

KAREN STEPHENS

Karen is CEO and co-founder of BCyber, an agile, innovative group that works with SMEs to protect and grow their businesses by demystifying the technical and helping them to identify and address cybersecurity and governance risks. In 2021 Karen graduated from the Tech Ready Woman Academy's Accelerator and the Cyber Leadership Institute's CLP programs.



C O L U M N

“From little things big things grow”

Diversity and equality: small words with big meanings, sometimes so very big you do not know where to start or what to do. I would like to start with a true story about how one person's 'small' actions made a big difference to the people involved.

Back in the days of WW2 a young country lass knitted over 500 pairs of socks for the troops overseas and with each gift included a small note of support for the boys. So, in their darkest hours they were reminded that, while far away, they were never far from the thoughts of those back home. It was a small action that made a big impact.

Sometimes the small actions of a single person can make a big impact. So right here, right now, let us look at two things everyone can do to grow diversity and support equality in our industry.

Look beyond the CV.

When you are inundated with CVs for a job vacancy, work experience placement, internship or whatever, it is tempting to take a 'tick-the-box approach' to cull the numbers. I get it. Time is money, but it might be well worth your while to choose a few candidates that stand out for qualities that cannot necessarily be taught: problem solving, lateral thinking, relationship building. Technical skills can (on the whole) be taught, but those other skills, not necessarily.

Diversity, equality and inclusion need to be more than buzzwords.

Actions speak louder than words. Make yourself



approachable and available. Informal coffees (virtual and real) can provide a 'real leg-up' to those breaking into the industry. I know we are all busy, but spending a little time with a 'newbie' providing practical guidance is priceless. You could even invite them to an industry function as your guest!

And for those who are wondering about the story: it is true. The country lass was Jean Stephens and she was my grandmother.

 www.linkedin.com/in/karen-stephens-bcyber

 www.bcyber.com.au

 karen@bcyber.com.au

 twitter.com/bcyber2

 youtube.bcyber.com.au/2mux