orientated. She's also very successful in achieving those goals (finding nemo and then finding her familig nemo and then finding her

When life gets you down, do you wanna know what you've gotta do? Just keep swimming!



Kelly's own superhero story is about her relationship with sport — beyond that of just health and fitness — and how it became the tool to unleash her inner hero. Sport has become something that Kelly turns to when she is facing challenges, life changes and even crises, and even though Kelly doesn't always enjoy sport, it's something which is hugely important in helping her through these situations.

Always a sportsperson, when she was younger Kelly started off playing team sports, but as she got older, moved onto more individual endurance sports which has helped with her focus and managing personal wellbeing. The journey from team to individual is also reflected four big challenges that Kelly has faced in her life.

The first was at school in Scotland where Kelly reflects, "I felt really different, I was from a working class background and my parents owned a Chinese takeaway where I spent my weekends working, I felt at school I didn't do the 'normal' activities that the other kids did."





"I wanted to find a way to connect with people and make friends that didn't require me opening up about what I did outside of school, as I wasn't comfortable sharing. I found that joining sport allowed me to interact with people, have fun, and make friends, without exposing that element of my life I didn't want to share."

Kelly ended up joining multiple clubs, from hockey, tennis and golf, to basketball and volleyball, her mornings, lunchtimes and afterschool were surrounded by sports. She says, "It gave me an identity and built my confidence in interacting with people",

Once Kelly left school and moved onto University and independent living, she faced a whole new set of pressures and stresses – academically and financially. However from her experience at school she defaulted to joining her University hockey team as a way to escape and build her network of support – not that she necessarily realised this was why at the time. Reflecting back Kelly says, "Hockey gave me that physical regime that helped to keep my mental health in check, building that resilience I needed to continue".

She completed several half marathons before moving onto marathon running – but she was still missing out on the social and networking side of sport. This led Kelly to joining a social dodgeball team, which although was a completely new sport for her, it was another way to manage her mental health and helped build up that support network that she was looking for. After University Kelly decided to move to London - further away from home, leaving all her friends behind and dealing with the pressures of working life. Without her support network Kelly found her mental health taking a dive, so she wanted to default back to what she knew: hockey.

However, things weren't as simple this time as Kelly couldn't fit the hockey club in around her work and her commute. Determined to find something, this eventually led to her taking up endurance sports in the form of running.



Kelly's journey with the ironman recent challenge of working at BT moving from the consumer side to the business world, and finding were completely different. Kelly says. "I felt like a fish out of water that my confidence was taking a

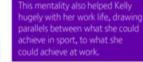


This was when Kelly responded by signing herself up to an ironman race - a long distance triathlon race (1.9km swim, 90km cycle, 21km run). Not something she had done before, she bought her first road bike only a few months before, she had tried open water swimming but had almost drowned in two previous races due to panic attacks where she had to hold onto the marshal's Kayak, so her friends were definitely shocked when she signed up for the ironman!

Kelly jokes, "I'm not a prime candidate based on my lack of experience, and I'm also only 5 foot 2! So it wasn't the normal kind of reaction I suppose - but I just thought, the ironman motto is 'anything is possible', and it was what I needed to inspire me to keep going. So even though you don't feel



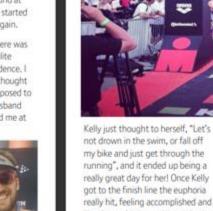




For the ironman race, after training night and day for 12 weeks and feeling really prepared, when race day came Kelly looked around at the other competitors and started to feel really out of place again.

She explains, "Everyone there was like over 6 foot, built like elite athletes and exuded confidence. I just sort of crumbled and thought 'I can't do this, I'm not supposed to be here', but luckily my husband was there and really helped me at the start line".





really hit, feeling accomplished and like she could do anything, it had a huge impact on her attitude to how she approached things outside of sport as well.

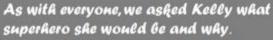
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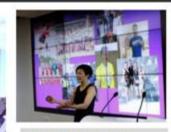
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ossible, even if you feel like a fish out of water and that you don't

f you think you want to do omething enough, then you

Sport is so much more than so many other ways as well".





