#youequaltech

WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY 2015

MORTIMER SPINKS
technology talent

ComputerWeekly.com

ABOUT MORTIMER SPINKS

Mortimer Spinks are the leading innovators in technology recruitment. Our business consultants, organised into agile technology and digital teams, are genuine experts in what they do.

Being part of the Harvey Nash Group, we offer the stability, infrastructure and quality of a major plc. Our clients benefit from access to our unique portfolio of services, including technology skills in Vietnam, recruitment solutions from managed service provision, contractor payrolling and business process outsourcing.

We work with some of the most innovative companies in the world. The majority of our customers are defined as entrepreneurial technology organisations, where technology is core to the growth of their businesses.

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ABOUT COMPUTERWEEKLY

ComputerWeekly.com is the leading provider of news, analysis, opinion, information and services for the UK IT community.

As well as being an advocate for UK IT professionals, we also champion the role of technology in improving organisations in all sectors of business and public life. On the web, on mobile and through face-to-face events, ComputerWeekly aims to help senior IT professionals to:

- make better IT strategy and technology purchasing decisions
- improve their knowledge and skills, and develop their careers
- connect with the people and information they need to be successful in their jobs.

www.computerweekly.com

ABOUT THE SURVEY AND THE PARTICIPANTS

The Mortimer Spinks and ComputerWeekly Women in Technology Survey 2015 collected data between 10 April 2015 and 28 May 2015 and represents the views of 4,146 technology professionals.

Due to the anonymous nature of our survey we have provided names of individuals only where they have expressly allowed it.

WHAT'S INSIDE

HELLO,

Welcome to the fourth annual Women in Technology Survey, produced as always with our friends at ComputerWeekly.com. Our survey has very nearly doubled in size in the last 12 months. This year, 4,146 technology professionals took part!

Perhaps even more amazing is just how many women contributed this year: 34% of the total and 50% more than last year. Considering that female participation in the tech industry is between 12% and 15%, we are very pleased that our focus on this topic – which includes countless blogs, events, roundtables, meet-ups and talks – has generated such a heightened interest.

The language you use is essential

One of the things we've noticed this year is the extent to which the language you use when presenting your business, team or job opportunity is essential. Later in the survey you can see the different opinions that men and women have on certain (and very commonly used) words – something for us all to think about when we go to market with a new opportunity.

It doesn't matter how you get here

There is a common myth that you have to have studied a STEM subject (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) but this is just not the case. We've found that people from all backgrounds and subjects have found their way into this industry – and progressed just as fast as, if not faster than, those from the more traditional backgrounds.

Disrupt your hiring process

About half of people are hired even though 'on paper' they're not quite the right match. Later we'll see how, by having an open mind and expert interviewers, you can grow your business in new and exciting ways.

It starts with a conversation

Forty-five per cent of people in the industry don't remember the last time they had, or heard someone else having, a discussion about gender diversity in technology. If there is one thing we can all do – collectively, starting today – it's to begin thinking differently, asking questions and initiating discussions with our peers and colleagues about this issue.

This year we've tried to bring real-life stories and experiences to the survey, so I'd like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Matt Richardson, Alexa Glick, Alex Bramley and Matt Searle for taking the time to contribute to this year's edition.

I really hope you enjoy this year's findings, and that they help you to ask questions, approach hiring differently, think about how your team portrays itself and begin the process of addressing our imbalanced industry.

Very best

James Hallahan

Managing Director

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

1. The **average number of women** in technology teams is **14%**

2. **95%** of people are **happy** to be working in technology.

3. **25%** **of women** working in tech are **contractors** *compared with 34% of men.*

4. **69%** of the industry work in **permanent roles**.

5. **56%** of the industry think working in tech is **less attractive to women** than men.

6. **79%** of the industry believe the **perception** of working in tech is **wrong**.

7. **96%** of people who've had a **mentor** say it **enhances career prospects**.

8. **45%** of people in tech **don't remember** the last time they had or heard a **conversation** about **gender diversity** in technology.

9. **87%** of people in tech believe we should be taking a more **open view** of **cross-training** people into tech.

10. People in tech had an average of **2.2 JOBS** **before** their **first tech one**.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

The general consensus is that in order to address the gender imbalance in the technology industry we need to think about how we are engaging with our female students in schools.

In the last 18 months the school curriculum has changed from teaching 'ICT' – where students were taught how to use specific applications like Microsoft Excel or PowerPoint – to more of the fundamentals of technology, including computer programming. The feeling across the industry is that this is a good thing. But are we actively encouraging our female students to consider this option?

Through working with all levels, from primary schools to universities and all the way up to talking with MPs about the technology skills gap, we've realised that speaking to women over the age of 16 about their career plans and aspirations is, in many cases, too late. We need to be engaging with students as young as 11, well before they start dropping subjects for their GCSEs.

The fundamental truth is that it's not just about engaging more women with technology as a career choice, it's about people. We're living in a country that is dramatically short of graduates and school leavers with technology skills.

So what would you say? Let's imagine you could say one thing to every 11–13-year-old student in the UK to try to encourage him or her to consider technology as a career choice: what would you say?

"Who'd want skills that can be used to eradicate disease, grow economies, connect people, expand our world and crush candy? I hope for all of our sakes that you do."
Matt Richardson, CTO, Hometrack

"Don't think of it as a career 'in technology'! Whilst there are certainly jobs that do focus on the code and the boxes, most of the value from tech innovation comes from changing people's behaviours and the ways in which organisations operate. That calls for leaders, for artists, for social scientists, for marketers and for people who can influence and sell as much as it does for people who can turn a line of code."
Matt Ballantine, Founder, Stamp London

"Learn to code! If you want to write a top-selling computer game, control a robot, solve a science challenge or be the brains behind the next really cool website then learn to code. Study at school and on the web. Coding is a life skill and some of the most exciting careers depend on it."
Matt Soane, General Manager, Ocado Technology

"Don't be put off by hard problems, failure, or other people's opinion of you. Or, in a format you may be more comfortable with, or to quote Jake the Dog: 'Dude, sucking at something is the first step towards being sort of good at something [https://youtu.be/DN43sCyEanA].'"
Alex Bramley, Systems Engineer (Surprised Reaction Engineer), Google

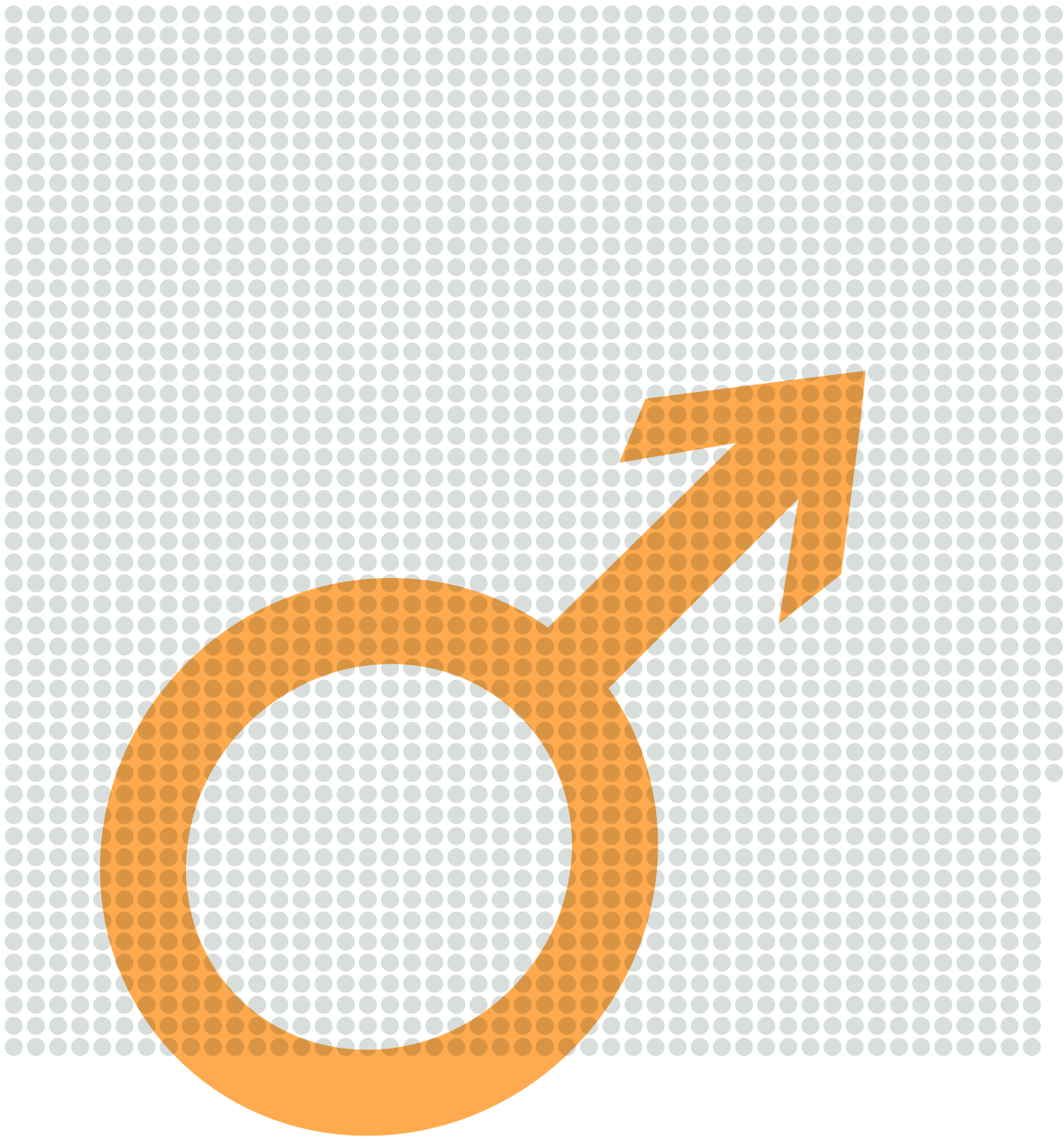
"Be brave and think big. You have the chance to design and build our future. You could have a real impact not only on your own future, but also on society. You can do anything with your life – you just need to want it enough and stick with it."
Alexa Glick, Diversity Program Manager, Microsoft

