



LADIES FIRST

Why women are the rock stars at Live Nation

Live Nation hardly needs an introduction, but what you may not know is that Live Nation is a female-forward organization with a progressive approach to retaining top female talent. In this candid session with some of Live Nation's top female executives, we talk about lessons learned from a long career in events, what makes a great female-friendly workplace and how women can get ahead in their careers.

THE PANEL



DEIRDRE MCCREADY
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
OF SPECIAL EVENTS



BARBARA BOUMAN
VICE PRESIDENT OF
NATIONAL SALES



TARA PORTER
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL
EVENTS, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST HELPFUL SKILL—LEARNED OR INNATE—THAT'S HELPED YOU BE SUCCESSFUL IN EVENTS?

TP: We can do everything in our power to prepare as much as possible, but there is always almost certainly something that won't go as planned. It's then our job to remain calm and find solutions for when something doesn't go as planned. Remove the emotion and think, what is the root of the problem and what solutions can we put in place to fix it?

DM: It's key to be proactive and solution-based for success in any line of work, but especially with live events. We are in a position to bring dreams to reality with clients who are relying on our expertise and skills to drive their visions. In order to be successful, you need to raise the bar by going above the expected, challenge the norm and creatively think beyond the regular.

BB: How you react when something is out of your control can easily affect the results. If a vendor is late or the power goes out—you have to remain calm. Find a solution and work together calmly to fix what needs to be fixed. The calmer I am, the calmer my staff and my client will be.

Q: WHAT CAREER ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WOMEN JUST GETTING STARTED IN EVENTS?

BB: Explore all aspects of events. Find an internship or volunteer in all areas of events to figure out which part of the industry is the right fit for you. There are so many different avenues to take in events from working at an agency crafting campaigns to selling a special event venue to providing food & beverage services.

DM: Learn everything related to your job even if you don't think it's your responsibility. This will allow a professional at any level to grow in countless areas. Young leaders should make time to step up and take on more work when a situation demands. This new knowledge will empower you to do your own job better with full understanding of how it affects others and ultimately how you can better impact your company. Pay attention to everything!

Q: HOW SHOULD WOMEN SUPPORT OTHER WOMEN IN THIS INDUSTRY?

DM: Lift each other up and share best practices. Understanding comradery is an important opportunity for women to showcase their value together. Women are already driving the change in live events by defying the status quo and leading disruptive ventures. It's important now to grow together by encouraging others to communicate their own value propositions, while sharing discoveries and best practices.

TP: We are all doing the best we can to excel in our careers and make our mark. You know very little about someone else's life and what they are dealing with. Be understanding. Be accepting. Have compassion. I'm a true believer in taking the high road, and that karma can be a bitch.

Q: TALK ABOUT WHAT MAKES LIVE NATION A GREAT PLACE FOR WOMEN.

BB: Live Nation is continually looking for ways to empower women and enhance their careers and experiences. Live Nation offers unparalleled services for women including a six-month maternity leave, travel care-giver assistance, fertility reimbursement and more. Plus, their women's group—WE Nation—offers educational and networking opportunities in chapters across the world.

TP: Our employees create awesome experiences for our fans, and Live Nation feels its employees deserve the same from their company. As a woman, it's really hard to not feel like you have to choose between excelling in your career or having a family. Live Nation offers six months paid time off for the primary caregiver to bond with a new baby. The company understands that it can be challenging to balance the needs of your children while navigating the work obligation of being out of town for a show or meeting.

Q: FOR MID-CAREER WOMEN IN EVENTS, HOW CAN THEY TAKE THAT NEXT STEP INTO LEADERSHIP? WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR GETTING TO VP-LEVEL AND THE C-SUITE?

BB: Communication. Let those above you know where you see yourself in five years and ask them for help on how to get there. Flexibility. Are you willing to relocate? Are you willing to work undesirable hours? Use your flexibility to show your worth.

TP: Be adaptable and learn to be able to change with the changes in your company. You are a piece of the puzzle, but your puzzle could be 10,000 pieces. Do what you can to make your mark by building others up. Create relationships and partnerships with others in your industry to build your network.

Q: HOW DO YOU STRIKE A WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

BB: Being strong advocates for ourselves and our health. In order for us to do well in our careers and for our employers, we need to take care of ourselves. I travel 80 percent of the time and in the past found myself extremely worn down. So exercise, eating healthy and sleep are high priorities for me—even while traveling. Take your first meeting at 10 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. so you can squeeze in a workout. Bring almonds on the plane so you aren't tempted by cookies and pretzels. Search for healthy options at the airport so that burger isn't so tempting.

Q: HOW CAN WOMEN ENGAGE THE MEN IN THEIR ORGANIZATION TO HELP SUPPORT WOMEN IN THEIR CAREERS AND WORK?

TP: Talk about it! Within the San Francisco chapter of WE Nation, we hosted an event with a panel of all women who worked at Bill Graham Presents in the 80's and 90's. We invited the entire office to come and listen to stories about how it was to work during that time in a very male-dominated industry. Do your part to make it known what ways the company can help support you as a woman in your career and at work. If it weren't for people speaking up, we wouldn't have the programs we do at Live Nation.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME TOUGH LESSONS LEARNED THAT YOU REFLECT ON IN YOUR JOB AND WHAT CAN OTHER WOMEN LEARN FROM THEM?

TP: Starting a family at a crucial time in my career was very hard. I was trying to figure out how to "balance" it all. But I finally came to the acceptance that you can't do it all—it's impossible. I now just try to take one day at a time and keep putting one foot in front of the other. When coming to this realization and getting to this point, I learned to prioritize my mental health. Kristen Bell has said, "Be patient with yourself. You're useless to everyone else if you're too stressed out. Know when to take a break." Live Nation gives the option to take young children and a caretaker on work trips because they understand the challenges of balancing your children and work obligations.

