

## **Submission - Recruitment Agency**

### **Do you think there is a gender pay gap in Jersey?**

Yes. I believe there is a gender pay gap and generalising, men often receive higher remuneration for doing the same job as a female colleague. As well as a pay gap I believe there is a gap in the opportunities that are available for women.

### **Is there any evidence to suggest that women returning to work after having children are less likely to be successful applicants?**

There is no direct evidence to suggest that women returning to work after children are less likely to be successful however there is significant evidence that the opportunities available prior to starting a family have changed and become A LOT more limited.

Historically there have been clients who we would describe as more “old school” who would say they wanted a man/insinuate that they were looking for younger/male etc, but this has died down in recent years – or they have learnt there are some things you cannot say!

There is occasionally indirect evidence that suggests whilst a client is not saying women with children are not considered there is an insinuation with certain roles that “due to hours required” or the “culture” of the department those that cannot commit extra hours would not be suitable. Many women return to the workplace seeking a more flexible working pattern which can significantly limit available opportunities and is challenging to find in today’s market. The female worker is then, I believe, more likely to “settle” for a role that does offer this flexibility and these positions tend to be less challenging/more back office administration. Taking this “step back” for the early years can significantly make a longer-term impact when trying to progress their career.

### **From your experience are women more likely to apply for part time jobs or jobs where there is flexibility in working hours?**

Women make up at least 95% of the applications we receive for part time or flexible working patterns. And a high percentage would be Mothers all seeking “mornings”.

### **Do you think culture change is required to encourage more men to take career breaks to look after children?**

I believe a culture change is required to encourage men to take career breaks as the primary care giver. Culturally it is seen as a female’s role and there are not the same paternity leave options as there are maternity which make finances/income a driver. Our culture says that the woman stays at home and the male goes to work and progresses his career – whilst this is outdated I think Jersey has a significant way to go to make a change. I could, for example, count on one hand the amount of men known to me both personally and via my position professionally that have career breaks or the higher percentage of responsibility for child care. Yes, I note this has increased but not significantly enough to make an impact. I also note some fantastic campaigns encouraging women in leadership/flexible working etc with some of the larger global employers we work for however I feel that they often contradict what they are really looking for.

### **How long do you think women can take out of the work place before it starts to hit their future progression?**

I think anything longer than 3 years out of the working environment has an impact on future career progression however consulting my team some felt it was as low as 12-18 months – there are many factors (role, sector etc) that influence this.

### **What barriers do women face in relation to promotion and progression in the work place?**

- Maternity leave – breaks in employment
- Women are less assertive (generally) when it comes to promotion and salary increases etc
- Due to family and home pressures less likely to networking themselves in industry/within business at out of core working hours events
- Primary care givers so only able to work core or specific hours
- Confidence, we believe women often under sell their abilities

### **Notes**

The above is me and my teams' comments and whilst there are always exceptions to the rules these are our generalised observations from the recruitment market.

As the owner and Director of a small business employing 6 women, as well as being a mother and step mother to 3 daughters, I am only too aware of female challenges career wise and hope to demonstrate to my children that you can be in a senior role in the work place and a good parent at the same time.

As an employer I do, and hope to continue, to offer both promotion opportunities and flexible working together but understand the challenges and limits that impact a small business trying to make this happen. I also feel that as women who tend to be in control of the home we occasionally do not help ourselves by trying to be everyone and everything and taking on too much– as a society the cultural shift is not just down to employers or men but as women we need to encourage and support each other and learn to let go of the control sometimes! I also believe that for flexible working to become embedded in society it needs to be adopted by everyone in the workplace so not just an option for parents but an option for anyone.