

# Gender discrimination

---

Sally Hulston, Partner



## QUESTION

---

*“In a male dominated working environment, how do you redress the balance and avert indirect discrimination, with reference to flexible working opportunities, access to training and promotion criteria?”*

# 1. POTTED HISTORY

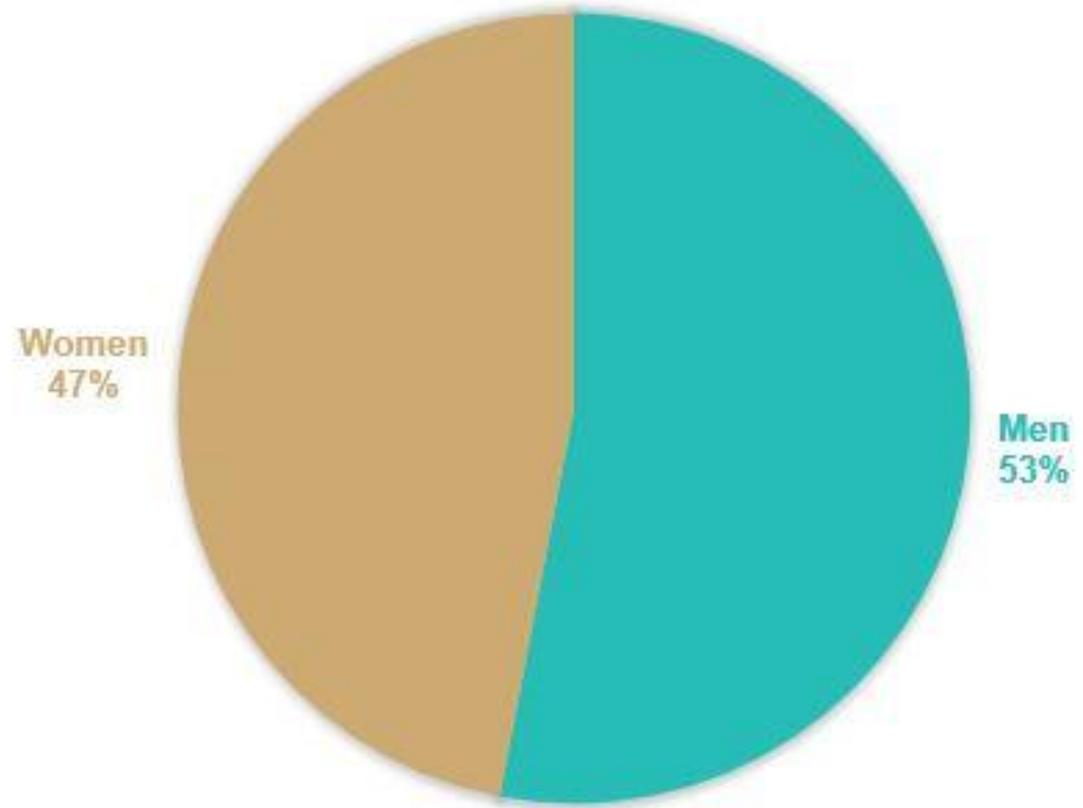
---

From then...

