

WOMEN, ENGINEERING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (Summary)

by Rosa Atteritano

A survey was carried out involving 75 students of the Faculty of Engineering (45 female and 30 male taking courses in engineering of telecommunication, information or electronics). The questionnaire asked about their choice of course and future line of work.

The following points summarize the results quoting the answers in order of importance.

1. Reason for choosing the course for both female and male students is that it is an enjoyable subject and has good job opportunities.
2. The most important characteristics for taking on a leadership role in the workplace for females is: being decisive, confident, determined and cultured. Males feel it is best to gain the respect of others in the workplace and to be determined.
3. The possibility of starting a business of their own seemed positive. 37% of males said “yes” and 29% of females said “yes”.
4. Females are more stimulated than men to become entrepreneurs (44% of females compared to 13% males). Females said they were influenced by parents, entrepreneurs, the faculty, teachers, entrepreneurial courses and the fact that it would bring them personal satisfaction. Males were mainly stimulated by work experience, but also in some part by their parents and entrepreneurs.
5. If there was an entrepreneurial course available, 62% of females compared to 37% of males said they would participate. Females feel it would be important for their future even if they do not start up their own business. Males feel it would be useful in the business world. So it seems that men are more focused on the practical utilisation of the acquired skills.
6. 27% of females and only 7% of males have completed an apprenticeship. Unfortunately their experience in most cases has not been relevant for their line of work within a company.
7. The most important points in the working life are, for females: future development and acknowledgement of their skills. Males consider it more important to have a pleasant work environment and to have good relationships. Females seem aware that they should be independent and efficient.
8. Females feel the most important aspects for the progression of career are:- passion for what they do, being decisive and in constant engagement. For males passion is important as it is for females, while the others aspects are less important.
9. Knowledge of the market and managerial capacity are the most important factors both for females and male in order to found a company, but males also believe the knowledge of new technology is important.