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Reflecting on her journey from team

sports are so important when you're

to individual sports she says, "team

younger, I owe a huge amount to

established and in work and have to

contend with time, endurance sports

are a great way to work to your own

schedule, and get that focus and

As you can imagine, endurance

sports give Kelly a lot of time to

found to get through it is to take

recommends history and science

podcasts - but also using mind talk

in a positive way. She often says to

herself, "If you can do an extra 5K,

you can smash that project at

work". A real inspiration!

think and the best way she has

your mind elsewhere - she

inspiration to get me through

everything else".

developing and when you're

them, but when you're more

#### Kelly's top 3 advice for life :

- 1. Anything is possible! The body and mind are capable of amazing things, so believe you can and commit to a plan. If you think you aren't an endurance runner, read "Born to Run" by Chris McDougall
- 2. Make time for regular positive pep talks to quiet those negative nae-saying thoughts. It might be going for a run, swim or cycle allows that time or go spend time with positive people.
- 3. Seek inspiration and remember that you will be inspiring others. When you see others who have overcome challenges to succeed it can provide you that drive you need to achieve your goal. Ahead of my Ironman, I joined a Facebook group for women triathletes and there were amazing tales of overcoming broken bones/ bereavements/obesity to complete triathlons and it was just such a boost. And if you remember that the journey you are taking will be inspiring others then you'll feel like it was all worth it.





Sales Manager – LGH, Universities, Housing Associations

WOMAN ON BOARD

# Laura Tressler

#### #WomanOnBoard

We're dedicated to bringing more women on board at BT, and giving them opportunities to achieve. Our TechWomen programme is helping women gain new skills and progress in their career. And we're proud that we've featured in the Times Top 50 Employers for Women for the last two years running.

# *"Feel the fear and do it anyway"* Why Laura has a determination to do more and a drive for balance

As a Sales Manager for Universities, Housing Associations, Local Government and Health looking after 178 customers and a team of Account Managers, Laura Tressler has a very busy life ... but still always makes time for family.

Laura joined BT 8 years ago coming from a retail background. She started off at a small family run business selling lights in a furniture store then moving across the business to area's from customer service and logistics, to sales and store management. She later left the family business to become a store manager on her own in retail, before joining BT as a junior account manager,

Laura had always enjoyed sales and been an avid fan of technology so wanted to try this in a B2B environment. Since joining BT she has worked in a variety of roles in the public sector area of before landing where she is now. "What's great is that as a sales manager I've got to develop my own team, and been able to nurture new talent into the business like the graduates—especially the new women we're bringing into the business".

Aside from the obvious ("my home and my holidays" says Laura), what drives her the most is that determination to do more. "I come from a large family of incredibly strong willed females, but who have not necessarily had the opportunity to go into business or leadership roles like I've had the opportunity to do. What drives me is that determination to achieve and be a role model across the family".



She also adds that the reason she does her job is that she absolutely loves being able to help our customers and developing her people to become better. Sales is a great career pathway for anyone trying to broaden their commercial awareness as you get exposure to so many areas of the business.

In terms of how Laura has grown during her career, she describes it through her transition from the small family business to the big corporate world.

"I'd come from a business where we could make fast and agile decisions, if they weren't correct we could be easily reverse these. BT is a complex business and change is slow to implement but for good reason. BT is teaching me how to balance the risk and reward but have a greater impact."

Overall Laura says she's learnt to get a broader perspective whilst still delivering what she set out to do. She said it's important to work hard on building your confidence in a business like this and encouraging everyone else around you to do the same.

#### "It's important we recognise the achievements the team around us has, it helps build confidence and a great culture to work in."

As for why it's important to have more women in tech, Laura truly believes that you don't need a Masters or degree in a specialist STEM subject to be a woman in tech, holding a music degree herself. "What we really need to encourage is the message that you can work in a STEM industry if you bring business and people skills. Women can bring really high emotional intelligence to sales and relationship roles and this awareness makes them commercially astute. Women also make great leaders as they bring empathy to the teams around them.





"There will be scenarios where you

feel like your voice isn't being heard,

airing views that you believe make

good business sense or allow you to

but never let that stop you from

readdress the situation. Don't

they come up."

Find some good mentors

around you who will help

you understand and

develop your skills but

underestimate yourself either, I know it's easier said than done but

embrace new opportunities when

Humbled to have been asked to be one of our female role models, Laura says she has a clear passion for supporting the females that enter the organisation and wants to do a huge amount to make sure they get all the support and coaching that they need.

Laura's advice for women in their careers can be summed up in 7 words: feel the fear, and do it anyway. She says you will feel much better at the end of it, even if you are absolutely petrified of whatever is in front of you.

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It's clear that Laura's fearless nature comes from her personal role models: two strong women in her family,

The first is her Nan. As a mother of 8 children, and around 26 grandchildren, Laura describes her as one of the most strong-willed, fierce yet absolutely loving people on this planet. In Laura's eyes, she may not have been a big celebrity but what she taught her was strength in character – to never let other people sway your opinions and morals. She also taught her that even when life is at its busiest, there is always room to be kind and loving and be with your loved ones.