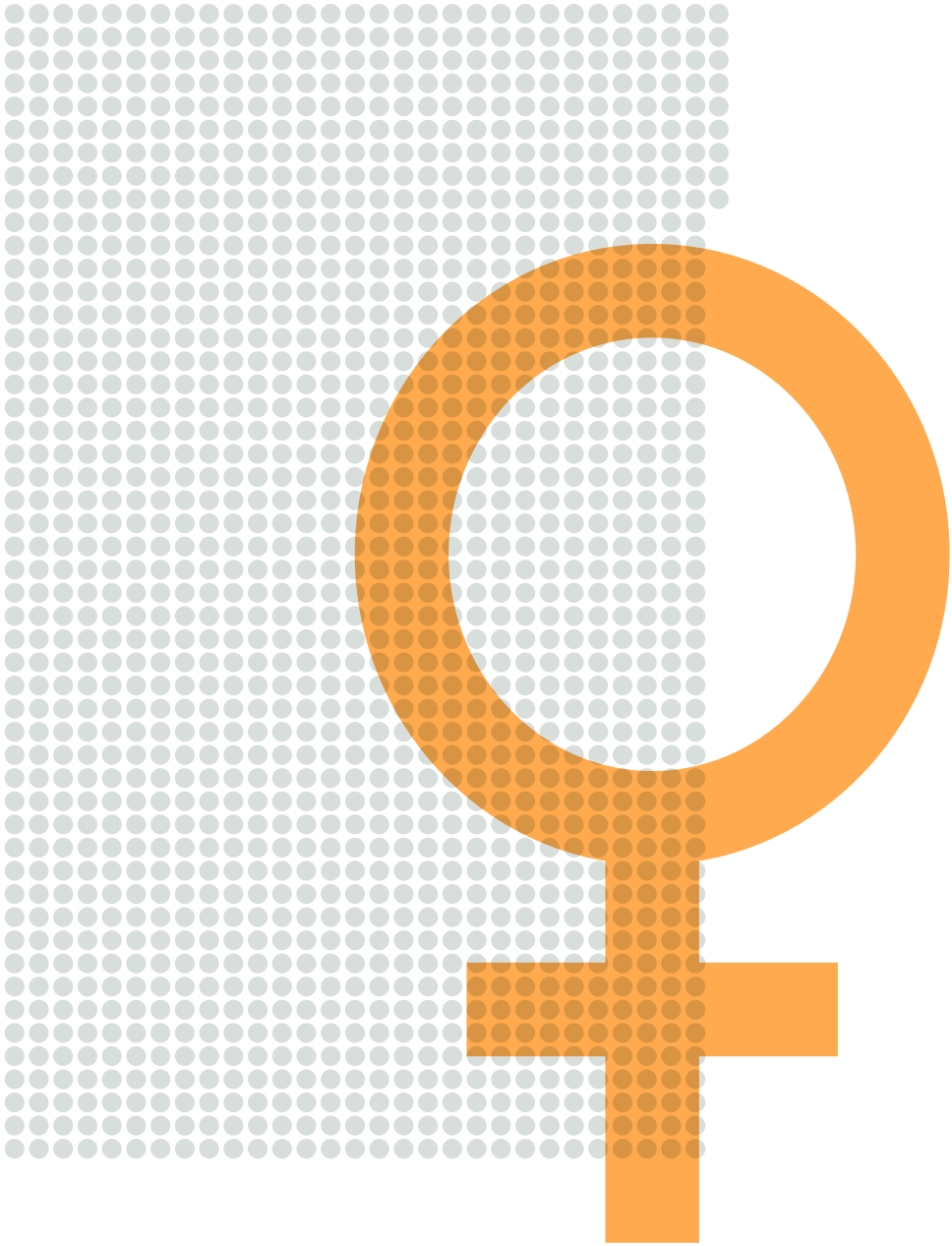
"Technology is the future, it is part of all of our lives and we have become reliant on it, don't get left behind. There is every opportunity to create the next big thing, you could be responsible for the creation of something huge, or you could simply find a career path which you love. Either of these reasons could mean passing up the opportunity on a future you love."
Matt Searle, Development Manager, Haymarket

"A career without technology will be no more an option to you than illiteracy. If you want to earn money, transform industries, or change the world then you will need to master digital."
George Smith, Digital MD, Valtech

OUR PARTICIPANTS

Figure 1 shows us our participants, all 4,146 of them; you can see from the graphic that 1,459 of our participants were women.





A QUICK LOOK

Before we go any further, let's have a look at a few demographic statistics about the technology industry as it stands in 2015.

Figure 2 - How many years have you been working in tech?

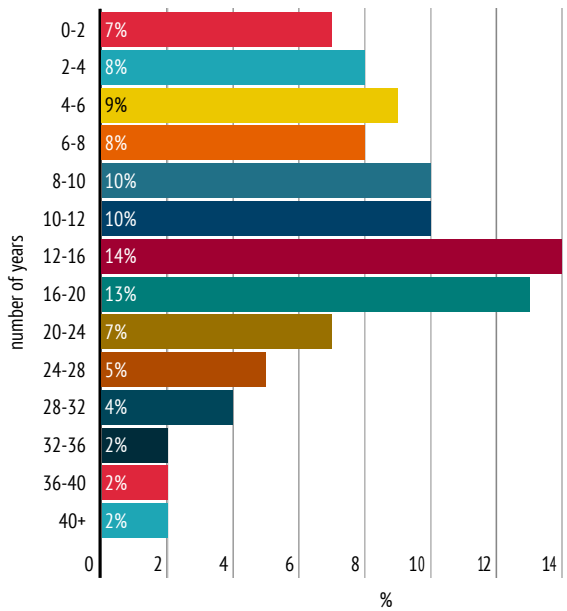
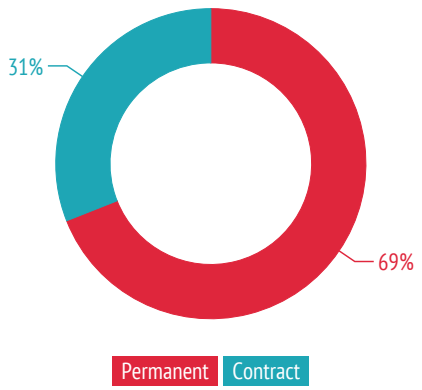


Figure 3 - Permanent or contract?



You can see from Figure 2 that about a third (33%) of people have worked in technology for eight years or less, a similar figure (34%) have worked in technology for between 10 and 20 years and the final approximate third (31%) have worked in technology for 20 years or more. We were slightly surprised by the number of people who had worked in technology for more than 20 years. However, later in the survey we talk about how many people who work in technology went straight into it, which could explain the relatively high number of years' experience in our industry.

Figure 3 shows us that 69% of the industry work in permanent roles and 31% in contract positions. Later in the survey we go on to explore the gender split within these two different types of employment.

Figure 4 - Average technology team

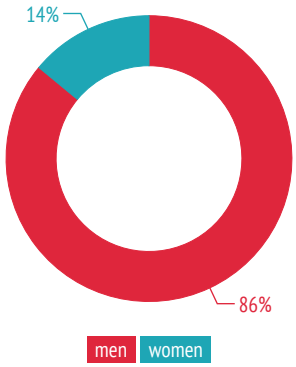
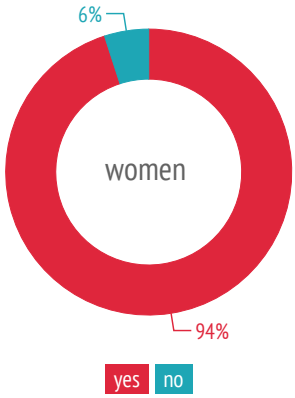


Figure 4 shows us that the average percentage of women in technology teams is 14%, up from 12% last year. It doesn't matter which study you read, or where you read it – the number of women in technology teams in the UK is somewhere between 12% and 16%. It's hard to know how much we should read into the increase from 12% to 14% in the last 12 months. Our average this year was almost identical to that of the 2013 edition of our Women in Technology Survey (14.6%). We feel that until we have more than ten years' worth of data we're probably looking at minor fluctuations that can be explained by different participants each year.

Figure 5 - Are you happy you have a career in technology?



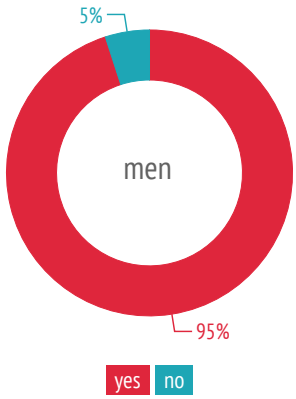


Figure 5, "Are you happy to have a career in technology?", has been almost the same for four years in a row. Women are enjoying their tech careers just as much as men and, in both cases, job satisfaction is extremely high. When we first saw this statistic we felt this could be a rallying call for more women to join the industry. Four years on, we still believe this to be the case; we need to think collectively about how we promote careers in technology to prospective future employees.

"I have once managed to achieve a 50/50 split of men and women in a team and it proved incredibly successful. Unfortunately there are just not sufficient women wanting to get into IT to make that happen more often. Male domination tends to continue because I'd have thought many women would prefer to work in a more mixed environment so avoid the male/geeky tech environments. We, as leaders, are the ones who are responsible for making this change."

Figure 6 - How would you describe your level of seniority?

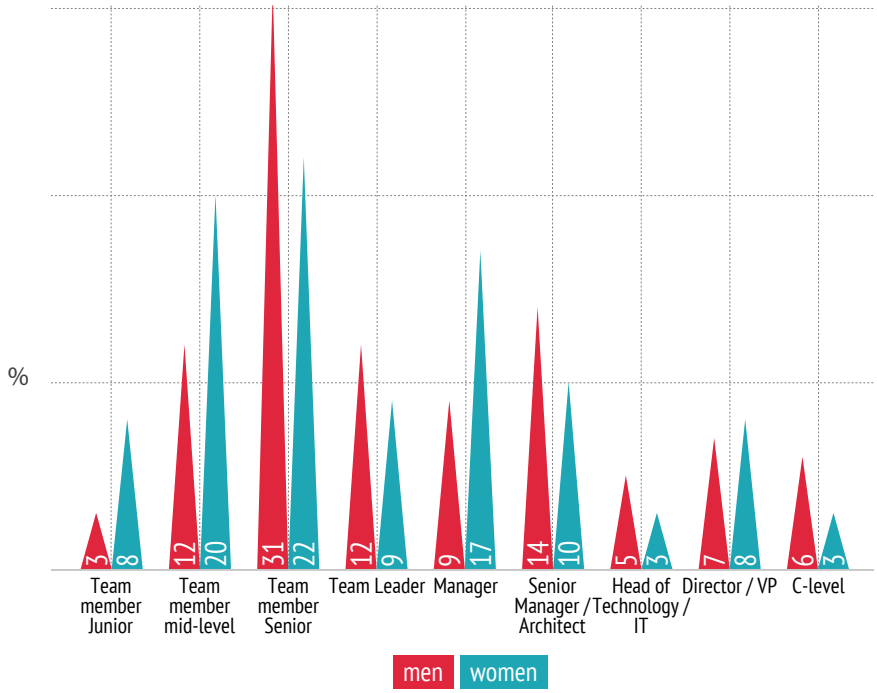


Figure 6 shows us the responses to "How would you describe your level of seniority?". You can see that there are a few standout differences between the two sets of responses. In the first instance, 31% of men describe themselves as "team member – Senior" whereas only 22% of women say the same. However, 20% of women describe themselves as mid-level and 8% as junior, compared with 12% and 3% of men. This point could be reflective of men and women viewing their own levels of seniority differently. The wording of the question could well have given us an insight into how men and women perceive themselves. It could be argued that this is particularly relevant as these three categories are perhaps not clearly defined by job titles.

As we progress up the levels of seniority you can see that 17% of women are in management roles compare with just 9% of men. The balance between men and women at the most senior level is relatively even, but at C-level you can see that there is double the number of men to women with 6% of men and 3% of women at that level.

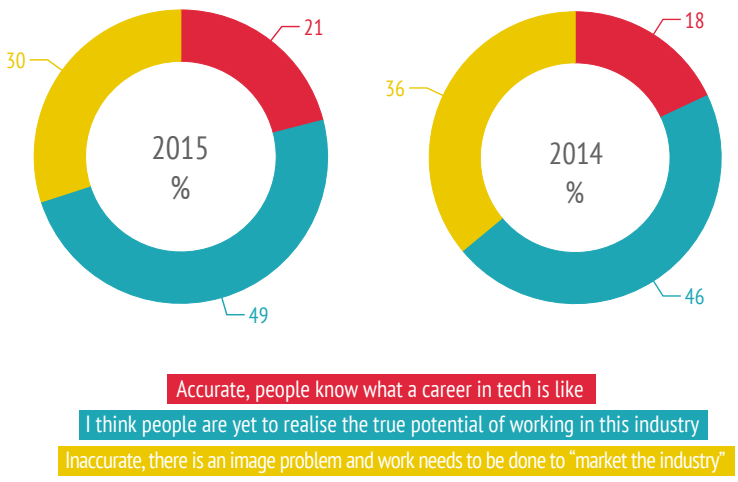
So what can we draw from this snapshot of the industry as it is? Well, there are some real positives: the fact that the vast majority of people in the industry are happy to be there is reassuring; the fact that, with a few exceptions, men's and women's career progression appears to be fairly balanced is positive; and the fact that the industry is maturing shows its solidity as there is a level of experience in the industry. However, there is one fact that we can't get away from and it's the one that stands out among any report on the industry: we work in a deeply gender-imbalanced industry.

