



Taxing Matters

International Women's Day special – Inspiring Inclusion with Tax Titan Trio

Alexis

Hello, and welcome to Taxing Matters, your one stop audio shop for all things tax brought to you by RPC.

My name is Alexis Armitage and I will be your guide as we explore the sometimes hostile and ever-changing landscape that is the world of tax law and tax disputes. Taxing Matters brings you a roadmap to guide you and your business through this labyrinth.

In case any of you miss any crucial information or just want some bedtime reading, there is a full transcript of this and indeed every episode of Taxing Matters on our website at www.rpc.co.uk/taxingmatters.

To celebrate International Women's Day this year I am delighted to be joined today by three inspirational female leaders working in Tax.

Firstly, I am joined by Tasneem Kadiri who is a Chartered Accountant and Tax Adviser and is responsible for managing all of the UK and Ireland's tax affairs for L'Oréal. Tasneem is also Chair of the "Women In Tax Network", is on the ICAEW Large Business and International Tax Committee, the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee for CIOT and is Chair of the Neurodiversity and Disability Network at L'Oréal. In addition, Tasneem is the winner of the 2020 Tolley's Taxation Award for 'Best in-house tax lead' and for her contribution to the wider tax community.

Secondly, I am joined by Dipti Thakrar who has a demonstrated history of working in industry and is the M&A tax lead at Hitachi Energy. Dipti is also a freelance tutor and mentor to young professionals. Dipti chairs the London Transfer Pricing Industry Group, the East Midlands Branches of CIOT and Women In Tax and at the same time is also an active member of the Women In Tax Committee in London.

And last, but not least, I am joined by Ashling Donnelly who is Head of Tax at Trainline and before that was Group Tax Manager at Addison Lee. Ashling is also an active member of the Women In Tax Committee in London.

The International Women's Day 2024 campaign theme for this year is 'Inspire Inclusion'. When we inspire others to understand and value women's inclusion, we forge a better world and when women themselves are inspired to be included there is a sense of belonging, relevance and empowerment.

The aim of The International Women's Day 2024 Inspire Inclusion Campaign is to collectively forge a more inclusive world for women. So, without further ado, let's get started.

Welcome ladies and thank you all so much for joining me today. So, what does Inspire Inclusion mean to each of you? If we can go to Tasneem first.

Tasneem Kadiri

Hi Alexis, thank you so much for having me on this podcast, really pleased to be here.

I will keep my answer short and sweet. There is a quote which I really love that says diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance. I would go on to say inclusion is very much about a feeling and where someone feels truly accepted within any particular circle of people where one faces no bias whether unconscious or conscious and they aren't afraid to be their authentic self. In my view if they feel they cannot fully be themselves then that is not inclusion. Inspire Inclusion also to me means supporting women and girls into leadership decision making, business and into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (**STEM**).

Alexis

Brilliant thank you so much Tasneem. Dipti?

Dipti Thakrar

Hi, Inspire Inclusion for me means it starts at home, it starts in my family, it starts with my parents, it starts with my children. It is not a responsibility I give to someone else I give it to myself. I also feel Inspire Inclusion has to come from belief in myself and it comes from the small changes that I create back into the community. So, if there is a project or community work where they talk about Inspire Inclusion it's a group of people coming together to make a change and that is wonderful but each individual person is also responsible to cascade that

	<p>change elsewhere and until everyone makes a change and makes a stand we are not going to change anything. I truly believe that, so I start in myself and start with the people around me, and I inspire it everyday and I just wish other people would do the same. I also then take that a little thought further and say if you can't inspire it in other people but you do control the people around you so if you stay connected to people around you who are thinking like you, developing like you, growing like you, you will inspire inclusion just by the community around you. So if someone around you doesn't do it may be a distance is something you need to create be empowered and feel the strength in you when you create that exit because it is quite a powerful statement to say I am no longer in this committee, I am no longer in this project and then someone will say well why so if I join a committee or a project or an organisation it is very much I believe they will inspire inclusion.</p>
Alexis	<p>Brilliant thank you so much. How about you Ashling?</p>
Ashling Donnelly	<p>Well Dipti and Tasneem presented that so lovely so I think for me it will be to build with an example of what they have described. Inspire Inclusion for me is showing up because you do not know who you will impact by your attendance or your visual, for me within Trainline for example I got this opportunity when I saw the CEO of Trainline that inspired Inclusion for me that another female Irish person could make it as far as a CEO. I carry that forward if you show up you do not know who will be watching and who I could inspire to take action that could be very meaningful for your future careers.</p>
Alexis	<p>Brilliant thank you so much. That is quite a powerful example. Thank you. Looking back now if you could give some advice to your younger selves what would it be. Shall we go to Dipti first this time.</p>
Dipti Thakrar	<p>Absolutely, this a wonderful question and also to be covered in a retrospective moment or a moment of meditation when one wants to reflect on this and I did a meditation on this and I did look back all my life I waited for a woman to come and in my head I could always see her, I knew who she was, I knew how she made me feel and I waited and waited for this woman to come and in real life and she never came and I thought I am supposed to have a female mentor where is she and when I did that meditation I saw who that woman was, it was me and I thought I have been waiting for myself to come to tell myself you are already here, so I give this huge advice to my younger self if I could just grab that eight year old and just say you need to smile more, you need to trust your gut, you need to believe you can do it and most importantly I really really need you to love and respect yourself, there will be hundreds of people who won't but make sure you are not one of those people and the person you are waiting for is you and that person will come when you believe in yourself, love yourself and respect yourself and the last last thing I want to leave with my younger self is the one thing that she did which is the reason I am who I am today is do not stop learning, school finished, college finished, university finished, two professional qualifications later I did not stop learning I have qualifications, projects, lessons, school lessons still coming out my ears and I would massively advocate don't stop the minute you stop something else stops so don't stop learning is my last last statement to my eight year old me.</p>
Alexis	<p>Brilliant thank you how about you Ashling?</p>
Ashling Donnelly	<p>When I look back the advice I would give to myself is just keep going doing what you think is right. I grew up in a small town and if I said to my 15 year old self that I would be the Head of Tax of a listed UK headquarter in London PLC company I would say as if. All of the decisions that I have made based on what I felt is right in the time has got me to where I am so my advice is just keep going and go with your gut.</p>
Alexis	<p>Some brilliant advice there. Tasneem have you got anything to add to that?</p>
Tasneem Kadiri	<p>I am going to take an extract of a letter I wrote, a letter to my younger self. My message to you is stop worrying about what everyone thinks about you and stop trying to please others. This will only cause more upset and worry for you, don't let other people put you down, be yourself, stand up for yourself and don't every change in order to conform to those around you. Be proud of who you are and where you come from because you have strengths and skills that others don't. Remember you difference is your strength. Work on really understanding yourself, self awareness will change your life forever. This is when you will really come into your own and truly shine. I know you are conscious of being short but don't worry this gives you the excuse to always wear high heels which you love, embrace your height and really rock those heels. Finally, because you are so resilient and strong you will always have a tendency to put everyone else first and have many people relying on you. I know that you love helping them all it is a great quality of yours however, remember to put your own oxygen mask on first, you will get better at this as you get older but try to embrace this earlier to protect yourself, remember to set some healthy boundaries and it is okay to say no. My final point never forget the sacrifices that your parents made to help shape your future, gratefulness always goes a long way and will help you to stay positive through the rollercoaster of life.</p>
Alexis	<p>Well thank you so much ladies that has been super useful it seems only fitting for International Women's Day for us to talk about the Women In Tax Network that we are all part of. Shall we just quickly talk about why we</p>

