



# Entrepreneurship, the case of male & female



## PROPERTY, RELOCATION AND LAW



SUZANNE BOLINDER  
CONSIDO



STUART MILLER  
MILLER ROSENFALCK



ALEX HADDON  
IC DESIGN



MATS INGELBORN  
YABOT



LENA BJÖRCK  
INN OR OUT



JASMINDER SINGH  
RADISSON EDWARDIAN

**Are there differences between men and women when it comes to entrepreneurship? If so, what are these differences between female and male entrepreneurship? Do men and women have different driving forces or do they get influenced by the same factors? What are the real key factors for success in entrepreneurship?**

According to the SCALES report "Explain female and female entrepreneurship across 29 countries" female and male entrepreneurs are often influenced by the same factors. A high level of education tends to encourage both genders and the most significant and consistent positive influences for entrepreneurs is family, both for financial support and to enable flexible working hours.

Today the share of female entrepreneurs is still generally lower than the share of male entrepreneurs. In the UK and Sweden the share of female entrepreneurs is approximately 30 percent versus 70 percent male.

The editorial team at the Swedish Chamber of Commerce have asked 6 entrepreneurs, 3 female and 3 men for their views on entrepreneurship, diversity and the challenges facing entrepreneurs today.

**Which are the most important factors that encourages a diverse entrepreneurship in the Anglo-Swedish market?**

Suzanne Bolinder, Conside, says that the most important factor is strictly cultural and individual. It is difficult to say something about what level of positive impact restrictions on, for instance childcare, would have on the diversity between male and female entrepreneurs. Which factors

that have the most influence depends on the type of entrepreneurship and business. Stuart Miller, Miller Rosenfalck, is on the same track as Suzanne and says that engagement in the new culture is a highly important factor to encourage diversity. He also believes that it is highly important to speak the local language if you want to succeed as an entrepreneur in the Anglo-Swedish market.

**What type of factors influences you in your own entrepreneurship? Are the driving forces different between men and women?**

Suzanne thinks that all entrepreneurs are motivated by building their own business and making a living, however, she believes there are differences in how women and men approach it. Women build a solid base and reflect before borrowing money from the bank. She continues by saying that many women are more likely to aim for creation of a lifelong business and most women seem to have a tendency to want to have total control over their business. Men on the other hand are more likely to take risks, and usually do not have any problems with borrowing money in an early stage in the process of building their business. In these times of recession and falling credits, she considers the female entrepreneurship style to be more successful, with a solid ground,

a long-term view with well thought-out planes, goals and a stable customer base.

Further Suzanne says she has built a safe and stable consumer base and in today's demanding times she is pleased that she acted in what she calls a female way. Stuart Miller has another opinion than Suzanne and cannot find any real differences between the driving forces between men and women but asserts with determination "But I am a man and we are from Mars..."

**What type of challenges do you believe an entrepreneur will face today, are there specific challenges for women and men?**

Mats Ingelborn, Yabot, does not believe that gender determines the challenges female/male entrepreneurship will meet. He highlights that the obvious challenge for all entrepreneurs lies in financing the business, but it has never been easier nor cheaper to set-up a new company and marketing its products through the use of the internet. The real challenge will be who has the best idea - actually this is very democratic and equal to both gender and ethnic origin. Alex Haddon, ic Design, also believes in equal challenges for both men and women. She clearly explains that she does not believe that female and male entrepreneurs face different challenges. "We all need

the same things: a strong network and support from loved ones!" she declares.

**What do you think determines the diversity of entrepreneurship in a country in general?**

Mats Ingelborn thinks that the mental belief and cultural aspects determines the composition of entrepreneurship. Alex Haddon believes that entrepreneurship has to be encouraged from an early age and thinks schools have a big part to play in nurturing talent and creativity. Mats Ingelborn says "I would say that London probably has Europe's most diverse business environment. If you can set-up a business in an environment with many cultures and team up with people from different backgrounds it will help you to be open-minded. This is the foundation for a great, expansive and flexible company."

**Can all people be good entrepreneurs?**

Lena Björck, Inn or Out, believes you can not learn to be an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs are great at finding the opportunity most people cannot see, they then get other people to buy their vision. She also declares that an entrepreneur looks upon life from another perspective than people in general.

Jasminder Singh, Radisson Edwardian, says that he does not necessarily consider the entrepreneurial skills to be something you can learn, as these qualities are more likely to be hereditary.

**What characteristics do you need in order to be a successful entrepreneur, does genes or gender affect?**

Lena Björck, states that she is not driven by profit so she would only do what she is good at, what she loves doing and what she truly believes in. Those are the three key characteristics that will make you successful according to Lena Björck. Jasminder Singh, says "In this day and age there are far more opportunities, regardless of gender, it is instead the different styles of leadership that are likely to win.

Entrepreneurs are generally restless individuals, both in good and bad times, and doing something successful in their life gives them the opportunity to channel energy and express themselves by accomplishing something worthwhile." Lena Björck continues by saying that a less successful entrepreneur is normally not very good at implementing what needs to be done to take the business forward and the successful ones have surrounded themselves with people who can.

Further Jasminder Singh explains that the primary qualification of an entrepreneur is to be able to accept failures and not to be disheartened by them. Importance lies also in the driving force and passion they must exercise to accomplish their vision. If these elements are provided and put into place, anyone can become an entrepreneur. Jasminder continues by saying; "Entrepreneurs are people taking risks and who want to succeed in everything they do, and they are usually extremely open-minded and free in thought."

First of all we can see that our panel's opinions are in line with previous research. According to the Member panel, females and males are often influenced by the same factors, building a prosperous and healthy company. Notable differences arise when it comes to financing, where men usually tend to take more economic risks.

Furthermore, our panel states that the challenges in today's recession are mainly financial. The most important driving force to encourage diverse entrepreneurship in the Anglo-Swedish market according to the panel, lies in the cultural individual aspects.

Enterprising skills are not likely to be learned according to the panel, they also believe that it is not about gender but may be about genes. Entrepreneurs are persons that are great at finding the opportunities most people cannot see and take the risks necessary to succeed. They are also persons that are driven to succeed in everything they do.

The panel also stated, however, that in order for an entrepreneur to have success within the business world, it is crucial that he or she is surrounded by energetic co-workers to assist in the process of implementing what needs to be done to take the business forward.

The panel agreed that the most important skill or factor for an entrepreneur, whether they are male or female is to follow their passion and to believe in themselves.

LINNEA GÖTSTAV, Anders Wall Scholar  
Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK

40

% - The aim of the Swedish government for female entrepreneurship by 2010  
Source: Newsdesk

22

% - The share of women in a leadership position in Sweden today  
Source: Grand Thornton

32

% - the share of female entrepreneurs in Sweden today  
Source: SCB

