Women in Corporations
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• Book “Women in corporations” has just been published
• Based on my experiences as a Manager/Director in global corporations including Union Bank of Switzerland, Coca-Cola, Zurich Insurances, GATX, Alcan, and Rio Tinto.
• Relevant literature/research considered
• «navigation instruments» , especially for Polish women
Women in Corporations

• Thesis: corporation might be a very good workplace for women - subject to certain conditions.

• What obstacles do women in global companies face every day? How can they navigate around them?
Women in Corporations

The following topics will be explored:

• Corporation: Advantages and disadvantages
• How to choose a valuable corporation and how to get hired?
• How to make your way in this new world - to orient yourself?
• How to get noticed? How to get promoted?
• Financial advancement – where am I in the salary frame?
• How to avoid traps – strategic thinking
Women in Corporations

Topics:

• Women and power (alliances, mentoring, sponsoring)
• Women and leadership
• Change management and its opportunities
• Specific skills for advancement
• Mindset for advancement
Corporation: advantages & disadvantages

• “Rat race” – negative image of the corporation in PL

• Advantages:
  - opportunity for development and further education (employability)
  - good salary and fringe benefits
  - international environment
  - you learn from the best
  - travel and expatriation
  - transparent rules and regulations (Code of Conduct)
  - flexible working hours, Home Office.
Corporation: advantages & disadvantages

- **Disadvantages**: 
  - less influence and opportunities in branch offices versus Head Office
  - sometimes slow decision process
  - prone to changes (mergers & acquisitions), no secure jobs (employability instead)
  - tendency to outsourcing and preventive cost cutting
How to choose a valuable corporation and how to get hired

• Education profile
  - economics (finance), informatics, law, philosophy (systemic thinking), 2 foreign languages

• Professional profile
  - specialist with managerial skills (MBA)

• Type of the company (company with mission, how do they treat women, type of business (industry, consulting, fashion)

• Initial situation (avoid traps: secretary’ position, too low salary)
# Women-friendly companies

Source: National Association For Female Executives (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Percentage of women employed</th>
<th>Percentage of women high in the hierarchy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott (US)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernst &amp; Young (GB)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleishman Hillard (US)</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM (US)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson (US)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPMG (Switzerland)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L’Oreal (F)</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariott Intl (US)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to orient yourself in a new environment

• Helicopter view – where is the center of power
• Learn about the company (products, markets etc.)
• Organization culture (artefacts, nomenclature, unwritten rules, norms and values)
• Learn the rules of the «game» and use them to your advantage.
How to break through

• Visibility (visits to the HO), public exposure (increase – by interviews, professional inputs in business journals, presentations)
• Accountability- don't be afraid of big projects
• Risk – take on tasks, for which you are not 100% prepared – leap of faith
• Strive for an expat position
• Results of your work have to be relevant for the company’s strategy
• Problem solving – improve it
• Aspire for higher positions – and talk about it.
Advancement in the hierarchy

Factors which influence women’s career and pay:

- Differences in working time arrangement (career killers: part time, mini jobs): 24.0%
- Discrimination (unexpl.): 22.7%
- Lower level of professional experience: 21.8%
- Segregation at the labor market: 11.3%
- Living conditions: 9.2%
- Personality (Big Five): 8.6%
- Other: 2.5%

Source: S. Fietze «Germany next top manager» (2010)
Advancement in the hierarchy

Job versus career

• Different success/career definitions by men and women:
  - women’ criteria: interesting task, friendly atmosphere

  - men’s criteria: contain «movement». Career as a sequence of tasks/functions which lead to the top. Work itself might be interesting, but it functions almost always as means to an end.
Advancement in the hierarchy

Finances – where am I in the salary band:

• Discrimination is evident, less so in corporations – due to transparent compensation policy
• Men assess their professional contribution as much higher and more valuable than women do (Kay Deaux, Purdue University) and can convince their superiors of it
• Divorced women earn more than married women (Andrew Hacker, US scientist)
• Women don't feel comfortable in a negotiation situation, unless they ask for a rise for someone else
• Importance of **Job Descriptions** in the compensation process.
Advancement in the hierarchy

Mentoring, sponsoring and coaching:

- **Mentor** within the company (higher in the hierarchy, delivers feedback, functions as a role model)
- **Sponsor** (seasoned manager with big influence in the company/business, facilitates her career by recommending her and enabling access to the specific power holders.
- **Coach** (supports a client in achieving a specific personal or professional goal by providing training and guidance). Might be a component of mentoring or a separate function.
How to avoid traps – strategical thinking

Traps:

• Accepting a job which does not lead to advancement (but looks good on a business card)
• Accepting being a manager without real power (check your competencies and responsibilities)
• Letting others overstep your boundaries (f.e. delegate work to you which is in their responsibility/accountability).
• Not thinking ahead (strategically), not observing what’s happening to your department/division, not «connecting the dots» (outsourcing!)
• Risk aversion with regard to your career
Skills for advancement

• Capability to process a big amount of information in a short time *(humanities)*
• Executive functions (working memory, self-regulation, cognitive flexibility – planning, decision making)
• Work smart, not hard
• Analytical vs. *conceptual* thinking (synthesis)
• Decisiveness
• Dealing with ambiguity
• General education (for intern. negotiations in business, diversity issues etc.)
Mindset

- Ambition gap between men and women (McKinsey survey 2016)
- Competition – do women shy away from it? (Niederle & Vesterlund)
- Assertiveness («I don't get confused» - Nikki Haley)
- Action in spite of apprehension/ fear
- Sense of humor
- Result is more important than the process itself
- Done is better than perfect (20/80 – Pareto principle)
- Need to be loved
- Mental resilience
- Stamina and discipline
- False modesty
Women and management


• Women outperformed men in 4 of the 5 categories studied: - initiative and clear communication; openness and ability to innovate; sociability and supportiveness, methodical management and goal-setting

• Men did appear to be better than women at dealing with work-related stress and they had higher levels of emotional stability
Women and management

- Situational management style
- Putting your team together
- Delegation
- Empathy at the wrong place
- Confusing the levels (thinking vs. feeling)
- Virtual management
- Attitude towards power/influence
- The higher your position the more strategical and political your job becomes
Change Management

• «In the eye of the storm» – threats and opportunities
• Restructuring, rightsizing and retrenchment (Headcount)
• Strategies: sit out or be pro-active
• Retention packages for key positions during the transition period (Head Finance, Production HR, Legal, etc.)
• Mergers & Acquisitions – different mentalities and organizational cultures clash together
• Social Plan negotiations (severance payment, garden leave, outplacement)