Laura's second personal role model is her cousin. As a mother to children with disabilities, Laura says she has dealt with whatever life has thrown at her in an absolutely commendable way which doesn't stop her from fulfilling her own dreams. A true inspiration!

also tell you when they believe a different decision would have a better impact for you. Have teams and sponsors who will help push you further, it's not just more senior people who push us it's the brilliant teams who work for us".

#### As with everyone, we asked Laura what superhero she would be and why.

Laura said she would choose to be a Doctor Who type hero – i.e. someone that is a time traveller. "I'd want to go back in time and explore new places and adventures, but also you could make sure that with anything that gets in the way in terms of your diary that stops you spending time with your loved ones, you could go back and move it. You could make sure you'd always have that important time with the important people around you".

Meet...

Sales Director, Major Corporate

Sarah Walker

#### #Heroes-in-Us

B

We all have an inner hero. A voice that reminds us we're strong and smart enough to achieve our goals. But it's not just about emotional intelligence. It's about an inner power that makes us unstoppable.

# "Dealing with whatever life throws at her in the Gest way possible"

~ Sarah Walker ~

#### Many people know Sarah Walker as a Sales director in Major Corporate, but most people don't know her story.

Sarah's story begins 12 years ago with the tragic loss of her second child – Isabelle – who was sadly born sleeping. Up until that day, Sarah reflects that she was fortunate enough not to have faced any real difficult setbacks in her life and had always been considered a really strong person. "It would be life changing for anybody of course, but it really shook me in a number of ways. I was diagnosed with PTSD and severe anxiety, going from having no real troubles to this was really challenging

But Sarah's story isn't all about tragedy, but is about the positives which grew from that loss. There were a few things that were really important to Sarah and her family; the first being that Isabelle was known and that they could create memories on her behalf; the second was to raise awareness and better support for families in similar situations.



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Bisabelle's Legacy Please join us in our efforts to raise funds for Saying Goodbye in honour of Isabelle www.ayinggoodbye.org



Speaking on her experience back then Sarah reflects, "12 years might not sound like a long time but it was a really taboo subject then and there was no help or support available <u>at</u> <u>all</u>. You weren't expected to talk about the experience either." This was when Sarah decided that she needed something to focus on and channel her energy into, to be able to give that time to Isabelle and everything that she was.

As a family, they started to support a charity called Saying Goodbye, which is guite a small charity who support bereft parents who have lost a child under any kind of circumstances. Sarah took a role with the charity as their national fundraising coordinator, starting by helping them with their national events and support services. Through Saying Goodbye, Sarah eventually started Isabelle's Legacy, which was when they decided to start doing things a bit differently. She started to involve her children, her friends and her family to bring some fun and energy into what they were doing and how they raised funds for the chanty. Taking up some tough challenges Sarah confesses that she is not a sporty person but admits, "What I will do is sign myself up for something as it's absolutely mind over matter. I will just head in and do it".



This led Sarah to completing the Great North Swim (2 miles across Lake Windermere) with no training whatsoever, she simply turned up in her swimsuit Since then she's completed Tough Mudder four times, and even involved her children who now also get involved in the kid's Mini Mudder along with their football team – that's 25 children who complete the course each year on behalf of the charity!



Sarah and her family have also done the Three Peaks Challenge. Describing the event she says, "This was without a doubt one of the most incredible but challenging experiences. Again it's all about mind over matter.

Having never climbed a hill – never mind a mountain – taking on 3 in 24 hours was an interesting test". As a result of all the seriously tough challenges completed, Sarah, her friends and her famäy have raised an incredible £35,000 for the charity.





This journey wasn't always easy for Sarah though. She explains, "The bit that always preys on your mind the most is wondering how people will react to me putting this out there as something that I want to talk about, and that I want people to be involved in.

We spent the first 2 or 3 years after we lost Isabelle with nobody wanting to talk about it at all, it was quite a big step to take. But when you get the reaction that you do, you think 'I don't know why I was ever scared to say it". My mom has been with me all the way – she is so beautiful, inside and out.

Isabelle's Legacy, the reaction was extremely positive and it helped the people around them to start talking more openly and became a lot more involved with the work they were doing. However Sarah says, "Being candid: I never brought it to work. It's something that I've always kept very separate for

various reasons, and probably still wouldn't be entirely comfortable to tell my story if Christina (Chan) hadn't started the incredible work she was doing with the Lean in Circles and the Heroes in Us campaigns".

