



# GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING THE COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Presented by  
Bibi Hilton, MD  
**GOLIN**

# WHAT IS THE COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE?

Reporting the GPG is a significant and positive step forward for equality in the workplace

But most companies are expected to report an 18% gender pay gap\*

Sharing this data will open up questions, concerns, confusion and potential legal and reputational attacks

Therefore careful and planned communication is critical to avoid undermining the positive impact of reporting





# INTERNAL AUDIENCES: RISK & IMPACT

## Employees

- Confusion and anxiety
- Disaffection
- Legal claims

## Leaders & Managers

- Confusion and anxiety
- Risk of inconsistent, mixed messaging
- Inertia / “head in sand” approach
- Reputational risk from poor management / communication

# EXTERNAL AUDIENCES: RISK & IMPACT

## Institutional stakeholders

- Loss of confidence in leadership
- Impact on share price

## Media

- Actively searching for “worst” offenders
- Ammunition to attack reputations

## Legal Claims

- - Law firms will be seeking cases for group claims



A photograph of a group of people working together at a table. In the foreground, there are several open laptops, notebooks, and glasses filled with a red-orange liquid. The scene is set in a bright, modern office environment. Overlaid on the image is a large, semi-transparent white text area containing the title.

# DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



# SHAPE YOUR GPG STORY

## Contextualise

- Is your GPG good, bad or downright ugly?
- How does it compare in your industry?
- Do you understand the causes?
- How does this fit with your wider employer reputation?

## Show progress

- Is it already starting to reduce?
- Do you already have in place initiatives to reduce it?
- What is your long-term plan to reduce it?

## Share your plan

- When, where and how will you communicate your GPG?
- Who will communicate it and to which groups?
- How will you engage them?

# UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES

The first step should be for your leadership and HR team to conduct a full analysis on why your GPG exists and what factors have specifically contributed to it – examples could be:

- Cultural Unconscious bias
- The impact of flexible working
- Negotiation skills
- High proportion of female employees taking maternity leave
- Weak return to work programme

## **STARTING TO CHANGE YOUR CULTURE**

Simply sharing the GPG data is not enough

Once you have identified where your problem lies you can start to plan what you do to remedy.

It's critical you have developed this plan and ideally implemented some of the initiatives prior to any communication internally or externally

Particularly large organisations who share their data but are not actively making change to address it will be vulnerable to reputational attack



# COMUNICATING TO YOUR AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE	LEADERSHIP / MANAGERS	EMPLOYEES	MEDIA	INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
<b>Type of communication</b>	Proactive	Proactive	Reactive	Proactive
<b>Who communicates?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEO / MD / Business Leader</li> <li>- HR Leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEO / MD / Business Leader</li> <li>- HR Leader</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of communications / PR</li> <li>- GPG spokesperson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CEO / MD / Business Leader</li> <li>- Head of investor relations</li> <li>- Use appropriate channels</li> </ul>
<b>Key messages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain GPG</li> <li>- Explain causes</li> <li>- Training provision</li> <li>- Engage in the problem and secure their support for a long-term plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain GPG</li> <li>- Explain causes</li> <li>- Training provision</li> <li>- Existing initiatives</li> <li>- Topline long-term plan to address</li> </ul>	<p>Pre-drafted media quotes that cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explanation of GPG and causes</li> <li>- Existing initiatives</li> <li>- Topline long-term plan to address</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain GPG</li> <li>- Explain causes</li> <li>- Existing initiatives</li> <li>- Topline long-term plan to address</li> <li>- Share risk mitigation</li> </ul>
<b>Tone of communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative and soliciting support</li> <li>- Open</li> <li>- Action-oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human</li> <li>- Open</li> <li>- Action-oriented</li> <li>- Positive about reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transparent</li> <li>- Clear</li> <li>- Open about need to improve</li> <li>- Contextualise within industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reassure by demonstrating control</li> <li>- Contextualise within industry</li> </ul>
<b>When to start communicating?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From now</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prior to April 2018 reporting and once there is leadership commitment to a long-term plan or topline plan is drafted</li> </ul>	<p>From April 2018 onwards, as needed in response to media questioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prior to April 2018 reporting and once there is leadership commitment to a long-term plan or topline plan is drafted</li> </ul>
<b>Regularity of ongoing communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Included on ongoing board meeting agendas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GPG reporting data shared prior to publishing</li> <li>- Regular quarterly updates on progress to reduce</li> </ul>	<p>From April 2018 onwards, as needed in response to media questioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GPG reporting data shared prior to publishing</li> <li>- Regular quarterly updates on progress to reduce</li> </ul>



# COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

**Leadership / managers communications guidelines**

**Timeline for communication to different audiences**

**Key messaging document to include:**

- Explanation of the causes behind your GPG
- Summary of your robust, long-term plan to address your GPG
- Existing or short-term measures already in place
- Proof points

**A strong and credible GPG spokesperson/people**

- Female
- Senior / leadership level
- Relevant life experience
- Good communicator / media trained

A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a red coat and a brown backpack, walking away from the viewer through a subway station. The background is heavily blurred, suggesting motion and depth. The lighting is warm and focused on the person.

# CASE STUDY

## WORKERS' RIGHTS

**BBC NEWS**

**Sports Direct staff 'not treated as humans', says MPs' report**

22 July 2016 | Derby

**INDEPENDENT**

**Asos working conditions to be investigated by MPs**

Security measures at the warehouse have reportedly intensified to the extent that workers are searched upon entering the toilets

Zlata Rofilonova | Friday 30 September 2016 14:33 BST | 3 comments

**The Telegraph**

**Business**

**Sports Direct profits tumble as Mike Ashley takes on a corporate jet and strikes deal with daughter's company**

Economy | Companies | Opinion | Markets | Brexit | A-Z | Alex | Telegraph Connect

**theguardian**

**Mike Ashley running Sports Direct like 'Victorian workhouse'**

fashion | environment | tech | travel | browse all sections

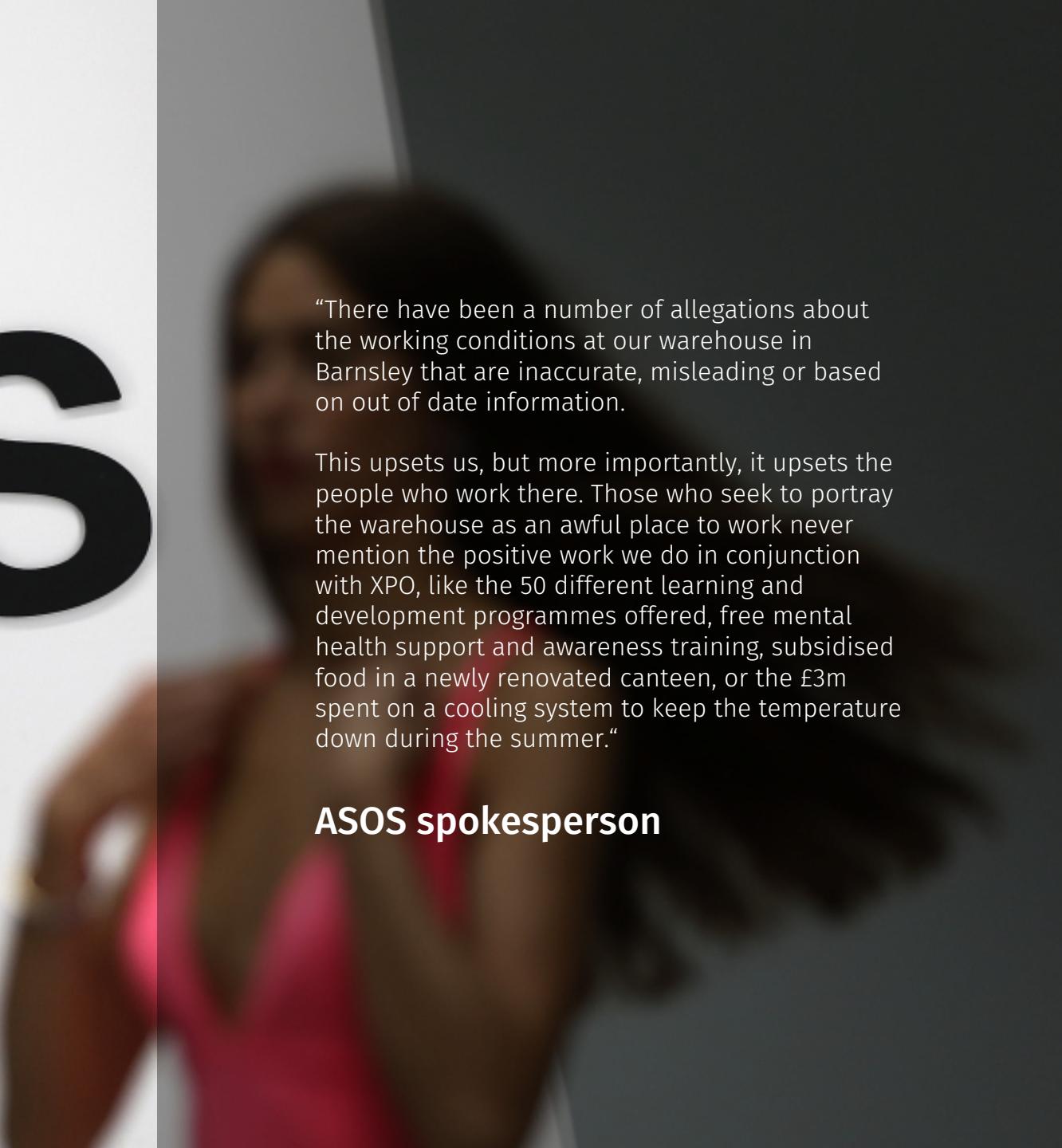
**BBC NEWS**

**Asos warehouse contracts 'exploitative', says committee chair MP**

By Ed Thomas and Noel Titheradge  
BBC News

7 October 2016 | Business



The ASOS logo, featuring the word "ASOS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are thick and have a slight shadow or glow effect, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The background is plain white.A blurry, out-of-focus photograph of a person's face and shoulders. The person appears to be wearing a dark top and has short hair. The background is a plain, light color.

"There have been a number of allegations about the working conditions at our warehouse in Barnsley that are inaccurate, misleading or based on out of date information.