"Personally I find the lack of women in the technology teams I work in disappointing. Clearly, something is amiss with entry-level opportunities. I work heavily with US teams (software development) and the ratio there is even worse so this is not a UK-only problem. I have a 2-year-old daughter and while I will obviously let her choose her path I will certainly make her aware of what a rewarding career technology can provide."

"I WORK IN TECH" – *INSERT REACTION HERE*

Earlier in this report we talked about how an exceptionally high proportion of people working in the technology industry are happy to be there. We discussed how important we think it is to get this message out there and collaboratively spread the word about how great it is to be involved in this industry. But is there more to this than meets the eye? Where are we now? What do people think when you say "I work in tech"? Have a look at Figure 7.

Figure 7 - Do you believe the perception of working in the technology industry is...



"I think the generic stereotype of the IT industry still sticks, although it is certainly getting better. I greatly believe that there should be more women attempting careers in technology as there are so many roles available – there's no one role that is typical."

We asked participants to think about how the technology industry is perceived by people who aren't involved in it. About a fifth of people (21%) believe that the perception is accurate and people know what working in technology is like. Just under half of participants (49%) think that people are yet to realise the true potential of working in this industry. Meanwhile 30% believe that the perception of working in the technology industry is inaccurate, there is an image problem and work needs to be done to market the industry.

There has been a slight change in the last 12 months. The number of people who believe that there is an image problem and we need to work to fix it has shrunk from 36% to 30%. The number of people who feel the technology industry is perceived accurately has grown from 18% to 21%. All of this would suggest we are moving in the right direction when it comes to communicating what we do.

But there is work to be done. It is important to explore this as an area that could be putting off women from joining the industry.

Figure 8 - Do you believe women find working in technology jobs more or less attractive than men do?

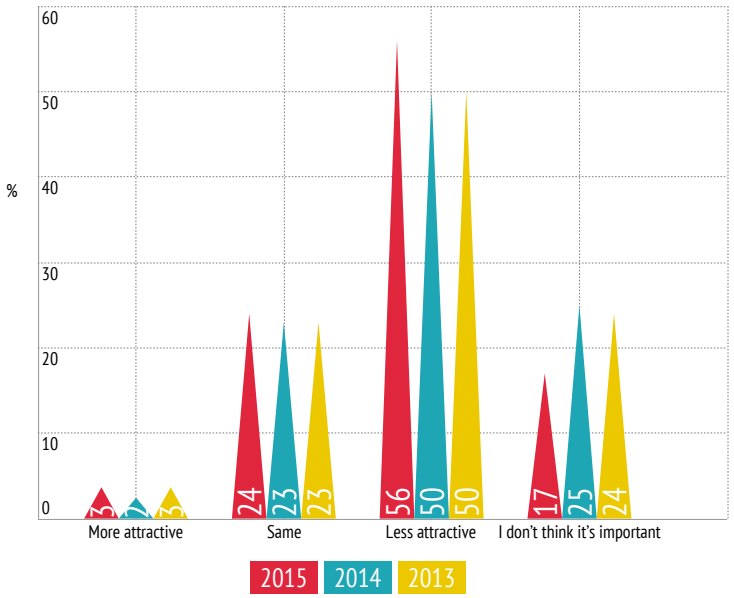
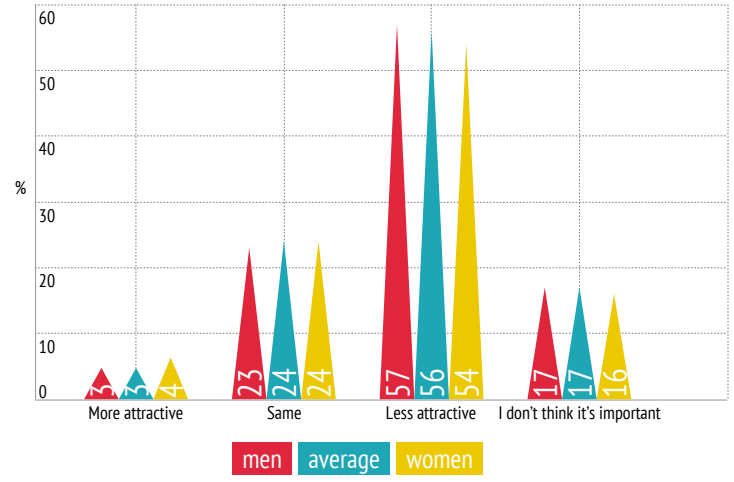


Figure 8 shows us the last three years' responses to this question. You can see that in all three years only 2% or 3% of participants believe women find working in tech more attractive than men. For three years around a quarter (24%, 23% and 23%) of participants believe technology jobs are just as attractive to women as they are to men. You can see that this year 56% believe that women find working in tech less attractive than men do.

Why is this? What is it that is making people believe this? Do people just believe that women find working in tech less attractive than men do because there are fewer women than men in tech, and therefore this must be the case? Or does this all come back to the issue of perception?

Figure 9 - Do you believe women find working in technology jobs more or less attractive than men do?



You can see from Figure 9 that there is no real difference between men's and women's opinions as to how appealing working in technology is to women.

"I believe that there is definitely some stigma that the tech industry is not friendly towards women. A lot of that assumption comes from word of mouth, and popular TV shows like *The IT Crowd* or *The Big Bang Theory*. It is a big problem that perpetuates the view that women simply aren't interested in tech. One of my female colleagues, who is the only female engineer in the studio, has that deep-seated belief as well. I think that of course with our current stigma of the industry being female unfriendly, it is no wonder they are less inclined to join tech."

"I have seen, and continue to see, a huge amount of sexism in my industry. If anything, things seem worse than 20 years ago, with the rise of the 'brogrammer' and the fact we are now so dominated by 20-something males. I think anything raising the profile of, and respect for, female engineers and technical managers is essential. The more we can level the m:f ratio, the healthier the industry will be."

Figure 10 - Do you believe the perception of working in the technology industry is...

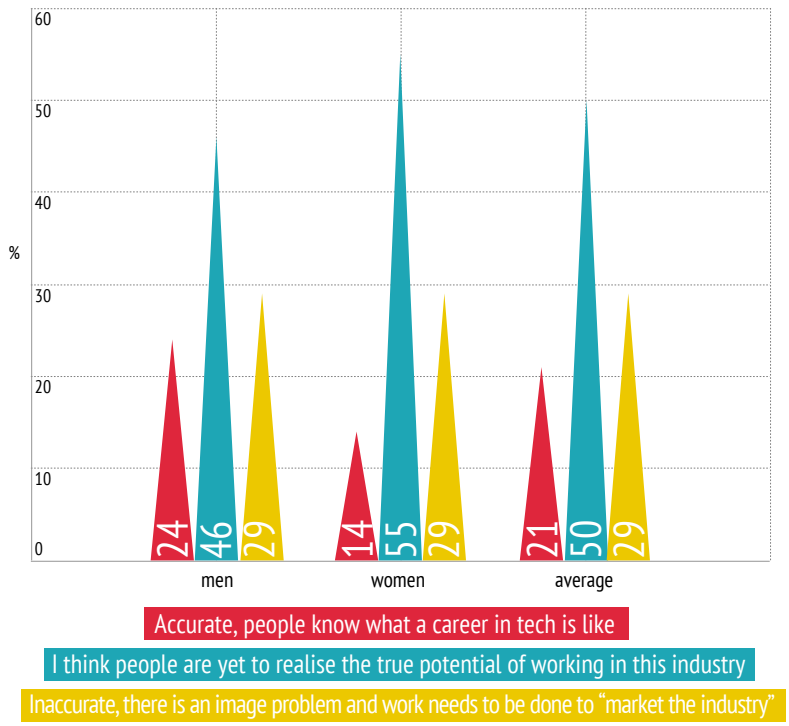


Figure 10 shows us the difference in men's and women's opinions on whether they believe the perception of the industry is accurate. You can see that 14% of women believe the perception of the industry is accurate, compared with 24% of men. Meanwhile 55% per cent of women believe people are yet to see the real value of working in this industry, compared with just 46% of men.

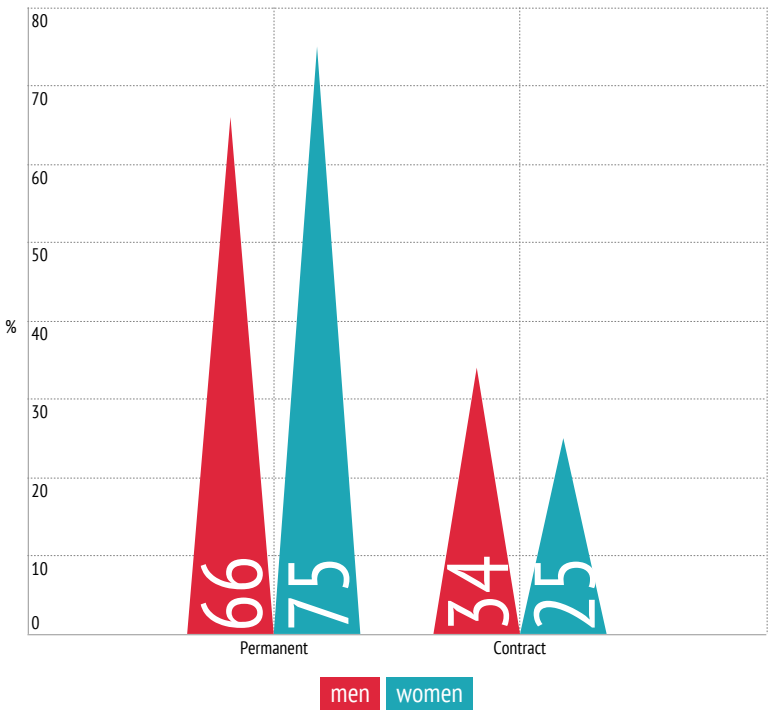
How our industry is perceived is of paramount importance to how we engage the next generation of talent to join it. We ended last year's survey saying we have a collective responsibility to market our industry, and to tell people what it is really like to work in technology.

This year, while that is still absolutely true, the feedback that we've had throughout our calendar of events, interviews, meet-ups, roundtables and forums has been that the issue is around defining what a technology job is. What is classed as working in tech? Are there people working in technology who don't realise they are? Do we need to define where technology stops and digital starts?

"I think women outside the IT industry find it less attractive than men outside the industry do. I think people outside the industry fail to understand how creative and fulfilling a career it can be; many view it as a utility or function rather than a creative outlet where the world can be explored and defined."

CONTRACTING – A MAN'S GAME?

Figure 11 - Men and women, contract and permanent



Women are significantly less likely to choose a career in contracting than men (25% versus 34%), so in an industry in which women are already underrepresented, contracting takes that imbalance even further. We estimate that only one in ten contractors is female.

Contracting is, indeed, a man's game.

But should it be?

At Mortimer Spinks we work with a wide range of contractors and many enjoy a highly flexible career, often working from home as well as taking off periods to travel, spend time with family or get involved in other business interests.

Job flexibility is often cited as a key reason why women who take a career break find it hard, or undesirable, to find a way back into the industry.

Is it an opportunity missed that more women are not taking contracting as a career choice?

WHAT LED YOU INTO TECHNOLOGY?

"A job I had as an iPhone app manager made me realise it suited me, and a desire to pay the mortgage."

"I'm naturally a logical problem solver. So I felt comfortable with the work."

"Looking for work from home opportunities"

"Desire to develop software that is designed and implemented using the most logical and intuitive thinking to advance the science of IT as best as possible"

"Video games"

"Logic, creativity, communication, money"

"Analytical mindset, a love of gadgets and the earning potential"

"It gives you the ability to create something very useful with just a PC."