When Sarah and her family started to

take action with Saving Goodbye and

Through bringing her true self to work, Sarah wants people to recognise that vulnerability isn't a weakness, there is always something which someone has been through and no one is going to judge you for

 Sarah's top 3 advice for life:
 You can't chose what life throws at you, but you can chose how you deal with it, and even through the most traumatic experiences you can channel your energy to find something positive
 Never be afraid to ask for help!
 Talk - it's therapeutic, and you never know how much your story may help someone else

And my extra one would be... ...do something really daft and completely out of your comfort zone at least once in your life



Being a part of Saying Goodbye has also taken Sarah to some interesting places – including No. 10 Downing Street. Recalling what led to her being there she explains, "Part of the work that the charity does is about lobbying government to change various things about the care of women during pregnancy after loss, but equally about changing some of the legislations around registrations of births that happen under a certain gestation".

Sarah says she was fortunate as Isabelle's birth is registered, but many parents don't have that at all, which in itself can be traumatic for those dealing with the loss of a child.

Sarah was invited to No. 10 by Samantha and David Cameron, who had sadly experienced the same loss, but which made them champions of what the charity was trying to do.

A few of them were invited to Downing Street to talk to government officials, healthcare ministers and businesses who were looking to support charities, to show them what the face of baby loss looked like.

For the last point Sarah explains, "There's a bit of a misnomer that it comes from impoverished families, mothers who drink or smoke during pregnancy and that there's a reason or cause for the loss coming from the parents, as opposed to it being anything natural that can happen to anyone". Which is why it was so important for Sarah and the charity to visit Downing Street and create that awareness to gain support.

#### As with everyone, we asked Sarah what superhero she would be and why.

t's no wonder then that Sarah's superhero is just as accomplished as she is – Black Widow from the Avengers. She says, "I asked my son who I should be for my superhero. He said Black Widow because his view is that 'm totally fearless and I can hold my own amongst a seam of men. Black Widow also just puts her game face on and gets the job done".



From that event, it took a bill into government that has changed the legislation on births being registered before 24 weeks gestation – an amazing accomplishment that Sarah describes as one of the scariest yet most rewarding experiences.

#### 60 seconds with Sarah Walker

#### Who's inspired you in your personal or professional life, and why?

Zoe Clark Coates - CEO of the Mariposa Trust. She's overcome a lot in her personal life, and channelled this into creating a charity that helps a lot of families during their darkest times.

#### What's your favourite music genre and what are you listening to right now?

I have a really eclectic taste in music, I love Nirvana but I also love Take That! My favourite genre is dance music though, and the last album I listened to was Dirty Vegas,

#### What's your favourite movie / box set of all time and why?

My favourite film is Hacksaw Ridge, if you have seen it you would understand why. Box set... 24 or Peaky Blinders.

#### If you could find time to invent something to address a bug bear, what would it be? Self-polishing taps... I can't abide

finger prints on shiny taps :-)

#### What's the last gift you gave someone or someone gave you?

Afternoon tea for my parents for them to celebrate some good news.

#### Can you share your most vivid childhood memory?

Perhaps not the most vivid, but earliest is Sunday mornings with my Dad mixing chalk and marking the pitches for his Sunday league team - I dread to think how bad the lines were!

#### Tell us something people may not know about you?

I'm an FA-accredited football coach, and I used to play for Coventry City as a youth.

#### If you're throwing a dinner party. Which famous people would you invite (dead or alive)?

Oliver Reed, Helena Rubenstein, Coco Chanel, Idris Elba, Kiefer Sutherland, Anthony Joshua and Chris Ryan... with Gino, Gordon and Fred providing the food and wine.

### Finish this sentence: when I dance, I look like...

... The complete opposite of what I think I look like in my head.

What's the best advice anyone ever gave you? Stop trying to please everyone.



# Managing Director of IT

**Rachel Higham** 

#### #WomanOnBoard

We're dedicated to bringing more women on board at BT, and giving them opportunities to achieve. Our TechWomen programme is helping women gain new skills and progress in their career. And we're proud that we've featured in the Times Top 50 Employers for Women for the last two years running.

# "Take every opportunity" Meet Rachel, the most senior female technologist in BT

Over her career Rachel has learnt

some important lessons. "I've learnt

inspire them to do amazing things.

will you give the customer great

well as building great partnerships

Continuing Rachel says, "I've also

learnt that you can't do everything

yourself, so it's important to build a

strong team around you with deep

sets the vision and strategy, rather

than becoming a technical expert. It's

Following on from

this Rachel's advice

to women in their

careers is...

to just say yes to

every opportunity

that comes along,

and figure out how

to do it later -

you don't always

need to be the

expert.

about learning to let go of the detail

and trust your team to perform".

expertise in certain domains allowing you to become a leader that

experiences, but you can build

with your suppliers."

