

Recruit more women into cyber security

With industry initiatives so far showing limited impact, there is no fast fix for encouraging more women to enter the cyber security industry. CREST has identified a number of ongoing processes that could go a long way to improving the situation, if implemented by members and the wider industry.

Here are the top tips for recruiting more women into security, identified at CREST's four Access to Cyber Security workshops held in July 2020.



Shine a light on unconscious bias

Of course, this is difficult to do because you are unaware it is happening. A good start is to ensure that the language in your recruitment ads has no unconscious bias and then learn from it. An automated tool such as gender-decoder.katmatfield.com can help.



Desired not required

List essential and non-essential requirements more clearly in job specs. Women are far less likely than men to apply for jobs that lack detailed job specs. Consider focusing more on skills and attributes than long lists of specific qualifications.



One size doesn't fit all

Implement and, most importantly, promote genuine flexible working that is designed to fit the individual's needs. Be proud of your company's good working practices for parents. It reflects well on your company to be seen to encourage a healthy work/life balance for ALL staff.



Focus on the positive

Make cyber security sound less like a war. In recruitment - particularly in schools - emphasise the good, what the industry is doing to help people/organisations.



Raise the status of soft skills

Skills such as good communication, report writing and customer care are often harder to learn than technical skills and should be more valued.



Strong and stable

Sell cyber security as a long-term, career choice with personal development, support and mentoring. Advertise the job as a career and make the career path clear.



We are all in it together

More networking events for women are important but get men to come too. Arrange mentoring for women but why not have them mentored by men? We need to ensure it is not just women talking to women. To make things better it is important to encourage more men to get involved.



Watch your language

Even when you are actively trying to recruit more women, don't overcompensate and tailor your advertising towards women. Keep the language gender neutral.



For further information contact CREST at:

www.crest-approved.org