



Overview

Helen Ashton has over 30 years of international business experience across a wide range of industries and ownership structures. She has been the CFO and Executive Director at a FTSE100 equivalent global online fashion business, the COO of a FTSE250 financial services business and the CEO of high growth, private equity owned entities. Helen has operated in and around boards for the last 15 years in both an executive and non-executive capacity. She started her career as an accountant, before moving into international leadership roles and has deep expertise in international growth, within retail and consumer businesses, particularly those with ambitious transformation and digital agendas. As well as being a Merryck Mentor Helen has a portfolio of Non-Executive and Adviser roles, including Non-Executive Director and the Audit & Risk Chair of JD Sports plc, the FTSE50 sport and fashion global retailer, and Entain plc, the FTSE100 international entertainment business. She is also an enthusiastic advocate for diversity and inclusion with a particular focus on equity across gender and neurodiversity.

Approach

Helen is straight talking, genuine and a down-to-earth Northerner, who balances her professional life alongside raising five children. Helen brings simplicity to the complex and supports clients through distilling opportunities and challenges down to the key points that will deliver the most value to them. She brings an analytical and pragmatic approach in today's increasingly challenging world. Helen champions a 'quick wins' mentality, testing to fail fast, learn, and build agility and confidence over time. Her own commitment to learning has led to her studying for a Masters in Executive Coaching at Ashridge Business School which supports both her coaching and Board work.

Career History

Helen's career culminated in being an Executive Director of ASOS plc, a FTSE100 equivalent global fashion business, which during her tenure doubled in size through rapid international growth and an ambitious transformation agenda. During this period, she held responsibility for a wide range of global functions including Finance, Legal, Risk, Internal Audit, Procurement, Investor Relations, Transformation, Digital and Data. She has also held CEO roles in high growth private equity backed businesses always with ambitious transformation plans, with a particular emphasis on digitalisation. Prior to this, she was the Retail Finance Director at Lloyds Banking Group, the Managing Director of International Cards at Barclays, and the Retail CFO at ASDA. In 2021 Helen was appointed to the Board of FTSE50 retailer JD Sports plc as a Non-Executive Director and spent time as Interim Chair during a period of CEO and Board succession. Helen is also an Independent Non-Executive Director at Entain plc, the FTSE100 entertainment business.

Personal

Helen is married with five children, who range in age from teenagers to young adults. Alongside work, she enjoys exercising and spending time with her family either hiking or cycling in the Lake District where she grew up.