

“We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience” (John Dewey).

Across nearly four dynamic decades, **Juliet Marber, Partner and Portfolio Manager**, has a particular breadth and depth to her career, rich with applicable learnings worthy of reflection as we celebrate the 2024 International Women's day theme of “Inspire Inclusion”.

Inspire Inclusion

Thankfully, many societies have progressed beyond the notion of women needing to succeed in a man's world. I have spent much of my career travelling to Japan, a traditionally conservative society. In the nineties, as one of very few visiting female fund managers, I was typically addressed as Sir. Today, supported by the government's own target for 30% women in management roles, there are more women at company meetings around the table. Closer to home, shifts accelerated by the Covid pandemic, have helped to normalise more inclusive practicalities, with presenteeism taking a backseat and hybrid working becoming the norm.



Allyship

Allyship has played a crucial role throughout my career. It is a fundamental aspect of culture, and one that requires ongoing care and commitment. At key moments in life, the empathy shown by close colleagues has supported my longevity in the industry and my sense of loyalty. Over time, I've witnessed progression, where allyship may previously have played a role for women, today policies are also being applied more broadly. From feeling the need to hide aspects of my personal life like being a mother, there's been a significant shift. Recently we engaged with corporate health insurers about the need for comprehensive coverage for fertility and menopause.

Psychological Safety

Diversity of thought presents both opportunities and challenges. In navigating professional environments, I've come to appreciate the importance of psychological safety, described as the belief that one can speak up without risk of punishment or humiliation. It's been important to recognise that the tone of a discussion can be as impactful as the content itself, highlighting the significance of considering both intent and impact. As a Partner and member of the investment team at a contrarian value manager, it's important to uncover all information available in the room to achieve optimal outcomes. As a female fund manager, I've observed that we often bring a different approach to risk. Psychological safety facilitates a better outcome.

Collective Action

The rise of women isn't about the fall of men, and the broadening of diversity agendas has been a welcome shift. Working with the Diversity Project has allowed us to support initiatives that promote positive change for the industry. At OP, as a small firm, it can be challenging to implement some of the broader objectives. As Chair of the DE&I Committee and the Charity Committee we aim to leverage our resources to support meaningful initiatives through charity partners in our local community.

My experience tells me that fund management is a role that is well suited to women. In recognising all that has improved, I also acknowledge there is more work to be done. With female representation stagnant globally, at levels of 12%, we must continue to collectively inspire inclusion if we are to move towards an objective of 30% by 2030.