

what we heard

& Leaders 2017
Daughters

Leaders & Daughters

“Don’t only think of being a backup singer.”

Johannesburg

March 8, 2017



EgonZehnder



what we heard

Each year, Egon Zehnder marks International Women's Day by bringing together a range of voices to discuss the successes and challenges facing the next generation of professional women. In Johannesburg, South Africa, about 20 business leaders and their daughters gathered at The Orangery to share experiences of how the country has changed and how women can play a growing role in expanding these changes. In their youth, the leaders at the table all lived under Apartheid, the country's policy of institutionalized racism that ended in 1994, some growing up in townships and all with limited opportunities to study or work.

At the March 8 Leaders & Daughters dinner, hosted by Egon Zehnder, leaders talked with their daughters or mentees about what they can do to make their mark in the corporate and continue the social progress that South Africa has witnessed. Among the special guests were Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse, a legendary Afro-rock pioneer, musician and singer; Deshnee Naidoo, chief executive officer for mining firm Vedanta Resources; Peter Matlare, CEO Africa for Barclays Africa and Charlotte Mokoena, executive vice president for human resources and corporate affairs for Sasol, an integrated energy and chemical company.

'Amazing' discussion across four broad themes

The roundtable discussion evolved to bring out four broad themes – confidence, branding, opportunities, and education – that are important as women climb through the corporate ranks. The overarching message, however, was that women must work to redefine gender roles, create their own opportunities, and take risks.

"It was an amazing discussion," Egon Zehnder consultant Xavier Leroy said after the event. "It was energetic. It was exciting. It was family-like. It was emotional. Everyone was engaged for four hours, and it was very interesting."

"Is gender a topic in our industry? Yes," Mabuse told the group, referencing his own experience in the music industry. "The industry is totally controlled by males. I've tried to tell women to become more in the industry than just backup singers, to aim to become a publisher for example. I try to encourage the youth not only to become singers, but rather to be the bosses of publishing houses, et cetera."

Confidence

The business leaders felt that their daughters and young women generally should look beyond gender-based roles in business and have the confidence to pursue their dreams. "Don't think only of being a backup singer," Mabuse told the daughters sitting around the table.

Charlotte Mokoena shared her experiences as she built a career. "Personally, when I am the only female in the executive committee, I know I have to re-define myself as a woman," she related. "Whenever I was intimidated, I would think back to when I was in grade one and I was first in the class. I have never been apologetic."

Branding

Along with self confidence, young women should push their personal brands, making sure that they stand out ahead of all their colleagues. By showcasing superior individual capabilities, young women demonstrate the irreplaceable value they offer their companies.

what we heard

Deshnee Naidoo, chief executive officer at Vedanta Resources, said, “I always make sure that I know my facts better than anyone else.... Once you floor anyone with your sense of knowledge and sense of your space, you put them back in their place. I did that, and continue to do this because it works.”

Opportunities

Leaders and their daughters said today’s South Africa offers women a broader range of opportunities, but they must still seek out those opportunities and find ones that fit their passions, even if they don’t necessarily match a standard career path. Young women should be the masters of their own decisions.

Mokoena said that when she was young, her mother taught her to make her own decisions and be comfortable with them. And now, the executive said, she tells her own daughter to be the best at whatever path she pursues and build her own independence.

Education

Everyone around the table – parents and daughters – emphasized that education was a prerequisite for achieving any ambition. Because of Apartheid, many of the mothers and fathers around the table were forced to study outside the country and said the value of education could not be understated.

Isaac Shongwe, executive director of Barloworld Logistics, said the best advice he’s given his daughter is that her first love should be her education and she should never be dependent on a man. His daughter Lerato, 22, said she understood that it was a privilege to get an education and that whenever a new semester started her father would remind her that education is an investment and he expected “a good return”.



Overview

what we heard

below

Charlotte and Bonolo

right

Sebastian and Anesu



above

*Tumi, Symonne and
Nanji*

above

*Naledi, Sipho
and Palesa*

right

Nanji and Heloise



what we heard

below

Isaac, Tumi and Peter

right

Vereen, Deshnee and
Sharessa



above

Lerato and Isaac

above

Xavier, Peter, Tumi and
Taryn

right

Sipho and guests



what we heard

Host

Xavier Leroy
xavier.leroy@egonzehnder.com



Everyone

what we heard

About Leaders & Daughters

To mark International Women's Day, Egon Zehnder conceived Leaders & Daughters, a global series of events that bring the world's most admired leaders and their daughters together to uncover the motivations, challenges and opportunities that face the next generation of professional women.

In 2017, we went further. In celebration of International Women's Day, we hosted Leaders & Daughters events in more than 40 cities worldwide – bringing together the voices of more than 3,500 participants to share their stories of success as well as the obstacles that are preventing progress. We share one common goal: to collectively pave a better future for the next generation of women leaders.

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

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