"I got a 386 computer when I was little which made me curious to try new things."

"Always interested in computers from a young age, felt it was inevitable"

"My parents bought me a Vic-20 when I was 7 and I typed in programs from a book and was fascinated by creating my own things."

"Wanting to understand how radio worked and enjoying listening to amateur radio broadcasts"

"I just loved potential to create anything you want with the use of technology."

"At age 10, I got a home computer and loved to program in BASIC. The first program was the skier moving down the screen – I was hooked then on working in IT."

"1) interesting 2) good income 3) travel prospects 4) job security 5) no more exams"

"A passion for architecture. This dictated my university studies which then led me into my current role as an Architectural Technologist."

"Fluke ... was looking for an accountancy position!"

"My mother was an early adopter of computers and was very computer literate. I had a fascination with technology and science fiction from an early age. I love solving problems and optimising how we live and what we know and technology is a means to achieve this."

"In the 80s it was fairly easy to get into, I needed the money (I was a single parent) and I didn't have much formal education. Plus I'm good at maths, like teaching and problem solving."

"I could earn more than in surveying."

"1997 – the internet came along."

HOW DID YOU END UP HERE?

For the last four years we've looked in detail at the thoughts, opinions, salaries, seniority, attitudes and everything in between of the people working in technology. Over the course of the last 12 months, we've had thousands of discussions about women in technology with people from all around the industry, and one question we always end up coming back to is "how did people end up here?".

This year we've tried to get a picture of what journey people who work in tech went on to end up where they are. At what point did they start their careers? Does what you studied at school affect when you entered the industry? Does your university course have a bearing on what you do now? All of these questions, and more, are areas we hope to shed some light on in this section.

Figure 12 has a lot going on, so let's break it down line by line. Along the bottom of the page opposite you can see that we have taken all of the survey participants who took some kind of undergraduate degree. We then categorised those undergraduate degrees into three areas: Arts and Languages, STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) and Social Sciences. We have then taken these three data sets and looked at them across a few things.

Before we go any further, it is important to note that we know we will lose plenty of details by cutting up the data in this way, but we are hunting for trends and while we are conscious of losing some of the detail, we believe the overall picture it reveals is still compelling. If we now just look at the people working in tech who studied Arts or Languages at university you can see that 52% of them were women and only 48% men. This means that there are more women than men working in tech who came from an Arts or Languages background. If you look across at the right-hand side of the page at people who studied Social Sciences at university, you can see that the gender balance is almost evenly split with 46% women and 54% men.

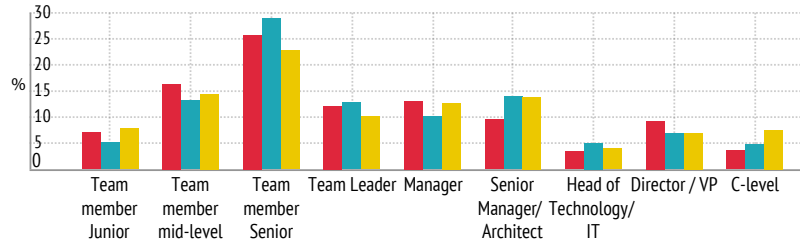
It may not surprise you to see that the sorts of subjects people studied at university had a major effect on whether they went straight into technology or not. Only 35% of people who studied Arts or Languages at university went straight into technology, and that number falls to 28% when you look at Social Sciences. You can see that 51% of people who studied STEM subjects at university ended up going straight into working in tech.

If you look a little deeper at what people did between university and working in tech you can see that, perhaps unsurprisingly, 15% of the Arts and Languages graduates went into the creative area of business and 7% went into marketing. When it comes to Social Sciences graduates, you can see that there is a relatively even spread of them across the different areas of business: 7% in customer service, 8% in sales, 12% in administration, 8% in accountancy and finance.

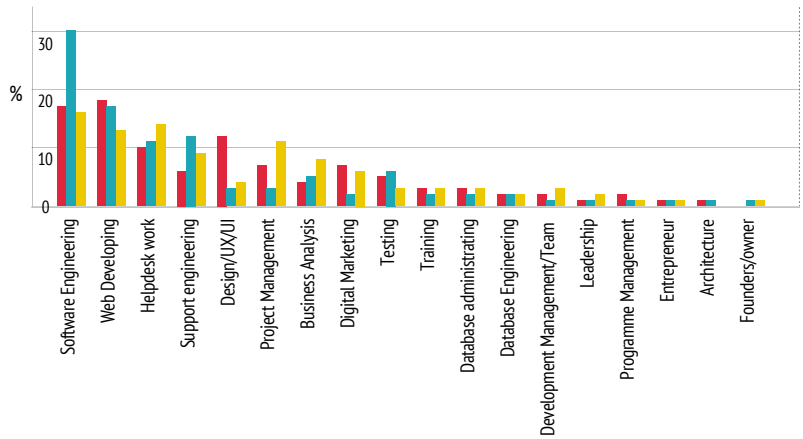
If you look at the next level up, you will see some interesting findings. You are looking at information on what type of job these three groups of graduates first took in technology. You can see that people who studied STEM subjects at university dominate the software engineering category as a first job, with 30% of STEM graduates' first jobs being in software engineering. You can see that 12% of Arts and Languages graduates took their first job in design/UX/UI. There are a few key areas that appear to be the most common areas for people to begin their careers in technology: helpdesk work, support engineering, web developing, software engineering, project management and business analysis. The split of graduates taking these as their first jobs doesn't show us anything groundbreaking: the Arts and Languages graduates tend to start their careers in tech in the more creative jobs; the Social Sciences graduates tend to start their careers in tech in the more human sides of technology; and the STEM graduates tend to begin in the more engineering roles.

Figure 12

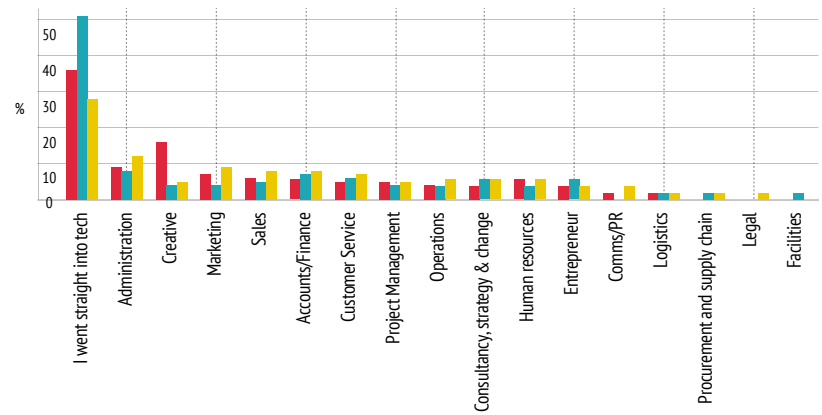
Arts and Languages | Maths / Science / Tech | Social Sciences



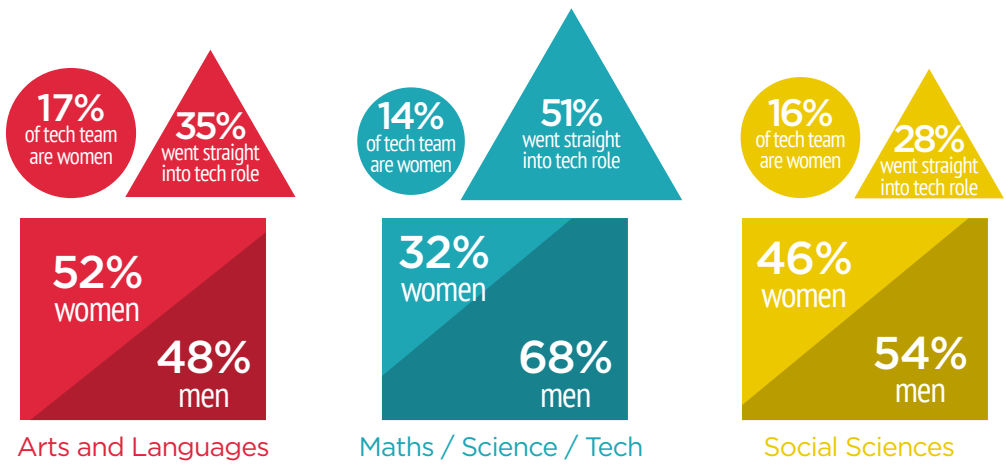
How would you describe your level of seniority?



What category did your first job in tech fall into?



If you did not go straight into tech which area of business best describes your career before technology?



If you look at the graph at the top of the page, you can see what level of seniority these different types of graduates now work in. Interestingly, a higher proportion of Social Sciences graduates are in C-level roles than from any other degree. There is also a notable drop-off in the number of STEM graduates working above the 'Head of Technology/IT' level. However, broadly, you can see that there isn't a huge amount of difference between the different degree choices.

So what does all this mean?

From careful analysis you can see that doing a non-technical degree appears to have no huge effect on your ability to 'make it' in technology: those who studied Arts or Languages may find their way in through design; those who studied Social Sciences might find their first job is in the project management or business analysis disciplines; and those who studied one of the STEM subjects are highly likely to find their first job in software engineering. However, when you roll this forward we can say with some certainty that whatever you do, you are keeping all paths to progress open. You're just as likely to be a director, VP or C-level technology professional no matter what you did in technology.

A CASE STUDY

HOW DID YOU GET INTO TECHNOLOGY?

What is your name?
Alex Bramley

What is your job title?
We get to set our own, so it's currently 'Surprised Reaction Engineer'. If you asked people operations, they'd sigh and tell you I'm really a 'Systems Engineer'.

Tell me about your role at Google.
I work in a part of Google called 'Site Reliability Engineering', or SRE – hence the 'initialism' of my job title. SREs in general are tasked with keeping Google services up and serving users 24/7; our core responsibility is maintaining the stability and performance of the production serving environment. My team in particular is Play SRE; we are responsible for the Play Store and Google Music, amongst other things.

How would you describe your role to someone who does not work in the technology industry?
"I play with computers." ;-)

Have you always worked in tech? If not where were you before? Please describe your career path.
Apart from temp jobs in my teenage years and just after uni, yes. I was lucky to land my first tech job, I think: most companies are looking for experience and skills that it's difficult to show if all you have is self-directed learning and a personal interest in the area.

I'd been applying and getting nowhere for about eight months, until one company sent me a set of problems to solve via their recruitment agency. Interestingly enough, they used Mortimer Spinks! They were fun and interesting problems to solve, and helped demonstrate the experience that my CV otherwise lacked. Thanks to my answers, they offered me a job as a systems administrator.

I left that company after a little over a year; it was tanking pretty badly and has since gone out of business. I moved to an awesome start-up that had spun out of Manchester University called Transitive. Eventually they got bought by IBM and things became … less awesome. A year or so later, while I was thinking about jumping ship, a friend of mine was approached by a Google recruiter. I asked him to pass my CV along as well since I was interested in moving to London to shack up with my girlfriend, and a few months later I was moving.

What was your favourite subject at school and what did you want to be when you grew up?
Probably Science, Chemistry in particular. There are a lot of interesting patterns in chemistry and the way chemicals interact. I don't really recall ever thinking too much about what I wanted to be when I grew up before I grew up – I only really started coming to terms with the idea that I had to grow up in my final year of university.

What were your top three chosen subjects at GCSE, not including the compulsory Maths, English and Science?
I only got to choose two: French and History.

If you went on to further education, what did you study?
A master's in Chemical Engineering at UMIST, now absorbed into Manchester University. My A-level Chemistry teacher recommended I consider it, and when I did I noticed it paid well so it seemed like as good a plan as any.

What would you say is the main reason(s) why you are working in technology?
I like solving problems and making things. Computers allow me to do both.