This upsets us, but more importantly, it upsets the people who work there. Those who seek to portray the warehouse as an awful place to work never mention the positive work we do in conjunction with XPO, like the 50 different learning and development programmes offered, free mental health support and awareness training, subsidised food in a newly renovated canteen, or the £3m spent on a cooling system to keep the temperature down during the summer."

**ASOS spokesperson**



On ending sexual harassment in the workplace:

**"Simple as that fellas. Not just fellas, girls. Sorry."**

He said he would change unfair practices but added:

"I'm not Father Christmas. I'm not saying I will make the world wonderful."

**Mike Ashley, Sports Direct**

# COMMUNICATIONS CASE STUDY: WORKERS' RIGHTS

## SPORTS DIRECT

- Opaque
- Aggressive, defensive and flippant
- No co-ordinated communications strategy or plan
- Inappropriate, ill-trained “spokesperson” in form of CEO
- Reacting to the story

## Impact

- Lost 57% off their share price
- Huge reputational impact – poster child now for unethical working practices
- Select committee hearing and parliamentary report

## ASOS

- Transparent and open
- Demonstrate action already being taken
- Timely and clear communications strategy
- Professional, trained spokesperson/people
- Controlling the story

## Impact

- Significant share price increase over the same period
- No material reputational damage



**GOLIN**

**THANK  
YOU**

A large group of approximately 100 people are gathered in a social setting, likely a bar or pub. They are standing in several rows, smiling and holding various drink containers (cans, glasses, and cups). The background features a brick wall with a large, illuminated sign that reads "GO IN".

ANY QUESTIONS?

# STARTING TO CHANGE YOUR CULTURE

At Golin, we implemented policies and procedures over the last two years to ensure we help any eliminate any GPG:

## **Salary Reviews**

We standardised the process eliminating random salary increase requests. This helped remove any advantage men may have by entering into salary negotiation. We based it on performance, with 360 feedback and reviewed every role against internal and external benchmarking.

**Parental policies** - Ease in Ease Out, Enhanced Shared Parental Leave, 6 weeks paternity leave, Maternity Mentors

Flexible working- Unlimited Leave, Work From Anywhere, all jobs advertised as flexible

## **Returnships**

