

Opportunity E-zine December 2010



Opportunity E-zine f/m is OiB's online newsletter. It covers news and events within our network and current issues related to diversity. If you have any questions or would like to suggest copy, please contact mberkel@opportunity.nl.

We hope you enjoy this number. Have a happy holiday season and we wish you all the best in 2011!

*On behalf of the Opportunity team,
Lizzy Venekamp, director*

In this number:

- "Talented Women" course proves beneficial
- A new boost of energy in the Opportunity network: getting to know Alliander and top Essent executive Nina Skorupska
- WikiLeaks in the Zuidas District

*N.B. For the Dutch version of this E-zine, please surf to:
www.opportunity.nl*

Opportunity Events

Leadership and diversity

Top executives open up about their personal commitment

The American management expert and musician Benjamin Zander was the keynote speaker at the Talent & Diversity conference on 8 November, organised by Talent to the Top. Zander's overwhelming (and musical) presentation gave the audience a taste of what "Leadership: An Art of Possibility" means. He clarified the link with diversity and inclusion – two things that call for a different mindset, specifically one that recognises and makes use of the potential of a variety of different talents.



The conference was organised by Talent to the Top in partnership with OiB, Women Inc, LEAP!, and Lof Media. Each of these organisations is active in the field of talent and diversity and each presented its own specific parallel session. The well-attended workshop organised by OiB focused on how to ensure that diversity and inclusive leadership are actually embedded within an organisation. OiB described how its Opportunity Boardroom Coaching

Programme had influenced the personal commitment of top executives to diversity. Based on its many years of experience, Opportunity considers personal commitment a crucial ingredient for successful diversity and inclusion. The programme is not only beneficial for the women being coached; it also leads the coaches to new insights, as confirmed by Boardroom Coaches Harry van Dorenmalen (IBM), Coks Stoffer (Cisco) and Herman Dijkhuizen (KPMG), as well as one of the programme coachees.

The Opportunity session included the premiere of a short film in which the three senior executives

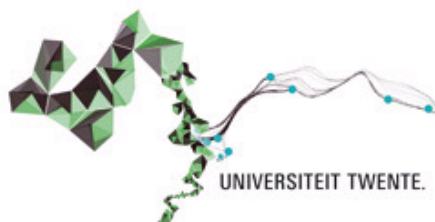
named above speak openly about the Boardroom Coaching Programme. As one of them relates in the film: "The programme operates in a segment in which various things are universal, but in which there are also differences... In my experience, you often have to put the brakes on the men and give the women a bit of a push."

Theme and events for 2011

The theme of the conference workshop described above will be the focus of Opportunity's programme in 2011: from organisational commitment to personal engagement. OiB is currently working very hard on the 2011 programme. It has already joined forces with Catalyst Europe to schedule an exciting event on 14 June. We will be living up to our role as "thought leader" by conducting a number of in-depth studies and organising small-scale meetings with D&I professionals and others. Opportunity members will receive the annual programme of events in January.

Personal development and training

Personal development and training



Opportunity Advies runs training course and workshops for senior managers, but it also has programmes that focus specifically on talented women. Our clients include businesses – everything from construction companies to law and accounting firms – and universities, including Twente University.

"Talented Women" course proves beneficial

Twente University wants to increase the number of women in prominent positions within its organisation. It commissioned Opportunity Advies to develop and run a tailor-made programme for ambitious female employees (both academic and non-academic staff).

The university also asked an independent party to study the impact of the programme.

The study, which focused on two groups of programme participants, revealed a positive trend. Participants appear to have taken the behaviour learned in the programme to heart. For example, they now invest more in developing their own leadership style, shoulder responsibility for more matters important to their careers, negotiate more strategically, and are better at "playing by the house rules" of the organisation.

It is also clear that they are better able to put aside personal feelings, are less likely to be distracted by others in reaching their career goals, and are less concerned about being considered "nice" by others.

The study shows that the programme is effective and that it achieved virtually all of its objectives. There was one point of concern among the study's findings, however: although the participants had become more "career-minded", they did not appear markedly more hopeful of making genuine progress in their career at the university.

