

UFI releases results on “Women in the exhibition industry” research

Paris - 6 November 2018: UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, announced the results of the “Women in the exhibitions industry” research at the 85th UFI Global Congress in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The “Women in the exhibition industry” research is a joint project between UFI and its media partner m+a, providing insights into the perception of women’s and men’s skills in the workplace, the potential for advancement for women within the industry and details of the different female career drivers. So, do women enjoy equal status in the workplace, or are they lagging behind?!

More than two hundred respondents from around the world, mostly women, participated in the online survey.

According to the research results, a staggering eighty two percent of respondents highly appreciate working in the exhibition industry and love their jobs.

Women were identified as having soft skills such as good communication skills and empathy. Women were also judged as having strong organizational skills, with the capacity to multi-task. Despite these soft skills, women lagged behind men when it came to networking. Meanwhile, all respondents, both women and men, assigned self-confidence, technical know-how and power-related skills to men.

Concerning treatment and equality of opportunities, more than half of the female respondents did not feel treated equally when it comes to salary and career opportunities, and more than one third also felt that they are held back from having more responsibility.

Most of the respondents felt that the industry would benefit from more female leaders and 61% already see active support for women, although only 49% think that quotas are the way to go. Women, contrarily to men, often have to choose between their career and private life, which is also seen as one of the major negative career factors, with career breaks due to maternity leave (78%) and institutional discrimination (68%).

Dr. Gwen Kaufmann from Deutscher Fachverlag (Germany) who led the project commented, “Women clearly make up the majority of the workforce in the trade fair industry, but they only represent a minority of the leadership. Both men and women agree that women can deliver diversity with a more creative approach when it comes to solving problems, helping the industry to prosper.”

Sonia Thomas, COO at UFI added, “Men and women have different skills, and are complementary, so the optimum is a mix of both sexes. We all must consider how to increase female representation at senior level by making the path to the top a little easier for women.”

After the initial presentation of the research results at the UFI Global Congress in St. Petersburg, the association will continue to work on the topic.

In line with UFI’s objective to provide vital data and best practices to the entire exhibition industry, the full results can be downloaded at www.ufi.org/research.

About UFI - The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry: UFI is the leading global association of the world's tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI's main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry. UFI directly represents around 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 58 national and regional association members. More than 780 member organisations in 86 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 1000 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

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