

Cathy Light

Priceless Leadership™ Lessons

Breaking Barriers,
Creating Change



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Liderança Group
Business + Workplace Accelerators™

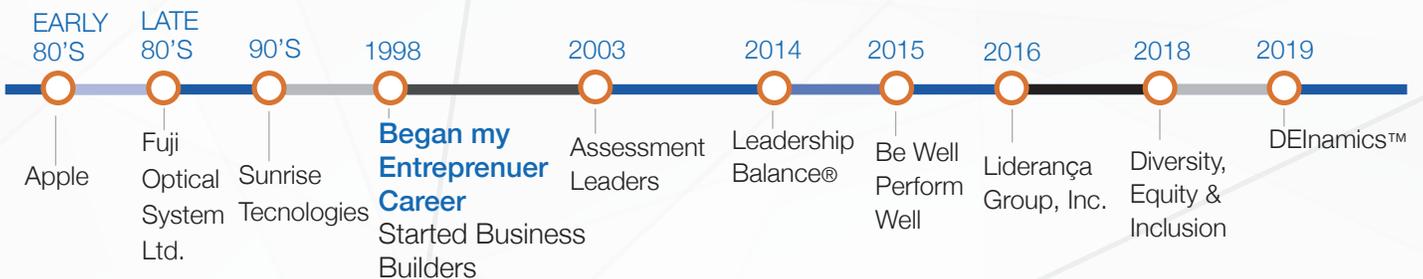
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MY STORY

It's still not easy for women to move up the ladder into executive positions - even though women have proven to be effective leaders. So why are many highly qualified women having such a difficult time reaching executive levels? Part of the answer lies within the senior management of the companies for whom they work. To have their talent recognized, it requires the awareness, commitment and leadership confidence of those making the hiring and promotion decisions.

At the age of 35, I was recruited by the CEO of a publicly-held medical device company. The company's stock price fell below the SEC minimum, became delisted and was obviously in big trouble. The position was VP/General Manager of its main revenue generating business unit - a divisional turnaround was quickly needed. I accepted the challenge not only because the CEO did a good sales job on me, but more importantly, he also convinced me that gender was not an important consideration in running a business. The significant factors were skills, abilities and leadership qualities.

My Entrepreneurial Journey



Top seven of the Priceless Leadership™ Lessons I learned along the way to becoming my own boss and what it took to stay on top:

- 1 **FLEXIBILITY** is second only to **INTEGRITY**. Create a mindset that change is an inevitable part of business operations. The ability to change course quickly, when needed, could result in your company's survival.
- 2 Always get the **FACTS** - it is easy to make a bad decision based on "false" assumptions. It's challenging to make the right decision, even with the best data.
- 3 This isn't a popularity contest - learn to make those tough decisions regardless of whether you are liked at the end of the day. It's more important to be **RESPECTED** in the workplace.
- 4 Hiring the right **TALENT** will make your job easier - don't be insecure about hiring people smarter than you. If your group can't achieve, neither will you. You will not be successful unless your team is successful first!
- 5 Attune to the CEO's agenda - knowing what his/her expectations are (not what you think they are, or should be) is key to your retention. Make sure you have **ALIGNMENT 360°**
- 6 Despite the complexity and clutter of day-to-day activities, you must **FOCUS** on your company's strategic thrust and making money for all stockholders – employees, customers and the investors. You must stay focused on this critical objective to ensure company goals are achieved.
- 7 **LUCK!**

MY POINT OF VIEW & PERSONAL TIPS TO GREATER BUSINESS SUCCESS ... AND A HAPPIER LIFE!

- Avoid office gossip and politics - you should be too busy for this drama!
- Support and collaborate with your women colleagues instead of competing with them. Women can be harsh to one another - don't fall into this category. Remember: kindness is power.
- One of my favorite sayings: "Your reputation is like money - hard to get and easy to lose!"
- If you don't like yourself, why should anyone else?
- Be positive, engaging, motivating and inspiring. Otherwise, you'll attract the opposite - negative people with a lot of baggage.
- Avoid a life of regrets. Ask for what you want and say NO to what you don't want. So often we get into situations that we know we should have said no to, and we only end up regretting it afterwards.
- Use the word "we" instead of "I" and experience the power of defusing a negative situation.
- You can't change people, so quit trying. It's exhausting.
- There is no substitute for humility. Add these powerful statements to your daily vocabulary: "Thank you. Can I help you? What's your opinion on this? I'm sorry."



