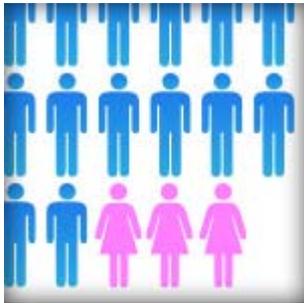


# Advantage Resourcing®



Increasingly organisations are being encouraged by the Government to appoint women to their boards. But once employed, the successful candidate may find that she is being paid less than her male colleagues.

An OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) pay survey published in March, which shows the UK's overall participation in the labour market, revealed that women are still being paid 19% less than their male counterparts.

The office for national statistics also showed that women are underpaid compared with men in 32 of the 35 industries surveyed.

The OECD includes all women in employment regardless of their part-time status and reports women are paid between 18% and 19% less than men. The TUC (Trade Union Congress) survey compares employee contracts and pay on a like-for-like basis. It states that on average women are paid between 15% to 19% less than men depending on which industry they're working in. The annual pay survey, reported the gender pay gap across the private sector is 19.9%, far higher than the 13.6% pay gap in the public sector.



Female health professionals have the largest pay gap of 31%, which equates to an average of £16,000 a year. Higher than average earnings for the best-paid health professionals is a key reason for the size of the pay gap in the sector. Top male professionals in the health sector can earn nearly £50 an hour, twice as much as top earning women who earn £24.67 an hour.

Women working in culture, media and sport experience the next largest pay gap of 27.5% – which equates to £10,000 a year – whilst women working in the manufacturing industry earn nearly 24% less than men.

The four major job sectors where women earn more than men include Agriculture, I.T, Electrical and transport, all of which are male dominated. Fewer than 50,000 women are employed in these sectors, compared to 1.5 million men. At the same time these industries are reporting skills shortages. Candidates are aware of this and as a result are negotiating higher starting salaries. The gender pay gap may in part be caused by women's lack of assertiveness when negotiating starting salaries. This may be caused by women's lack of confidence in their skills. An employer will always initially offer a lower salary, in the expectation that the job seeker will ask for more, regardless of how much they wish to employ that person.

As a result, for organisations that give annual salary increases, a woman who didn't negotiate a higher starting salary will always be underpaid compared to her male colleagues who did.

Women joining boards will know what their male counterparts are being paid due to new laws that require board director's salaries to be declared. As a result, non-board members will be in a weaker negotiating position because their salaries aren't published. Regardless, there is nothing preventing a woman from giving her employer a clear business case for a pay rise. With the job market improving, we expect employees will begin to feel more secure in their current jobs. In the future we anticipate employees will seek new pay rises and consider other career paths.

Jo Watts, Operations Director at Advantage Resourcing feels the changing economy will have a positive impact on pay equality. ***“This year with salaries set to increase, the recruitment industry predicts that employers will be seeking to retain their staff and will seek to do so by offering pay rises – which might include offering the same salary as men. As employers become aware of how hard it is to find good staff and train them, employers will increasingly treat staff equally and with greater generosity to keep them.”***

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Winter 2014