



High performance. Delivered.

My wish for the future: Increase participation of girls and women in STEM

Video Transcript:

Paula Neary, Managing Director

Hello, I'm Paula Neary. My wish for gender diversity is to get more girls and women involved in science, technology, engineering, and math's – STEM. It's something I'm a champion for in Accenture Ireland.

All statistics show that the percentage of girls and women participating in STEM both in education and careers is actually decreasing. Also the research would show about seventy percent of all jobs in the future will be STEM related.

So young girls and women are making decisions through their education that actually will mean those opportunities won't be there for them, that they will miss out on opportunities. And as a society we also risk missing out on that diverse thinking and creativity that women bring to solving a problem. So this is something that I'm passionate about that we need to change.

I am very lucky to have a fantastic mother who put a lot of energy and time to make sure I realized my full potential. When it came to choosing subjects for my leaving cert, which is the equivalent of A-levels or the baccalaureate, I wanted to do honors math and physics.

But in the all-girls school I was attending, you didn't have that choice. So my mother changed me to an all-boys school where I could study the subject and they were letting girls come into the school. While I didn't appreciate it at the time, leaving my friends behind, it was a great intervention for me.

And likewise, when I choosing my degree to go forward into college, the career guidance teacher was recommending I go into primary school teaching because it was a good career for a woman. Yet my favorite subjects were math and physics and accounting and so my mother put a lot of time into looking up career options.

It talked about if you like solving problems, if you fix the Christmas tree lights, then maybe a career in engineering would suit you, and that's what I did.

I was lucky to be able to study a subject that has given me a skill set where I can go on and have a fantastic career and can make a difference in the world through the work I do. And I think that's something that most young girls and women would like to do. So my wish for the future is that we increase the participation of girls and women in the areas of STEM and I also hope I have the same positive impact on my two little girls that my mom had on me.