

John

UK Head of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)

Transcription

So, KPMG is about people, really. We've got this big brand but fundamentally it's the people and that's why I'm still here.

I'm John McCalla-Leacy. I'm a partner in KPMG and also the UK Head of ESG. ESG is Environmental, Social and Governance. It's been quite a long journey. It's been a fascinating journey. I can talk about this based on my own personal experience of having been here for 20 years. I've lived in Hongkong and China for three years. I ran our centre of excellence right across the whole Asia at that time. I've worked for so many clients, pretty much most sectors over that period. I've worked on some of our largest mergers and acquisitions, some of the largest multi-billion dollar transactions that KPMG has ever supported, and this has been stretching, it's been challenging but I've also had the opportunity to meet with so many amazing people. People who I now call friends.

But I also had a side interest, this whole inclusion topic. This whole diversity topic. This is something that I've personally drawn to from a very, very young age. Always putting my hand up to support what I could do. What it meant within the firm is that I took up a number of roles. So, I'm the co-sponsor of our African and Caribbean Network in the firm. It means also that I sit on a number of groups and boards such as the People Committee but also externally I sit on the Inclusion Advisory Group for British Canoeing, which is a lottery funded sport. So, I was challenged at that time, when I was at school in my early teens, to get into a pretty obscure sport called white water canoe slalom. What I didn't realise though was all the additional benefits that I was learning through this sport. Discipline, focus, planning, setting clear goals and working towards these. Now at the time in school, I was absolutely failing in school and I went through, I sat my exams. I failed the majority of my exams but then I went back to my exams and applied what I learnt in sport to my education, and I passed all my exams.

I guess when I look back now, I see that same discipline, that same focus, the looking for incremental gains have helped me over the years in my career here at KPMG.

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