

Brussels
March 08, 2018

Synthesis

& Leaders 2018
Daughters™

Mind the Gap

EgonZehnder

On March 8, 2018, Egon Zehnder hosted its second annual *Leaders & Daughters* event in Brussels. The event brought together an intimate group of senior Belgian executives and their daughters in hopes of spotlighting the motivations and challenges confronting the next generation of professional women and of identifying key actions to limit the women loss from Hiring to C-level.

“It’s important to actively manage diversity, this doesn’t occur naturally.”

Diversity process: from hiring to mentoring - how to attract and retain female talent

How to hire more women?

Key Insights:

“People join organizations they feel comfortable with. Certain industries can play a role in attracting women, but the image and reputation of the company also plays a role in terms of career opportunities for women. Having more women at the top can also help.”

“We often look for people who will fit here. Great ideas arise from conflict, which means diversity is as important - or even more important - than fit.”

“Think about how large the percentage of female graduates in an industry or concentration is versus how many are attracted to your company. Look for bottlenecks and search for a solution.”

How to retain more women throughout their career?

Key Insights

“Flexibility! If companies were more agile - allowing for the possibility to move across functions and departments - and career paths less linear, there could be fewer issues for women coming back from maternity leave for example. It would be natural to come back into other roles different from the ones they left.”

“Try to understand the challenges young women face and adapt your organization to your best people. And do offer the same flexibility to men and women.”

“Create role models. Make sure there is a significant percentage of women in Executive Committees.”

“Companies are not built fairly towards women, particularly in Europe. There are no mechanisms to help them if their priorities change. The focus on diversity is much more present in companies in the US where, if you do not have women on your Executive Committee, you are failing!”

The importance of Mentorship and Sponsorship

Key Insights

“Take a good look at your staff and identify talent. It’s important to actively manage diversity, and this doesn’t happen naturally. Be proactive in developing and retaining talent.”

“If you don’t have a mentor, ask for one! Senior leaders will feel honored to be chosen.”

“Sponsors are even more valuable for a young woman’s career than mentors.”

“Make senior women aware of their added value in the career of younger women.”

In conclusion

“The barrier for women often starts in their head: talk about your great achievements, speak up, make sure to be noticed.”

“It feels like we’re 5 to 10 years behind on our way to a diverse workforce, compared to the USA. We’re finally getting started by organizing events like these.”

“The key is to make diversity mandatory!”

“Create a flexible organization.”

“Make sure you look like your customer to understand your customer.”

Event



Event



Panelists



Roland Cracco
CEO
Interparking



Jan De Witte
CEO
Barco



Isabel Baert
Channel Director
Neuhaus



Laura Depickere
Ex-Sales Account
Manager
AB Inbev

Hosts



Isabelle Langlois Loris
Consultant
Egon Zehnder

About Leaders & Daughters

In 2015, Egon Zehnder launched the *Leaders & Daughters* global event series. Our goal was to convene the world's most admired leaders and their daughters and mentees in hopes of uncovering the motivations, challenges, obstacles and opportunities ahead for the next generation of women leaders. In 2017, we hosted 40 panel and roundtable conversations around the world, bringing together over 3500 attendees to share experiences, perspectives, and—importantly—solutions.

In the Spring of 2018, beginning in Sao Paulo and ending in Jakarta, Egon Zehnder will host *Leaders & Daughters* events in nearly 40 cities across Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America. Through both intimate and large-scale events, we will use this year's theme—*Mind The Gap*—to look closely at why senior level women so rarely make it into the C-Suite, and share examples of where they've had success. Our objective is to push the global conversation further in hopes of better understanding how leaders and the generations below them think about this topic—and to come up with concrete actions that will have real impact on the female leaders emerging today.

In addition to the events, we have also launched a campaign, *To My Daughter*, in which leaders write letters to their daughters about their hopes and dreams for the future. To participate, please visit www.leadersanddaughters.com.

Visit *Leaders & Daughters* at www.egonzehnder.com Join the Leaders & Daughters LinkedIn group, follow #LeadersAndDaughters on Twitter and on Instagram at @egonzehnder

