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For technology companies

Gender as a Strategic Pillar

Rebecca Parsons

CTO, ThoughtWorks

@rebeccaparsons

Hypothesis: Software development, as a
fundament problem solving activity, benefits from
having diverse development teams.

Therefore, technology companies benefit from
having a diverse organization.

Exploiting this diversity requires strategies for balancing efficiency and effectiveness.

Exploiting this diversity also requires strategies for balancing short-, medium-, and long term business benefits.

*But why should diversity make a difference for
technology companies?*

Diversity: Where does it matter?

Or perhaps where doesn't it matter

Across organizations

- Different roles
 - Product visioning
 - Requirements elicitation
 - Problem solving
 - Coaching and mentoring
 - External voices
 - Not just “people” roles
 - Preferably not your diversity champion
- ❖ Board and management
 - Vision setting
 - Planning
 - Decision making
 - Risk assessment
 - Performance evaluation
 - Risk taking
 - Modeling behavior

Diversity: Why does it matter?

Not just because everyone is talking about it...

Two Very Different Reasons

- ❑ The business case

- ❑ Because it's the right thing to do

The Business Case

It's actually quite well documented (at least for gender)

Studies show (mostly for gender)....

Better business results, particularly in times of uncertainty

Better products

Better functioning teams

There's even a proof for problem solving!

Scott Page – The Difference: How The Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies

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It's the Right Thing To Do

Not just because everyone is talking about it...

Standard line: we're a meritocracy. Everyone who wants to be in tech is in tech. The rest just don't want to be.

If there's nothing stopping people from being in tech, why do they leave at such a higher rate?

If it's a meritocracy, why are the figures for advancement, VC funding, salary, and hiring so skewed?

Diversity: How To Achieve It?

You just can't will it to happen

*It's not just recruiting, but also retaining and
advancing*

Recruiting

Don't keep looking in the same places

Watch out for “culture” bias

Consider different degrees and training programs

Be careful about who interviews and how

Retaining

Watch out for your culture

All people have to feel safe, including men

Don't protect people who disrupt the culture

Invest in people (both technical training and diversity training)

Advancing

Be deliberate about diverse pools

Invest to ensure you have the talent later

Track it, but do something with the numbers

Balance the business imperatives across short and medium term

It is important to start early, rather than trying to catch up.

*It takes sustained focus and attention – and it's
way too easy to backslide*

*We have to accept that it will take time and things
might slow down for a while*

We're not done yet.

THANK YOU

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