You have to put the customer at the

Rachel Higham is a woman-onboard. Not only is she the Managing Director of IT in BT Technology responsible for 13,000 people who run 2,500 applications across BT, that service our employees and customers around the globe - she is also an inspiring leader who is passionate about change and diversity in the workplace.

Despite her job, Rachel is not a software engineer by trade. Initially trained as an accountant and a lawyer she guickly moved into IT consultancy and spent 20 years in financial services managing large programmes of transformational change. With this she had the amazing opportunity to live all over the globe in places like Japan, Chile, Argentina and Canada - working on projects in over 60 countries.

Rachel says, "That's what I really hange. Hove coaching and building ams and inclusive cultures - just aking a difference". This love for ange is what led Rachel to joining lecoms. At the time the industry change bringing the fixed and nobile words together. Eventually Rachel joined BT and has been here appily ever since.

When asked what drives her Rachel answers, "Coming in everyday and knowing that I've made a difference to people, and what we deliver to the UK society by delivering our social purpose is important to me. That's one of the big reasons I chose BT, with our mission to 'use the power of communications to make a better world\*\*.

WOMAN ON BOARD





"Manage your career as your most important project, don't sit back and be passive. You have to be clear on how to build great diverse teams and your skills and experience, what you want to do next and then let people know and go after it. Doing this will heart of everything you do - not only massively accelerate your career, raise your visibility and also raise other people's understanding of what's sustainable revenue, and you'll inspire great about you". your team to deliver more for them as

As for why it's important to have more women in tech, the answer is simple to Rachel. "Half the world is female - a large proportion of our customers who make the buying decisions are female. So if we're designing and building solutions for them, how can we do that well if we haven't got women around the table to help understand the needs of that population?"



Speaking to Rachel on International Women's Day gave the opportunity to highlight that there are still 650 million women around the world who don't feel safe, and 350 million women who don't have access to education - highlighting how far we have to come, and that companies like BT are key to showing the way.

When asked why she thought she was selected as a female role model, the answer was highly surprising - Rachel is the most senior female technologist in BT. Not only that but she's incredibly passionate about diversity and inclusion; part of her role is in sponsoring TechWomen, becoming visible as a spokesperson in BT on this topic. Incredibly proud of what the TechWomen programme has achieved, of the 1500 people on the programme, two thirds of them have bigger and better roles because of it and they've almost eliminated women leaving BT to continue their careers, as well as boosting confidence levels across the board.





**Rachel Higham** 

Managing Director, 17, 8T Director of the Board, TM Forum

44 Digital leadership for me is not just across online channels or apps, it is across the full spectrum of social, mobile, analytics, IoT and cloud user experiences. It also has to be a holistic consideration - technology capabilities are critical but the right culture, behaviours, ambition, vision and strategy, skills and talent pipeline, operational processes, and even bysical facilities are even more important."

Rachel's personal role models are Martha Gellhorn and Svivia Earle. Martha was an American war correspondent who was influential for creating a new style of reporting that told the human stories behind the conflict. Described as fearless, Rachel adds that in the Second World War she was the only reporter who was actually on the beaches with the soldiers during the D-Day landing.

Her second role model, Sylvia, is a marine biologist, explorer and author. Responsible for 'Mission Blue' she aimed to establish marine protected areas around the globe, which in order to achieve she used. her expertise and her profile to influence governments, world leaders and societies to change their mind set and take a stand. She also holds the world record for the deepest submarine dive ever! Between Martha and Sylvia, it's clear to see where Rachel gets her drive for change and influence from, as well as her passion for people.



thoughts on how far we still have to go for equality with

faces and ages, driving industry".

**UNLEASH YOUR INNER HE** 

As with everyone, we asked Rachel what superhero she would be and why.

"I would be the Flash – to be able to make change happen faster, do more in a day and solve problems before people even realise

#### tmforum



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Finally, Rachel had some clear women.

"It's such a pervasive problem in the industry in media and in marketing, everywhere you look or what you hear still has a big element of those gender stereotypes. Companies are becoming more aware but they aren't doing enough. BT is doing a good job in improving our imagery and we need to keep showing a diverse mix of examples to the rest of the



Chair of BT Regional Board, Wales and South West and Regional Sales Director for Local Government and Health

WOMAN ON BOARD

# Samantha Toombs

#### #WomanOnBoard

Meet...

