

# Charlotte Crowshaw: being part of the change



On 8 March the world will celebrate International Women's Day with the theme 'Choose to Challenge'. To mark the occasion, R&S spoke to **Burke Bros Moving Group's Marketing Officer, Charlotte Crowshaw**, about her experiences in the industry.

## R&S: What do you like about working in the removals and storage industry?

**Charlotte Crowshaw:** Moving house is about more than vans and boxes. It's one of life's milestones, the start of a new chapter, and a great emotional investment. It is a privilege to be involved with it as Marketing Officer for Burke Bros. In my role I appreciate the power of a well-crafted sentence, know the value of an Oxford comma, and have found it a pleasure to maintain and promote such a well-known brand in an ever-changing digital landscape.

## R&S: What's the business case for gender equality in the removals industry?

**CC:** While women are involved in most areas of Burke Bros' business – from Transport to International Shipping, Corporate, Finance, and Marketing – women are still under-represented in the industry as a whole. This is disappointing – especially as one major difficulty companies face in an increasingly competitive landscape is skills shortages. The economic outlook is uncertain, so making the most of resources and widening the talent pool from which companies draw future leaders is critical. I believe the business case was aptly summarised by the outgoing Director General of the CBI (Confederation of British Industry), Carolyn Fairbairn, who said: "... there's no doubt in my mind that developing more women leaders will make a real difference to the success of the UK economy."

## R&S: Have you encountered any obstacles in progressing your career?

**CC:** After my Marketing and PR experience in other traditionally male-dominated industries, I appreciate that unconscious bias can be difficult to overcome and that people often, albeit unwittingly, gravitate towards those who look and think like themselves. I have occasionally had to work harder and be that bit more persistent to prove my skills. I also have enough professional experience, however, to know that companies which judge people according to their capabilities, commitment, and results undoubtedly succeed more.

## R&S: What recommendations would you make to improve gender equality in the industry?

**CC:** At Burke Bros we benefit from very close ties with numerous South American moving companies developed over decades of partnerships. Many of the senior positions in these companies are held by women. Perhaps we have something to learn from our South American counterparts? I believe there may be value in looking at the business practices that support this kind of advancement and have provided the right environments to retain ambitious women in the moving industry.

The value of good role models and mentoring shouldn't be underestimated. Finding someone to champion you and help guide your career is really valuable. The industry also isn't well-known for flexible working practices that promote a work/family balance and this can significantly impede the career trajectory of women.



## R&S: Do you have any advice for women who are entering the industry?

**CC:** Never shy away from a challenge and see these as opportunities to prove yourself and lead by example. If there are professional qualifications that relate to your occupational area, make the most of them. I certainly found that studying for the Chartered Institute of Marketing qualifications stood me in good stead. While our industry hasn't historically been well-known for gender equality and diversity, the tide is turning. Work hard, dig deep, and be part of the change.

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Get in touch with Charlotte at [marketing@burkebros.co.uk](mailto:marketing@burkebros.co.uk) or visit [www.burkebros.co.uk](http://www.burkebros.co.uk) for more information.



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