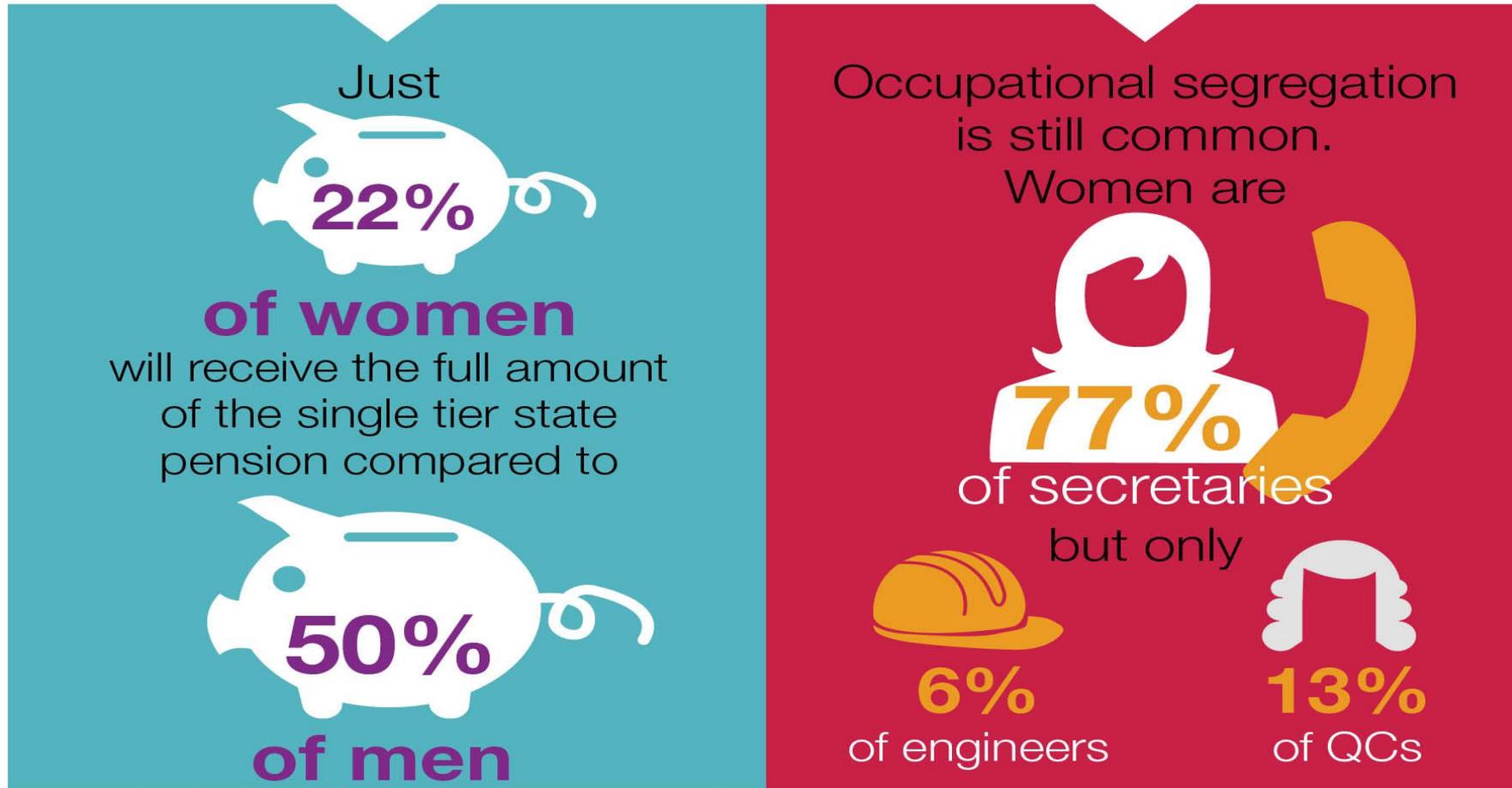


...to now

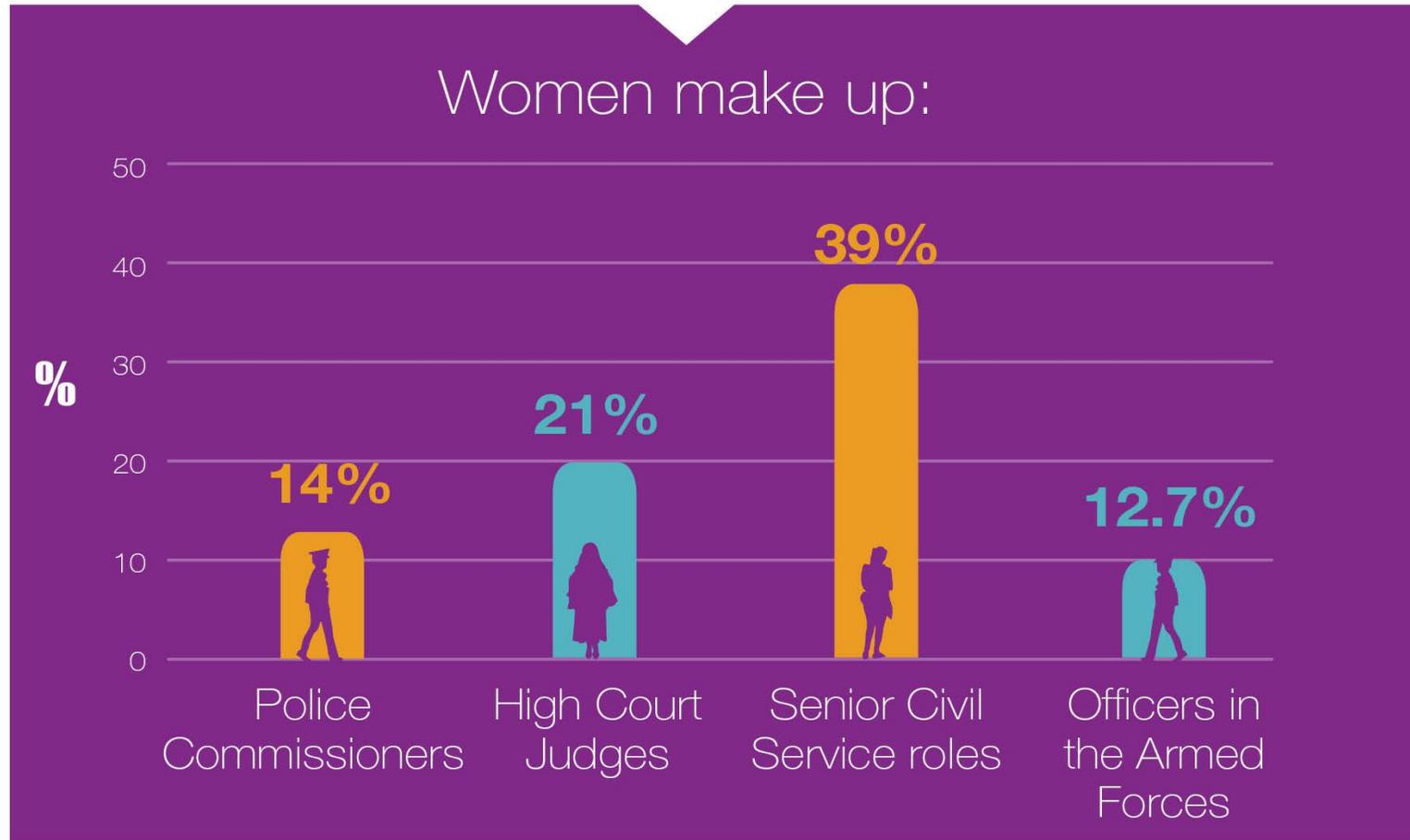
UK WORKFORCE 2016



# Work 2016



# Women at the top 2016

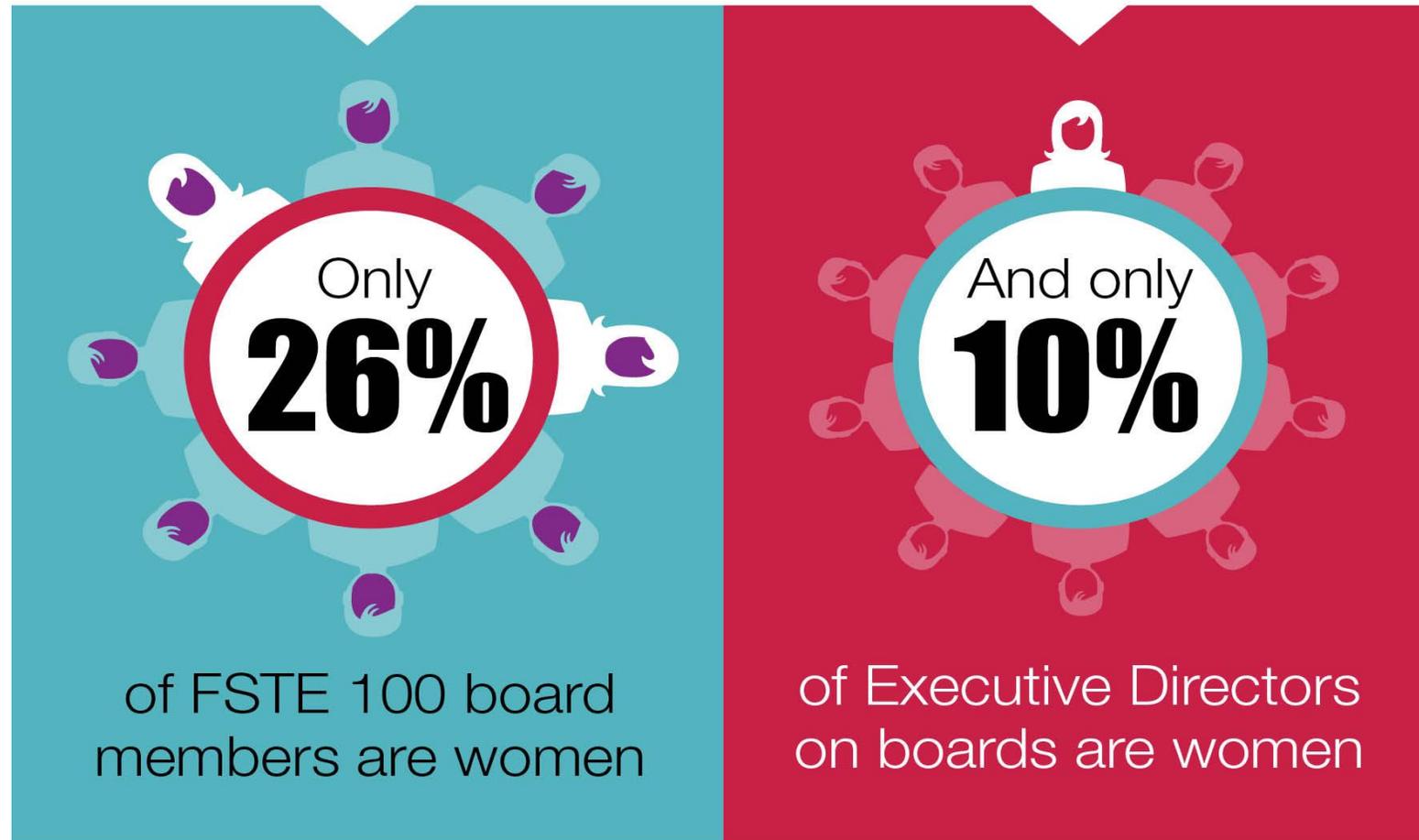


**150 YEARS**  
**Fawcett** ▶  
**150 years of campaigning for women's rights**

 @fawcettsociety  
#150women

References available at [bit.ly/150YearsTimeline](http://bit.ly/150YearsTimeline)

# Women at the top 2016



## It's Election Day: What do the polls say?

- ▶ ? in 10 women in full-time employment believe gender discrimination still present in the workforce
- ▶ Is it:
  - ▶ 4 in 10?
  - ▶ 6 in 10?
  - ▶ 8 in 10?

