Why talk about Women?

Let's look at some argument in favour of diversity and mixed teams in companies:

Diversity quote: [**Katherine Phillips**](http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/News_Articles/2009/philipsresearch.aspx), associate professor of management and organizations at the**Kellogg School of Management** at **Northwestern University**. 2009The benefits they reported associated with creating diverse groups:

**1. Results in better decision making**
Phillips and her colleagues conducted group problem solving experiments with two sample sets: one containing a diverse team member, the other made up of homogenous team members. The former set made better decisions that led to correctly solving the problem.

**2. Breaks up group think**
Homogenous groups tend to be comfortable around each other, which is great for camaraderie, but not so great for exploring complex solutions to problems. While one would assume that socially-distinct team members would bring new ideas to the table, the study notes that their mere presence may be enough to get people out of their comfort zones and thinking differently about the situation.

"In diverse groups, everyone is more likely to focus on the available information and to bring in new ideas, not just the people who are different," according to Phillips.

**3. Improves group effectiveness**
The study found that socially homogenous groups in the sample set thought they worked better together, when in reality they were less efficient at problem solving. The diverse groups came up with better solutions to the problems, even though members felt that they didn't work together very effectively. This goes to show that a degree of discomfort can ultimately improve results.

While we often think of diversity as marking big differences such as race, gender and age, Phillips found that smaller indicators of social distinctiveness were also valuable in improving group output. According to the study, adding a team member from a different department in the company or even one who grew up in a different state may add just enough of a difference to improve group output.

Women on Boards
percentages

Skills shortage

Economic Drivers:
Improving Financial Performance
Better ROI
Better ROS

Even if none of the above convinced you sooner or later you will have to adapt to current trends. Even if there isn't a quota in most mining jurisdictions (outside of South Africa) we are moving towards x% representration of women on boards by x year. You might be pushed in that direction by the mining finance world in the near future. In the same way that if you don't comply on environment you will find it difficult to get project funding and raise capital soon you won't get ahead if you are a homogenous company??

So why not get ahead?

You are trying to survive the current mining crisis, are cutting costs, letting go of people and are cash strapped. I hera you say "Diversity? Frankly? That is at the bottom of my priority list"

Yes now, in a downturn. There are some actions that aren't costly which you can udnertake already and might result in immediate repercussions which position you ahead of teh game for when times get better.

I want to help you look at your brand in terms of "Are you an employer of choice?" for women?

How many women sit on your board
How many women sit on your executive committee?
How many women are in management
How many female employees do you have
Do you know those numbers?

How effective are you at retaining female employees?
What benefits do you offer?
What is your strategy to attract female talent?
Do you have a diveristy policy?
If not would you like to have a road map
If yes who is responsible for implementing it. In whcih department does diversity sit?