

Sally Kasaks' CEO Journey Enthralls the Pacesetters

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On April 19th the Pacesetters attended this interactive session that identified some of the characteristics and qualities that separate aspiring C-Suite contenders from the rest. Sally's story is unique and rare as she held the CEO position in several companies over a period of four decades. In her colorful description of her journey up the ladder, Sally offered a set of success factors for the Pacesetters to consider. Among these were grit, determination, resilience, and a true



Sally responds to questions about next generation CEOs

passion for your work. She illustrated through her story that high potential women with aspirations to excel and achieve the most senior positions need mentors who can help them succeed and guide them through the rough spots. Sally discovered at an early stage in her career that quality work was among the most important criteria. As she advanced, however, she needed people in influential positions to endorse her for positions of more responsibility. She encouraged the Pacesetters not to get lost under the radar and to reach out to sponsors and other supporters for help. Relationships are important in all positions and businesses, but especially so where advocates are needed for promotion.

The Pacesetters were interested in Sally's advice on a range of topics, including whether the one who screams the loudest gets the trophy. Sally spent quite a bit of time discussing how she overcame her introverted tendencies to become more vocal and visible. She explained how difficult it was to speak up in meetings or express an unpopular opinion. She described the painful process of adapting to the demands and requirements of a fast paced, energetic industry as an introvert. The solutions that worked for her were planning what she would do and how she would behave, and practicing what she would say beforehand. Being prepared gave her the confidence to manage the expectations of her senior leaders. She reached a point in her career where no one would ever guess that she prefers introversion over extraversion. She emphasized to the Pacesetters that they can adapt to their environments without compromising their uniqueness or their values. Her success, in her own words, is attributed to being true to who she is and having others understand that they should be true to themselves as well.



(l-r) Front: Jennifer Tenzer; Lilian Kim; Veena Jayadeva; Irina Li; Christine Loomis, Pacesetter Vice Chair Rear: Mari Richardson; Aisha Elezi; Deon Hall-Garriques; Sally Kasaks, Presenter; Gerri Bostick, Pacesetter Chair; Julie Chin; Elisabeth Seep; Carolyn Axisa

Sally Frame Kasaks served as the President & CEO of ANN, Inc., Talbots, Abercrombie & Fitch and Pacific Sunwear. Sally also serves as a Director of Grupo Cortefiel in Madrid, Spain, Tuesday Morning, Inc., Pacific Sunwear and AARES. She has also served on the Board of The Children's Place; Coach, Inc.; St. John; and White House|Black Market.