

# YOU CAN FULFILL YOURSELF BOTH IN FAMILY AND IN PROFESSIONAL LIFE

**Monika Szczerbak**, President of the Sol Financial Services Polska

**O**n reading the above sentence, people usually ask: "Can you reconcile raising five children with professional ambitions?" The answer is not simple. But without going into details, I say: "Yes, provided that you have support and understanding from your loved ones." And it is important not to get lost somewhere in-between, to maintain a balance between the role of mother and wife and the role of professionally fulfilled woman, even if "fulfilled" can be interpreted in a variety of ways. You can fulfill yourself both in family and in professional life; you can have delicious preserves, a perfectly kept house and interesting job at the same time. So it is in my case. The family is my top priority, but I also remember about my professional development.

Since I had my first contact with accounting, it has been my passion. As I spotted a gap in the market and demand for accounting services, I decided with my husband to respond to it and make use of the knowledge I gained in my time as researcher, combining it with the extensive finance experience of my husband. The beginnings were not easy. The firm had to work its way through to be competitive, choose the management solutions that would guarantee a maximum effectiveness. Long-lasting talks, meetings with experts, implementation of a quality management system, investment in human capital – all this was systematically bringing the expected results. Consequently, we could start expanding and improving the quality of services provided. The result is that SFS now offers professional accounting, human resources and payroll administration, audit, business consulting, expertise and proficiency in solving all kinds of formal and legal problems faced by entrepreneurs. With thorough knowledge of accounting and tax law, as well as Polish economic realities, SFS advises foreign clients, helping them find optimal solutions.

Although lecturing and running a business is extremely time- and energy consuming, I like what I do and do not feel tired. Therefore, I strongly encourage other people, especially women, to fulfill their dreams, to start their own firms. Time is always good, you just have to find your market niche. There are slots in every industry. It is up to you to spot one at the right



time. Small and medium-sized businesses are the strength of the Polish economy. They are self-confident and positive about the future despite passing difficulties.

Work is important to me, but it is not the meaning of my life. I love travelling with my family, endless conversations, buzz and laughter. I do not waste time. I still have so many things to do. Waiting in my drawer is a concept of the book I would like to publish in 2016. I also have big plans for strategic changes in my firm. Even the smallest organisational misstep can be extremely costly. That is why, I strive to perfection in what I do, to share my knowledge and inspire students to entrepreneurship, to make SFS an ideal place for the whole team to work and develop, and to have my children, especially the oldest daughters, draw moral, spiritual, scientific and business patterns from my achievements. In conclusion, let me add: I am going through life with the feeling that I still have to do more, and that is my compass.

**Monika Szczerbak** – PhD in economics, lecturer of financial and management accounting at the University of Technology and Economics (UTH) in Warsaw, specialist for internal control and audit, a member of the International Network of Accountants and Auditors. Co-founder and long-standing president of the Club of Entrepreneurs and Experts affiliated with the Polish Economic Society (PTE), expert of the Business Boutique Foundation, member of Polish Network of Women Entrepreneurship Ambassadors, graduate of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, graduate of the Warsaw University of Technology's Business School, President of Sol Financial Services (SFS), a business advisory firm providing accounting, tax and legal services to businesses, not-for-profit organizations, embassies, chambers of commerce and high-net-worth individuals. Co-author of books and author of articles. She is particularly interested in research aimed at identifying opportunities and barriers to conducting business, including family enterprises. Mother of four daughters and one son. She does not make a choice between family and career. Her life credo is "I always have time for my wonderful husband and wonderful children." □