

AJW®



# CULTURE: AVIATION EMBRACES DIVERSITY

Businesses can no longer ignore diversity and inclusion if they want to survive and succeed in the aviation industry

OVER 90 YEARS OF TRANSFORMING AVIATION EFFICIENCY

## An aviation story since 1932

**IN 1932, AJW FOUNDER, ANTHONY JAMES WALTER, QUALIFIED AS A PILOT AND TOOK TO THE SKIES. HIS PASSION FOR FLYING SAW THE PIPER CUB AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURERS GIVING HIM SOLE DISTRIBUTION RIGHTS IN EUROPE. HE HAD A DREAM, AND 90 YEARS ON, HIS VISION IS STILL GOING STRONG.**

After nine decades in the aviation industry, AJW prides itself on the personal touch and agility that Jim Walters showed all those years ago.

Having started the business based at Gatwick Airport when it was nothing but a grass strip without a paved surface in sight, AJW HQ opened its purpose-built warehouse and campus-style office space in West Sussex, UK, in 2012. The same year also marked the launch of AJW Technique in Montreal, moving the Group into the Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) space, further enhancing its role in supply chain integration.

Decades of growth have seen AJW evolve from being recognised as a world-leading provider of spare parts for Airbus and Boeing, to an acclaimed provider of sophisticated support services valued by airlines, OEMs, and MROs around the world all of which underpin its global repair management offering.

Being an independent company has meant that AJW has had the freedom and flexibility to evolve with the changing needs of its customers and has been able to develop an unrivalled understanding of the industry's supply chain that is regarded as second to none.

AJW continually looks for ways to deliver value to its supply chain customers through its wealth of expertise, customer service excellence, powerful digital platforms, and proven logistics operation.

With an ethos to be dynamic and innovative, the company drives efficiencies through continuous improvement, it is a journey that will never stop.

[ajw-group.com](http://ajw-group.com)





AJW®

# Contents

## 03 A designed approach

Diversity and inclusion has to be integrated into every process and part of a business

## 06 Theory into practice

Ways to create a positive company culture that embraced diversity and inclusion

### Editorial

**Editor** Graham Newton  
**Head of content production** DeeDee Doke  
**Production editor** Vanessa Townsend  
**Senior designer** Gary Hill  
**Picture editor** Jessica Marsh

### Production

**Production manager** Jane Easterman  
 +44 (0)20 7880 6248  
 jane.easterman@redactive.co.uk  
**Publishing director** Aaron Nicholls

### Advertising

**Business development manager**  
 +44 (0)20 7324 2763  
 airlines@redactive.co.uk

Subscribe to the Airlines, fortnightly email - register your details at [www.iata.org/optin](http://www.iata.org/optin)

**Published by Redactive Media Group,**  
 9 Dallington Street, London, EC1V 0LN  
[www.redactive.co.uk](http://www.redactive.co.uk)



The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors or advertisers and do not necessarily reflect those of Redactive, IATA or its members. The mention of specific companies or products in articles or advertisements contained herein does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by IATA or Redactive. The paper in this magazine is elemental chlorine free (ECF), manufactured within ISO 4001 environmental management standards and is sourced from sustainable managed forests. All of this publication's content is subject to copyright, design rights and trademarks of Airlines, and third parties.



**Clyde Buntrock,**  
 CEO, AJW Aviation

# A DESIGNED APPROACH TO DIVERSITY

Diversity and inclusion cannot be left to chance but must be integrated into every aspect of a business.



3

**D**iversity and inclusion are high on the aviation agenda for 2023 and beyond.

Even though aviation is still recovering from the effects of the travel shutdown during the pandemic and learning to adapt its business practices and operations to meet the changing needs of the sector, diversity and inclusion cannot be afterthoughts.

Indeed, for many, these qualities are a fundamental part of the answer to the challenges facing the industry.

The AJW Group—a leading aircraft parts supplier and

maintenance company—is embracing diversity, equality, and inclusivity into its company culture by making the changes needed to be an accommodating and forward-thinking place to work.

The aim is to create a workplace where everyone feels recognized and valued as individuals within the workforce.

### Global team

CEO of AJW Aviation, Clyde Buntrock, says working lives must mirror society. And as society becomes more aware of these issues, it must be reflected in business practices





and policies. He points out that AJW, as a global concern, has always been sensitive to these trends. The group operates in more than one hundred countries across the world, encompassing myriad cultures, attitudes, and religions.

“As a global organization, AJW has always embraced diversity and inclusivity,” Buntrock notes. “But we have dialed this up over the past year to better reflect society at large. We want to be a microcosm of the global community. We want to be a truly global team that represents the best of the world in all its diversity and inclusivity. When you’re representative of the global community it makes you more relatable.”

According to Buntrock, addressing the key element of unconscious bias is vital.

4 Everyone has an unconscious bias to some degree, from upbringing and culture, for example, and this affects their thinking and mindset. Yet having a designed approach and focused programs for diversity and inclusivity within an organization allows a workforce to understand the how and why of different attitudes.

