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The combination of female and male leadership within a board of directors will create high performance and sustainable organisations.

Susana Rodriguez

President of Asofrío



President of ASOFRIO, (contractors Company member of the Spanish Confederation of Installers, CNI)
President of AEFYT, Spanish Refrigeration and its Technologies Association
Member of the Board of Directors of the Spanish Confederation of Installers, CNI
General Director at FRIEX Commercial refrigeration and air conditioning for the retail sector.

This is the first time an Association in the refrigeration sector in Spain elects a woman as President.

Susana has more than 25 years of experience in the Refrigeration Sector in an installation company with a national scope. Two lines of business: installation and maintenance of refrigeration and air conditioning installations in the food sector.

What is your current job title and responsibilities?

 *For more than 10 years I have been in charge of the FRIEX Group, an installation and maintenance company of refrigeration and air conditioning. It is a family run company. I combine the functions and responsibilities that this entails with the presidency, for more than 7 years, of ASOFRIO, the only purchasing group in the refrigeration sector that currently exists in Spain. On behalf of this group, I hold the presidency of AEFYT.*

What initially interested you, and lead you to this industry?

 *To be honest, I had never been interested in the cold industry, nor the industry in general, the idea was pretty far from my professional future claims when you consider it as a teenager. My father had an installation company, I studied business, and at the age of 21, like so many children of entrepreneurs, I joined the family business. It is more than 25 years ago, and at that time, family interests prevailed over individual ones. This was the beginning, and all help was needed to be able to get the business project out. I emphasise that it is a characteristic of great value in family businesses, regardless of the sector.*

Do you have any insights or advice for other women who may not know this industry as a potential sector for them?

 *Every sector is a potential area for professionals, no matter whether it is for women or men, they are not shielded by gender. The industry is one of the sectors susceptible to immediate transformation within the plans of the public administration in the Recovery Plan. This is linked to one of the 4 axes that is "gender equality" (Spain without gender gaps). Furthermore, the industry has always been a sector led by male professionals, it makes the presence of women in its ranks essential.*

"The industry needs key competencies in its organisations, such as emotional and interpersonal intelligence, of which women are the champion."



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Do you have any insights into what could be done to encourage more women into this sector?



Following the above, to encourage, you have to teach, and you have to give examples of women in the industry, showing the exciting stories that are behind each one of these tireless fighters. If you don't teach what you do, no one knows. Teaching attracts the talent.

We must also banish the stereotypes of this sector, not only technical profiles from a regulated training are needed. In the industry there is space for all female professional profiles from boards of directors to human resources.

A series of key competencies and skills that people must have include commitment, adaptation to change, teamwork, leadership, innovation, emotional intelligence, communication, and organisation. These key competencies and skills are found in women due to our education and environment from childhood. Women must become aware of this reality and society must become aware that a shared leadership team of both sexes, in current and future organisations, will transform into competitiveness and quality of our businesses. And the industry is probably the sector which is most in need of this leadership.

I still think that we have to teach, tell, show the work of each one of us to girls, young people, and women so that they can see the need that the industry has for their talent.

What do you as a woman bring to the industry?



That should be told by people who work with me! They are the ones who receive what I try to give. My goal is always to work from passion and happiness every minute. Working without being happy with what you do is the greatest condemnation of mediocrity.

"Let's bring examples of ordinary women with great history in the industry to the girls and young women of today, to attract talent to our ranks. Let's go out to society."

In relation to the industrial sector, I always try to give a 360° vision. In a sector so marked by technical professions, I try, in any professional circumstance, to always keep the business reality in mind. In the end we are large and small organisations, which converge in an

ecosystem where there are thousands of actors and multiple realities that are going to influence the success of any project. I like to always promote belief in people, and in training our skills and competences, focusing on giving the best version of ourselves.

Where do you see yourself in five years? What is the big goal?



I honestly do not know. I am happy doing what I do...I will keep trying to learn more every day, to improve and contribute to a better society. My great objective is to have contributed to improving the world. I believe in small daily actions as part of a great change, and if that great change is breaking the glass ceiling in my sector, I cannot ask for more.