

LinkedIn's Ngaire Moyes Talks about Failure

Ngaire Moyes is the Europe, Middle East and Asia communications director at LinkedIn. She has 17 years experience in the communications industry, specialising in tech brands – and has worked at Microsoft and IBM.

What does success mean to you?

Success to me is all about professional and personal fulfilment. Being the best I can be at work – and at home. At LinkedIn, I'm working in a fast-paced environment with a great team. I'm learning every day, developing as a professional and making, what I hope, is a great contribution to the company. However, it's equally important to me that I put the same focus and effort into my family life.

What are your thoughts on working your way to the top as a woman – have you ever been underestimated because of your gender?

It's unfortunate that casual sexism is still present in many industries. Over the course of my career, working around the world, I've seen examples of this from time to time – from tougher standards imposed on women to make a high-performer's programme, through to women experiencing job insecurity when they've gone on maternity leave.

LinkedIn's recent women at work study revealed that one in five British women still believe it's the biggest career obstacle they face. However, on the plus side, there are an increasing number of inspirational female role models, and I feel privileged to work with a number of them.

Is juggling family life an important factor and is it the key to your success?

It's essential. It's also rather difficult to get right! I've found that having a supportive and flexible employer and family are critical for success in any high-profile, high-pressured role. It's perhaps not surprising that more than three out of four working women in Britain put flexible working at the top of their wishlist to help them better juggle their responsibilities.

Is it important to fail?

Yes, absolutely. The sweetest victory is the one that's most difficult and hard won and sometimes that means failing along the way to get to your final goal. I've made the biggest progress in my career after what seemed like the biggest setbacks at the time. Failing helped me learn – and fast.

A lot of us are afraid to fail, but talk to any entrepreneur or business leader and they'll usually have a tale or two of spectacular failures along the way that often proved turning points in their careers.

Perhaps my biggest career mistake was not recognising early enough how valuable relationships in the workplace are. Your network matters and the more experienced you become the more you rely on it and the more you invest in it. You need to bring people along with you. It's much more rewarding and makes it easier to be successful.

Do men and women lead differently? If so, how?

I've not found this to be the case in my experience. There are many different leadership styles, but I've never seen gender play a specific role. I would say that leadership is down to the individual rather than your gender.