

Profile of Success: Kristin Molinari, Investor Relations and Marketing, Pagoda Asset Management

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Don't wait to get noticed! That's just one piece of advice Kristin shares with you here. Read more on why adopting new techniques was a major challenge, barriers that need to be eliminated for women, asset trends, and more!

Question: As someone who has been involved in the investor relations space for a little while, what are some of the biggest challenges you've faced and how have you adjusted to them?

A: I transitioned into the Investor Relations role at an emerging manager hedge fund after working as an Institutional Equity Sales Analyst at a global investment bank. One of the biggest challenges for me has been adopting new techniques and skill sets that cater to a much longer and nuanced sales cycle. Learning on the job, networking, and educating myself about the hedge fund industry have helped me address these challenges. The dynamic and entrepreneurial workplace environment has created many opportunities for me to grow both personally and professionally.

Question: What is some advice you would give to women to help them advance in their careers?

A: Don't wait to get noticed. Take initiative, determine what your strengths are, and strive to be the best at what you do.

Question: What have been keys to your own personal success?

A: A mentor of mine in the business once told me that the key to building strong relationships is being helpful to others. I took that advice seriously and have since developed a valuable personal and professional network that will act as a support system as I continue to progress in my career. From there, a strong work ethic, staying organized and a commitment to always bettering myself have been instrumental to my personal success.

Question: What are some steps that need to be taken to get more women into financial services?

A: Barriers for women have shifted from the traditional gender-bias many years ago to a more subtle, unconscious bias that impacts women more so at the height of their careers than in the early stages. Historically, the financial services industry was a male-dominated sector with a culture of risk-taking and arrogance that seemed best suited for the male demographic. Today, many female college students – myself included – have embraced that challenge and strive to rise up to the highest ranks of their respective institutions.

The next step is to keep them there. In order to do so, the industry must be open to striking a better work/life balance so that life choices, such as having a family, are not hurdles to leadership. More women at the top who can speak to rewarding, successful and happy careers can inspire young women who are just beginning to define their goals.

Question: What trends are currently shaping the financial industry?

A: It's an exciting time to be in a capital-raising role as asset inflows have more than doubled since the financial crisis. Most expect the bulk of inflows going forward to come from large institutional shareholders, which creates opportunities for hedge fund managers with strong performance and a unique edge. Additionally, on the other end of the spectrum, liquid alternatives such as UCITS in the EU and '40 Act Funds in the US are becoming increasingly more common and are bringing a broader section of retail and institutional investors into the fold. Both of these trends bode well for the future of the hedge fund industry.

Question: How has your involvement in the FWA benefited your own life?

A: The FWA is a fantastic organization that has introduced me to many inspirational women across the financial services industry. The various networking events and professional development programs organized by other members have also helped me to expand my horizons and to develop a better perspective on the industry as a whole. I have been a member of the FWA for almost a year now, and I would certainly recommend it for anyone looking to become more involved in the financial services industry.