

Flexible working must not just focus on female talent

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Organisations must proactively encourage a culture of flexibility across the entire workforce, or risk negatively impacting employee engagement levels and the ability to attract and retain top talent. That is the advice from global talent acquisition and management specialist, Alexander Mann Solutions (<http://www.alexandermannsolutions.com/>).

The call comes in response to a report (<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/358/358.pdf>) from the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, Fathers in the Workplace, which recommends that all new jobs should be advertised as flexible to reflect societal change.

The paper reports that fathers are even more likely than mothers to perceive that they will be viewed negatively by employers if they request to work flexibly, and that women with dependants are over three-and-a-half times as likely to report working part-time as men with dependants.

The report also highlights that while 96 per cent of employers say they offer a level of agile working, research by the Timewise Foundation has found that only 9.8 per cent of 'quality job vacancies' - that is, jobs paying over £20,000 full-time equivalent - are advertised as being open to some kind of flexibility.

In response to the findings, Paul Modley, Director of Diversity & Inclusion at Alexander Mann Solutions, comments:

"While the recommendations in this report are designed with fathers in mind, the benefits of promoting working options which appeal to a wider pool of available talent should not be underestimated."

"The CBI's advice to the committee – that is, if a company feels a job can be done flexibly, it should advertise it in that way from the start – is a strategy that we at Alexander Mann Solutions have long promoted. As Timewise's data shows, the majority of businesses are, in theory, happy to consider role flexibility if it means that they are able to access the skills they need. However, the fact that this is not reflected in legacy-laden recruitment processes means that jobseekers may not even consider a role unless a flexible working culture is celebrated and promoted at the earliest stage of the recruitment process. The best person for the job may never apply."

"The right to work flexibly should not be viewed as the preserve of females with young families or individuals in lower skilled roles. Society on the whole and expectations of employees are changing. Regardless of age, gender or level of seniority, individuals are increasingly seeking to work in a way which fits with their wider lifestyle and commitments. Employers who fail to respond to this desire risk missing out on the skills and experience of a huge proportion of the working population."

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About Alexander Mann Solutions

We are Alexander Mann Solutions and we're passionate about helping companies and individuals fulfil their potential through talent acquisition and management. Today, over 4,000 of our talent acquisition and management experts partner with more than 100 blue-chip organisations, operating in 40 languages, and over 90 countries. We deliver a distinctive blend of outsourcing solutions and - through Talent Collective - a full range of consulting and specialist services. We provide unrivalled experience, capability and thought leadership to help clients attract, engage and retain the talent they need for business success.

For more information, visit www.alexandermannsolutions.com

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