

## Can digital skills help to close the gender pay gap?

It's been an exciting decade of change, disruption and growth in the tech world. But despite seeing rapid developments in the industry, we're still facing a gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is NOT about equal pay; it is a given that people should be paid the same for the same work regardless of gender and has been a legal requirement since the introduction of the Equal Pay Act in 1970. The gender pay gap refers to the difference in the overall average of full-time pay across all levels in an organisation.

In many ways pay is one of the most visible and to some, the most telling demonstration of the value we place on an individual. So while it might be 2017, it is unacceptable that a [new Accenture study](#) shows that women are only earning \$100 to every \$140 a man earns and demonstrates what big strides we still have to make in tackling inequality.

While the pay gap may not be closing as quickly as we'd like, the new report has highlighted three powerful equalisers that could be the key to the solution. These include boosting women's skills in technology, encouraging them to manage their careers proactively and developing digital fluency.

We know that economies grow when women enter the workforce. However, across the globe, women face a range of barriers to paid work. With many women still taking on the lion's share of unpaid work, such as childcare and home duties, it's led to the development of the 'hidden pay gap', where women are less able to seek paid employment. Another contributing factor to the pay gap is the underrepresentation of women at senior levels, which is driving down the overall average pay for women within organisations.

Digital fluency has the power to help us change this, by allowing women to educate themselves and take up paid employment online. As companies strive towards full digitisation, office cultures are beginning to shift and change, allowing women to manage their time flexibly.

The potential impact of digital fluency is huge, with nearly 100 million women added to the paid workforce, and almost two trillion dollars of additional income generated. Our study also shows that digitalisation will narrow the pay gap by 21% by 2030.

To succeed in a digital world, we need to encourage women to choose the right training at university and make digital upskilling accessible to women in all areas of the world throughout their careers. For example, when it comes to continuously learning important new digital skills, our research shows that male undergraduates outperform women, 53 percent to 44 percent.

As an industry, our mission is clear. Digital fluency and upskilling is a vital step to achieving pay equality and boosting economies across the globe. As well as advocating the importance of global internet access, we need to help women to make the right choices regarding their education and continue to embrace digitalisation throughout their careers.

[Click here to read the full Getting to Equal report](#)