## It's Election Day: What do the polls say?

- ▶ **8 in 10 women** in full-time employment believe gender discrimination still present in the workforce *(Investors in People poll of 2,000 women, 2016)*
- ▶ Also:
  - ▶ **90% women** working in engineering said having children affected their job prospects *(poll by Hays for Building magazine, 2017)*
  - ▶ **Almost a fifth of women** said that their careers have stalled because managers failed to promote them or offer training opportunities *(Project 28-40 by Opportunity Now)*

## What women say about a male-dominated workplace culture...

*I'm often interrupted or ignored in meetings*

*In selection processes, I'm asked whether I'm 'tough' enough*

*Work still takes place at football matches or on the golf course*

*I have to do better than a man to succeed*

### Potential effects:

- Loneliness
- Intimidation
- Isolation
- Harassment
- Increase levels of stress hormone causing illness?

## 2. FLEXIBLE WORKING

---

# The challenge

2 in 5 working  
mums take lead  
role in childcare

89% of women  
said developing  
career after 2<sup>nd</sup>  
child = v difficult

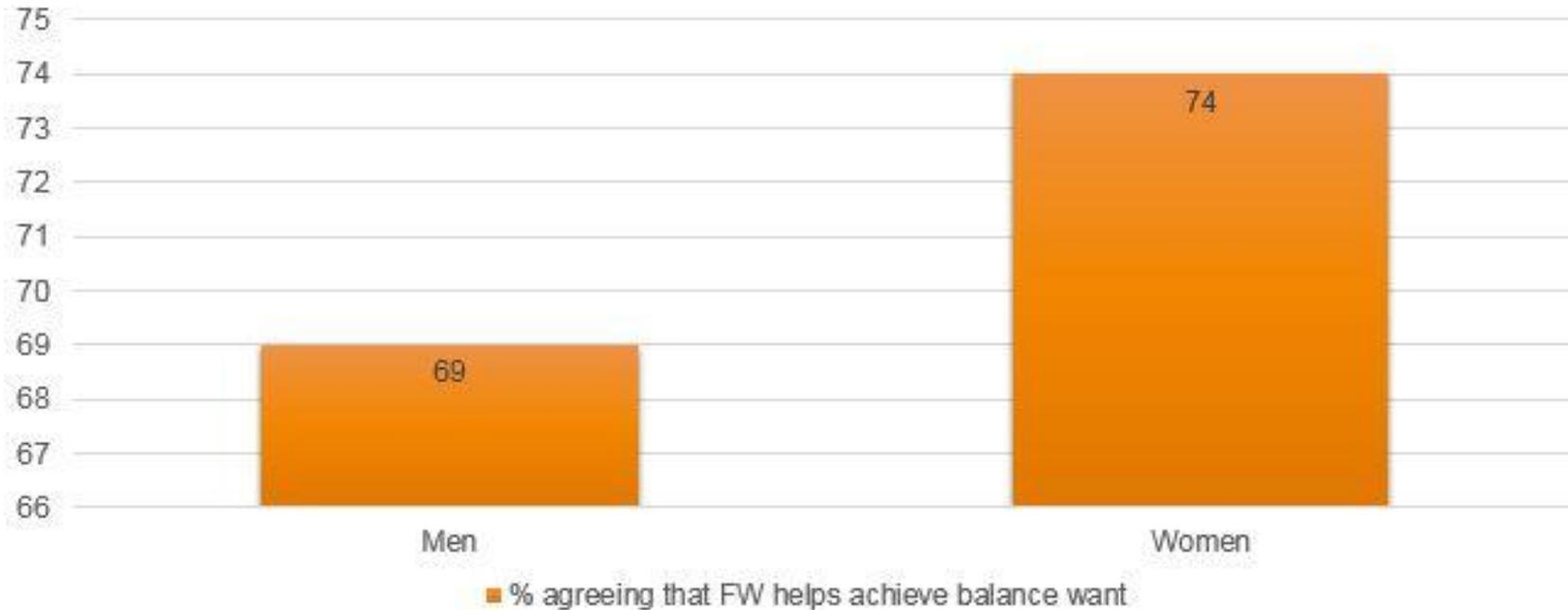
93% women find  
it hard to combine  
career with  
childcare / caring

