Business Profile: Janet Ioli

Executive coach and popular seminar speaker Janet Ioli spent her childhood and adolescence in Athens, Greece attending an international school with students from a dozen different countries.

"This multicultural upbringing taught me there are many different ways to navigate the world and that we should embrace differences," Ioli says. "The world is a global marketplace and we need to deeply understand our fellow workers, customers, and vendors if we want to succeed.

“Too often in my work developing leaders, I've encountered an attitude that tolerates diversity as long as everyone conforms to a prescribed set of norms. I challenge my clients to move beyond their own mindsets and seek to understand new ways of looking at the same thing. I strongly believe that adapting diverse perspectives is a prerequisite for innovation.”

Ioli recalls the excitement she felt learning about the intricacies of human behavior at an early age, often outside the classroom, and she developed a voracious reading habit that was focused on psychology, biography and philosophy.



Janet Ioli

A life-long interest in human behavior led the CEO to a career of helping leaders and C-Level executive improve their performance by better understanding themselves — and others.

"My father thought I might want to become a clinical psychologist and advised me to become a practical psychologist by becoming a business leader," she recalls. "He said, 'Companies really need help in learning how to understand and treat their employees and customers.'"

Her deep curiosity and knowledge about human behavior helped her develop the ability to help anyone adapt to being thrown into the deep end of new business challenges and learn to lead effectively.

Due to family reasons, she moved from Athens to Germany and continued her formal education at campuses of American universities overseas. She voraciously pursued dual Masters degrees in Business and Public Administration to augment her undergraduate degree in Business.

"This business education helped me gain a deep understanding of the realities leaders face running their businesses and to speak the language of business" Ioli says. “The study of public administration gave me an understanding of government and serving in the public sector, so that I could have an understanding and grounding in both public service and business.”

She moved to the United States and soon became one of the first recruits for a direct marketing startup at Cigna, the first of many initial

"Too often in my work developing leaders, I've encountered an attitude that tolerates diversity as long as everyone conforms to a prescribed set of norms. I challenge my clients to move beyond their own mindsets and seek to understand new ways of looking at the same thing. I strongly believe that adapting diverse perspectives is a prerequisite for innovation." — Janet Ioli

career moves that fast-tracked her business acumen and leadership development skills.

"The managers were former executives at GE which at the time was known for its leadership and organizational development practices. I learned and applied these best practices at Cigna, and was quickly tapped to work in leadership development to train others," she says.

She was soon hired by the publishing and media giant, Gannett to design and deliver leadership development programs across the company. Due to her organizational and business savvy, she was soon tapped to set up a Human Resources department for one of their publications, *USA Weekend*, as one of several progressive gigs at the company. Then came stints at two well-known players in the Aerospace and Defense industry in the Washington DC metro area where she continued to develop a reputation for creative leadership development solutions to ever-changing corporate needs, and as a trusted advisor and coach to executives.

In 2014, she followed her inner entrepreneur and desire to provide tailored and focused leadership development and executive coaching solutions and formed her own consultancy https://www.janetioli.com/.

The same year, her first book was published, *The Cure: Remedies for the 5 Ailments that Plague Organizations*. Her second book in 2018 addressed her passion for helping women in leadership, *Power Presence for Women: Unshakeable, Unstoppable, Unforgettable.* "As I coached both men and women executives over the years, I noticed so many women seemed to be trying to fit into a male-dominated leadership model. In this book, I wanted to address the conditioned thinking patterns that cause self-doubt and the need for validation in women leaders. I wanted focus on helping them step into their own power presence," Ioli says. Her most recent book published in 2020, *Less Ego, More Soul: A Modern Reinvention Guide for Women*.

As a fierce advocate for women in leadership, Janet is on a mission to help women create a new paradigm for success. "So many women's leadership programs focus on building skills to help women operate more like men. While understanding how to navigate existing systems is important, my focus is on helping women building the inner confidence, resolve, and powerful presence needed to drive systemic change."

She credits one of her favorite books, *Man's Search for Meaning* by Victor Frankel as a major influence in shaping her philosophy about leadership and leading with intention.

"Frankel endured and witnessed the most horrific circumstances in a Nazi concentration camp. His profound insights resulting from his experience are life-changing, and there is one that I think about daily in my work with leaders. Frankel noted that in between what happens to us and our response to it, there is a space. In that space is our ability to choose our response in any given moment.

"In that response is where our growth and freedom lie. To me, making this conscious choice about how we respond to anything in life instead of automatically reacting to our environment is the key to a powerful leadership presence. I have learned through my work with thousands of leaders over the years that the journey is about learning to pause, self-monitor our automatic responses, and lead with intention." — ***By Scott S. Smith, Staff Writer, California Business Journal***

Copyright © 2021 California Business Journal. All Rights Reserved.