

A VIEW FROM JOSH KRICHEFSKI

Stop paying lip service to diversity and embed it into culture

[DIVERSITY](#) [INCLUSION](#) [TALENT](#)

JOSH KRICHEFSKI, CEO, UK 07 APR 2017

Championing diversity and inclusion requires some massive changes to how agencies are set up and operate.

Diversity and inclusion have dominated the news agenda so far this year, almost every agency is talking about the importance of having the most diverse workforce possible. However, while the topics have been on everyone's lips, and several agencies like Valenstein & Fatt have captured attention with some nice ideas, the number of agencies making fundamental changes to promote diversity and inclusion remains woefully low. Championing diversity and inclusion requires some massive changes to how agencies are set up and operate. At MediaCom we've always looked at how we can lead on the issues that matter and invested in practicing what we preach.

I'm a strong believer in meritocracy, rather than positive discrimination and this is why we have so many women at the top of MediaCom – our culture enables the best to rise to the top. However, this culture doesn't just happen.

United in the belief that a diverse workforce drives us to deliver our best work and fuels a culture that keeps us at the top of our game, the whole agency actively champions equality, diversity and inclusion.

However, there is a key role for the senior team to play in shaping the business to enable this culture. This is why, as a business, we've set ourselves the challenge to improve our diversity stats by a further 10% this year and why we've expanded Nancy Lengthorn's role to head of diversity, inclusion and future talent.

We want to make sure we're attracting the best talent – particularly women who often feel unable to move from their jobs once they start a family, and provided the flexibility many need to achieve their potential.

The flexibility issue was at the heart of our decision to sign up to Timewise's Hire Me My Way programme. This means that every role we recruit for will now be offered to people on a flexible basis so that they can establish a working pattern that is beneficial to them as well as us.

Hire Me My Way aims to get hundreds of Britain's biggest employers to open up more of their jobs to flexibility at the point of hire. Timewise's goal is for one million part-time or flexible jobs to be advertised annually in the UK, by 2020 – about three times the current level.

For me, flexibility isn't a bonus, it is a business imperative. I'm acutely aware that there are numerous people who simply wouldn't be part of our organisation if they weren't able to create a working day bespoke to them, and I want to keep attracting this talent.

I hope that being part of Timewise's Hire Me My Way will encourage more people to come talk to us about how a job can be shaped and prove that there really is a role for anyone in media that wants one.

We'd already extended the option of flexible working to existing staff and new hires, the most recent example being Satin Reid, joint managing director of London who joined us on a four day a week basis.

In order to continue to create a team that challenges those around them to be the best they can be, we knew we needed to go further.

Signing up to Hire Me My Way is tangible proof of our commitment and I hope it will inspire others to follow suit.

After all, for the UK to retain its reputation as the creative hub of Europe post Brexit, we

need to be attracting and keeping the best talent we have.

DIVERSITY INCLUSION TALENT