

No place for 'male banter' in job ads, says APSCo

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Monday, 29 January 2018

Following the revelation that a 'boutique secretarial recruitment company' posted a job advert (<https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/no-this-job-posting-is-not-from-the-50s-its-from-2018>) on LinkedIn and Guardian Jobs which included the 'ability to deal with the male banter and to be sociable but not distracting' as part of the spec – Ann Swain, Chief Executive of APSCo (<http://www.apsco.org>), was last week invited by the BBC to share her thoughts.

Summarising the analysis she shared on BBC 5 Live's Breakfast show and BBC London's Drivetime, Ann Swain comments:

"This advert feels uncomfortable to me. This wording is quite frankly disappointing and clumsy. The idea that you have to have an 'ability' to put up with male banter is nonsense and the fact that it was mentioned shows that both the end client and recruitment company sees it as a problem. Employers should want professional women to have an even platform to perform well in their roles – and they can't do that if the environment is intimidating."

"It's worth noting that the company was seeking a professional and experienced graduate with at least five years' experience for a PA role with a salary of between £40K and £50K. It's a shame that the advert seems to request professionalism from applicants – it asks that they are emotionally intelligent and conscientious - but does not demand that this professionalism is reciprocated by the employer."

"Ultimately, if you don't foster the right culture and environment, you'll never be able to retain – or get the best out of – star talent. It's a shame the recruitment company didn't feel confident or able to advise the client to deal with its own cultural failings – rather than simply replicating and amplifying their archaic demands."

- Ends

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