We're dedicated to bringing more women on board at BT, and giving them opportunities to achieve. Our TechWomen programme is helping women gain new skills and progress in their career. And we're proud that we've featured in the Times Top 50 Employers for Women for the last two years running.

# "From the valleys to the boardroom" Sam Toombs is a Woman on Board – in fact she's on two!

Sam Toombs, Director for LGH across Wales and the South West, might have been born and raised in South Wales but she loves to travel. Having always nearly travelled for work, Sam has worked in Germany, Prague, Birmingham and London before landing where she is now.

Since leaving University – specifically Glamorgan University (now University of South Wales) where Sam studied Information Systems with Business – she has always worked for large Digital Transformation client partners like Fujitsu, Logica, CGI and Atos in client facing roles. She spent 14 years in delivery, 3 years in sales and then run businesses within a business for the past two.

Sam has been nominated by her colleagues in the past 3 years for a prestigious Every Woman in Technology award for Innovation in 2016, Womenspire Welsh Female Leader of the Year 2017 and Mentor of the Year in 2018 – a pretty impressive CV!

As well as running the business for LGH across Wales and the South West Sam is also the Chair of the Board for Wales and Chair of the Board for the South West across BT Group. In fact she is the only female Regional Sales Director in LGH and Chair of a Geographic Board for BT. Not only that but Sam is the only person to chair more than one board – making her one incredible female role model whose achievements are some to aspire to.

When asked what drives her she responds, "The higher purpose for me in both roles is to protect, transform and save the lives of citizens. This is what gets me up in the morning.

We truly do this in partnership with our customers through the health, government and blue light citizen services we underpin; or by improving the economic impact in the area through local jobs for local people and local supplier spend.

My authentic self is about helping others and giving back – something which can be quite hard to do in IT and telecoms.

I can confidently say that my team and I are genuinely making citizens lives across Wales and South West better."

The nature of Sam's job allows her to grow and learn every single day. She says, "I always continuously challenge myself to be brave. Through any high and low I experience I always make sure that I'm continuously learning and improving. I think it's really important to keep moving forward and push your own personal boundaries".

BT



Through experience and growing confidence, she has learned and her quote to go by comes from Richard Branson, "If someone offers you an amazing opportunity and you're not sure you can do it, say yes – then learn how to do it later".

As well as challenging herself to be brave, Sam is passionate about the causes close to her heart. "I blend my passion for leadership and diversity by mentoring women and minorities.





I am a mentor for a Gender Equality Charity called Chwarae Teg (Fair Play). In Wales in particular, there is a real under representation of women in most industries, it's not just a tech issue". The work that Chwarae Teg do is incredibly important in bringing this to attention.

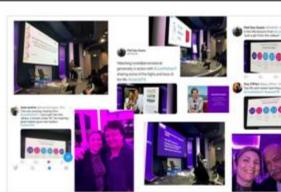
They show that in Wales in particular, the gender pay gap is around 15%, although in some parts of Wales it is as high as 25%, with only 8% of women working in management, vs. 12% of men.



The charity also highlights the benefits to bringing equality to Welsh businesses, showing that if they worked towards closing the gender pay gap, they could bring about huge economic growth - adding £150bn to GDP by 2025 and an 8% growth in the economy.







But in order to do this, the company culture needs to be right - with a piece of research by PwC showing that the most attractive traits in a modern workforce are a culture of flexibility and good work-life balance.

However, Sam feels strongly that these issues run deeper than simply just gender - of men vs. women and that we should be talking more and more about diversity and minorities in all shapes and forms, in order to improve lives, bring about economic growth, and build a better society.

Sam mentors her own personal Mastermind group of mentees who are 'different' and she strongly believes building a diverse team with complimentary skills and behaviour is key to any leader in building a high performing team.

From this, Sam reflects on her advice to others. "I recently spoke at the Solace UK Leadership Forum about my career and my personal highs and lows.

and reflected on the leadership summary of Sam's key learnings and

· Perfect your emotional intelligence Be an authentic leader always Be kind Help others reach their potential · Give back

And through all of this Sam takes guidance from her own female role model in her life, her mother. "She is a fighter and the hardest worker I know, who has battled through many headwinds in life but has never given up. Even at the age of 65, she still works as a carer in a dementia nursing home".

#### As with everyone, we asked Sam what superhero she would be and why.





## Sales Enablement Director, Enterprise

Sara Venables

Meet...

#### #WomanOnBoard

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# "Bringing balance through strong diversity" to success

Sara Venables isn't scared of anything when it comes to her career. **Currently the Enterprise Sales Enablement Director, Sara has always** been about going after that role that seemed a little bit out of her reach or skill set, one that would scare or challenge her. She says, "I love the fear of trying something new".

