

Women leaders and their role in socioeconomic development

KEY CONCLUSIONS

Professionalism is an employer's primary measuring stick

"When looking for employees, we focus on professional qualities and not gender," - Ekaterina Rybakova, Co-Founder, President, Rybakov Foundation.

"Gender is in the head and the emotional state of every single woman building a life and a career. As regards general standards, including those of the finance industry, there are no specific features, there are no gender-based features of importance, and the key for evaluation is professionalism," Anna Vysotskaya, Head of Far Eastern Branch Orient Express Bank.

"It doesn't matter whether you are a man or a woman; what's important is that you are a professional," - Elina Tikhonova, TV presenter, RBC.

Salary level not dependent upon gender differences

"Salaries are different because jobs are different, and the salary of a worker in a nursery school, a school teacher, and men who go down into a mine are different," - Anna Akparova, Assistant to the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation and Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District.

A woman's personal traits are her advantage

"There are certain advantages to being a woman. As a result of some particular personality traits, she's good at choosing the right moment to stand up for certain ideas that she wants to get across. Each idea, however, will be based on clear criteria that are unrelated to the fact that she is a woman; they will be directly related to the profession," - Anastasia Tsvetkova, CEO, Lake Baikal Foundation

"Statistics show that if one of the founders is a woman, it's good for companies where there is more than one founder, and if there is a woman there, then they are more successful. Statistics show that they are more successful, by up to 60%", - Ekaterina Kumanina, Member of the Management Board, Director for Strategic Communications, RVC.

PROBLEMS

The relevance of gender stereotypes

"Despite the fact that we have made serious progress in this country - there are many women leaders, including in political leaders and business leaders [...], the issue of stereotypes remains," - Victoria Panova, Vice President for International Relations, FEFU.

"We cannot disregard the fact that our perception of each other is based on gender; it really is," - Anastasia Tsvetkova said.

Perfectionism gets in the way of career growth for women

"Women are essentially perfectionists. Unless a woman is sure that she fits a particular requirement, or a job, or a project perfectly, she won't go and get involved," - Victoria Panova said.

Lack of ambition in women

"There are stereotypes, and most often it's the women themselves who have them. This is due to the fact that women have a great opportunity to find fulfilment as a mother, as a wife, and often women at some stage limit themselves to this and think that this is enough, and they do not set themselves any other career-related goals. [...] Women are less ambitious than men, and this is due to the fact that they have another way to find fulfilment, although it in itself is insufficient," - Ekaterina Rybakova said.

"There are very few women who want to dedicate the better part of their lives to business. Because it demands an enormous amount of energy. You have to be able to balance your family life, your relationships and time devoted to your children properly and not forget about your business," - Anna Vysotskaya said.

SOLUTIONS

Making gender traits work for you

"Gender traits are an advantage and not a hindrance. Since women are more emotionally sensitive, they are better able to negotiate, they possess more skills that are inherent to them by nature, that make it possible for them to achieve the desired result more quickly and effectively," - Anna Vysotskaya said.

The development of women's solidarity

"In our community, it is particularly important that women support one another. When they need to get out of a passive state and into an active one, it is very important that they support other women," - Ekaterina Rybakova said.