

CWIM LEADER SPOTLIGHT



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I am an equity fund manager and financial advisor. I've been investing client money internationally for 16 years, out of Switzerland in the last 11 of those. I am the veteran member of the CFA society Switzerland Career Committee and the Principal of our Women in Finance (WIF) series since inception. With the Women in Finance series, the career committee aims to specifically address the diversity gap recognized in our membership base - women represent less than 15% of the CFA Switzerland members - and aims to offer our audience a more diverse role model palette of career experiences in finance.

In our series of monthly webinar, senior women in the financial industry are invited to share their field of expertise, their career successes and struggles and mentoring tips and advice to our audience member.

We recognize that Covid-19 has changed forever the way we work and women, in particular, have been once again the most vulnerable to job losses and career stops, given the higher percentage of childcare burden they bear. We do not have specific statistics for our industry in Europe yet, but we expect the impact to be significantly similar to the US one, given the anecdotal evidence we witness every day. We hope, presenting some concrete aspirational content to our members, to give them an additional kick of self-confidence to push through the difficult time.

It occurred to me that throughout my career in the investment management industry, sadly I cannot pinpoint to any example of female representation at senior level, let alone one that I could look up to for mentorship. Within the spectrum of my male colleagues and superiors, some were wonderful mentors I remember fondly and still are friends with today, while some other displayed the worst examples of overt/covert sexism that so many women lament, and everything else in between.

Still, my experience taught me that being a minority, with multiple languages and cultural backgrounds, life experience, education, career path, and perspective, so being an enormous enrichment to any financial organization, especially in better investment decisions and client satisfaction while furthering ethical standards. The value of diversity is undeniable particularly in our industry and I am committed to advocate and facilitate its advance. Maybe I can be the kind of representation that someone needs today, the one that I did not have myself. :)

Grit, hustle, and confidence are still the best qualify for any woman approaching a finance career and, true, it takes a village of support - family, friends, partners, etc. So we know now that we must provide a platform for equity, meaning women shall be given equal access and equal opportunity to succeed. The goal is to never hear again: "I had to work twice as much to achieve half as much".

Through the collaborative WIM and our local Women in Finance initiative we want to provide an inclusive space where representation and a support network are provided to our female members.

I hope my testimony will inspire other Societies to join the CWIM, particularly in Europe where ESG investing values and practices are growing the fastest among the global investment community. Gender Equality is indeed the n.5 U.N. Sustainable Development. On this note, I also want to encourage everyone to check out the new CFA Institute Certificate in ESG investing available for members and non-member. <https://www.CFAinstitute.org/en/programs/ESG-investing>. I earned this qualification myself in 2020 and I strongly recommend it to everyone that wants to gain an edge into a segment that is evolving quickly and will form a key part of our investment future.