If you have a blanket approach of only recruiting for the skillsets and nothing else, and if you can take the unconscious bias out of the recruitment process, then over time the business will naturally evolve to be more diverse and inclusive, Buntrock concludes.

### Leadership awareness

Having good intentions is not enough for diversity and inclusion to take root in a company culture. Many firms are falling into the trap of making changes too quickly, for example, leading to positive discrimination and potential harm to the business. Adapting and changing to be a more diverse and inclusive organization takes time.

“You’ve got to acknowledge and accept where you are, start somewhere, and get on the journey,” says Buntrock. “The most important thing is that leaders are aware

## Diversity and Inclusion definitions

The broad definition of diversity is recognizing the diverse needs of individuals from different social, economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, genders, disabilities, sexual orientations, religions, and more.

Inclusion is the process of creating an environment in which individuals or members of groups feel welcomed, heard, respected, supported, valued, and where they can reach their full potential, whatever their background or identity or whatever disabilities they have.





# “Having good intentions is not enough for diversity and inclusion to take root in a company culture”

Clyde Buntrock, CEO, AJW Aviation



that diversity and inclusivity are vital aspects of workplace culture. At AJW, we are putting them at the center of our decision-making. This is what drives our business forward and keeps the momentum in terms of all the initiatives that we deploy.”

AJW strives to leave no stone unturned, whether it is implementing lift access for less able-bodied people or mental health support for those who need it.

“Truly appreciating and understanding the diversity of people within our organization is important,” says Buntrock. “Creating an environment that promotes and creates diversity and inclusivity is not only the right thing for any business to do but also a positive thing.”

## Core values

The AJW Group has six values at its core: Authenticity; Customer Obsessed; Entrepreneurial; Growth; Impact; Innovation.

“One of our values is growth, and by that we don’t just mean the growth of the company, we mean the growth of individuals as well,” says Buntrock. “Part of that is being self-aware and understanding unconscious bias. We want our people to go on this journey with us. We recruit for the values, we train for the values.”

“There should be no barrier to your progression within a company, save your commitment and performance to the business and people,” he concludes.

## The AJW Group mission

The AJW Group’s mission to use the deep domain knowledge of its people to serve customers with innovative solutions to drive the transformation of aviation efficiency. The goal is to build a technologically enabled aviation component parts, MRO (maintenance, repair, and overhaul), and supply chain solutions business.



Special Supplement: AJW

# AJW<sup>®</sup>

6







**Jane Hossack,**  
Chief People Officer,  
AJW Group

# PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

**Jane Hossack**, Chief People Officer at AJW Group, talks to **Trish Sutton** about creating a positive company culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.

## Q Why now for diversity campaigns?

There has always been an equality and diversity policy at AJW, but last year the company revamped this and outlined more about unconscious bias.

Our People Strategy launched in 2022 and the goal is to become more focused on diversity and inclusion through ongoing development and training, and by involving our people's feedback and ideas to strengthen our efforts.

There will be new training programs to educate our people on unconscious bias and how it can affect people within the workplace. And leadership development and training will also top the agenda in 2023. Leadership must set the tone, setting a clear example of expected behaviors to shape culture.

That can mean being brave and calling things out when needed. That has to be part of the culture too. This is all about putting policies into action.

## Q Is promoting diversity a top-down process?

AJW Aviation CEO, Clyde Buntrock, stands by his belief in leading from the top and by example. But, in turn, that promotes a bottom-up process where people are motivated and trained to do the right thing. Buntrock is pro people, and that is refreshing and exciting as he wants to drive these diversity and inclusion policies

forward as part of our corporate strategy.

Putting people first perfectly aligns with our idea of commercial success. People must be at the forefront of a business for it to be productive. But having a CEO with the desire to drive diversity forward shapes the people and culture of a company.

The Group's maintenance hub



## Diversity and inclusion training and programs 2022/23

- Diversity and inclusion policy revamped/launched in 2022
- Engagement committee launch
- Stonewall collaboration in 2022 and continued development in 2023
- Senior Leadership Team Zones and Leadership training
- Ongoing mental health initiatives
- Corporate Social Responsibility events, including Pride celebrations
- Diversity and Inclusion events and communication plan
- Developing mental health first aiders and investing in Occupational Health services and third-party providers
- Reasonable adjustments planning and human approach to employee relations activities
- Diversity ambassadors program, supporting and raising awareness around protected characteristics in the workforce

7

**“Employing a diverse category of people means you bring in diverse views, ideas, and more creativity. It improves innovation”**

**Jane Hossack, Chief People Officer, AJW Group**

AJW Technique is also people-focused. AJW Technique has an ethos of people, productivity, and profitability, in that order, which is strengthening for our workforce and beneficial for the business.

### **Q What difference will diversity make to your business?**

Having a diverse workforce gives a business a competitive edge. Employing a diverse category of people means you bring in diverse views, diverse ideas, and more creativity. It improves innovation.

But a shift in culture does not happen overnight. Measures must be put in place to create a culture of inclusion within the company. We are taking a positive approach and removing barriers within the working environment and in its policies. This will allow us to attract, onboard, and develop the best talent for our teams.

