



TOP RETAILERS SUPPORT SEARCH FOR FEMALE TALENT

Female bosses share tips for success as Retail Ambassador nominations sought

The UK's leading female retailers are lending their support to encourage women and girls to see the career potential offered by the retail industry. As the UK's largest private sector employer, with 2.77 million people working in it, retail has a predominantly female workforce but only 5% of women occupy the senior decision-making roles. Successful retailers including Specsavers founder, Dame Mary Perkins, Hobbs CEO Nicky Dulieu and Walmart Board Executive Judith McKenna have given their backing to the Specsavers everywoman in Retail Ambassador programme.

Created to highlight the breadth of opportunity within the sector, women working in all areas of retail, of all ages and from across the country are encouraged to nominate themselves and the successful colleagues who inspire them, for the 2014 programme.

Some of the UK's leading female retailers and past everywoman Award winners have shared their top tips for getting into the industry and navigating your way to the top.

Kelly Hoppen MBE

"Confidence is key. Without confidence the business world can push you aside. Be a sponge at the start of your career - absorb all the information you can find and research your competitors, you'll need to keep one step ahead of them."

Nicky Dulieu, CEO, Hobbs



"Trust your instincts. A lot of retail is intuitive. Use your networks exhaustively and don't limit your horizons. Find a business you are passionate about and understand your customer – what they want and how to communicate with them"

Judith McKenna, Executive VP Strategy and International Development, Walmart International



"Do something you love, ask questions and don't be afraid to have an opinion when asked back. Work hard, but work smart and if you think you can do something better, don't be afraid to try. Find a mentor to guide and help you."

Helen Pattinson, Co-founder, Montezuma's Chocolates



"Good retail is about theatre. Have an eye for detail and understand your business. Learn on the shop floor and get experience in different types of businesses. Focus on customer service, but don't forget to understand the numbers."



every
woman
in Retail Ambassadors

Holly Tucker MBE, Co-Founder, Notonthehighstreet.com



“Stay ahead of the game by connecting customers’ experiences across various channels. Don’t be afraid to be disruptive – dare to think differently. Write your own rules and try something new every day.”

The initiative is spearheaded by everywoman, the UK’s leading membership organisation that champions the advancement of women in business.

Co-founder Maxine Benson MBE says “An estimated 80% of purchasing decisions are influenced by women, demonstrating the already significant influence they have on the success of the retail industry. But in order for the industry to thrive, it is imperative that we see more women in decision-making roles across all job functions. Leadership teams are most effective when they better reflect the business customer base.”

Accessible role models achieving success in the industry play a vital role in attracting more talented women to it. That’s why the Specsavers everywoman in Retail Ambassador Programme is such an important initiative, one we hope all retailers will get behind by nominating the women playing a role in their success. Our 2014 Ambassadors will be asked to share their experiences and advice, speaking at schools and to the media.”

Specsavers’ founder, Dame Mary Perkins, Britain’s most successful female entrepreneur comments, “Getting ahead in business requires passion, enthusiasm and a lot of blood, sweat and tears to navigate all the obstacles in your path. It is inspiring to see more and more women succeeding in retail, either in senior posts for established brands or opening and growing their own companies. A lot of women run small companies really successfully and profitably, and they’re heading them up because it belongs to them and they can make the rules rather than having to play by the rules in big publicly quoted companies. I completely appreciate the hard work and determination that drives these inspirational women towards their goals and recognising all such achievements will help inspire many other women to pursue their own business ventures and career ambitions.”

BRC Director General, Helen Dickinson, adds “The retail workforce is around 60% female so celebrating the success of the women who work in our industry makes perfect sense. I’m proud that the BRC is supporting this programme. For millions of people, working in our industry is more than just a job, it’s a career. By showcasing the achievements of inspiring female role models we can spread the word that a bright and successful retail career is open to everyone. This in turn will encourage more young women to choose retail as the place to build, and even more importantly, continue to progress their careers as well as pointing them towards the right support and tools to help them on their way.”

The 2014 Retail Ambassadors will be announced at an evening reception at the Waldorf Hilton on Tuesday 23 September. To nominate a woman in retail or to request a speaker visit everywoman.com/retailambassador



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About everywoman

Founded in 1999, everywoman is a global membership organisation that champions the advancement of women. Our members include well known companies looking to develop and retain a pipeline of female leaders, and women who are looking to advance themselves in organisations or their own business.

everywoman supports any woman at any stage in their career. For those women starting out or looking to progress their careers or businesses, the everywomanNetwork provides personal development resources, connections, advice and inspiration to address the issues we know women face. As they progress, our events and leadership programmes support the development of confident, capable and charismatic leaders. Promotion to the top echelons of senior management or being at the helm of your own large business brings with it a different set of challenges, ones addressed by everywomanClub. Our Award programmes and projects such as The Navigator and Modern Muse showcase role models who inform and inspire future leaders and the next generation, positioning the organisations they work for as ones with career opportunities for women.

www.everywoman.com

About Specsavers

Specsavers is a Partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run opticians throughout the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, the Nordics, Spain, Australia and New Zealand. Each store is part-owned and managed by its own directors who are supported by key specialists in support offices that provide a range of services including marketing, accounting, IT and wholesaling, among others. There are currently more than 1,700 partners in the UK and Republic of Ireland alone, of whom 548 have been with the Partnership for at least ten years. Specsavers was founded in 1984 by husband and wife team, Doug and Dame Mary Perkins, who pioneered the optical joint venture partnership model and also revolutionised the industry with their innovative concept of affordable, fashionable eyecare for everyone. Specsavers has partnered with everywoman to support women in retail since 2008.

www.specsavers.co.uk

About the British Retail Consortium (BRC)

The BRC is the lead trade association for the entire retail industry. Diverse and exciting, our industry spans large multiples, independents, high streets and out of town, from online to bricks, selling goods across all retail sectors to increasingly discerning consumers. Our mission is to make a positive difference to our industry by advancing vibrant and consumer-focused retail. We stand for what is important to the industry and work in partnership with our members to shape debates and influence outcomes. We work with Government to ensure a competitive market which creates the right conditions for growth and innovation, we champion great careers and we promote responsible retail's vital role in the community.