

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2024

CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF TAVISTOCK

March 2024

Navigating change and the path to leadership: Johanna Rager



In celebration of International Women's Day 2024, Tavistock Investments is shining a spotlight on some of our colleagues and their journeys within the finance and investment sector. From overcoming challenges to taking control of their careers and championing gender equality, these profiles aim to inspire and highlight the integral role women play in driving forward our industry. Here, we speak with Johanna Rager, Group Finance and Operations Director.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOURNEY IN THE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT INDUSTRY?

After earning a master's in Economics from the University of Economics and Business Administration in Vienna, my journey in finance took off when I moved to London for an internship that quickly evolved into a full-time role as a Financial Analyst.

From there, my path has been a blend of strategic leadership and change management, from reshaping financial and operational frameworks to driving profitability and process efficiency in various businesses. Each role has offered opportunity to build scalability and shape longer term business plans, leading me to

my current position at Tavistock Investments PLC, where developing strategies to support our growth, always with an eye on enhancing profitability, efficiency and compliance, have been core activities. It has been an interesting journey, marked by continuous learning and a deep commitment to excellence.

WHAT ARE YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF IN YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

What makes me proudest in my career is not just the strategies I've created or the systems I have improved; it's about the people I have had the chance to mentor and the teams I have built.

Watching talented individuals grow, thrive, and take on challenges in fast-paced environments has been really rewarding.

A personal highlight was being recognized as a high potential leader in a 'Women in Leadership' program. Today, I'm happy to be working as a trusted business adviser to the leadership team on financial, commercial, and operational matters.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED AS A WOMAN IN FINANCE AND INVESTMENT?

I have had to learn to feel confident 'to have a seat at the table'. When I was in my early 30s, all board meetings I attended consisted of men in their 50s...and me. It's good to learn how to adapt to different situations and environments.



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I was fortunate to have worked with bosses who were great mentors and believed in me, trusted I was up to taking on significant challenges, and therefore gave me great opportunities for growth.

HOW CAN THE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT INDUSTRY BETTER SUPPORT AND EMPOWER WOMEN?

Based on my experience, I do not think the finance and investment industry is different to any other industry.

Close collaboration and teamwork, exposing individuals to new tasks and workstreams, leading to capability deployment and opportunity for growth beyond management teams needs to be on offer.

It is also important to have a strong recognition culture in place to inspire more 'outside the box' and 'revolutionary' thinking.



WHAT IMPACT DOES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION HAVE ON DECISION-MAKING AND INNOVATION?

Women's strengths and skillsets can often be different compared to those of men. Good interpersonal, communication, diplomatic skills and a high level of emotional intelligence are often referred to as strengths in women. Therefore, every smart and successful business leader should be encouraged to leverage the different talents coming from a diverse and inclusive workforce.



With the right help and mentoring, most challenges can be mastered if the individual is determined and motivated.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH MENTORSHIP, AND IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SUPPORT OTHER WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY?

I have been very lucky and had great mentors throughout my career. I managed to establish good working relationships, based on trust, communicated openly, and spoke up when needed, which was always well-received and helped form the basis for strong mutual respect.

I have mentored many people over the years, often women. I can relate to many of their specific issues and provide hands on experience from my own path to help them overcome any obstacles. Most importantly, providing opportunities or challenges they did not necessarily expect or think they could master. With the right help and mentoring, most challenges can be mastered if the individual is determined and motivated.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUNG WOMEN ASPIRING TO BUILD A CAREER IN FINANCE AND INVESTMENT?

Always stay true to yourself. Believe in yourself and come forward with your ideas. They will be heard if the right people are approached and actioned if they are aligned with the strategic direction of the company or department.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, WHAT CHANGES DO YOU HOPE TO SEE IN THE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT INDUSTRY REGARDING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN LEADERSHIP ROLES?

More business leaders in the finance and investment industry, and many other industries, need to realise the value of diverse teams.

There is a lot of evidence available illustrating that leveraging the multifaceted talents from a diverse and inclusive workforce lead to better business outcomes.