



INSIDER PROGRESS LAUNCH EVENT

Our overview

Thank you to everyone who attended the launch of the Insider Progress initiative. We were impressed by the insightful, open discussion, inspiring honest speakers and the energy in the room which participants so fully directed towards our interactive workshop.

We want to share some of the key themes to emerge, which provide valuable insight and a 'pulse check' for the insurance sector.

Mindset and culture shifts start with story sharing



Geoff Godwin, UK Chief Operating Officer AIG explained how sharing his personal journey and experience of difference gave permission for others to do the same. Finding ways to normalise and socialise this change is critical to success and AIG's 'one thing' - encouraging employees to share the one thing that will make work better for them - is a good example of this.

Shirine Khouri-Haq, Chief Operating Officer, Lloyd's confirmed the strong business case for diversity and inclusion and took us under the surface of the statistics with her powerful, moving story of difference. She described how she flexed her working style to deliver demanding work goals whilst becoming a mum of twins. Shirine's courage and openness moved many in the room. Her message, whilst not easy, clearly communicating our needs to the organisations we work in, is essential.

The experience of difference is personal, powerful...changing

We asked the circa. 80 participants; a wide representation of organisations, roles, seniority and dimensions of diversity, to reflect on a time of 'feeling different'. The impact of these personal moments varied from negative experiences of feeling intimidated, awkward, minimised or frustrated, through to positive ones of confidence, authenticity and empowerment.



There was a greater weight of the negative impact of difference, and also a sense that greater awareness is happening in the insurance sector, that D&I is a topic now taken seriously. The challenge is creating the support and practical initiatives to instigate real behaviour change.

Inclusive leaders understand others needs

Although participants identified practical needs such as more flexibility, end to sexist comments, measured on results; mostly what people asked for was a behaviour shift that represents core values and qualities such as respect, compassion, cultural sensitivity, honesty, acceptance, support and advocacy. Everyone agreed that shifts in mindset and behaviour are central to creating inclusive cultures.

Inclusive leadership

Participants identified the behaviours and actions everyone can take, (regardless of level or role) to shift the insurance industry towards inclusion. These were two-fold and included:

1. In the moment acts of inclusive leadership	2. D&I initiatives that normalise these behaviour changes
"Don't be afraid to acknowledge difference"	"#Respect role-model"
"Ability to put yourself in others' shoes"	"Bystander training"
"Receptiveness to different working patterns"	"Consideration of talent across a diverse pool"
"Be our advocate - speak up"	"Creating/ enabling peer group support"
"Make it clear it's ok to be yourself"	"Senior leader's commitment and advocacy"
"Changing macho cultures to a more supportive environment"	"Mentoring"
"Admitting you are not expert and inviting team members who are"	

Where next? Listening and acting together

As participants shared their key takeaways from the event, there was a definite desire for more connection and conversation; "we want more time for this", "sharing our experiences is so powerful". There was palpable energy and enthusiasm for the heart of D&I's message of valuing everyone's uniqueness, so we can all be our best self at work.

Already this experience is rippling positive change with participants advocating for next steps to be taken in their organisations. The Insider Progress events in 2019 will no doubt build upon the insights shared at today's fantastic launch.

We would like to acknowledge and express our thanks for the positive feedback we have received following our workshop and to participants commitment to progressing inclusive cultures.

"The standard you walk past is the standard you accept."

"Our approach to D&I must be based on intersectionality."

"It's all about respect and listening to each other with open conversations."

"Create space for storytelling - share the stories with the stats."

"We are all unique - let's bring our whole-self to work."

About WDI Consulting

By developing a deep understanding of the culture in which women and men operate, we work with teams and individuals to achieve their full potential and with organisations to create inclusive cultures where everybody can give of their best.

Lynn White and Clare Russell have developed WDI's Women's Leadership Coaching, a unique approach that untangles from societal stereotypes to enable women to thrive, bringing their whole-self to work.