



BPW International

Symposium International Theme: “Making a Difference Through Leadership and Action”

Tallinn, 12 – 14 Dec. 2014

I n t r o d u c t i o n

(Dr. Antoinette Rüegg)

Regarding LEADERSHIP BPW offers outstanding opportunities which are valuable for all of us to know better. Therefore the Taskforce “Leadership and Lifelong Learning” took the opportunity to invite leaders of BPW International to make use of the International Theme to work on leadership.

Objectives of the Symposium

- 1 Testing the new “**4 Modules Leadership Training Tool**”
- 2 Knowing why BPW is the best place to acquire **SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP** competences
- 3 **UMBRELLA for lifelong learning and emotional competences** (Resolution for Congress 2017), initiated by BPW International Past President Liz Benham. The taskforces “Leadership & Lifelong Learning”, “Mentoring”, “Peace & Intercultural Understanding” and the Committee “Development, Training & Employment” will put together the performance, training, tool, projects and services which they offer on behalf of BPW. The next step is to accomplish professional sponsoring documents and potential sponsors contacted.

1 Testing and discussing a new “4 Modules Leadership Training Tool”

Conny Montague and Ester Eomois and their team developed a new “4 Modules Leadership Training Tool” which they put to the test at the “Young BPW Europe Symposium”:

- 1 “Me as a Leader”
- 2 “Me and my Team”
- 3 “Organizational Level of Leadership”
- 4 “Global or International Leadership”

2 BPW, best place to acquire SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP competences

2.1. Emotional competence

Leadership is not just a question of “knowing”. If a leader becomes stressed or loses control true emotions show up which can destroy trust, respect and the willingness of the subordinates or workmates to cooperate in a heartbeat. Therefore developing sustainable leadership competences means developing the emotional competence such as self-confidence, empathy or authenticity. To learn emotionally we have to know that emotional learning doesn’t work like intellectual learning.

Important differences between intellectual and emotional learning

Compared to mind learning or intellectual learning, emotional learning works differently, and even contradictory. Emotional learning means

- **individual learning**, perceiving **one’s own true feelings and intrinsic motivation** and not following or copying others
- **learning through experiences**, nothing can replace one’s own experiences, they are the foundation of all emotional learning
- **learning by mistakes**: Going through one’s own experiences means making mistakes. Zero mistakes indicates successful intellectual learning but in emotional learning mistakes are prominent teachers. Avoiding mistakes means avoiding emotional learning.

2.2 Training opportunities in BPW

2.2.1 Opportunities for emotional learning

Practicing “**learning by doing**” or “**learning by experiences**” is the most efficient training for emotional competences. BPW offers a wide range of leadership training opportunities like serving as a president, a board member, a taskforce or a project chair.

In addition to the numerous leadership opportunities BPW offers, compared to the business world, there are two especially demanding environmental factors for emotional learning, **voluntary work** and **democratic culture**. In each leadership position a high level of emotional competence is an advantage, but in voluntary working organizations with a democratic culture leaders also realize very quickly that giving orders, imposing tasks or putting pressure on others does not have the expected success.

Only emotionally well balanced leaders are able to create an ongoing constructive and open working atmosphere which enables the members to use all their energies for work and not for all kind of avoidance or power games.

2.2.2 Voluntary work

The development of emotional competence voluntary work is not a curse but a tremendous opportunity. Salary work is a deal. The one that pays can give orders, impose tasks or put pressure on the employees who have accepted the deal or game by a contract. In a voluntary working environment leaders realize very quickly that giving orders, imposing tasks or putting pressure on co-workers does not yield the expected results. Co-workers want to be involved, respected and informed and a leader has to be able to find truly motivated members.

An important difference to paid work is the priorities of voluntary workers. In paid work the job has first priority and people are available for certain hours a day. Leaders in BPW for example realize quite quickly, that BPW tasks have 3rd priority after job and family. BPW leaders train their flexibility and their emotional stability at the latest when they realize that compared to business there is no money to pay a replacement if the organizer quits 2 month before the event.

If money cannot compensate frustrations, people reveal their true character and leaders have the opportunity to learn how people and characters really work. Being able to meet people on their true ground means saving the energy people use to hide their true nature and play roles. Short term leadership behavior relies mainly on playing roles and collapse, if manipulation doesn't work anymore. Playing roles or following rigid rules, used adequately on short notice, is a very important competence. But in the long run and for more complex tasks, the directive leadership style needs tremendous control, absorbs a lot of energy, is inflexible and not sustainable. Energy conscious leaders develop emotional competence to save energy and to increase their personal emotional well-being or life quality at work.

2.2.3 Democratic culture

To teach women democracy was a reason why Dr. Lena Madelin Phillips and the women pioneers founded BPW International in 1930. Following democratic rules is not only a question of “knowing” but also requesting emotional competence. It is emotionally demanding to compromise, to respect different cultures or dissidents, or to practice true tolerance and patience. Democracy is a very slow system and therefore is very seldom applied in business but good leaders learn the importance of emotional competence.

In a democracy information is important for making decisions. Providing members with brief and to the point information requires much more time than writing long reports. Concise and clear information do only needs good language skills but also a lot of empathy regarding the audience to be addressed with congruent and exact thinking.

3 UMBRELLA for lifelong learning and emotional competence (Resolution for Congress 2017).

BPW International Past President Liz Benham initiated the UMBRELLA concept and together with the taskforces “Leadership & Lifelong Learning”, “Mentoring”, “Peace & Intercultural Understanding” and the Committee “Development, Training & Employment” a resolution will be submitted at Congress 2017.

For the first step all performance, training, tool and services BPW offers have to be listed in a document. Later, professional sponsoring documents have to be accomplished, and finally potential sponsors have to be found and contacted. The participants of the Symposium will brainstorm and work on this new concept.