
Carolina Müller-Möhl, What emotions do you feel on returning to Zurich after a business trip to a major city abroad?

Carolina Müller-Möhl is President of the Müller-Möhl Group in Zurich and sits on numerous on numerous boards of directors, including Nestlé, Orascom, and Neue Zürcher Zeitung. She is also dedicated to promoting youth education.



● **Zurich is a renowned financial center and consistently tops international rankings for quality of life. But it also harbors ambitions to become Europe's "Silicon Valley." How can the city attract high-caliber creative professionals from around the world?**

It is important for cities to set bold, long-term goals like the "eZurich" project, and I am sure this strategy will bear fruit. Throughout its history, Switzerland has shown that it can adapt and innovate. The Zurich area is not only a highly attractive operating environment for businesses. It is also home to some first-class academic institutions like the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) and Zurich University's Department of Economics. These factors have been instrumental in persuading companies like Google and IBM to set up major research centers here. PC and social media penetration is among the highest in the world. This is another reason why software and computer services com-

panies see Switzerland as a particularly interesting option.

— You are actively involved in helping underprivileged children gain access to the same opportunities as children from wealthier families. Can entrepreneurial "spark" be taught? And how important is failure in shaping an entrepreneurial mind?

Ernst Fehr, Professor of Microeconomics and Experimental Economic Research at the University of Zurich, recently annotated a study that not only demonstrates a correlation between early learning opportunities and equal opportunities later in life but between early learning and a better overall "return" for society in the form of lower crime rates, reduced social welfare spending, and higher per capita income. So it's essential to start instilling a basic

"Zurich is an attractive operating environment for businesses."

awareness of certain topics, especially financial literacy, in our children from the outset. This is particularly relevant for Switzerland – according to the UNESCO Report on early childhood education in Switzerland, we only invest 0.2% of our education budget in early learning. The key is to communicate business in a playful, hands-on way so that children are inspired by the issues in primary school. A positive, real-world approach will help them grasp otherwise

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- 01 **IBM Zurich**
Nobel Prize-winning research.
- 02 **Panorama Zurich** offers both a lakeside setting and an Alpine backdrop.
- 03 **Kunsthaus Zürich**
One of the finest 19th- and 20th-century collections in Europe.

03



abstract economic concepts and will certainly counter the worsening trend of youth debt.

As regards failure: Every one of us, including even the most successful entrepreneurs, makes mistakes at some stage in our careers. But it is our ability to learn from our mistakes and move on that ultimately has the biggest bearing on our long-term success.

— Zurich, and Switzerland as a whole, punches above its weight in many cultural fields, especially art. A Zurich-based art historian is directing the 2011 Venice Biennale, and Art Basel is now the world's leading contemporary art fair.

What role does art play in your business?

Art Basel is a fantastic institution and attracts a lot of international interest and talent to Switzerland. We should certainly be proud to have dedicated people such as Bice Curiger curating world-class events like the Venice Biennale; the Zurich Kunsthalle, the Kunsthaus and other museums, like

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the Fondation Beyeler, also hold priceless collections that draw visitors from all over the globe. But my relationship to art is not business-driven, so it does not feature in my company's asset allocation.

— What emotions do you feel on returning to Zurich after a business trip to a major city abroad?

I feel at home. I associate Zurich with a serene lakeside setting, an Alpine backdrop, superb higher education opportunities, unique cultural institutions, and a standard of living – and security – that is second to none. For me, the city is an inspiration, a reservoir of energy, and a place of relaxation and stimulation all rolled into one. ●