After studying a degree in History of Art & Design at Manchester University, Sara started selling company data in the City for a couple of years.

Eventually she saw an advert in the Sunday Times for BT sales people and applied; even though the role was more senior than what she currently doing; and so her career in BT started. Sara says, "One of the amazing things in BT is the choice of roles/businesses you can work in and the opportunities available, so I have worked in many areas - from sales, marketing, acquisitions and customer operations - developing my skills whilst being supported by a fantastic BT mentoring and coaching network, whilst also juggling a family".

side from her two kids, what gets rive for wanting to succeed, but also to have fun. Having fun at work is Work is a large part of my week that eed to enjoy it and feel I am making difference to our customers"



WOMAN ON BOARD

Over her time at BT, Sara says she's learnt so much, and grown a lot throughout her career - with as many failures as she has successes!

She explains, "There has been many a time I have wanted to cringe about something I have said or done that has led to a failure, but I have learnt the resilience to pick myself up again, plus I have a strong work and home network that I call on to talk things through".

Sara says she has also learnt the values that are most important to her-trust, honesty and humilityand to be a woman in a man's world, as that is her difference and she is proud of it.

Speaking on the importance of having an understanding leader who is willing to coach their employees, Sara speaks on her own experiences with Andy Summerfield, the MD of Corporate. \*Andy has laughed quite a few times at my mishaps, but he has great coaching skills to get me to a solution, a skill that I also use with my own team".







true success, nothing gives me eaders or wider team into a new to lead and develop the next talent for BT (and to take my role!) and to truly deliver for our customers".

For herself, Sara explains that she doesn't feel like a role model, just that she's a woman doing a job that she really enjoys, and who has learnt a lot about herself in the process something that she says she really wants to pass onto her own daughter as she gets older.

When it comes to the bigger picture -

"I think it is important to have not just

women, but a strong diversity widely

business. Diversity brings a balance to

our business and is a true representation

of who our customers are which helps us

represented across all sectors of

serve them better".

in tech - Sara has clear thoughts on

balance.

why it's important to have more women

#### 60 seconds with Sara Venables

#### Who has inspired you in your personal or professional life and why?

Anyone that juggles work, home and kids with apparent ease and achieves amazing things - like my PA Jayne, my sisters, my parents.

#### What's your favourite music genre and what are you listening to right now?

I am sadly a cheesy quaver, so anything with a strong bass line – just been to see The Prodigy and still recovering from the strobe lighting.

Give us three words your best friend would use to describe you? Fun, focused, family-orientated.

#### Do you have any hobbies? What are they?

With two kids, standing on a cold pitch watching sport at the weekend... oh and eating with friends, exercise to burn it off, I'm an avid reader, and a homework helper extraordinaire.

#### Your favourite movie/box set of all time

and why? Peaky Blinders, I have a soft spot for Cilian Murphy.

What are you driving these days? An old Toyota Verso, it's the 'mum car' in our house.

What's your favourite holiday destination? Married to an Aussie, it has to be Sydney or there would be a divorce.

What's the funniest thing that happened to you recently? Trying to escape from The Escape Rooms with my team after a few glasses of winel

Tell us something people may not know about you?

I can do the splits.

Name one thing from your bucket list that you haven't yet achieved? I'd love to go to Japan at Easter to see the trees in blossom.

Finish this sentence. When I dance I look

... a middle aged raver.

What is the first thing you notice about people when you first meet them? Their hand shake.

What's the best advice anyone ever gave you? Be yourself, and treat others as you would like to be treated.

#### As with everyone, we asked Sara what superhero she would be and why.







Sara admires Jayne because of how brilliantly she manages to juggle her work, her home life and managing Sara day to day with amazing ease, happiness and achievement; traits that she also hugely admires in her hard working, driven sisters as well.



# like...

## **Propositions Director, Enterprise**

**Snehal Pindoria** 

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# "Unleashing her inner hero through making a difference" Using planning and preparation to work more efficiently –

Snehal Pindoria talks ambition and hard work

Snehal Pindoria is all about using balance to drive herself a better working world. Currently the Propositions Director in Enterprise, Snehal joined BT as a graduate in 2005 and has pretty much always done propositions since. She says, "Not having any idea what I really wanted to do, I tried a couple of different things but found my home working in the Consumer Propositions team quite quickly and have loved it since then. I have been fortunate to always have fantastic opportunities to progress, friends and mentors who have encouraged and supported me through the journey".

