

Attracting and Retaining Women in Tech



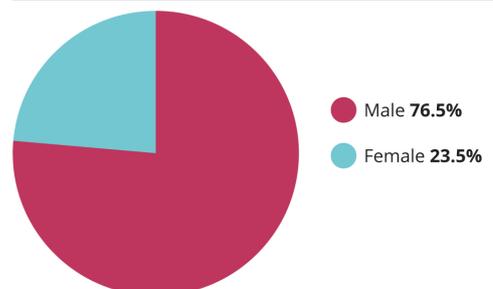
In today's environment, tech companies need talented people more than ever, and top industry leaders recognise the impact a diverse workforce has on their ability to secure the best people, innovate and stay competitive. In honour of International Women's Day, we explore data around women in tech from our **Sourced Report** and provide three strategies to better attract and retain female in the sector. Learn more, [here](#).

By implementing strategies to better attract and retain women in tech, companies can be instrumental in driving constructive change in the industry, all while increasing revenue growth and innovation within their business.

Women in Tech: As it Stands

Our semi-annual **Sourced Report** provides invaluable insights into the current state of diversity in the Auckland and Christchurch IT sectors, highlights perspectives in the industry and allows us to see where progress is happening by comparing data from past years. **Our latest report** (released in March 2021) reveals that the overall gender split of the respondents for both locations is currently 76.5% male and 23.5% female. This is an improvement on the results from **March 2018** (when we first began to explore data on gender in IT), in which women made up 20% of the respondents.

Gender Split



Our survey also shows notable progress around other issues of diversity. While previously more men than women considered their salary fair, the **August 2020 report** found that feelings of fairness tipped towards women, with 15% more Christchurch women than men thinking their pay was fair, and 26% more in Auckland. Since pay equality is a key aspect of achieving gender diversity, this is an

encouraging sign.

What aspects of company culture are most important to women?

Flexible working hours

Support from management

Professional development

Nevertheless, it's important to be aware of the different factors that motivate each gender, particularly since our research emphasised that salary is less important to women than it is to men.

As of March 2020, work/life balance was top of the list of what female tech professionals look for in a new IT role, followed by career opportunities and new challenges. Men, meanwhile, were also driven by

work/life balance, but needed a challenge more so than new career opportunities. And in terms of how businesses can better engage their female staff, the aspects of company culture most important to women were flexible working hours, support from management and professional development.

3 Ways to Attract and Retain Female Tech Professionals

So, what can companies do to attract and retain female tech talent? The insights from our reports denote three key strategies to help close the gender talent gap within your organisation:

How to Attract and Retain Female Tech Professionals:

- 1 Create a culture that meets the needs of women
- 2 Provide tools to succeed in the industry
- 3 Raise up mentors and role models to inspire future leaders

1. Create a culture that meets the needs of women

While equal and fair salaries are important factors, building a truly inclusive company culture is key to attracting women to tech jobs and ensuring that they actually want to stay in them. Diversity initiatives that include specific policies for women are proven to be hugely beneficial not only for the women in tech but for the companies they work for, which is why employers must continually re-evaluate workplace practices to ensure they align with the needs of female employees. The key thing here is to ensure that women within the organisation are part of the conversation early on, as giving them a voice around what support they want is the best way to create a more inclusive workplace.

For example, flexible work arrangements and post-maternity support policies can be the deciding factors between choosing to return to work after maternity leave or resigning; allowing women to balance childcare needs with their career goals is key to retaining women in the industry. Similarly, introducing networking opportunities and other benefits that thoughtfully consider women's unique requirements will go a long way towards helping you attract and retain diverse talent.

2. Provide tools to succeed in the industry

Critical to creating an inclusive environment is providing upskilling opportunities for women to continue to develop their careers. This investment must extend throughout the lifecycle of the female tech professional, from the entry level right through to executive.

Recent graduates, for instance, are key targets for tech attraction, so providing apprenticeships and graduate schemes can help to entice more female employees to technical roles. Once on the job, female employees should be able to benefit from ongoing support and training so they can continue to work on their professional development. At the top end of the spectrum, investing in high potential female leaders can accelerate their development within the organisation.

3. Raise up mentors and role models to inspire future leaders

When it comes to how to attract and retain female tech talent, representation is a powerful tool. By visibly empowering and championing women, employers can inspire new female tech talent and improve long-term engagement (not to mention boosting the company's reputation).

Depending on what is realistic for your business, there are a range of approaches you could take, such as:

- Recruiting and promoting women into senior positions, thereby encouraging other female professionals to strive for their own career advancement
- Developing employee resource groups specifically for women
- Creating a mentorship program to pair female professionals with female leaders in the business that they can learn from and be supported by

Closing Thoughts

While driving workforce diversity and supporting women in tech is an ongoing process, the root of it begins with strategic and inclusive recruitment practices. At Sourced, we have a diverse network of IT professionals across the full technological spectrum, and have a track record of placing quality candidates that contribute to the organisation's culture, unique dynamic and goals.

Need advice on how you can start building a more diverse workforce? Want to ensure your hiring process is unbiased, inclusive and reaches the very best people in every corner of the talent pool? Pick up the phone and **Speak to our team** of IT and Digital recruitment specialists today.