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HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

A business needs a balance of men and women to fire on all cylinders

Ask James



James Caan

Dear James

I MET you at a business skills show last year and was greatly motivated by your words of honesty. My question is: how important is it to you to have a mix of men and women in your team?

Kyranjeet Sanghera

MY immediate reaction to this included every assertive adjective you can imagine; critical, extremely, exceptionally – the list goes on.

Of all the businesses I have run in the past 30 years, there is no question that the only way to ensure a dynamic working environment is to balance the sexes. I have seen equal successes in both women and men

who have done outstandingly well in the work place and I think if you have one sex predominating in a team, you're missing out on the benefits of the other, which puts your business at a major disadvantage.

Having a male or female-dominated working environment, to me, means you're missing a trick – diversity brings together varied perspectives, produces a holistic analysis of the issues an organisation faces and spurs greater effort, leading to improved decision-making. I've

found that different people are driven by a variety of things and, of course, will have their own way of thinking.

In 1992, the American author and relationship counsellor John Gray's book, Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus, was published and it quickly became a popular saying. I have noticed women tend to play more nurturing roles making them great team players as they are able to see the bigger picture and take into

consideration emotional mentality, more so than men who sometimes

adopt a very "straight to the point" kind of vision.

Ultimately, every team needs different skills and attributes to bring to the table – if everyone in the team had the same mentality you'd never get anywhere.

■ For more expert business advice follow James on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/influencer/jamescaan