

Female university graduates dramatically underestimate their worth, contributing to gender pay gap

We may be making some progress when it comes to the glass ceiling but women might also have a "lead floor"¹ to deal with. New research reveals that female graduates dramatically underestimate their earning power when applying for their first job out of university, which could be contributing to a stubborn gender pay gap later in life.

Results from a survey of 5,000 postgraduates show that more than a third of female respondents indicate that they expect a starting graduate salary of £20,000, compared with the median UK graduate wage of £30,000 per year.

The study – conducted by the graduate career website Milkround – shows that only 17 per cent of women expect to earn between £25,000 and £35,000 in their first jobs, compared with almost half of male graduates.

Milkround found that just 18 per cent of male graduates say they are prepared to accept a starting graduate salary below the £20,000 mark and that this confidence in their own worth gives them a head start when it comes to their salaries, paving the way for a gap further up the road.

Despite efforts by policy groups, charities and the Government to close the gender pay gap, progress has been rather slow. According to the Fawcett Society, the overall gender pay gap for full-time workers is still about 14 per cent.

A report published by the Department for Education in June shows that, five years into their careers, women still earn on average £6,500 less than their male peers.

"Although we're very aware of the existing gender pay gap, it was a surprise for us to see that so many female graduates do not realise their worth when starting their careers, a fact that may contribute to a difference in pay," said Francesca Parkinson from Milkround.

"Nearly 85 per cent of female graduates do not know their own value, which may have a knock-on effect in their future earnings."

On Wednesday, the BBC sparked² national outrage when it published the salaries of its top earners revealing a severe gap between the salaries of its top paid male and female stars.

From April next year, companies across the UK employing more than 250 people will have to publish their gender pay gap figures on their websites.

Adapted from *The Independent*, 20 July 2017

¹lead floor: starting salary

²sparked: suddenly started

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A – Compréhension de l'écrit (10 points)

Vous rédigerez **en français** le compte-rendu de ce document en 180 mots (+/- 10%). Vous indiquerez **impérativement** le nombre de mots utilisés.

B – Expression écrite (10 points)

Vous êtes Sam Johnson, assistant(e) de gestion de la chaîne de franchises Oak and Birch (Churchill Estate, London EA2 4SN), spécialisée en négoce de bois.

Alex Ridley, PDG, vous charge de rédiger en son nom une lettre à l'attention de Christopher Timber, responsable de la franchise de Nottingham (Oak and Birch, Robin Crescent, Nottingham NG1 1AJ). En effet, des disparités de salaires choquantes entre les employés des services commerciaux ont été signalées.

- Vous exposez les plaintes qu'Alex Ridley a reçues de la part de certaines employées :
 - salaires à l'embauche inégaux entre hommes et femmes ;
 - primes accordées principalement aux salariés masculins ;
 - promotions plus rapides pour les hommes ;
 - disparité des évolutions de carrières.
- Vous rappelez que la société Oak and Birch s'est engagée dans une politique d'égalité des sexes et avait promis de réduire la fracture salariale.
- Vous insistez sur le fait que les inégalités relevées nuisent au bon climat social dans l'entreprise et donc à ses résultats.
- Vous lui annoncez qu'un audit de l'ensemble des franchises est envisagé dans les semaines à venir ; des mesures urgentes s'imposent donc pour que les pratiques de la franchise soient conformes à l'esprit du groupe.
- Vous l'invitez à prendre contact avec Alex Ridley.

Formules et présentation d'usage.

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