

EMPOWERING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN LUXEMBOURG

Company name : PWC

Activity sector : Activités de services administratifs et de soutien

Company category : Grande Entreprise

Description of the action

“Connected Women” is a yearly event organised, via the Women&Men@PwC committee & sponsored by PwC’s Managing Partners, at places chosen for their uniqueness & singularity. Participants are exclusively influential women from the business, the public sector & the cultural world. A different theme per year illustrates women achievements from a different perspective. Luxembourg, its people & culture are celebrated. Launched in 2008 with an audience of 25 participants, 100 participants now yearly show up: 96% appreciate the initiative, 88% confirm the event utility for networking, for 94% the event promotes women in business & for 100% it should be renewed every year.

Context

Changing the mind-sets about gender equality & being a role model is a long-term commitment at PwC Luxembourg. By counting currently 25% of women among top management, the firm’s challenge is to build a sustainable framework for gender diversity. PwC rapidly realised that adjusting internal processes & gender mixity of management committees was not enough. Acting at the level of corporate communication is as much important as working on best practices of inclusion. Thus, communicating, promoting, valuing the place of women in society is still a must. For many years, PwC has been committed to conduct projects aimed at promoting that equality. “Connected Women” is one of these initiatives with an external impact.

Approach

Gender equality is giving the company a competitive advantage by enhancing the performance of the whole organisation. Due to their minority representation, women in leadership are often by themselves & tend to network less spontaneously than men, which may prevent them from a unique source of inspiration, knowledge transfer & business connections. PwC decided to intervene on that aspect not only from an internal perspective but also with a corporate social responsibility focus. That’s what substantiates the idea of building a supportive & powerful women community in the country. The initiative, named “Connected Women”, is truly about networking women annually across sectors & organisations in the context of diverse topics.

Objectives

By organising a networking event, PwC gives the signal that networking matters to women: a large, far reaching network is increasingly important in today’s society, and nurturing their own network is not a common practice for many women. Women are important in business but also in the cultural life: when referring to gender diversity, the focus is often directed on “women in business”. This is however irrespective of other great achievements realised by women in the public, cultural or associative spheres Engagement for gender diversity is at the core of the firm’s: PwC believes that companies with a strong brand are accountable for spreading the importance of diversity within the community.

Impact

The most obvious added value is that “Connected Women” creates a strong awareness that women matter in the

economic and public life. It clearly signals to women that creating relationships is important. By promoting this initiative, PwC follows its ambition to act as a catalyser of projects, initiatives and ideas. The sustainability of the project lies in its recurrence. "Connected Women" is now institutionalised as an event where women (and sometimes men!) actively seek to be part of. PwC's on-going facilitation across women in leading positions resulted in a highly diversified community where lawyers discuss with artists, architects exchange with politicians... In only 5 events, PwC gathered more than 400 women.

« To do »

- Assess the relevance of the contemplated topic for the event
- Activate all networks
- Choose audacious, "original" themes in order to have an impact
- Invite men!
- Think large in terms of contributors (different backgrounds, ages, nationalities, choices...)
- Find an "entertaining" formula

« Not to do »

- Underestimate the challenge of identifying all possible participants
- Ignore the potential over-reaction to the necessity of a dedicated event to women
- Neglect the time for the selection of speakers