60 Seconds with ... Aimee Avrill



Aimee is a qualified Project, Programme and Change Manager with experience working across various industries, including Defence, Public Sector, Logistics, Banking and Technology. She's a member of the Association for Project Management and Chartered Management Institute.

With a passion for diversity, equity & inclusion, Aimee joined BAE Systems in 2022 as a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Manager, leading the company's Employee Resource Group Programme across the UK, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Australia. Over the past two years, Aimee has led the expansion and growth of the programme with a membership base of 12,500+ globally.

For her recent work, she was recognised as a finalist for the Inspiration of the Year Award at the LGBTQ+ in Defence Awards 2024.

Aimee is originally from Jersey, Channel Islands, where she served as a Police Officer in the States of Jersey Police Force. She moved to Devon in 2016 where she lives with her partner, Sophie. In her spare time, she enjoys going to festivals, concerts and dining out.

You are a champion of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) – in a few sentences, how would you describe DE&I?

DE&I is fundamental to creating an environment in which everyone – regardless of their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, background, or any other characteristic – can thrive. We can all help to create a place where people feel they belong and are respected and accepted for their authentic selves.

What first attracted you to working in DE&I?

It stems from my personal experiences in previous workplaces, where I witnessed people being overlooked or undervalued because of certain aspects of their identity. This isn't only morally wrong, it's bad for business! I saw the difference it makes when people feel included, respected, heard and accepted. That inspired me to join an Employee Resource Group and be part of the change, before securing my current role within the DE&I Team.

What aspect of your career are you most proud of?

A few years ago, I made the decision to leave an organisation that didn't align with my values. The role was everything I'd ever wanted, but the workplace culture wasn't. This particular company valued presenteeism, extended working hours and failed to address bad behaviours, all of which impacted my happiness, mental health and productivity. I'm proud of the decision I made because now I work for a company where I feel respected and valued. It's a company where my voice is heard and I'm encouraged and supported to maintain a positive work-life balance.

What advice would you give to yourself age 12?

I'd encourage myself to take risks, ask questions, and not be afraid to challenge the status quo. Up until the past 10 years, I always felt like everything had to be perfect. As time went on, I realised that growth often happens through those moments when things don't go as planned. We shouldn't be afraid of mistakes, but embrace them.

How important is DE&I to a discipline such as system safety?

Diversity of thought is crucial to spot business opportunities and address business challenges. But to harness diversity of thought, organisations must create an inclusive culture that encourages participation and values different perspectives.

What's your most favourite quote or motto?

"*One day you'll leave this world behind, so live a life you will remember*" – Avicii, The Nights. Great song, great quote.

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

I'd love to learn British Sign Language (BSL). Communication is one of the most powerful ways to connect with others and being able to sign with people who are deaf or hard of hearing would allow me to have meaningful conversations with friends and colleagues who use it as their primary language.

How do you see the rise of Artificial Intelligence affecting the objectives of DE&I?

Broadly speaking, I'm excited by the rise of AI, but do believe it will present both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, I foresee AI being a powerful tool in advancing DE&I – enabling data-driven decision making, enhancing accessibility options and helping to create personalised pathways for employees. But if not carefully managed, it could also reinforce biases and inequalities. It's important that AI systems are designed, implemented and continuously monitored to identify and mitigate these risks.