

# Leading from the front

Working at the highest levels to help fight against issues such as cybercrime, Zabeen Mirza, Managing Director - The Americas, Schraner Negotiation Institute isn't easily fazed

## Talk about the institute's unique work

The Schraner Negotiation Institute is the only negotiation body in the world dedicated solely to the support of active high stakes negotiations in business and government. As an institute, we are involved on a daily basis in negotiating critical agreements with everyone from Fortune 500 organisations to unions to political parties, governments, and high profile individuals.

Beyond our active deal advisory, we conduct trainings and executive education, management consulting, and research and analytics processing for negotiation leverage. We have a global presence with offices in Zurich, New York City, Hong Kong, and Dubai.

In the Middle East, we have been actively involved in negotiations for complex real estate projects, M&A and joint venture negotiations, manufacturing, and automotive negotiations, to name a few.

## Describe your role and how it has expanded

I am the Managing Director of the Americas division and I lead our team and faculty in the Americas from our office in New York City. My role has evolved over the years to include the management of several of our global accounts, look after our complex management consulting projects, as well as oversee our

Zabeen Mirza



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expansion to frontier markets like Dubai.

**The institute has been active in battling cyber security threats, what has this involved?**

Cybercrime statistics are quite dire. For 2019, cybercrime related costs are predicted to surpass US \$2 trillion globally. On a yearly basis, cybercrime damages will cost the world \$6 trillion by 2021.

In this space, we support companies who work actively to protect clients against cyber attacks, and have negotiated with governments, regulators, and service providers agreements to improve and increase protective measures

for businesses and consumers against cybercrime.

**You are a regular speaker at the big security conferences, what has that been like?**

Yes, I've spoken at quite a few because security is an important topic, not only in the Middle East but around the world. I believe that individuals, governments, and companies are unprepared in the event they get hacked or become a victim of a cybercrime. While hackers and cybercriminals evolve and advance in their skills, prowess, and daring, security and protective measures at the corporate and individual level have simply not

kept up with the same rate of innovation.

There is also a huge gap in education when it comes to how people and businesses can protect themselves from cyberattacks – from the fundamentals like not opening attachments or emails from people you don't know, to a company needing to invest in a more sophisticated IT infrastructure. The wars of the future will be fought with computers; they are already being fought right now, in fact.

**You have attended Intersec Dubai many times. How have you seen the event change?**

First, I've seen the event grow bigger every year with larger crowds, more exhibitors, and more companies entering the security space when it was previously not their core business or a service/product they even offered in the first place.

There is also more knowledge sharing, there is more awareness, and there is more focus these days on the security industry – which is booming.

**What advice would you give women entering security or tech roles; how can they succeed in still very male dominated sectors?**

The security industry is growing at an incredible rate, the cyber security sector even more so. There are more jobs than there are people that are qualified to fill them. For women seeking to enter

any industry that is male dominated, my advice is always this: be smarter than, work harder than, anyone in the room.

Have all the answers, have a great attitude, don't take things personally. Become the expert. Have people look to you for answers. Make a reputation for yourself as a do-er. Learn from those who are good at what they do, whatever that may be. Ask them to teach you. Force them to teach you. Shadow them until you learn.

**Have you encountered sexism in your career? If so, what's your strategy?**

Of course. I still encounter it today, nearly every day. My strategy is to first not let it ever affect my confidence or my sense of self-worth, or my motivation to excel. I use sexism to fuel my drive to always be better than, more than; success is the best revenge.

**What are your worst and best habits work wise?**

My best habit is my worst habit: perfectionism. I am a perfectionist to a fault, whereby I hold myself and others to unrealistic standards. While it's great to strive for perfection, to be detail oriented, to achieve and to be ambitious – when the bar is set so impractically high there is no chance of success. You take it personally. I'm working on it.

**Describe yourself in three words**

Resilient, resourceful, original.

**Words you live by....**

Be so good they can't ignore you.

## Serco Middle East strengthens technology offering with appointment of Chief Digital Officer

With 22 years experience working in both the private and public sectors he will look at new ways of agile working using the latest technology

International service company, Serco Middle East, has appointed Paul Bogan to the role of Chief Digital Officer headquartered out of its Dubai office.

With a focus on driving the expansion of the company's technology offering, Paul will be responsible for digital asset management, workforce management and use of big data, and also be a part of Serco Middle East's Executive Management team.

Paul's role will see him lead the digital team, whilst looking to create new strategies and initiatives to implement agile ways of working by leveraging

the latest technologies.

Paul brings his experience of over 22 years working in technology for both the private and public sector and of setting up new digital-focused service lines both in the UK and most recently in the Middle East. Prior to joining Serco, Paul was the Market Director of Digital and Technology for Atkins Middle East and Africa.

Commenting on his appointment, Paul Bogan, Chief Digital Officer for Serco Middle East said: "There's no doubt that technology is driving change at pace and is revolutionising how we work and conduct business. At Serco, we need to be ahead

of the curve to leverage the power that technology brings to drive innovation and growth. I'm proud to be joining Serco Middle East at a time of tremendous opportunity so that we can harness digital enabled solutions to deliver improved services for our customers and an even greater end-user experience."

He continued: "Serco has a strong track record in the Middle East when it comes to its technology offering, and I'm proud to lead the team as we continue to innovate our service lines."

Phil Malem, Chief Executive Officer, Serco Middle East

echoed these remarks:

"Our Middle East strategy has a strong focus on technology and Paul will be responsible for driving this forward within the region. Paul has an excellent track record of setting up new technology-focused service lines which aligns to our areas of focus, which will ultimately contribute to the growth of our division and business as a whole.

"We're very much looking forward to welcoming Paul to our team and supporting him on his career trajectory with us as we look to

achieve our collective goals in the future."

In his spare time, Paul has worked for several charities such as the Children's Trust in the UK and is a supporter of Animal Action UAE. Paul also holds an MBA from Hult International Business School, which he received in 2017 with a distinction.

