

Nothing I'm going to highlight in this piece is exclusive to a specific gender. Yet this example of small stature, larger than life leadership reminded me what makes women's contribution to leadership so important. It highlighted to me why amplifying the voice of women in the workplace is such an important proposition.

Of all the leadership traits commonly found among today's leaders, new research is showing that women demonstrate, significantly more than men, a variety of attributes which are needed now more than ever. These attributes include (but are not limited to) women's preference to be more inclusive, more conscious of the wellbeing of others, and more aware of what they leave behind for future generations

Women also demonstrate a strong affinity towards collaboration, as, for example, can be seen in their preference to use 'we' over 'I' in their conversational and written language (often at their disadvantage).

This example of leadership thoroughly impressed both my friend and I, and highlighted for me (again) why we do what we do at Kacha Recruitment. Coming from a background of some hardship, this woman decided she wanted a career in technology. It was a significant deviation from the norm for women in her environment, and despite being one of the only women she knew making that choice, she stuck to her guns. She had also developed a strong sense of social justice from an early age, which had grown stronger over time.

Although happy in one of her first technology career roles, she experienced significantly less career advancement than her male counterparts, for which she squarely blames herself.

Eventually, despite being in a secure job with decent career prospects, she decided to leave her employer and invest in her own enterprise, founded on a passion for social justice and an appreciation that there was an issue to address. Her aim was to give other women the opportunity to grow a career in technology that so many other women miss out on. She wanted to make a living helping others.

Her company is now rapidly growing, staffed with people inspired by her vision and passion to make a difference. Although initially taking a significant personal economic hit when she went out to start her endeavour, her passion to positively contribute to the world and her energy and dedication to her cause has driven the growth of an exceptional enterprise.

When she describes her work, she exhibits that which we often see with women: managing a mind-boggling workload while actively collaborating and enabling others, and consistently understating her own achievements, preferring to thank others for what they have done than to acknowledge her own action. She is inclusive, highly collaborative, passionate and dedicated to contributing to others.

Why is this example relevant? For me, this person highlights how women's talent is presently so under-utilised, given women's low participation in STEMM based industry. Many disciplines within IT specifically have a women's participation rate of approximately 5% or less. How might these sectors and the outputs (innovations, new technologies etc.) change if women contributed equally to men? How might the very culture of large technology organisations change if women, with a predisposition towards collaboration and inclusion, influenced these businesses in equal measure?

That is part of why at Kacha, we do what we do. We believe that for businesses to continue to grow, for humanity to continue to prosper, for the ongoing protection of the natural environment, women must have equal voice and influence in the world. Humanity stands to benefit not only from the significant resource that women's increased participation represents, but from the leadership qualities women exemplify and the criticality of these qualities at this current time in our history.

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