

## Kaoru Kobu

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### What do you find most valuable about the Invesco Women's Network?

I was lucky to be one of members who launched the Invesco Women's Network in Tokyo two years ago. This type of organization was pretty new to us, so I believed there could be room for improvement. In Japan, gender diversity is more important than ever. Not only about gender, IWN Tokyo is hoping to contribute to add more value to Invesco through various activities with both male and female employees. Through these activities, we can meet with global colleagues and leadership. Before her retirement, Karen Dunn Kelly, who started IWN, visited Tokyo to support IWN's

expansion. Invesco's senior management always encourages us to implement proactive initiatives that create value for our employees.

### How did you first get interested in the asset management industry?

I started my career at an investment bank as a new graduate. After three years, I got recruited to a job as an analyst. At that time, buy-side analyst roles were not so popular, compared to investment banker or sell-side analyst roles. To be a buy-side analyst at an asset manager requires showing good performance, being neutral and honest to the market, being independent, and those aspects seemed very attractive for me to establish my career in the long run. Such long-term career planning was right for me, as I have spent 20-plus years in my career now as long-term investor.

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### Why do you think there are so few women in investment management? How might that change in the future?

We see more and more women are joining the asset management industry, but when we look at senior management, there are very few women among our peer companies. Asset managers should have a good chemistry with the thought of diversity, since everyone must think about their own strategy of asset management sometime in the future. We should always employ diversity of thought to meet our clients' varied needs. Asset management clients are very different from one another, even though their profiles may seem similar at first sight. With more diversity in our leadership, our organization should become more competitive to reach our customers' demand of asset management.

**What are some of your personal passions outside your career?**

During weekends, at night and very early in the morning, I am at the ice rink with my kids to play hockey mom. My 9-year-old boy and 6-year-old girl have joined a hockey team. In Japan, ice hockey is not a popular sport, so they have to wait until late at night or wake up early in the morning to practice, as the ice rink is popular for figure skaters. My daughter dreams about the Winter Olympic Games, and my son is hoping someday he will skate in the U.S. with NHL players.

