

Diversity is a key component of success for the **medical device industry**



Three women share their experiences of working in a company that is leading the way in employing female scientists and engineers who populate senior roles right the way up to the CEO.



Tatenda Ganyani
Scientific Officer,
Oval Medical



Susie White
Device
Development
Engineer, Oval
Medical



Helen Vickery
Director of Quality
Assurance, Oval
Medical

Being part of an organisation that enables women to have their voices heard and play an integral part in the company's products and development is something which is incredibly important for employee growth. At the same time, businesses must also provide a variety of opportunities for growth and progression in their careers.

Cambridge-based Oval Medical Technologies employs Tatenda Ganyani, Scientific Officer, Susie White, Senior Development Engineer and Helen Vickery, Director of Quality Assurance.

Tatenda joined the firm after graduating with a degree in Chemistry from the University of Liverpool and spent her first two years of employment working part time as she studied for and completed her Masters.

Three years in the job and she is loving the variety her role offers. She says: "What I enjoy most is the range of work you actually do, I can be doing research and development testing, or focusing on the quality control aspect, so analytical chemistry, as well as

writing up standard operating procedures."

Inspiring role models

A big surprise for Tatenda on joining the company was just how many women filled senior positions within the operation.

"It was nice to see," she says. "We do have a lot of women who are supervisors or team leaders and our CEO is a woman. It enables you to see yourself in their position and it gives you something to aspire to one day."

Susie has been with the company for 10 years and enjoys the camaraderie and transparency a smaller business can more easily provide.

"There is always a chance to learn and do something new and interesting and I think because it is small enough, you get a bit of clarity into all sorts of aspects of the work that goes on. The company has increased in size since I have been here and there is the opportunity for things like management roles," she says.

The employee ratio between men and women, according to Susie, is fairly well balanced although there are slightly more male employees.

Ensuring your voice is heard

"I think as an organisation we are quite diverse and reasonably good at making sure that everyone gets their voice heard particularly the junior staff who are always encouraged to make their suggestions," she says.

"Engineering is ultimately problem solving, so the more different kind of attitudes and opinions you can get to a problem, the more likely you will be able to reach a reasonable solution, otherwise it's very easy to go down a rabbit hole."

New Zealander Helen became interested in science while in high school and graduated from Massey University with a BSc in Microbiology and Psychology.

She moved to the UK in 2000, where she found a wealth of opportunities to get into the pharmaceutical industry and took a job with GlaxoSmithKline where she stayed for 13 years.



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A significant industry change

A year ago, she joined Oval and is responsible for the pharmaceutical quality management system that covers all the company's activities.

She is enjoying her job and being able to make a valuable contribution. She says: "I am in a position where at ground level I can influence change."

"There is a woman CEO here which I have not come across in my career before. I sit on the site leadership team and that is well represented with women."

"We have a lot of young graduates here and that is what they see right at the beginning of their career. It's certainly not what I saw at the start of mine."

"I think there has been a lot of significant change, not just within this sector, but within industry as a whole and that will continue to happen," she concludes.

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