

# Shelley Zalis, CEO at The Female Quotient

 By Jessica Tennant

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This week, we go behind the mask with Shelley Zalis, CEO at The Female Quotient in the US, who spoke at Loeries Creative Week on the topic of #SeeHer.



■ ***So tell us, what's really behind your mask (literally and/or figuratively speaking).***

Optimism. These are difficult times, but I've also been blown away by how resilient, empathetic and innovative we are.

■ ***Where are you locked down?***

Los Angeles.

■ ***How are you finding working from home or physical distancing at the office / how has your way of working changed?***

During normal times, I am traveling all over the world. I joke that I live on United! This has definitely been a change of pace, and I miss seeing my team in person, but thank goodness for Zoom.

■ ***Describe a typical workday, if such a thing exists.***

It really doesn't exist — and that's what I love about my job!

■ ***How do you maintain a good rapport with your teammates/clients?***

Don't underestimate the power of communication. Find a cadence and format that works for you — regular 1:1s, spontaneous virtual coffees — but really prioritise staying in touch and checking in.

■ ***How do you socialise these days?***

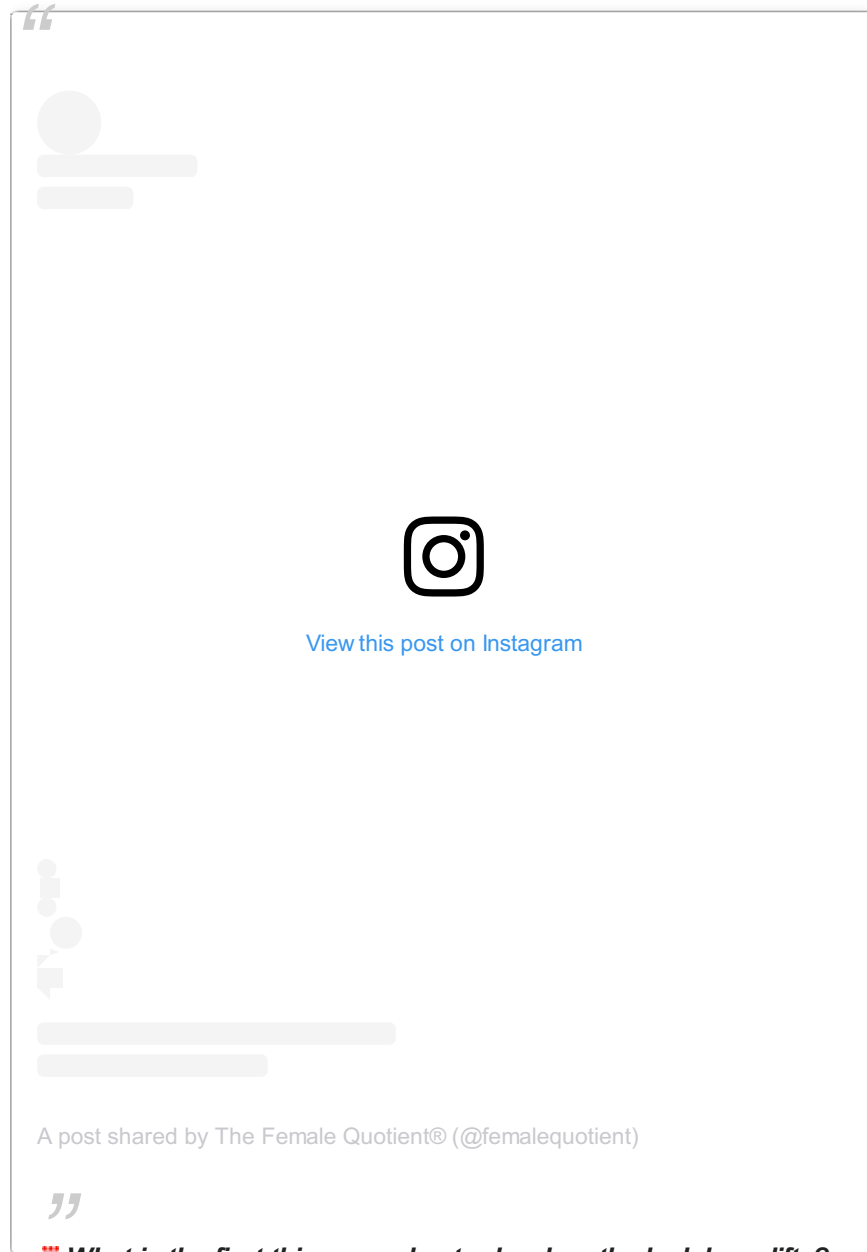
I have socially distanced walks or picnics with friends who live in the area. I also love my 'coffee walk-and-talks' — when I have my coffee in the morning, I go out for a walk and call a girlfriend. It's a great way to stay connected, caffeinated and active, all in one.

■ ***What do you do to keep fit/healthy and/or sane (physically/mentally)?***

I love doing SoulCycle classes at home.

■ ***Share your favourite Covid-19/lockdown-related meme/gif with us.***

I don't really follow memes, but the FQ's social team has been creating amazing content to keep us informed, sane and grounded during lockdown. I thought this one was a great reminder:



A post shared by The Female Quotient® (@femalequotient)

■ ***What is the first thing you plan to do when the lockdown lifts?***

Have a big get-together with my FQ family!

■ ***Describe your career and if/how the pandemic/lockdown has affected its course.***

The pandemic has totally altered The Female Quotient. Prior to lockdown, we were holding more than 60 Equality Lounges at conferences and companies around the world. We have pivoted with positivity, switching to virtual, and it's actually been a wonderful moment. While nothing can replace IRL events, virtual allows us to include a whole new swathe of people across industries, roles and geographies. We also kicked off the FQ Global Pack, a virtual dinner series held in countries around the world.

■ ***What are you working on right now?***

We have so many exciting things in the works here at The Female Quotient. Watch this space!

■ ***What does the 'new normal' look like to you?***

I don't think there is a new normal. The world is constantly changing, and we have to evolve with it. However, I do hope that moving out of the pandemic, we will have a new-found appreciation for all that women do — from the global leaders who are so fearlessly navigating the crisis, to the women at home who are taking care of their families.

■ ***What are some of the buzzwords floating around at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself?***

I keep saying "pivot with positivity". These are scary, unprecedented times — but they're also an opportunity for us to evolve, to do better and be better.

■ ***What advice would you give to other industry folk during this time?***

Again, pivot with positivity! Don't wait to see how things pan out. Be proactive and really think about how you can respond to our current situation.

Follow Zalis [@ShelleyZalis](#) and The Female Quotient [@femalequotient](#) on Twitter.

*\*Interviewed by [Jessica Tennant](#).*

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