	are all part of Women In Tax for any listeners out there who might not have heard of the group and might like to come along to some of our events. Tasneem is our Chair of the Women In Tax. Shall we go to Tasneem first.
Tasneem Kadiri	Brilliant thanks so much Alexis. I think for me the reason I first became part of Women In Tax it was a number of years ago, I actually had an idea for an event and Heather really loved the suggestion and she asked me to then join the committee having faced all sorts of buyers and obstacles in my career I always felt like I had to prove myself more than some of the men around me and I think having had that experience and having experienced the struggle it took to get to the top I would say that's what makes me really passionate about being Women In Tax, but that is what it really means to me I don't want other women to go through those obstacles and of course we have a huge way to go if you look at overall society when you look at the Davos report, the Parker report etc. We still have many years to get to true gender equality but for me I really want to personally make a difference in this space because I know what I went through.
Alexis	Brilliant shall we go to Ashling next.
Ashling Donnelly	I joined Women In Tax back when I was just starting out as a Head of Tax in Trainline and I was looking for that support network of other people in tax and then I could reach out to so from an individual standpoint that is where I was looking at it. However, I have been involved with the committee and the team for nearly two years and what has come out of that is a reflection just on what I have said earlier around you never know who can be inspired by your career path and who's watching inspired by the rest of the fabulous women that are in that group. It means that you are putting on these events, showing up to the breakfast coffee sessions that we have and reaching out to anyone that wants and needs or would like to discuss and can gain some value from that. It's a really lovely way of giving back to the tax women community as well as getting a loving network of women to learn from.
Alexis	Brilliant thank and Dipti why are you part of Women In Tax.
Dipti Thakrar	Because I love it I really do love it and that's my big moto in life if I don't love something I will let go. It is not that it does not no longer serve me it is because I am no longer able to serve the community of the one I have joined and then for me that's my clear exit. So I have been here since my maternity leave from my last child eight years now. I have done vice chair in London for two years. I am chair of the East Midlands Branch of Women In Tax as well so I am in two committees. I have supported other branches that have spun off or started and taken the initial calls with them and guided them on some of the things I have learnt from creating the East Midlands one from scratch and why do I do it because long time ago I was in a relationship at work as in manager subordinate relationship and my manager was a female. I walked away from that relationship knowing I would never be that type of female manager. I don't want to digress too much from what it was but I just knew I don't want to be that but then in the same breath I cut women out, I stopped working with women, I stopped connecting with women colleagues, I just cut them all out and I sat with a coach at the time and he said you just deleted 50% of the population because of one person we need to work on this so we did work on it. Today the female connections I have are so powerful that is how amazing the women in my life are, two are on the call right now and it is so beautiful to create this community spirit and I am so so proud to be part of it in every shape and form I get to run events for the Women In Tax. I get to coach, I get to mentor, I get to give back, I get to create a safe place for women to come and to feel inclusively attached to the event that I have created and that is it I love doing that back to my very first sentence I am here because I love it.
Alexis	Amazing thank you so much. As Ashling said you can never really underestimate the power of just turning up, the power that your story can have on somebody else. Joining Women In Tax myself it is just invaluable so thank you very much to all of you. Thank you so much to all of you for your time and for joining me today in this discussion on Inspire Inclusion for International Women's Day 2024. Unfortunately that is all we have got time for in this month's episode. Thank you again to Tasneem, Dipti and Ashling for today's podcast.
	As ever a big thank you goes to Inciter Productions and Andrew Waterson for the production, music and sound editing of this episode.
	A full transcript of this episode together with our references can be found on our website www.rpc.co.uk/taxingmatters .
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