



Women on boards – lessons for leadership



Setting the scene, Anne told delegates that South Africa currently has:

- 7,8% female CEOs and chairpersons
- 14,3% female directors, and
- 25,3% female executive managers.

Anne Pratt is a director of Melanani Investments and Memela, Pratt and Associates, and member of the Black Management Forum, Institute of Directors and Businesswomen's Association. She is the author of 'Women on Board' and was a finalist in the businesswoman of the year awards in 2002. She has a bachelor's degree in social sciences and an MBA.

QUALITIES WOMEN BRING TO BOARDS

- Men: believe women bring a different perspective – less ego driven, greater diversity and sensitivity, raise human capital to top of the debate, good strategic overview, attention to detail, more pragmatic, consultative, sensitive to relationship issues and personal strengths
- Men: see themselves as ego driven, run with group culture, focused on financial issues
- Women: similar but more focused. Believe they bring diversity, sensitivity, attention to detail (thoroughness), intuition, focus on outcomes and societal issues, understanding of the organisation, extract the best from human capital, think laterally, but have a more formal approach
- Women: see men as single minded, methodical, see things in black and white, focused on their egos, therefore make more emotional decisions

WHY GENDER-DIVERSE BOARDS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE

- Men: most see the value of gender diversity; a few are adamant gender is not an issue
- Women: believe gender diversity is important; a few believe other aspects of diversity are equally important, eg religion, race, specialisation. Feel issues will be addressed from a different perspective, and there will be a better and more rigorous debate because of mix and styles

CHALLENGES CONFRONTING WOMEN ON BOARDS

- Men: believe women have to earn their credibility, be tough, cope with the 'old boys' network, realise their relative inexperience and deal with the traditional attitudes of the role of women
- Women: believe they are not taken seriously, they are in a minority, have to prove their credentials, should not be viewed as tokens and must add value

Successes from the field

Two recipients of FoodBev incentive grants shared their experiences with conference delegates...



"Until FoodBev offered us funding, we were baking in home-made ovens. Now we have stoves. We started the business in August 2006, selling buns door to door. We were making about 1 000 buns a day, but didn't have any experience. Now, we have been trained by Sasko and Butterfield and, with equipment bought with the FoodBev funds, we are producing 1 500 loaves and 2 500 buns a day. We have 15 employees, and have completed a food safety and hygiene course, which will improve our business even more. We are what we are because of FoodBev."

Rebhone Moraswi
Emang Ka Maoto



"We studied nine modules for a year and then five of us got together to start a poultry business. We received R100 000 from FoodBev. We raise chickens and sell them to the community. We also sell eggs and vegetables.

"We have brought the market closer to the residents so that they don't have to travel to town.

"We thank FoodBev. It has been good for us and we would like you to continue to do it for others."

Lindiwe Happy Miranze
Ntoziphamayo Cooperative