(Source: University of Twente, Tinguely Xperts)

Good Practices

Diversity as part of Royal Haskoning's procurement process



Consulting engineers Royal Haskoning made diversity part of its procurement process at the end of last year. It uses a list of criteria to assess what potential suppliers and/or business partners are doing about diversity before it makes a selection.

Royal Haskoning is convinced that diversity in teams generates added value. In order to act on this belief, the firm is making diversity part of its personnel policy and operations, as well as a basis for assembling teams. But it doesn't intend stopping there: it will also be asking its

suppliers and partners to look consciously at diversity. "I'm convinced that diversity won't happen all by itself," says chairman of the board Jan Bout. "We need to take action ourselves to get things moving. We intend taking active steps in our own procurement policy."

Quotes of the month:

"Equating diversity policy with positive action is a useless exercise in this day and age."
Ila Kasem (Financieele Dagblad newspaper, 8 November 2010)

"If I only come across clones of myself when I walk down the street, then it's hardly worth going outside." *Piet Hein Donner, Dutch Minister of the Interior (18 November 2010)*

News from the Opportunity network

Getting to know...



Alliander puts its energy into diversity
New Opportunity member Alliander is one of the biggest network companies in the Netherlands. It consists of Liander, Liandon and Endinet, which manage and maintain a large proportion of the Dutch electricity and gas grids. Alliander employees work hard every day to ensure a safe, reliable, and sustainable supply of gas and electricity. Alliander is also preparing its energy grids for the future. For example, the grids will be transporting more sustainable, locally generated energy in future, and there will be an increasing number of charging stations for electric cars. (See also: www.nederlandwordtgroenland.nl.)

Alliander has more than 6000 employees from a variety of different backgrounds working at its 19 branches. Because Alliander is a technical company, many of its employees are men. But that's changing: the proportion of female employees increased from 17% in 2008 to 20% by mid-2010. Today, 32% of new employees are women.

Alliander also finds it important to help women in their personal development and promotion to management positions. It became part of the Opportunity network in order to support its diversity policy. Alliander wants to make more of its employees aware of differences in male and female career strategies and career obstacles. Three members of its board (Peter Molengraaf, Mark van Lieshout and Pieter Romer) immediately made a personal commitment to this strategy by volunteering as mentors within Opportunity's Cross Mentoring Programme.

One of Alliander's female managing directors, Nancy Kabalt, about participating in the Opportunity network:

"Joining the OiB network really boosted our employees' enthusiasm for diversity. OiB is helping us to learn with and from one another, so that we can then map out our own careers."


Essent senior executive Nina Skorupska lives up to her company's logo

"The first thing you have to do is deliver. But it's not enough just to work hard."



Energy company Essent has been a member of the Opportunity network for several years now. In March, a woman joined its four-person management board – the only female board member in the Dutch energy sector. Nina Skorupska is Essent's Chief Technology Officer. She started out in the energy industry in 1992 as a fuel specialist and has worked in various operational management positions in the UK (N-Power) and Germany (RWE). Opportunity manager Margo van Berkel talked to her at her office in 's-Hertogenbosch and asked her about her time in the UK and the Netherlands.

Growing up in the UK as the daughter of Polish immigrants, Skorupska learned early on that she had to rely on herself and make the best of what she had. "So I've always worked very hard.

 Sometimes I hit an obstacle, but I never gave up." Her company's slogan – "Essent delivers" – could have been written with her in mind. "If you want a career, the first thing you have to do is deliver – in other words, do excellent work." But she soon found out that it's not enough just to work hard. It's important that

trade and services, and we want to invest up to EUR 7.5 million per company," says Jansen Verplanke. "We have plenty of ideas and we can't wait to get started."
(Source: *Financieele Dagblad* newspaper, 26 October 2010)

Importance and value of diversity in government sectors undiminished



A "Think Diversity Day", held in November for Dutch government organisations, concluded with an inspiring and remarkable address by the Dutch Minister of the Interior, Piet Hein Donner. In his address, he stated that – whatever the new government's Coalition Agreement suggested – the importance of diversity policy in the public sector was undiminished. "In a society characterised by multiformity and differentiation, diversity is absolutely essential if government organisations are to stay in tune with society and offer it a good quality of service."

