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HIGH PERFORMING
TEAMS NEED DIVERSITY
CIO STATES

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News Corp is a global media and information services company. The business includes news and information services, book publishing, digital real estate, cable network programming and pay-TV distribution in Australia. Its news brands are world famous and include The Times newspaper in the UK, Dow Jones and the New York Post.

Khan-Carter, formerly a business technology leader with News UK, part of the News Corp family, is now CIO for News Technology Services (NTS), which provides core technologies to all parts of the News Corp business, including web development, application support infrastructure management, analytics and cyber-security. The center was opened in April 2016 and Khan-Carter says the operation was created to tap into technology and data science talent in Bangalore, India. Since opening the operation, it has grown from 10 staff to 350 and Khan-Carter says one of the challenges is to "retain culture".

The CIO told .Next attending peers that culture is key to creating a high performing team. For an organization to have the right culture a change in leadership style is needed.

"To have an engaging work environment, we need the right culture with more coaching and mentoring," she says. This benefits not only the employee, but also the organization because it enables innovation and for teams to hit very demanding "performance targets".

> **Managing a high performing team means you will have some high performers and some poor performers and that's okay. You don't want a team of all high performing stars, you need people who can carry out the tasks at hand**

Khan-Carter adds that a further benefit for a media organization is that the teams innovating and delivering new technology are closer to the consumers.

The media is a sector that has been transformed entirely by technology, with advertising, payment product type and delivery all being completely changed by internet services. Khan-Carter says that the millennial and generation Y communities value experience over possession. For a CIO as an employer and as a provider of information this has a direct impact on ensuring you can retain the most talented millennials and generation Y staff.

"Millennials are willing to take a 15% pay cut to be with a company that has the right values for them. Most people who quit their jobs do so because they were not offered flexibility," she adds. But it is not just about the young stars.

"Managing a high performing team means you will have some high performers and some poor performers and that's okay. You don't want a team of all high performing stars, you need people who can carry out the tasks at hand," Khan-Carter says.

To get the right mix News Technology Services wanted to achieve a better culture, we had to spend a lot of time looking at the purpose of everyone on the team and ensure they knew their purpose every day" she says, adding that building a communications team was important.

"The thing I want my team to be focused on is the outcome and not the process. If people are patting themselves on the back for following steps in a process, that is wrong."

Diversity

"Talent is the number one challenge for us, because the employees have the choice now," Khan-Carter says of the major change in the dynamic of employee and employer relationships. "We know of a developer who works from a cruise liner as his girlfriend works there and he codes all day, that is the workplace we are having to adapt to."

Diversity has been key to ensuring News Technology Service has the right culture and is able to be a high performing team.

"Identifying diversity, gender, age and ethnicity is key; it all contributes to making a company more performant. NTS took positive action to have 15% diversity by setting our target to 21%. We are now working on 35% and it is really difficult." Digital is an area where diversity can be increased, but in engineering and infrastructure roles, Khan-Carter says building up diversity is a real challenge.

But culture isn't just about having the right mix of ages and genders on your teams, the CIO says. "Culture is not just the brand, it is about the boundaries that you create and set. It is the incentives and rewards you give employees." She adds that organizations that only bonus the senior teams risk "creating a divisive culture".

"What was challenging is that we created a shared service in India that provides augmented services to the brands, so by its nature we have teams that don't feel associated with to one another and the whole NTS organization, so we talked about the employer value proposition," the CIO said of setting out the right tone. Khan-Carter added "we didn't want to share our promise to our employees in the traditional contract form."

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