What do you think businesses can do to help with the gender imbalance in tech?
First, I'd like to say that as a straight, white male I feel somewhat underqualified to comment on these issues – I've had it easy. My personal opinion is that there are a number of root causes of the current gender imbalance, but the one that I think companies could really do more to help set right is the significant and mostly unconscious cultural bias against women that permeates large portions of the tech community.

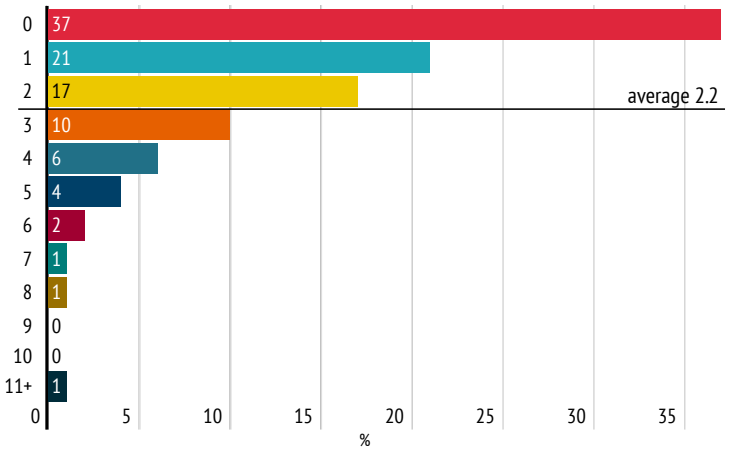
What do you think the perception of the technology industry is to people external to the industry? If incorrect, what would you do to change this?
I don't really know. I don't think I've interacted with anyone outside the tech industry other than friends and family in a fairly long while. Most of my friends are engineers :-)

If you could say one thing to every 11–13-year-old student in the country to encourage him or her to consider technology as a career choice, what would it be?
Don't be put off by hard problems, failure, or other people's opinion of you. Or, in a format you may be more comfortable with: https://youtu.be/DN43sCyEanA

‘LIFE EXPERIENCE’ OR ‘GET A HEAD START’?

Everyone’s life is unique and people ‘end up’ in different places, doing different things at different times. But how much does the ‘bit’ between education and employment affect where you ‘end up’ in the long term?

Figure 13 - How many jobs did you have before your first technology role?



To start with have a look at Figure 13: we’ve asked people how many jobs they had before what they considered their first technology role. You can see that 37% went straight into tech, 21% had one job, 17% had two and 10% had three. The average number of jobs before beginning a career in technology is 2.2. Interestingly, for women it is 2.5 and for men 2.0.

Figure 14 - How many jobs did you have before you began in tech?

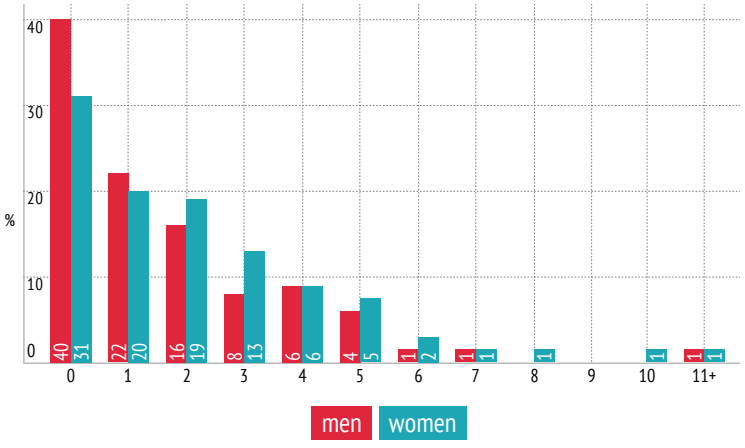
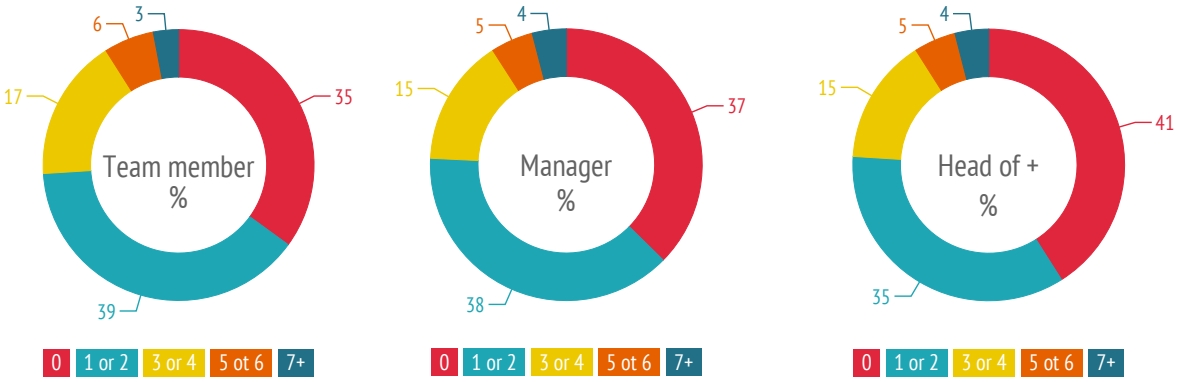


Figure 14 shows us that there is a slight difference between men and women when it comes to how many jobs they had before beginning their technology careers. Women are more likely to have had two, three or four jobs before starting in technology. Perhaps this points at the fact that technology is not always an obvious choice for them.

Does the number of jobs you have before technology influence where you get to in your tech career? Do people with a longer career before entering technology fare better or worse than their colleagues who went straight into tech?

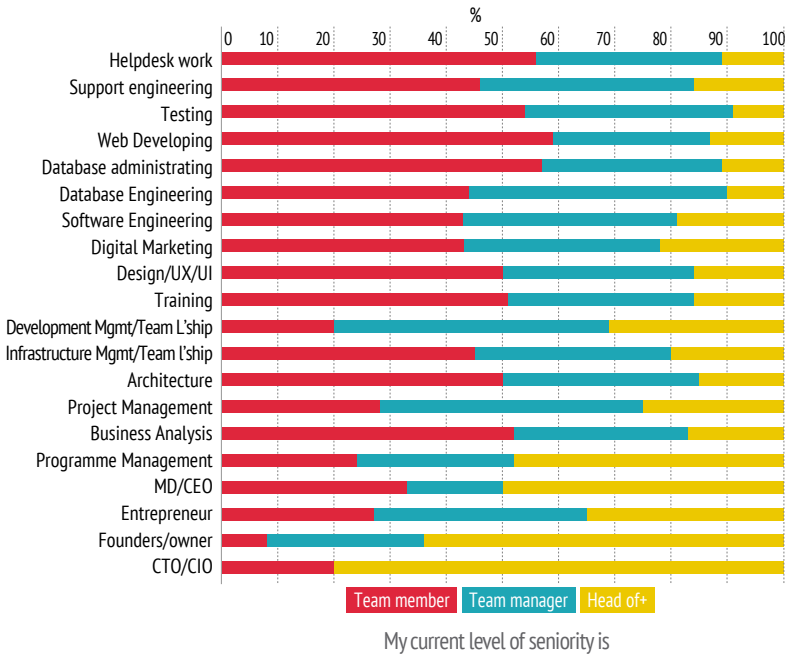
Figure 15 - The number of jobs people had before working in tech and their seniority now



In Figure 15 we've grouped people's seniority into three areas: Team members (be it junior, mid-level or senior), Managers (team leader, manager or senior manager) and Head of or higher (head of, senior architect, VP, director, C-level). Interestingly, you can see from the series of charts that they are close to identical. It points, unequivocally, to the fact that you can have as many jobs as you want before starting in technology; it's not going to harm your potential to progress.

But what about that first job – your beginning in technology? Does that have an effect on your progression potential? Could it be that if you came into the technology industry as a software engineer then you're more likely to be a CTO than if you entered as, say, a database engineer?

Figure 16 - How your first job in tech influences your seniority now



In Figure 16 we have again separated the data into the same three areas: Team members, Managers and Head of or higher. This time we have looked at what these three sets of data tell us about how people's first job affects their career progression. From a first glance it looks a bit like Figure 15: almost identical. Well, it is, in the most part.

There are two key areas to look at. The first is testing: 8% of people who began their career in testing are now in a 'Head of or higher' role. The second is helpdesk: 10% of people who began their career working in this discipline now work in a 'Head of or higher' role.

The most standout fact from Figure 16, however, is that of project management: 28% of people who began their career in project management are currently working as a team member; 47% now work as a Manager; and 25% as a 'Head of or higher'. Could it be that as project management is, by its very nature, more focused on leadership and organisation of multiple parts it means that it is a fast-track route to a true leadership role?

LEARNING THROUGH HIRING TO HIRE FOR LEARNING

It is hard to pick up a business book that doesn't contain a chapter (or more) on how important hiring is to your business. In many ways the technology industry has disrupted the hiring processes of traditional businesses. For a long time Google's interview questions became the stuff of legend, with people blogging about things they were asked and whole forums discussing what 'the right' answer could be.

But what do we look for when we hire? Isn't it quite straightforward in technology? We hire for the skills and experience, right?

Figure 17 - Have you ever hired someone even though 'on paper' a significant proportion of the required technical skills and experience specified to do the job were missing?

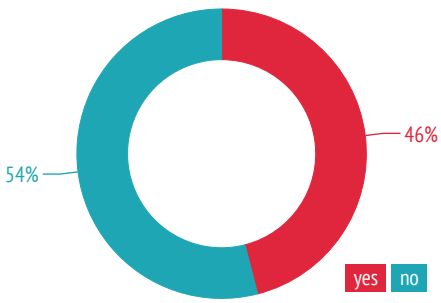
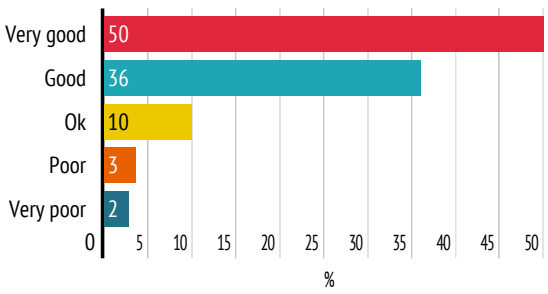


Figure 17 shows us that just under half (46%) of people have hired someone even though 'on paper' a significant proportion of the required technical skills and experience were missing. This is a promising statistic: people can go and get themselves jobs that they may not feel they are a 100% match on. But how have those hires turned out?

Figure 18 - If yes, how has this hire turned out?



In Figure 18 you can see that 86% of these hires have turned out either 'good' or 'very good': again, a promising statistic. There was a theory put forward that when applying for jobs there was a different approach between men and women. The theory stated that men were more likely to apply for a role where they only met half of the requirements, whereas women felt they needed to meet more like 80% before putting themselves forward. We actually asked this question in a previous survey and found there was little to no difference in our data sample. However, if that theory is true then there is a reassuring message to potential applicants here.

But knowing that people have hired people who aren't, on paper, the perfect match for the job and that they have turned out well isn't intrinsically useful. What we really need to know is why.

Figure 19 - If you've made those kinds of hires, why?