"The Coalition Agreement says that the Government is ending its policy of diversity/positive action based on gender or ethnic background," said Donner. "Henceforth, selection will be on the basis of quality. But it's important to understand the background to that statement. I want to emphasise that here, because it would be easy to conclude, wrongly, that the Government doesn't recognise the importance of diversity. It is not a question of re-evaluating the importance of diversity to the quality of the machinery of government; it is simply a question of re-evaluating the way in which diversity is to be achieved," said the minister.

WikiLeaks in the Zuidas District



Three young women who started their careers in Amsterdam's Zuidas business district have been blogging for the past two years under the name of ZoZas, short for their blog's URL, zozuidas.nl. They recently published a book of their blog entries, Zo Zuidas [So Zuidas]. The authors give the low-down on work attitudes and business culture in the world of hip companies and trendy entrepreneurs. According to the ZoZas, the

Zuidas District is "just like Animal Planet" and the investment bankers "are the real alpha males of the Zuidas". A couple of quotes: "If you work in the Zuidas District, you don't waste time on something as extravagant as a private life" and "The trick is to resemble your senior executive without losing your authenticity."

Opportunity congratulates

Opportunity has taken note of the following appointments of women to top positions (in alphabetical order):

Dominique Bech, Partner, Monitor Capital Partners
Sophie van Bijsterveld, Professor by Special Appointment of Religion, Constitutional State and Society, Utrecht University
Cokky Bosman, Chairperson, Contact Centres Employers' Federation
Yesim Candan and Laamia Elyounoussi, winners of the Aletta Now Award 2010
Conny Castelein, Corporate Director Quality Assurance & Safety, Mediq
Faiza Dadi, Ethnic Woman Manager of the Year
Marjolein Demmers, Sustainability Programme Director, DHV Group
Sandy Go Chau, Netherlands' Ethnic Business Woman of the Year
Marjan van der Haar, Director, NVS (Netherlands Association of Feature Film Producers)
Petri Hofsté, Division Director, Banking Supervision, DNB (Netherlands' Central Bank)
Marjan van Kasteren, Director, VFFP (Federation for Financial Planners)
Carien Keuter, Partner, law firm of Riet Wijnands Keuter
Liesbeth Kneppers-Heijnert, Chairperson of the Supervisory Board, Martini Hospital Groningen
Stella Kuin (Land Registry), Best Woman ICT Manager of the Year
Mijntje Lückerath-Rovers, Professor of Corporate Governance, Nyenrode Business University

Marjolein Lurvink, Director, Van Lanschot Bankers, Gouda Branch
Lisa McDermott, Director, Financial Governance Team, Intertrust Netherlands
Carla Mahieu, Member, Supervisory Board of BAM
Anja Oskamp, Rector Magnificus, Open University of the Netherlands
Henriëtte Prast, Supervisor, AFM (Netherlands Authority for the Financial Markets)
Géke Roelink, Director, Film House of The Hague
Cindy Rombouts, COO, Syntrus Achmea Real Property
Astrid Sanson, Member, Supervisory Board, Rochdale Housing Association
Marjolein Sol, Member of the General Board, Eumedion
Marjolein Verstappen, Member of the Board, ZonMw (Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development)
Anneke de Vries, Member of the Supervisory Board, Rochdale Housing Association
Janny Wierda, Director for Security and Legal Affairs, Holland Casino

More information

For more up-to-date information and good practices, go to:

www.opportunity.nl

*OiB is an expertise centre and national network of leading organisations that aim to achieve an even balance between male and female managers/executives. **Opportunity Advies** is a consultancy allied with OiB. Basing itself on the same philosophy. Opportunity Advies works on putting the associated policy into practice. It does this by guiding changes in corporate culture, providing training courses and advising clients on diversity and leadership issues. Opportunity is also associated with **the Netherlands' national diversity management network (DIV)**, focusing on cultural diversity in SMEs and government.*