

DATE	7 th November 2014
USERS	113, 946,305

Women in Leadership

Setting the agenda for current and future leaders



Money talks: six women tell us their experiences of earning

On Tuesday the UK gender wage gap meant that women were now working for free until the end of the year. We speak to six women about what a wage means to them

Lottie O'Connor

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Money can be a difficult subject to discuss, but this week Equal Pay Day has got us all talking. Photograph: Alamy

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Clare Burles, HR director at East Midlands Trains

For one, I think we now need to stop just talking about the pay gap and take action. Employers have a responsibility to ensure they have robust, transparent pay structures in place which are fair regardless of gender. Women need to be confident, take a deep breath and just ask for a pay rise! I'm sure we've all been in roles where we feel undervalued compared to another, but it's how we approach the issue that matters.

My advice to women seeking a pay rise is to first find out what you are worth. Look at pay surveys, talk to recruitment consultants and look at similar advertised jobs – always do your homework.

Megan Bowne, fleet planning engineer at London South Eastern Railway

I started earning a regular income when I was 16, in the first year of my apprenticeship. My school friends were joining sixth form and learning to drive but they were also supported by their parents, which is a luxury I didn't have. So while I was the only one within my group of friends with an income and a full time job, I was also the only one who couldn't afford to learn how to drive or socialise at the weekend, so at this point I sometimes found myself feeling a little jealous.

However, it was when I reached 19 that I really learnt the true benefits of earning my own wage. My friends were all starting university and found themselves living on a student budget. I was able to buy my first car and take holidays without any help from anyone.

The moment of my life that I was most proud of was when I was able to move into my own house (albeit renting) when I turned 21. It was at this point I realised that beginning full time work at the age of 16 had finally paid off.