

I Believe in Natural not Artificial Rules

It is not my habit to look at people through a prism of age, skin color or sex. Besides rules of etiquette, which I regard to as utterly natural, I do not give preference to women in terms of professional life. In my conception, people are simply good and better, beautiful and more beautiful, successful and more successful... I just do not divide people into men and women.

When looking back to my longtime work as a personnel consultant, I do not remember any occasion when I singled out a particular woman as the most suitable of all women. Women and men are for me an equal set of candidates. I always have and always will evaluate appropriateness, ability, skills, successfulness and personality... which applies to the vast majority of working positions, not only within the business realm but also in politics or social life. I even think once a woman and man meet in any kind of contest, prioritizing and privileging the woman just because she is a woman may be rather degrading from her point of view.

A professional approach to appointing people in top level positions seeks the most appropriate candidate regardless of their sex. There are occupations in which women naturally excel, due to their particular abilities and characteristics, though these characteristics are never professional. On the other hand, there are jobs men are naturally inclined to occupy. There is a majority of males among stokers, crane-operators or plumbers, whereas there are more female teachers, cooks and tailors. Even though statistics prove that in spite of their higher average of education, the share of women in managerial positions within EU countries was lower than one third (32 %) of the whole, I do not presume this is because the society builds unnatural barriers or so-called glass ceilings on their way towards a career.

For years I have been encountering a broad spectrum of people and I have never witnessed an occasion in which a woman who displayed the willingness to compete, supported with sufficient ability, skills and qualities, has not succeeded just because she was a woman. In some spheres it is the contrary. Imagine there is a woman who appears on the Slovak political scene with high ambition and quality, and displays her interest to the public – political parties will immediately grab her. And it works much the same in business too. I know tens and hundreds of female top managers of successful companies in various branches, as well as a plenty of women standing behind the scenes of really big organizations or international corporations.

I am not supporter of quotas for women in either business nor politics. If there exists an occupation which demands a particular type of responsibility more apt for woman (such as child care is more natural for her), the woman should be preferred. If the given criteria demand demonstration of the best abilities, skills and experience from the particular candidate, there I do not approve the rule of female quotas or anything similar. Such matters ought to function on a natural basis. If such an ideology is nurtured and preserved in life of society, in raising children etc., the unnatural selection or artificial prioritizing of women would not be necessary.


As a consequence of exercising the quota principle, apart from others, there is the danger of appointing lower-quality workers in higher positions, because selection and choosing fails to select candidates out of a natural group. I adhere to the principle of natural dynamics, natural competitiveness, natural growth, and I do not support "close-one-eye", special rules or priorities. It is completely a different matter if someone is unable to assert themselves in a certain profession or elsewhere due to a health handicap. In this connection, I believe it is important that society be prepared to help women who want to fulfill their vocation as a mother. Again, I am not a supporter of state or formal interventions. Society is most productive and effective when abiding with the largest measure of informal rules possible, and when its members act responsibly from their own self-persuasion.

There are many admirers of those northern countries which have implemented several arrangements thanks to which there are the highest number of women in managerial positions or lowest variance in the ratio of unemployed men and women. Undoubtedly, many positives were achieved by this, but for instance the Swedish model has also shown malfunctioning in families and marriages. And in women's case, success does depend on the ability of merging professional and personal life. From this point of view, it is much more difficult for women, for whom it is important to give



birth and bring up children, than men, whom society tends to assess on the basis of their professional success. The goal of the Woman of the Year 2006 Awards is to find such women and introduce them to the society as an inspiration for those who have ambition, as well as examples worth following. ■

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