To help, AJW opens the channels of communication between colleagues at all levels. The company will be rolling out an engagement committee later this year to connect people within the company so that the People Team can hear from the workforce about ideas and issues.

An example of this was a talk held last year with a group of women about a menopause policy. And we've also talked with people who are caring for elderly or sick relatives. These people need to be heard and to know they are understood. It shapes how we do things, whether that is in our policies or through physical support.

It's so important to talk. By addressing any issues, we can make them more human and acceptable, and other people don't feel so nervous about speaking out.

### **Q Is promoting diversity always to the benefit of the company?**

Having diversity in our DNA certainly benefits our commercial outlook. It means we select and work with the right clients



## **“When seeking candidates for a role, we’ve got to have a consistent approach to our policy that is fair”**

**Jane Hossack, Chief People Officer, AJW Group**

and create the right partnerships, for example. Working with other organizations that have the same values brings the right people along the journey with us and this is vitally important to us as a company.

It means we can share ethical business practices. Like attracts like, and within the aviation community it will allow companies to support one another in their move towards a more diverse and inclusive industry.

Diversity and inclusion also mean we get our recruitment right. We want the right people in the right jobs. Any changes we make need to fit the people and can't be done just because we think it is right.

### **Q How will diversity help recruitment?**

Being a more diverse organization opens us up to recruiting top talent through fair processes and bringing the right people and skills into the business to support performance. We can boost employee engagement through ethical and fair business practices, and we can improve our brand and our relationships with clients who believe in, and adopted, the same behaviors.

First and foremost, though, we are a meritocracy. We recruit for the skills and attributes that we need for the business to take us forward for continued success. We don't want any barrier to that whatsoever.





## Disability and gender pay gap

AJW Group is a Disability Committed Employer. Run by the UK's Department for Work and Pensions, the Disability Confident movement is working to change the way employers think about disability, taking action to improve how they recruit, retain, and develop opportunities for disabled people.

Following the publication of a Gender Pay Gap Report in 2021, AJW Group has committed to an action plan. This will benefit everybody and aims to support the changes required by the Women in Aviation and Aerospace Charter that the company signed in April 2019.



strength through diversity. Everyone brings different perspectives to make the company culture richer and the business stronger. Our mindset is built on the pillars of awareness, openness, and respect, driving a positive impact in all environments worldwide.

Change is positive and the People Team worked with the Legal Team to develop various training programs around employment and unconscious bias. Having things such as accessibility, diversity training, mental health support, changes in recruiting and onboarding, inclusive meetings, and eLearning for workplaces is helping to change the company culture for the benefit of all people.

Our culture also supports ethical business practices and behaviors. By doing this, we are agile as a business and have trust across our workforce and partnerships. This builds morale and supports the performance and retention of our people long term.

so they will be removed. The company will be coaching and offering training to anyone involved in the recruitment process, from managers and directors to the more obvious People Team.

When seeking candidates for a role, we've got to streamline our process and have a consistent approach to our policy that is fair. This also includes the interview setup.

Crafting job descriptions, recruitment advertisements, and planning interviews all involve careful design to ensure diversity and inclusion are intrinsic to the process. This continues throughout the employee life cycle from onboarding to performance management, learning and development, career development, employee relations, policy development, and succession planning.

Another development is anonymous engagement surveys that are more bespoke than they have been in the past. Rather than general questions about the workplace, job satisfaction, workloads, and mental health, we are progressing to an in-depth look at how people are feeling about life at work. The People Team will take a more direct approach to asking questions as it moves into this next phase.

### Q How does diversity affect company culture?

Equality is embedded in the culture of our business, starting with the recruitment and selection procedures, and running through the employee journey. People are expected to treat each other fairly, honestly, and with respect.

The AJW spirit is to build



That is the only thing we recruit for; the skill sets we desire and require in the business.

Having an open approach to diversity and inclusivity means AJW is not cutting itself off from any opportunity and will bring the right individual into the business, no matter their gender, race, religion, or whether they are able-bodied. It allows the company to engage with the wider community and to select people based on skill. Addressing unconscious bias through ongoing in-house training removes anything in the AJW recruitment process that might play on this.

### Q What are you doing to help this process?

The company will be introducing confidential CV profiles in 2023. By removing names and ages from employment screening, the company will remove the barrier of assumption, which goes back to the comments about unconscious bias. These details are irrelevant to a person's CV,

A stylized illustration of a woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a vibrant, patterned dress in shades of red, blue, and black. She is holding a white shopping bag with red handles, which features the AJW logo. The background is a dark purple with a large gear and a world map motif.

AJW®

# Complex Supply Chain?

We are your nose to  
tail solutions provider

AJW Group is the world-leading, independent, parts, repair, lease, engine, flight hour programme and supply chain solution integrator, transforming efficiency in commercial, business and defence aviation.

With hubs and offices on every continent - including AJW Technique, a state-of-the-art component MRO facility in Montreal - nose to tail, we have you covered.

[ajw-group.com](http://ajw-group.com)