

Profile of Success: Deidre Campbell, Global Sector Chair, Financial Services Sector, Edelman

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As Global Sector Chair for the Financial Services (FS) Sector at Edelman, one of the world's largest public relations firms, Deidre Campbell supports 150+ financial services executives in 30 markets to help them deeper and more globally integrated service to clients. In a recent interview, Ms. Campbell outlines her role and key advice for women trying to enter the financial services, including "looking for the unconquered challenge" and "being hungry."



Q: What are your current responsibilities now at Edelman?

A: My responsibilities include global trendspotting for financial services and sharing best practices to ensure all offices are bringing deep sector knowledge to clients. It's exciting to bring proven ideas and thinking to emerging markets and then customizing them to specific in-country needs. Africa is a great example where teams are applying sector knowledge to the under- and unbanked to drive economic growth.

Q: What advice do you have for women trying to get into the same type of position? The financial services space in general?

A: My advice would be to always be looking for the unconquered challenge and then face it without fear of failure. Everything about Edelman and this position is entrepreneurial. For financial services, my experience has been to be the kind of colleague that I want to have. Guess that goes for any sector.

Q: How did you get to where you are career-wise?

A: My career path was largely driven by instinct and determination. I left my home town of Baton Rouge for Washington, DC to get into politics. After 10 years, I moved to New York looking for a job in corporate communications for financial services. I had some great mentors, great opportunities and very good luck. But, ultimately, you have to be ready to take advantage of good luck, and that's just working hard and being hungry.

Q: What steps need to be taken to get more women into the financial services space?

A: In communications, we see good balance. For the FS sector, groups like the Financial Women's Association (FWA) make a big difference. Also, encouragement in families and schools. The evolving role of financial services in society is also casting broader opportunities

to work in the sector beyond traditional roles and functions. In areas like corporate social responsibility and community relations, completely separate skills are needed and the sector benefits from thought and talent diversity.

Q How do you juggle motherhood with a full-time job?

A: My kids are great and have been used to me working their whole lives. It's a constant balancing act. Hillary had it right – it does take a village. My parents, husband, community, and friends are key to making sure we are providing a well-rounded upbringing. I've also always had great employers that were fully supportive.

Q How does your involvement in the FWA help you have a fulfilling career and life?

A: My FWA network continues to be an invaluable source of knowledge, inspiration and friendship. I am proud of my almost 20-year affiliation. I continue to meet with senior financial services women – both through and because of the FWA — to advance thinking, broaden my own professional network, and gain insights to bring to clients. The professional advice has been career changing, but the personal advice has been just as important. FWA friends have helped me understand the demands and expectations of senior roles and helped prepare me for getting there. They continue to and I'm extremely grateful for rich experiences past and those to come.

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