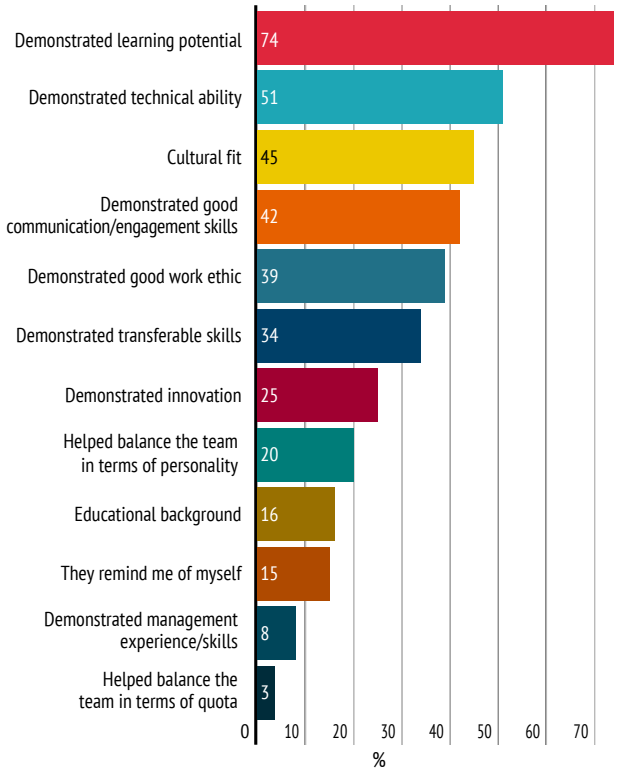
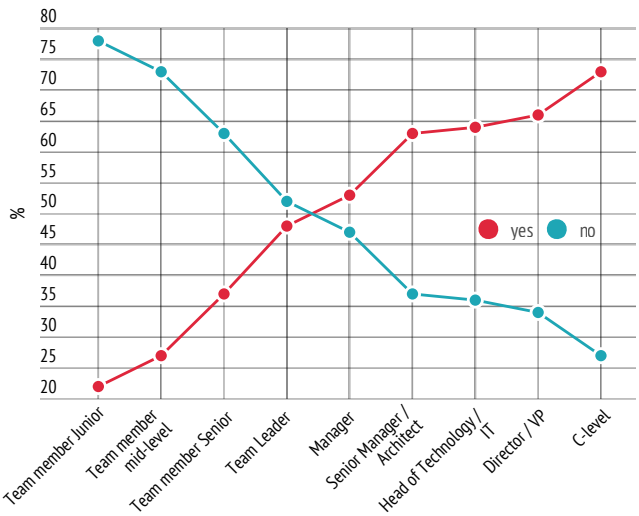


Figure 19 shows us why people have hired individuals to join their teams or businesses despite them missing a significant proportion of the required technical skills and experience specified to do the job. We see that 74% of hirers said they have hired based on the potential employee demonstrating learning potential; 51% said they demonstrated technical ability; and 45% said they were a good cultural fit. We left the question as a multiple choice so it really is just to measure the most popular answers. 'Demonstrated learning potential' is by far the most popular answer, but what does that mean? How do you measure someone's learning potential?

As it happens there are some really strong tools to measure someone's ability to learn new things, how quickly they will be able to learn them and the extent to which they will retain the information, but are employers using these tools? Perhaps, if learning potential is such a key factor, we need to think about whether or not our interviewers are equipped to assess this skill?

As we progress in our careers, do our hiring criteria change? Figure 20 shows us whether this is the case.

Figure 20 - Have you ever hired someone even though 'on paper' a significant proportion of the required technical skills and experience specified to do the job were missing?



It is rare for us to find such a clear correlation but, before we draw the conclusions that we inevitably will, there is one important caveat. As people progress in their careers they are less likely to be hiring people for roles where there are strict rules on technical abilities and number of years' experience in certain disciplines or sectors.

Having said this, there is no denying that as people develop in their careers they may be looking for potential rather than previous experience. It would be fair to assume that, at more junior levels, senior team members, team leaders and team managers in technology are hiring more of the hands-on technical roles where they know exactly the level of ability they are looking for and are reasonably uncompromising in their requirements.

Is it possible that we should start to adopt a more 'senior' approach to hiring at the more junior levels? Based on the fact that more than 80% of hires made, even though significant skills were missing, turned out to be good or very good, maybe this is an approach we should take further.

A CASE STUDY

HIRING

hometrack

What is your name?
Matthew Richardson

What is your job title?
Chief Technology Officer at Hometrack

How did you get into technology?
I taught myself to build computers and some C++ as a kid – this turned into some success at some engineering competitions while I was at school and that gave me the confidence to start a small tech company. From then on I've been involved in founding and running some pretty interesting companies changing the way people buy, live, become and stay healthy, and work.

Do you think the perception of the technology industry is accurate?
I think the idea that there's a technology industry is wrong. Is Ocado a supermarket? Of course not – it's a technology-enabled logistics company that just happens to sell groceries. It will still be a while before this shift is widely appreciated, and longer still until we know what that means for our economy and the balance between the tech enablers who scale and capitalise on big opportunities quickly, and the fundamental value producers that we depend upon; every Deliveroo needs many local restaurants, and every Uber requires a great many drivers. For all that technology can do to connect us, it may end up creating the biggest 'class divide' ever.

Have you ever hired someone even though 'on paper' they did not have the required technical skills and experience specified to do the job?
Yes. It was a success – he grew quickly into a great leader within our team.

If yes, what were your reason(s) for hiring them?
Confidence! I'm not sure how he did it, but he immediately gave me confidence that he understood what we were trying to achieve, was passionate about it and would persevere until it was perfect. Having a team of people whose objectives are aligned with my vision is far more important to me than finding someone who has 'kind of done this before'.

Do you believe businesses should take a more open approach to cross-training individuals into technology-based roles from other disciplines?
Yes, and emphatically so. All of the great products that I've seen have been produced by heterogeneous and cross-functional teams. This arrangement does, however, require clear direction from the leadership team on roles and responsibilities to take into account the respective levels and breadth of technical understanding.

What do you think businesses can do to help attract more women into technology?

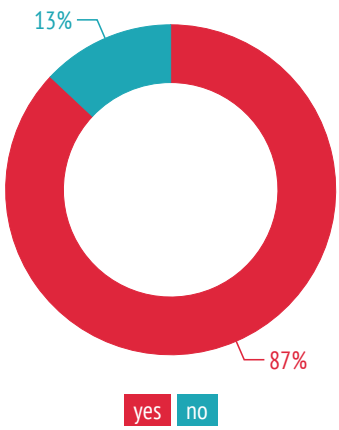
Many barriers have been removed – tech is cooler than it has ever been and is no longer the preserve of geeks (or at least geeks have become cooler!), the quality of STEM secondary education is generally improving and is becoming less gender-typed, and self-learning opportunities (the best way of really understanding technology) are more accessible to girls than ever thanks to the Girl Geek movement. Most of the hiring managers I know are also truly happy to see female candidates for technology roles, and always offer them the role if they're the best fit.

The missing piece of the puzzle is confidence for girls and women to pursue a tech skilled career. Initiatives like Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In' help in some way, but I think a more direct 'do what you enjoy' message needs to be heard by girls at school.

THE PEOPLE YOU NEED ARE STARING YOU IN THE FACE *(OR AT LEAST THEY'RE IN YOUR BUILDING)*

In last year's survey we talked about needing to approach the gender imbalance in technology from three angles: the short term, medium term and long term. The short-term solution we identified was to look at cross training individuals from different business areas into technology. The conclusions we laid out in the previous section further emphasise just how successful this option can be.

Figure 21 - Do you believe businesses should take a more open approach to cross training individuals into technology-based roles from other disciplines?



We asked participants "Do you believe businesses should take a more open approach to cross training individuals into technology-based roles from other disciplines?" and Figure 21 shows us that 87% of participants said "yes".

But are there any good examples of this in the industry? A massive 600+ people responded with their own:

"I hired a whole team of developers in my first start-up that were brand new cross-trained developers from other fields."

"Moving people directly into developer roles is hard, but there are many other routes that have worked many times: testing, systems administration, documentation, program management, product ownership are common examples."

"I've recruited switchboard staff into IT and secretarial staff into IT."

"Advertising internally for trainee programmers, assessing all applicants with a numeracy test and picking the best by result, to interview. Got some good, unexpected, people."

"A waiter who had good analytical and customer skills was transferred into a mobile support role – initially pure customer support, moving into a minor technical role and now developing/testing."

"Ex forces moving into technology roles"

"A number of BAs I know started work in the call centre and have progressed through the business to become BAs in IT over a ten-year period."

"Me. I am a lawyer by training but I am now a technology leader."

"I cross trained in my own time from a secretarial role to an IT training/helpdesk role. However, this was solely driven by myself. No helping hand."

"I am a great example of cross-industry solutions – I started in surveying and moved into technology and now own my own company."

"First company accepted graduates from all sorts of educational disciplines but cross trained into IT, accepting that great teams need all sorts of characters. Worked very well."

"We hired a student worker who had limited IT knowledge and experience but was willing to learn. Her personality was a good fit with our team and she was a fast learner. The overall experience was very positive."

The key thing to note here is that there may be other areas of business where, when hiring, the business would like to take on four or five of the candidates interviewing, but cannot as there is only one vacancy. Perhaps with some great cross-training initiatives and a strong framework to encourage learning this could be a way of addressing the gender imbalance in technology teams?

There follows a case study from a friend of Mortimer Spinks, Matt Searle, who began his career in the world of financial services supporting mortgage applications. The world of accountancy and finance provides, in many ways, very relevant experience to technology. Could we be proactively targeting these sorts of business areas?

A CASE STUDY

"I'VE DONE ALL SORTS OF JOBS"

haymarket®

What is your name?

Matt Searle

What is your job title?

Development Manager

Tell me about your role.

As a Development Manager I manage a team of four developers, upgrading, maintaining, redesigning and rebuilding the current portfolio of websites including Stuff, What Hi-Fi?, Autocar, Classic and Sports Car and FourFourTwo. In our team we also have a Project Manager, Product Owner, QA and UX. We all work together to ensure the projects we work on meet requirements, are architected in the best way and meet deadlines for completion.

On the whole a Development Manager is responsible for ensuring that any coding meets standards laid out, is built in the most efficient and logical way and in a way that is maintainable. Keeping costs of development down is important and can only be achieved through coding efficiently by architecting it correctly.

I regularly communicate with other areas of the business with regard to any new work we've done and demonstrate it. I will be involved in the roadmapping and programme planning to identify any obstacles in the stream of work that we have coming in. I might also be given first sight of new functionality to understand if it is something we can work with and utilise. As much as possible I try to avoid wasting time on implementations which could be costly with little benefit or trying to 'reinvent the wheel'.

I try to help grow the individuals within the team and make them better business people and developers: to structure them and to encourage them to share ideas and try new things.

In addition to this, we as a team are often looking to streamline the process in which we work and get rid of any technical debt.

How would you describe your role to someone who does not work in the technology industry?

I work in a team of developers, each one at different levels of expertise. I help them to develop within the business and grow as individuals within their role. I also play a part in helping them to architect and build websites to make sure that they are usable, fast and good quality. We try to do this while keeping the costs low and wherever possible streamlining the way we work to achieve this in a shorter time and at a lower cost.

Have you always worked in tech? If not where were you before? Please describe your career path.

I've not always worked in tech but I've always been involved in it, starting from when I was young by programming computer games in BASIC with my brother on our Spectrum 48k.

I've done all sorts of jobs including barman, waiter, lifeguard, stacking shelves at a supermarket, call centre operator, postman and sales. I worked in finance, going from mortgage accounts roles where I spent my time calculating interest paid on repayment mortgages, then focusing on what I was better at led on to being a Treasury Accountant. Throughout this time, as a hobby I would build websites for fun and for friends to help them with new ventures.

I would also build my own computers from peripherals, finding this was the best way to get a high-powered computer cheaply. I learnt that in most cases it won't do any harm to just have a go at something.

After a short spell in different careers while following a dream to live in Cornwall, I decided to follow what I was most interested in since I had time on my hands.

I formed my own limited company and provided laptop and PC repair services for local businesses and residential areas. I grew this to encompass a more creative side and picked up where I left off in building websites.

