

Fireside Chat with Candy Straight and Colleen Campbell Highlights

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Pat Cronin of BMO Capital Markets shares his insights with the audience

On February 12, we witnessed a dynamic fireside chat with Candy Straight (Executive Producer of *Equity* and *The Pages*) and Colleen Campbell (Vice Chair at BMO Capital Markets), interviewed by Donna Parisi (Partner at Shearman & Sterling LLP). The event was co-hosted by BMO Capital Markets and Shearman & Sterling LLP, as well as FWA.

After the warm and informative opening remarks by Conni Gibson (Associate General Counsel & Managing Director, US Capital Markets at BMO) and Pat Cronin (CEO at BMO Capital Markets), Candy Straight and Colleen Campbell shared relevant insights and anecdotes around ***Equity vs. Equality***. The following are some highlights that stood out for us:

- Candy raised the money for the movie *Equity* in only 6 months!



(l-r): Candy Straight, Colleen Campbell and Donna Parisi

- Colleen encouraged women in Finance to “make sure you ask for what you want. Hard work alone won’t do it.”
- Candy shared an anecdote of the 80s, when a man in her organization said: “Why would we invest in a woman when she can get pregnant?” She added that gladly, she recently heard of a woman who was promoted when she was 9 months pregnant.
- Paternal leave is still not the social norm in our culture, with stay-home dads being considered as “not manly.”
- Colleen confirmed that women should not only be promoted because they are women; much rather, they should have access to *equal* opportunities and pay.
- Mentorship is advice, sponsorship is taking a stake for someone; Candy voiced that women should sponsor more and not be so concerned to recommend other women but rather trust that recruiters have enough judgment to hire the right candidate.
- Fear of failure and the need to be perfect is what holds many women back. We must accept failure as a learning experience.
- For women, relative compensation (fair pay) seems to be more important than the absolute amount.
- Women must understand the different cultures and politics at the different organizations to make it easier for them to move up to the leadership ranks.
- Board service implies a major time investment. Sector and deep line experience is often critical to get on a Board.
- Diverse Boards create better business results because they generate a more dynamic discourse and provide new approaches to problem-solving. Women tend to dig deeper into issues, do more research before making decisions. It’s a matter of getting the right balance, having a conversation together. In short: Mix it up!

Stacy Musi’s encouraging closing remarks sent us off into a lively networking round over wine and hors d’oeuvres.