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## Women on board

“from the representations of  
power to management style : a  
qualitative gender-oriented  
survey

This study is based on  
a qualitative survey  
With women directors

This women belong to  
the top management  
of famous firms  
Otor, CCF, TF1,  
Suez, Fimalac, Total  
Erap, HPM

Valérie BERNIS – **Suez** ; Michèle BOUVIER – **Otor**  
Elizabeth COQUET-REINIER – **Onet** Monique COHEN – **Unilog**  
Claire DREYFUS-CLOAREC - **SNCF**  
Anne DUTHILLEUL -ERAP, Françoise JARRY - **HPM**  
Brigitte GAUTHIER-DARCET - **Europe 1 audio**  
Katia LE BERRIGAUD – **Française des Jeux**  
Véronique MORALI - **Fimalac**, Isabelle HUSSON - **Arkema**  
Ariane OBOLENSKI - **AFB**, Dominique ALDUY – **Le Monde**  
Anne-Claire TAITTINGER – **Société du Louvre**  
Claude COHEN – **TF1** ; Gilberte LOMBARD - **CCF**

This study deals with  
“Women top managers  
and their  
representation of  
power”

# THE GLASS CEILING ISSUES

## THE RESULTS

Power is basically

- linked to the existence of authority
- linked to the relationship of superior to subordinate

***BUT***

This power does not seem to attract the women directors

***“Power for the sake of power is of no interest to me”***

*“Power, well, I don’t need power. To be more specific, it is not my goal. I don’t have any ambition as far as this potential power is concerned, political power for instance”*

***“I would say, whether I have power or whether I don’t is absolutely meaningless”***

*Explanations and origins*

– no models and no success stories to lead the way



– no socialization to domination

nothing has weakened the stereotypes linking management, power and masculinity

***They don't want  
"the power to"***

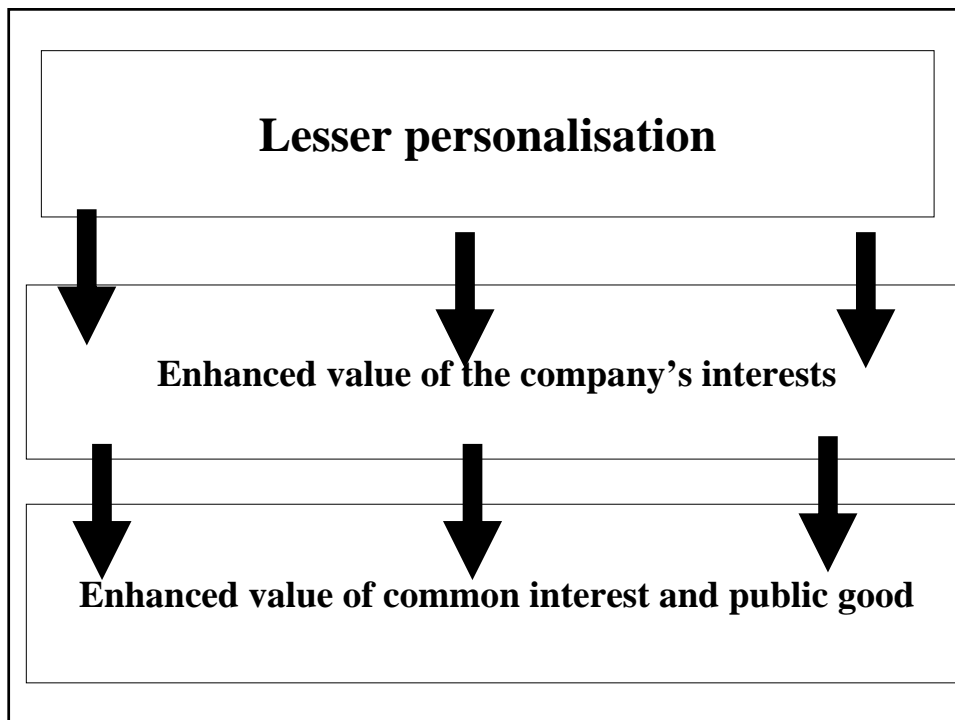
***They prefer  
"the power of"***

They prefer to consider power as an instrument of management.

They reject power as an instrument of domination and as an instrument to emphasize their high hierarchical position

The type of power that they seek is linked to the opportunity to carry out missions, conduct actions, and implement programs.

***They prefer common  
interest  
they reject personal  
interest***



*“In Burma we’ve built village committees around Sustainable development. One must be able to do this kind of projects even if a financial cost is involved”*

*“My mission in the board is to represent common interest instead of a capitalistic one.”*

## KEY WORDS

Common good

Environment

Public service

Common interest

Ethics

Sustainable development

**Consulting  
rather than imposing**

women make power moral

**They highlight**

**- respect of others**

**- team spirit**

*THE KEY WORDS OF WOMEN*

Listening

relations

bilateral

respect

Consultation

Adhesion

Human

Cooperation

Conviction

*SO....*

Power means exerting domination.  
It is a solitary exercise that excludes others.  
While women interviewed do not seem to  
abide by these rules.

They are not attracted to power as such, but  
prefer to exert a right of influence on  
others, as a way to share

**Power = Influence**

**Power = responsibility**

**Power = common good**

**Of course this representation  
of power is linked to the  
issue of legitimacy**

*Women vs. 'the power'*

Domination, in the Weberian sense of the word, must be based on legitimacy between the dominator and the dominated between those who exercise power and those who agree to submit to it.

**Women don't seem to  
be legitimate to  
exercise domination  
and therefore power**

**A feminine management style ?**

**Today, researches value  
this supposedly female  
differences and show  
women to be, in essence,  
more humane, more  
sensitive, more  
attentive...**

**BUT**

**It will be a problem to confine  
women in those concepts.**

**Women could be trapped in their  
stereotypes.**

## **Conclusion**

**It would be indeed very strange to allocate a corporation's needs on the basis of a male/female division which would leave to men 'power over' and would confine women to 'power to'... forever leaving women to the power of influence**

**THANK YOU**