MY DAILY MANTRA IGNITES MY PURPOSE AND BRAND

- 1. Attitude:** I'm a positive person both personally and professionally.
- 2. Confidence:** I have the skills, abilities and talent to excel.
- 3. Drive:** I'm ambitious. It's up to me to create my own success.
- 4. Visualize:** I close my eyes, visualize my challenges, and see a positive outcome.
- 5. Negotiate:** I've learned to ask for what I want and negotiate to equitable and fair agreements.
- 6. Energy:** I'm action-oriented and can manage multi-tasking as a mother, busy executive and philanthropist.
- 7. Innovate:** I like to take risk and I'm not afraid to push the envelope. I'm forward-thinking, and I can create new ideas all the time.
- 8. Network:** I have surrounded myself with a network of incredible people for whom I am extremely grateful.

LET'S GET STARTED

Simple steps to create a roadmap to your success

1. VISUALIZE – Everyone defines success differently. This is as individual as YOU!

What do you see?

2. CURRENT STATE – It's difficult to know your path unless you understand where you are now.

Where are you on your roadmap? Starting your journey? Climbing? Arrived?

3. Identify THREE ACTIONS you can begin tomorrow to move you forward on your roadmap to success:

1.

2.

3.

4. ACKNOWLEDGE your skills, abilities, talents and areas of development. What are they?

Skills	Abilities	Talents	Development areas
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Skills: The expertise to do a particular task; something learned by putting in a conscious effort

Abilities: Capacity to do things (a measure of skill or talent)

Talents: Something natural in a person (probably learned unconsciously)

5. **IDENTIFY** mentors who can provide honest feedback and coaching:

6. **CELEBRATE** small wins on your journey to success. Journal your progress:

7. Describe when you know you have **REACHED SUCCESS**:

CREATE YOUR TOP 10 LIST OF VALUES THAT DEFINE YOU. Review these daily to ensure you don't derail on your brand.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Reflections when creating your Top 10 list:

1. LEARN FROM YESTERDAY
2. DREAM BIG
3. ACTING ON A GOOD IDEA IS BETTER THAN JUST HAVING A GOOD IDEA.

*Do better. Be better.
Achieve higher.*

-Cathy Light

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

According to McKinsey & Company's monthly highlight in October 2019, titled "[Women in the Workplace 2019](#)", "We've seen more women rise to the top levels of companies. An increasing number of companies are seeing the value of having more women in leadership, and they're proving they can make progress on gender diversity. Still, women continue to be underrepresented at every level. The biggest obstacle that women face is much earlier in the pipeline, at the first step up to manager. Fixing the "broken rung" is the key to achieving parity."

Top three "asks" from employees:

1. Manager Support
2. Sponsorship
3. Inclusive and unbiased hiring and promotions

Five steps companies can take to fix their broken rung --- and ultimately, their pipeline:

1. Set a goal for getting more women into first-level management
2. Require diverse slates for hiring and promotions
3. Put evaluators through unconscious bias training
4. Establish clear evaluation criteria
5. Put more women in line for the step up to manager

This is a WORKPLACE PRIORITY! It's everyone's responsibility to hold themselves accountable to "being the change." Let's all do our part to turn the conversations into actions that create meaningful change to drive greater employee satisfaction (opportunities and fairness) and positive business impact. --- Cathy Light, CEO



CATHY LIGHT is an Organizational Architect & Senior Advisor to Boards and CEOs. She left corporate America in 1998 and has since founded five Bay Area companies: Business Builders; Assessment Leaders; Leadership Balance; Be Well, Perform Well; and Liderança Group, Inc. Cathy is passionate about Priceless Leadership™ and specializes in creating the right strategies, executive teams, culture, and processes from start-up to emerging growth companies to achieve business and workforce success. She is recognized as a successful, progressive entrepreneur and marketing executive with global experience in a cross-section of markets and industries. She is a world speaker, engaging and motivating her audiences on a variety of leadership topics: Driving Innovation, Winning Teams Win in our 4th Industrial Revolution, Using Assessments to Improve Hiring and Organizational Performance, and How to Create Stakeholder Value. Ms. Light is equally passionate about working [with] women issues and is a frequent speaker on Women in Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities.

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