

**Press Release**

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**Women empowered to collaborate with colleagues and clients across the globe**

*Shift to remote working has given one group of women a happy work culture*

Opportunities for remote working are empowering women to collaborate with colleagues and clients across the globe and excel in high level roles.

That's the experience of five female leaders who work for Redcliffe Training Associates Limited, who came together via Zoom on International Women's Day to talk about the role of women in their workplace and industry.

They include Helen Zagrovic, SEO and website development manager, who works remotely for the firm at her home base in Redcar, a coastal town in the North-east of England.

Joining Helen was Laura Daunyte, a Lithuanian national who works and resides in Prague, Rachel Mustaffa, who is from London and works from the capital, Susan Ferguson, who moved from her home in London to a village near Leeds and Apollonia Turoczi, from Romania, who works in London.

Laura, the firm's senior client and relationship manager, says she would guess no more than 40% of the people who complete Redcliffe Training's courses for financial professionals are female.

However, she adds there is evidence the world of financial services is becoming less male-dominated.

"We are hearing more from the trainers who work with our bank clients and advisory firms that they are keen to promote women in their companies, but there are still those who are a bit more old school and are male-dominated," Laura says.

Susan, who is trainer liaison manager and client support, added: "I work with our freelance trainers and the vast majority in the past have been male. We are starting to see a shift taking place as we bring on board more female trainers from a variety of financial backgrounds."

All the women agree roles should be allocated to the best person for the job, regardless of gender - and this is something that is embodied by Redcliffe Training.

"At Redcliffe Training, when we are recruiting trainers, the first priority is the person's experience and expertise, regardless of whether they are male or female," Laura says.

“In an ideal world, you would have 50% of trainers who were female, but our trainers are employed on the basis of their skills and experience, not their gender, so it’s unlikely you will ever get a 50-50 split.”

Apollonia, head of administration and client services adds: “I would say 20 to 30 years ago, financial organisations were much more male- dominated but we are definitely seeing a shift and that is now being reflected in the number of female trainers we have.”

In terms of the numbers who are directly employed by Redcliffe Training, there are 13 employees and nine of these are female.

It is nothing more than a coincidence that these five senior employees are all women, as they were simply deemed to be the best people for their roles – but it’s a coincidence that makes them happy and thrive in their work.

Helen says: “The fact we are all women is not something I think about on a daily basis, it was just something that I realised once I was in the role.

“As a team, we are inclusive and we communicate well.

“We understand what each of us does and where we can support one another – but the fact we are all women in the senior leadership team is a happy coincidence.”

Apollonia adds: “I do think women bring more empathy and good communication to their roles. Therefore when it comes to the leadership team, it is easier to communicate with women.”

Susan adds: “It is just very positive to be in an environment that allows you to get to play to your strengths and be heard.

“Working at Redcliffe Training has empowered us as women to rise to where we want to be.

“But we have been able to progress within the company with no prejudice, as whether we are women or men is not really thought about, it’s just a case of being the best person for the job.”

She adds there are “no barriers to overcome” and believes this is what true equality looks like.

“The whole culture of the company allows you to do the job to the best of your ability and enables your thoughts and ideas to be listened to,” she says.

“As a team of women we feel fully supported and backed by the company director and everyone else in the team.”

Helen adds the remote working opportunities within the business and flexible working arrangements work well for parents - whether mums or dads.

“My kids are grown up now but in the case of staff with young children, there is no problem asking to be away from your desk during the school run and arranging to work your hours around that,” she says.

“Working from home has a lot of advantages and was a big deal for me because I’ve always worked in an office.

“I can honestly say I’ve never felt disconnected from the team as it is inclusive and if there are things happening in the different sections of the business I will know about it – people will include me in conversations.

“I will know what’s going on in the background and how it might impact my area of work.”

Rachel, head of email marketing, adds that the group of women feel empowered to share ideas, regardless of their position in the company.

“We are in regular contact on the telephone, in chat messages and on Zoom meaning it’s a very collaborative process,” she says.

“This is also evident across the business with different people’s ideas shared, seen and heard by everyone in the company.”

She adds the leadership team is extremely humble and “nobody makes out they know absolutely everything about everything”.

“Everyone can come up with an idea and show their worth and ideas,” she says.

“If you’ve got a talent in something, regardless of your position, you’re encouraged and trusted to run projects and run with ideas.

The five women meet in person twice per year – which is no mean feat considering their different locations.

“It’s not just about work, it’s about having that social connection and having some fun,” says Apollonia.

“We work hard as a team and it’s good for us to have some social time together – and that helps us work together even more successfully.”

**ENDS**

**Sent by SASS media Ltd on behalf of Redcliffe Training Associates Limited.**

**If you would like any further information or to interview any of the ladies, please contact Sarah Walker on 07896 894538.**