1 in 5 women  
said employer  
unsupportive of  
working mums

38% women said  
colleagues  
unsupportive of  
working mums

# The opportunity

**% Men and Women who agree that flexible working allows them to achieve the balance they want between career and life outside work**



## The holy grail?

A truly agile organisation, with men and women able to work in a way that makes them productive and engaged

## How do we get there?

- ▶ **Job design, technology and agile teams**
  - ▶ Globalisation and technology= talent can be sourced anywhere (virtual teams)
  - ▶ Agile work patterns good for men too – encouraging all employees to maximise agility will help tackle stigma
  - ▶ Beat presenteeism culture – value outputs, not hours
- ▶ **Allow for non-linear careers**

# Case Study: IBM

## Promoting flexible working

- ▶ Unified set of flexible working options for everyone: standard part-time working, compressed hours, term-time working, job share, annualised hours, mobile working and working from home. Not just for parents/carers – recognise important for all (men and women).
- ▶ Employees also encouraged to adopt a flexible approach to working.

## Benefits

- ▶ Better employee morale and engagement. Highly valued by employees and a great retention tool. 80% of employees said they feel in control of where, how and when they work.

# 3. ACCESS TO TRAINING AND PROMOTION CRITERIA

---

## The ambition...

- ▶ Women are ambitious and confident. Over  $\frac{3}{4}$  have confidence in ability to lead a team & 70% have desire to lead.
- ▶ Women are actively seeking opportunities to advance their careers.

*“Plenty of [women]...are ambitious and keen to double what we earn. We are not all some stereotype home maker. Plenty strike up on their own to double their earnings. Had my firm made me an equity partner I would have stayed!”*

## The barriers...

- ▶ **Lack of transparency**
  - ▶ 22% of female respondents felt they were not offered fair/transparent appraisal processes
- ▶ **Perceptions gap: ‘Superwoman’ v “What’s the problem?”**
  - ▶ 57% of women feel they have to be extra special to succeed in their career
- ▶ **Unconscious bias**
  - ▶ *“Subtle instances where we misrecognize and misinterpret behaviours and it causes us to overlook things”*

# The answers?

- ▶ **Sponsorship**
  - ▶ Reverse mentoring
- ▶ **Unconscious bias training**
  - ▶ Strategic advantage in pursuit of talent
  - ▶ Consider 'impact points' and use checklists
- ▶ **Implementing fair and transparent promotion / appraisal processes**
  - ▶ Challenge managers expectations
  - ▶ Language in job postings / interview questions
  - ▶ **Growth** mindset – see possibilities over time

## Case Study: Goldman Sachs

- ▶ Ms Mulashasani in FT this week- made partner last year
- ▶ Bank had a poor record when it came to gender diversity
  - ▶ Introduced a buddy/ mentor scheme
  - ▶ Leadership training for high-potential female bankers
  - ▶ Networking programmes
  - ▶ Senior female role models
  - ▶ Childcare facility 3 months- 3 years
- ▶ Now female partners make up 16%. Recognise still some way to go.

# 4. SOME CONCLUSIONS

---

## Some conclusions: how do you redress the balance?

- ▶ Create a truly agile organisation for men and women
- ▶ Regular, fair and transparent appraisals/ interviews
- ▶ More senior female role models \*really important\*
- ▶ Sponsorship, mentoring and coaching
- ▶ Position unconscious bias training as a business (not HR) initiative
- ▶ Allow for non-linear careers
- ▶ Line managers play a crucial role

# QUESTIONS?

---