Married and a mum to two little boys (aged 4 and 7) Snehal loves to run and do yoga, and she finds cooking and cleaning oddly therapeutic. "I am the type of person who cannot sit still, ever, and it drives my family mad. Beach holidays... definitely not for me!"

Clearly a very active and driven person, Snehal describes what makes her get up in the morning, "During the week, work genuinely makes me get up... I know I know, so cliche!

There's been rare occasions in my career when I've feit a luil, lost my sense of purpose but now more than ever I look forward to coming in, doing my job and making a difference. When you're working hard and you can see the impact of that, be that from propositions we're launching into market that make a real difference to the customers we serve, or the growth and development I see in my people, it brings a real sense of satisfaction and pride".

But how to unwind from all of that? "Over the weekend, there's nothing more liberating than a good run after an intense week at work", It's all about the importance of balance with Snehal - a key learning for her in her career.

Whilst she feels that she's learnt many things over her time at BT, a couple of more surprising lessons she learnt come from learning how to work more effectively, and also how a good mentor can make a big difference.

I'd always been ambitious I suppose, eager to keep growing and not stand still, I worked long hours before I had my children, it it. When we decided to start a family, I've got to admit I was concerned about the impact that it would have on my career - would I

What I actually found was the complete opposite! I work just as hard as I did before but far more effectively and with better perspective. I work fewer hours, which might seem odd given my level of responsibility has grown considerably since then, but it made me much more focussed, I plan and prepare better and get lots done in busy days".

Snehal took a year off with each of her children and said that it can be tough adjusting back into work, missing her kids, but it's not held her back at all and the opportunities still kept coming. She stresses it's very possible to manage work and children, but wouldn't go as far as to say it's easy, sometimes it's really not,



WOMAN ON BOARD





Even though Snehal has taken strong

quidance from the male role models

in her life, she says that it's still so

important to have more women in

tech. For her it's simple - diversity

outcome. She explains, "The more

diversity we have, the better the

outcome and I truly believe that.

experiences comes diversity of

With differing opinions, backgrounds,

thought and a stronger, well thought

Snehal wants to use her platform

confidence to achieve what they

everything else in life, without

want in their career and know that

dvice is that there are many great.

opportunities out there for women.

which will lead to a stronger

perspectives, approaches,

and more rounded result".

"This week my 4 year old was unwell all week and it really pulled at my heartstrings, but for anyone who is pondering the same as I did, it's very possible to balance career and children, and you'll be surprised how well you can cope with it and flourish".

Secondly Snehal says that a really good mentor can make a big difference. \*My best mentors and managers, who l've learnt the most from and have really encouraged me to grab opportunities have coincidentally all been men. My mentor, is my go to person for when things go well, when they don't, when I just want some simple honest advice. and when I need some confidence. Whoever this person is for you, everyone needs someone who can be a safe space to have honest conversations with and can encourage you when you need it. Finding that person is super hard, you've got to 'click' and I only found mine after 10 years!"



UNLEASH YOUR

Her key role model in her life is her mum. "She works so hard and I get my strong work ethic from her. Her career flourished after 40 and for someone who wasn't born in England whose first language isn't English and didn't have the education I had, but still had the determination to do something, I find that really impressive. But she's still so mumsy, always makes time for everyone, loves to overfeed and overreacts at the first sign of illness or weight loss, love my mum!"

#### 60 seconds with Snehal Pindoria

Do you work out and what's your favourite method of exercise? Running and yoga, love both!

What values are the most important to you and why? integrity and humility

What's your favourite holiday destination? Greece, the weather and food is amazing

What would you do if you won the lottery? Boy stuff, lots of it

What's the last gift you gave someone or someone gave you? I gifted my mum an insanely expensive face cream for her birthday, it must have been made out of oold

Tell us something people may not know about you?

I have a big scar on my right arm which I got when I was 12 years old and accidentally smashed through a glass door, it's a pretty cool scar. When people ask how I got it, I tell them I'm notonous in some parts of London and they shouldn't mess with me, the other person looked a lot worse; I

Finish this sentence. When I dance I look

I'm having a lot of fun!

What device/gadget can't you live without? My Kindle

What's the best advice anyone ever gave

you? If everything you try is going well, you're playing it too safe and not taking enough

#### As with everyone, we asked Snehal what superhero she would be and why.

She would be the Hulk! "Not because I'm green and beastly and have anger management issues, but simply because my kids love him and they'd roll on the floor laughing if I came in dressed as hulk and did the hulk smash!" A brilliantly balanced superhero answer if there ever was one!

# " Everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story."

We think there's a bigger meaning behind diversity and inclusion. It's about what you can offer and how you think. And feeling like you can step up and speak up.





