

ViewPoint

Career Chic Cdr. Bud Slabbaert

One of the most rewarding things about writing a column is that I make contact with some of the most inspiring people, get a sample of what they do, and then pass it on to you. Today, I had the opportunity to talk to **Lisa Quast**, known to readers of *Forbes Magazine* as 'Career Chick'.

Oh, we know that such names are a bit catchy. And okay, if that's what's needed to get attention for an important issue or project, why not? She told me that she doesn't mind being called 'Career Chick', however 'Career Woman' is more appropriate. Is she a pilot? No! Is she in the aviation business? No! Is she an inspiring force? Yes, and that's what counts!

It's my contention that this industry needs initiatives for moving ahead. There are lots of good ideas 'out there' that should find attention, encouragement and professional help. Any economy is driven by start-ups and small size businesses. Have you ever thought of volunteering to be a mentor? Why not? You're too good for it? Einstein said, "Teaching should be such that what is offered is perceived as a valuable gift and not as a hard duty." Well, I can accept that you're not Einstein, neither am I - but we could do some mentoring. No time? Don't give me that! You have exactly the same number of hours each day that were given to Helen Keller, Louis Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo DaVinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein. Let me fill you in - time is only what you read on a watch. If you want to be someone, then mentor someone! What can we do to make things happen?

On my quest I found Quast

We are blessed to have aviation organizations like *Women in Aviation* or *Women in Corporate Aviation*. Many a man can cut off a slice of what the ladies do. If you're different just because of one tiny little chromosome, you should still read on. There is something to be learned here for all ladies and gentlemen. Personally, I always like to be the person to look beyond to see if there are synergies to learn more and to do more. Now, if you were a man wouldn't you be interested in how Oprah Winfrey became successful? Oh, you wouldn't? Then tell me, are you as successful as she is? Most likely not. So, continue reading.

Here is where Lisa Quast comes in because she generously allows us to share the information from her blog:

"Over the years, one of the role models I've eagerly observed from afar has been Oprah Winfrey. Her abilities as a female entrepreneur are what inspired me to leave the confines of corporate America and start my own consulting company focused on helping women succeed in their careers. And there are a lot of lessons career women can learn from Oprah.



Ms. Winfrey defied the odds stacked against her in life and used her abilities as an entrepreneur to take Harpo, Inc. from a small, five-person production company to a 430-person multimedia conglomerate. "Today, she is one of a handful of black billionaires across the globe; her net worth estimated at \$2.5 billion" (*Allyne, 2008*).

Born to unmarried parents, a miner father and a mother who worked as a maid, Oprah's early years were filled with abuse, loneliness, and heartache. But what she was forced to overcome became a driving force for making Oprah what she is now, an incredible entrepreneur and mentor to women and men around the world.

"Her unprecedented success in American business serves as the undisputed blueprint for many minority entrepreneurs. Her leadership has broken down barriers; her business instinct the stuff of legend; and her innovation unprecedented. She has spent her entire career beating the odds - and has inspired millions of business-minded minorities in the process" (*Allyne, 2008*).

What career women can learn from Oprah:

What career women can learn from Oprah:

Sometimes it pays not to 'over plan' things: Oprah claims not to be much of a strategist; rather, "she asserts that divine inspiration, not strategic planning, is the key to her company's success: 'I haven't planned one thing – ever. I have just been led by a strong instinct, and I have made choices based on what was right for me at the time'" (Allyne, 2008).

Demonstrate a strong work ethic: While Oprah worked as a news anchor she also took on the responsibilities as host of a morning television talk show. Throughout her career, Oprah has never shied away from hard work, she welcomes it.

Don't be afraid to be an entrepreneur: Her entrepreneurial mind-set and willingness to take risks has paid off by propelling her forward throughout her career. She sought out opportunities as an actress, invested in start-up businesses, such as Oxygen, an independent cable network for women, and most recently, launched the Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN).

Create a moral-support network: Oprah created a cheering squad with people such as her best friend, Gayle King, and Stedman Graham, who helped her during difficult and lonely times in her career.

Create a professional-support network: Over the years Oprah has built up a professional network and been able to reach out to some of the most successful business people in the world for help or advice. In turn, she has also given back to others such as helping Barack Obama with his political campaign for president.

Lead and inspire others: Oprah's leadership style demands that nothing be taken for granted. "I don't yell at people, I don't mistreat people, I don't talk down to people. Treating people with respect is the most important thing to me. It's not just talk" (Allyne, 2008).

Oprah has been a wonderful role model for myself and for women all around the world because she has demonstrated the key traits necessary to achieve your dreams. She has proven that it does not matter from where you come; what matters is where you want to go, how you get yourself there, and how you treat people along the way. She has shown me that to be a successful entrepreneur takes courage and the ability to try new things, even in the face of uncertainty.

But what I will probably always remember is that she has become more than a talk show host and more than a business woman – she is a mentor to women around the world." *Lisa Quast*.

Entrepreneurial Scholarship

I believe that an entrepreneurial scholarship should be created for women that would enable them to get help (writing a business plan, etc.) for starting up a business in the field of aviation. There are plenty of female professionals who have a solid industry background and knowledge and the passion for aviation who could become successful and inspiring entrepreneurs. They may lack just some specific knowledge (legal, financial, etc.) to be an entrepreneur. Some have it together already in their mind and may just need that little extra encouragement to get started. A financial institution or an aviation consulting business could consider sponsoring such a scholarship. Part of the scholarship or whatever it may be called should be that mentors and experts would make themselves available to accompany these starters, or at least make their coordinates available in the spirit of "Have a question or problem? Call me!"

Taking Flight

'Taking Flight' sounds very much like it has to do with aviation, doesn't it? How about 'Wing-to-Wing'? It is a Women's Mentoring Project and a global volunteer movement that aims to inspire women to reach out to other women and, through the simple act of offering guidance and insight, help them achieve their personal and professional aspirations. The project is the brainchild of author, career coach and mentor, Lisa Quast who envisions a world where women actively reach out to other women and offer their professional and personal support; mentoring women to success. Lisa describes her view:

"Mentoring another person is one of the greatest gifts you could give them. And there's almost no better feeling in the world than to help another person accomplish their dreams. There's an unexplained karma in the world that you get what you give and the more people you mentor the more the rewards come back to you, only multiplied."

"If a caterpillar can transform into a beautiful butterfly, a woman can transform herself into the person she wants to be." – *Lisa Quast*

Wing to Wing™ Women's Mentoring Project is a global volunteer movement that aims to inspire women to reach out to other women and, through the simple act of offering guidance and insight, help them achieve their personal and professional aspirations. The website gives information on how to get involved and who can be a mentor (<http://www.wing2wingproject.org>). Being a mentor can be one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do!



Lisa Quast is the founder and president of Career Woman, Inc., a Seattle-based international career development consulting company. Drawing from her personal experiences and passion for helping other women in business, Lisa acts as a mentor and coach dedicated to helping women improve their careers and achieve their professional aspirations. Lisa is also the author of the book, "Your Career, Your Way! Personal Strategies to Achieve Your Career Aspirations" She may be contacted via her own website <http://careerwomaninc.com>