Because of the poor economic climate at the time, I searched further afield for opportunities and grabbed one in Central London as a Junior Developer. From there things went from strength to strength, I progressed from Junior to Mid-weight to Senior to Team Lead to Tech Team Lead and eventually to Development Manager, which is the current position I hold.

What was your favourite subject at school and what did you want to be when you grew up?

I like to think I am a creative person and loved Art and Drama but through lack of nurture (or perhaps talent) I focused on my naturally stronger subjects which were Maths and Sciences.

What were your top three chosen subjects at GCSE, not including the compulsory Maths, English and Science?

French, Design and Technology, and Business Studies

If you went on to further education, what did you study?

I studied Business Management joint with Multimedia. I lasted a year before I dropped out. I wasn't happy with how subjective my studies were and wasn't enjoying it at all.

What would you say is the main reason(s) why you are working in technology?

It is the future, it has been for as long as I can remember and it isn't going anywhere. It's an area which often doesn't have boundaries for creativity and ideas.

Much of the work we do is problem solving. It's an intellectually challenging environment and interesting. There is a great sense of team work and collaboration. There are many people involved and all working towards the same goal.

What do you think businesses can do to help with the gender imbalance in tech?

Hold open evenings to allow people to see what technology departments do, what different roles are available in technology, how the gender balance is in these companies. Just meeting people out of interest is a difficult thing to do. It may sound boring but it's a way to get people together to dispel any misconceptions.

Present new and interesting ideas, run workshops or tutorials and hackdays. It can often be the case that people will try new things for fun and then develop from there. If you include everyone despite their skill level then you will encourage more interest. Part of working in tech is about mentoring and coaching more junior members so there should be plenty of acceptance and willingness to teach.

Understand that a breadth of roles exists within technology and that many of these are filled by women playing a part in the whole infrastructure. This may then encourage confidence to branch into other areas of technology. In my team alone 50% are women, and I can see the imbalance is already improving.

What do you think the perception of the technology industry is to people external to the industry? If incorrect, what would you do to change this?

To be completely honest, I will use the slang used to describe me at some points throughout my career – nerd, geek, socially inept, intelligent, baffling, boring.

I don't think any of that is true: intelligence is subjective, it's important to be able to put yourself in the position of the people using the websites. To be compassionate and empathetic. You have to understand the needs of the business to best build a website that they will use every day as well as consider the end user who is consuming your website. What one person might think is the best way to do something might be the worst for any of those other individuals and as such you have to be flexible and accepting of change.

Interacting with people and their teams is a good way to help: let them engage with individuals, encourage presentations from team members. Half the battle is actually meeting the people to dissolve any preconceptions.

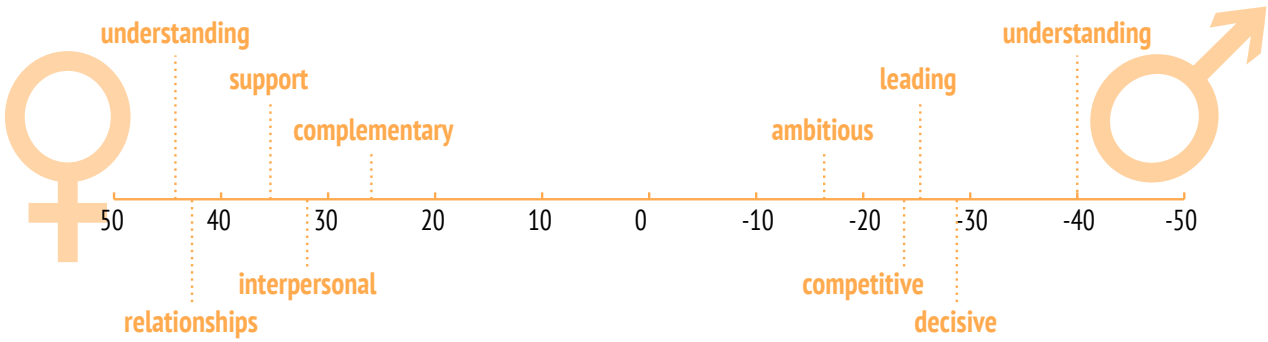
If you could say one thing to every 11–13-year-old student in the country to encourage him or her to consider technology as a career choice, what would it be?

Technology is the future, it is part of all of our lives and we have become reliant on it, don't get left behind. There is every opportunity to create the next big thing, you could be responsible for the creation of something huge, or you could simply find a career path which you love doing. Either of these reasons could mean passing up the opportunity on a future you love.

‘LE’, ‘LA’, ‘UN’ OR ‘UNE’... IT’S MORE LIKE THIS THAN YOU REALISE

“But what can we actually do?” is one of the most common questions we, at Mortimer Spinks, get asked. After talking businesses through the different strategies to help them, we inevitably start talking about how the company presents itself. We ask the business to imagine they were a prospective candidate, considering their next career move. They receive an email, job description or careers page of your business: what is going to make it stand out to the people you want to join your business? We often talk about using the right sort of language to engage candidates, but that got us thinking about language in terms of attracting men or women to join your business. Could it be that some words are more ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ than others? Could it be that some words in English are one step on from French – they actually imply a real gender?

Figure 22



At first Figure 22 feels like a lot to take in, but let’s break it down. We have taken ten words and asked participants to say whether they feel that the word itself is more associated with a man, a woman or neither. We’ve then taken men’s and women’s opinions and formed an average which is presented on our sliding scale.

Let’s pick out some of the most interesting findings: 63% of women and 34% of men believe the word ‘understanding’ is more associated with a woman than a man; and 55% of women and 31% of men associate the word ‘support’ with a woman.

You can see that the word ‘competitive’ is more associated with a man, with 36% of men and 44% of women saying so.

If we pick out the words which people associate more with a man than a woman, we have 'decisive', 'leading', ' competitive', 'political' and 'ambitious'. If we take the words that people associate more with a woman than a man, we have 'understanding', 'support', 'complimentary', 'relationships' and 'interpersonal'.

How is this useful? Well, let's take a hypothetical situation where a female web developer is looking for a new role. She finds two different job adverts: one starts with "We're looking for an ambitious web developer to join our leading team" and the other starts "We're looking for a web developer to complement our existing team". She may choose one over the other or she may not.

Let's imagine that she interviews with both companies for both jobs. During the interview for the first job, the hiring manager presents the team as "competitive" and talks about needing someone "decisive and ambitious". In the interview for the second, the hiring manager talks about "needing someone to really understand the business, build great relationships with the team" or about how she'll be "fully supported" and "we're really looking for someone with great interpersonal skills to join the business".

Now imagine both roles offer her the same financial package, and they're equal distances from where she lives. Perhaps the different ways the businesses have been presented means she'll choose job number 2?

Looking back at Figure 22 you can see that in every example a higher percentage of women felt that the words were either associated with a man or a woman than men did. Does this mean that women are more in tune to the language you are using to present your team or business?

There are many great case studies on businesses that have taken the time to work with a language consultancy to rewrite their website and/or careers pages in order to attract more women to the business. If this isn't something you are looking at doing, perhaps it could be?

The real challenge here comes from the fact that the vast majority of teams and departments in technology are dramatically imbalanced, which means you don't have the people on board to take the time to think about how you're advertising, communicating and interviewing. Does this mean your imbalance begins to feed itself? If you don't have the skills internally to analyse the way you attract a balanced team, how will you ever address the problem?

MENTORING – STILL A LIFETIME GUARANTEE

In the previous section we discussed how using language differently may help to attract more women to join your technology teams. In this section we're going to have a look at how to retain the people you have working for you. What things can you do that could help?

During our second year of running this survey we found that a lot of the conversations we were having at events and roundtables were about how important mentors, both official and unofficial, can be to everyone in technology, but in particular women.

Let's start with some of the basics on this subject.

"I think it is important to have a good guide with experience to introduce a newcomer to the technology working world."

Figure 23 - Have you ever had a mentor at any point during your career in technology?

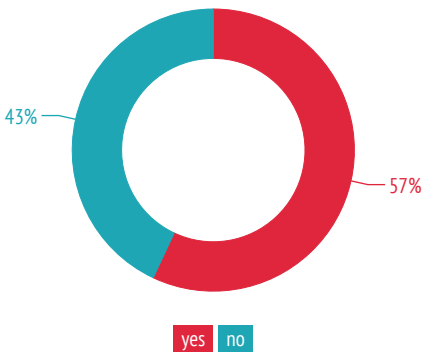


Figure 24 - To what extent do you think mentoring improves people's career prospects?

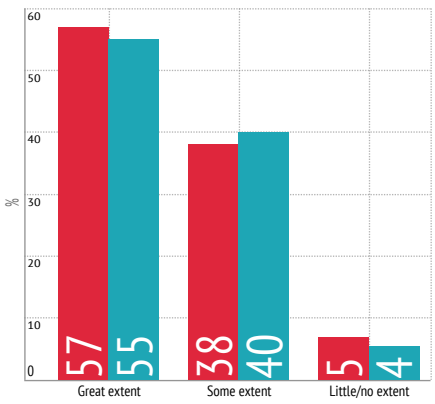


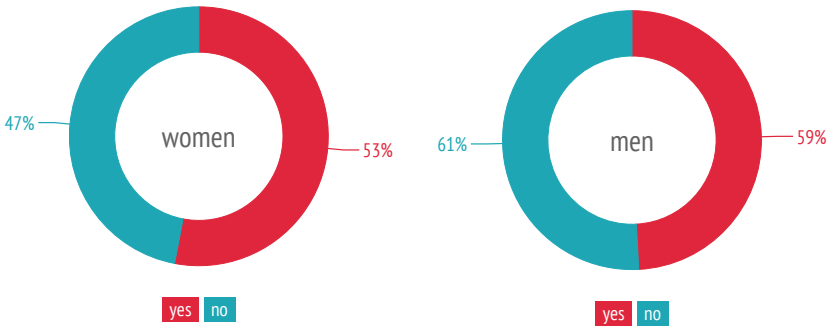
Figure 23 shows that more than half (57%) of the industry has had a mentor at some point during their careers in technology. In Figure 24 you can see that an incredibly high proportion of those who have been mentored believe it to improve people's career prospects. This has not changed since last year. This has acted as a bit of a validation for us; we were reluctant to use this data to advise our clients too much over the last 12 months as we only had one year's data to back us up. Now, though, with two years' worth of data we feel we can say that being mentored is a good thing – well, certainly for 96% of those who have been.

"A mentor can point you in the right direction, you still need to understand why it is the right direction and be able to follow through."

Before we go any further, think back on your career. Have you had a mentor? Were they useful? More importantly than this, does your current employer facilitate mentoring? If not, could it be something you suggest in your technology team? If you do decide to launch a mentoring programme, one thing is for sure: it will be received well by those who participate.

If we cut this data down by men and women, is there a difference in their opinions?

Figure 25 - Have you had a mentor at any point during your career in technology?



"It's a win-win – good for both the person being mentored and good for the mentor hearing their challenges and sharing experiences."

Figure 26 - If you answered 'yes' to the above question, please specify at which level you were mentored?

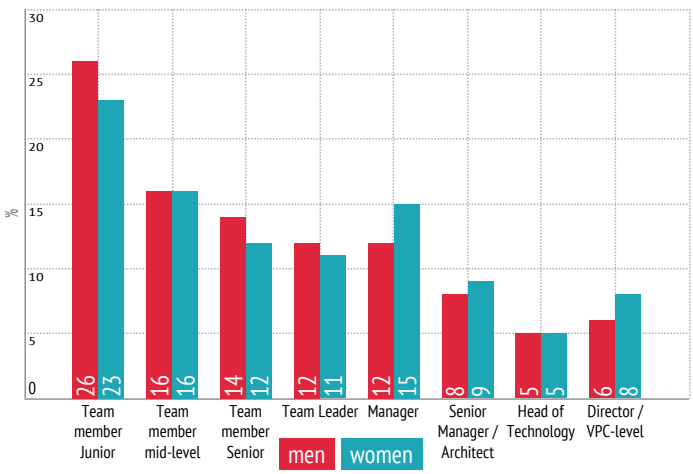
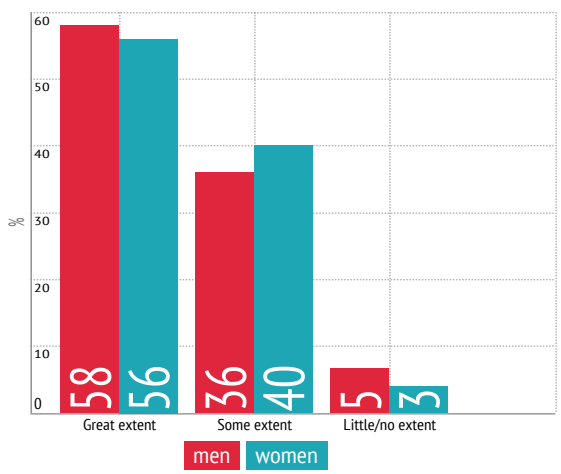


Figure 27 - To what extent do you think mentoring improves people's career prospects?



From Figures 25, 26 and 27 you can see that there seems to be very little difference in how mentoring is received by men or women. The only real difference worth mentioning is that it seems more women in senior roles are mentored than men are, but the percentage differences here are too small to draw any real conclusions.

From our experience working with technology teams and businesses all across the world, mentoring schemes are (other than time) free to implement, and often give people a line of communication outside their reporting line to seek support, air concerns, gain advice and increase their engagement.

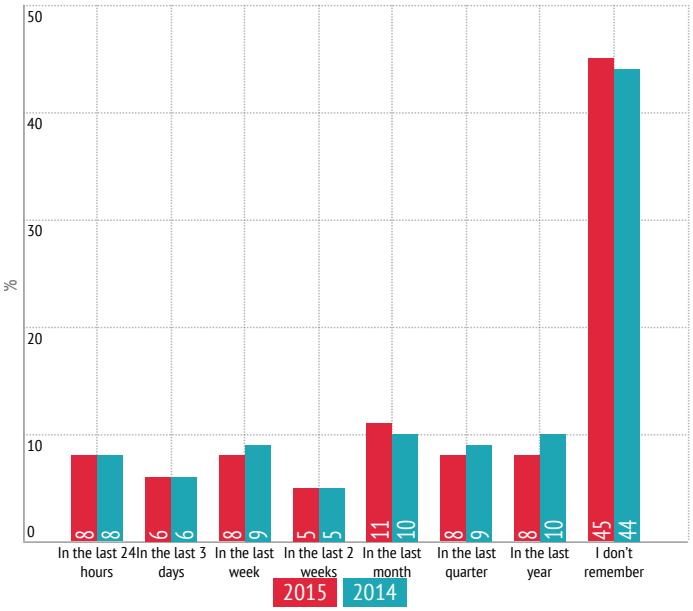
So if you aren't on a mentoring scheme, or setting one up, it may be time to ask yourself why not.

"I think mentoring is very important in an experience-led industry such as IT. It helps demonstrate the art of the possible far more quickly than leaving people to discover this just by themselves."

ACTION COMES SECOND ... TALKING COMES FIRST

Last year we wanted to try to gain a real sense of how important gender diversity in technology was to people who work in the industry. We thought long and hard about how to do this; we felt that on balance asking people directly how much they thought about the issue would not necessarily provide us with any useful data. In order to try to gain a useful picture of how relevant this subject is in people's minds we asked them when was the last time they heard or had a conversation about gender diversity in technology,

Figure 28 - In your job, when was the last time you heard or had a conversation about gender diversity in technology?



You can see in Figure 28 the answers to how much discussion is being had about women in technology. Interestingly, there has been almost no movement for the better or the worse (assuming you agree that this subject needs addressing) in the last 12 months. However, there are positives to take from this. More than a fifth of the industry have had or heard a conversation about gender balance in technology in the last week and almost two-fifths (37%) have in the last month.

What's important to note here is that in many ways Figure 28 is the guide for us to know how quickly, or otherwise, things will change. It is unlikely that people are going to try to 'do' something about this issue if they are not discussing it; how could they?

If we assume that actions come out of words, then it would be fair to assume that really only people who are having conversations about gender diversity in technology on a weekly basis are likely to be trying, in any way, to address it.

Figure 29 - Are you aware of any formal initiatives within your business to promote women into technology?

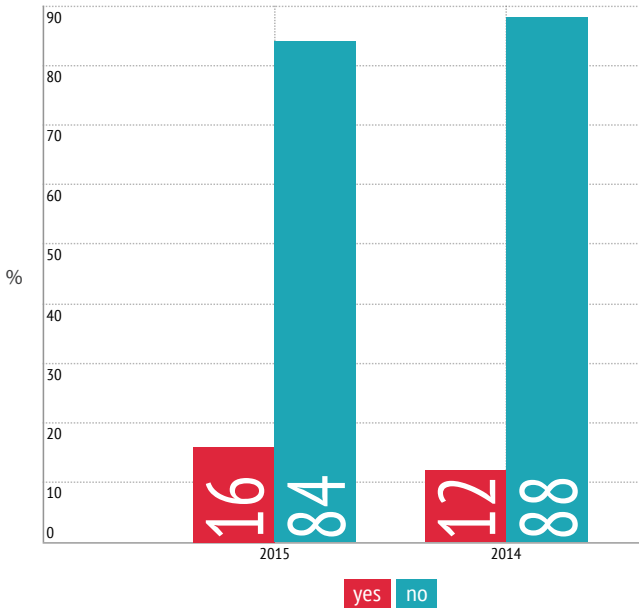


Figure 29 is interesting as it shows us the change over the last 12 months in the number of formal initiatives within businesses to promote women into technology. If we start with the basics, last year 12% of participants were aware of formal initiatives to promote women into technology; this year that number has risen to 16%. Initially that does not look like much of an increase, but it is actually a 33% increase year on year. If we had this increase again in 2016, we would be looking at more than 20% of businesses in technology promoting women into technology. That would be a very real achievement.

So between Figure 28 and Figure 29 we know that 22% of the industry is talking about (or hearing conversations about) women in technology on a weekly basis, and 16% of the industry are aware of formal initiatives within their business to promote women into technology roles. This feels like progress.

Figure 30 - Are you aware of any formal initiatives outside of your business to promote women into technology?

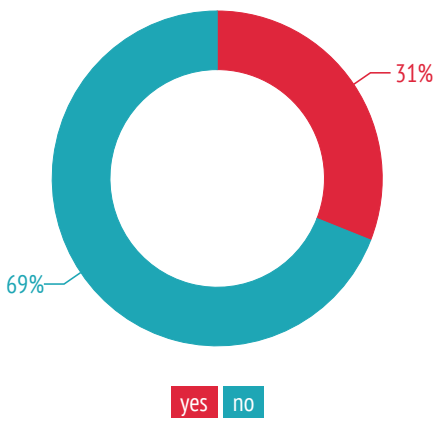


Figure 30 shows that more people are aware of formal initiatives outside their business to promote women into technology: 31% of participants answered "yes" when asked if they knew of things outside their business. There are positives and negatives to take from this. On the one hand, it has to be a good thing to have almost a third (31%) of the industry at least aware of these things. On the other hand, it could be argued that 31% seems a little low. It could be that at Mortimer Spinks we think and talk about gender balance in our industry so often and are so aware of the things going on in this space that we have an imbalanced view.

However, try searching for "women in technology" online: the sheer volume of videos, blogs, articles, talks, discussions, forums, businesses and everything in between devoted to women in technology is astonishing. So how do we get people thinking about it?

In many ways, that is the fundamental question that we need to address …

A CASE STUDY

WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS DOING?

CODESS

Microsoft

What is your name?
Alexa Glick

What is your job title?
Diversity Program Manager, Microsoft

Tell me about your role at Microsoft.
In my role, I work as part of our Global Talent Acquisition team alongside HR to build a Global Diversity Strategy for attracting and retaining diverse talent. As part of my role, I also manage the global Codess community, a networking forum for female engineers.

Does Microsoft have any formal initiatives in place to encourage more women into technology?
We have many programmes that encourage more women into technology, including DigiGirlz and Kal Academy. DigiGirlz is a Microsoft YouthSpark programme that gives high school girls the opportunity to learn about careers in technology, connect with Microsoft employees, and participate in hands-on computer and technology workshops. We are also investing in a new programme this year called Kal Academy. Kal Academy is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to teach professional women marketable technical skills. At the end of their five-month training course, we then work to find them jobs at Microsoft.

Tell me more about Codess: what is the company about and how they are helping women in tech?
Codess is a global community for female engineers to come together and support one another in their professional careers. In over two years, we have held 25+ events across ten countries worldwide offering hackathons, technical conferences, mentoring sessions and career workshops. Codess provides a safe environment for women to learn new skills, feel inspired and meet likeminded women. Our mission is to inspire women to stick with the engineering profession.

What do you think businesses can do to help attract more women into technology?
It is so important that we are highlighting our female engineering talent and giving women who are looking to get into technology a role model to feel inspired by. Businesses need to be sharing the variety of roles you can get into, and highlighting the real-world impact these great women are having.

What do you think the perception of the technology industry is to people external to the industry?

The perception is that the technology industry is male-dominated and if you want to get into technology, you have to be a coder. However, there are so many different roles out there from being a game designer for the next-generation Xbox, researching the future of wearable technology, or inventing a breakthrough medical device, the possibilities are huge!

What would you do to change this?

We need to hear from women in our organisations, the women doing these amazing jobs and having this incredible impact. We need to position them as role models to inspire the next generation of technologists.

If you could say one thing to every 11–13-year-old student in the country to encourage him or her to consider technology as a career choice, what would it be?

Be brave and think big. You have the chance to design and build our future. You could have a real impact not only on your own future, but also on society. You can do anything with your life – you just need to want it enough and stick with it.

Any other comments?

Open new doors. Join our Codess network today for regular updates on tech news, upcoming events and mentoring.

FINAL THOUGHTS

For four years we've put huge amounts of time, effort and resources into running our Women in Technology campaign.

We've produced four pieces of research, we've pored over the results and we've drawn conclusions each year to try to recommend an action.

This year, there are obvious recommendations to come from our latest report.

Get your positioning clear

We should all make the time to review how we are positioning the technology teams within our business, or our business as a whole (if you work in a technology business). We need to make sure that we are attracting a balanced team and not letting the fact that we are currently imbalanced add to the problem or our imbalance will become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What are you hiring for?

Looking at your hiring criteria is essential. If you are a business or team that requires a traditional education when hiring technology professionals, then you must think long and hard about why. We can see from our data on how people came into technology that whether people study Art, Music, French, Japanese, Maths, Geography or Computer Science they can make it in the technology industry and go just as far as anyone else.

I wish I worked in tech

We need to change the perception of the industry: people in technology believe there is lots of work to be done to alter the way people view technology. But how do we do this? Well, why don't we start by telling people how great our job is, how much we enjoy building things, changing the way people behave, making people's lives more convenient, faster, more informed and more productive.

It will always start with a conversation

More than any of the points above, if there is one thing and one thing alone that you do differently having read this report, talk about gender diversity in technology. Don't be afraid to ask your management team how important it is to them. What are they doing to address the issue? Or, even better, what can you do to help address the issue?

Thanks so much for reading this report.

As always, we'd love to hear from you, so get in touch with us.

Mortimer Spinks runs regular events and forums on this subject, so if you are interested to know more please get in touch with Harry Gooding, our Head of Client Engagement

harry.gooding@mortimerspinks.com or **+44 (0) 20 7 170 6435**

www.mortimerspinks.com

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