



## INFLUENTIAL WOMEN: LUCIA BARBIERI LIFE AND BUSINESS COACH AND TRAINER

**Dear Lucia, thank you for taking the time to answer our questions. We would ask you first to kindly introduce yourself and explain your work as a coach and trainer, mainly in the women empowerment field career coach?**

First of all, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present myself and my job to the ICC and its Mentor-hood newsletter, sharing my experience with you, and hoping to be somehow of inspiration and motivation. I work as a life and business coach and trainer, mainly dealing with personal growth and relationship (or teams) management. I help my coachees to understand their passion and potentials and to enlighten them (my motto is, "Ignite your passion and enlighten your talents").

A specific sector of my job is related to women empowerment, mainly on a personal and professional level, working on self-esteem and fulfilment of goals. It is quite surprising when I have been contacted by you as I am right know starting a programme for women criminal lawyers, based on leadership skills, effective communication in the courtroom and outside it; on how to be assertive with the jury, but also with colleagues and, not least, with clients. It will be held in presence, in Tuscany, next spring and it will see the participation, as speakers, also of women judges and public prosecutors. Therefore, I feel even more connected to your reality.

**A lot of female professionals have heard, as part of their education, "you are a woman, you need to do twice as a man would do to reach your career goal". Do you agree with this statement?**

Surely, I heard it too, sometimes as a suggestion, sometimes as a hidden warning or even as an excuse (for not letting me go further). But I guess, as most of women, I experienced it the hard way, apart from only hearing it.

**L**ucia Barbieri

Trainer and life & business coach, with more than 15 years of international experience.



My vision is to be a light for the people around me and for my clients. My mission is to release the potential and guide them to enhance themselves and in turn enhance those close to them. I am specialized in the personal development of individuals, which in teams turns into strengthening the skills and potential of the entire team. My expertise in women's empowerment leads me to have a special focus on it, especially on self-esteem, female leadership, effective, intercultural and body language communication, emotional intelligence.

Fortunately, not in my family space, where I was encouraged to follow my dreams wherever they would have seemed "not right for a girl" (they knew which kind of girl it was about!). In fact, my academic studies brought me to live in the Middle East, and after to be a trainer in the Euro-Mediterranean framework for the European and Council of Europe training institutions. A job which brought me to travel a lot, being very few days at home and facing challenging situations. Later I moved to the private sector as business and life coach. Especially in the business sector, I often encounter even now the need to "do twice as a man" and I see how much I have to be competent and assertive in order to be heard. Most of the times, I am in male framework and, especially at the beginning, I found a lot of cour-

## INFLUENTIAL WOMEN: LUCIA BARBIERI LIFE AND BUSINESS COACH AND TRAINER (CNTD)

tesy, but not consideration, at least, as much as I wanted (and deserved!). Now things are much different. First, for my self-awareness and self-esteem which lead me to behave with more consciousness and assertiveness. But also, the attitude of other people has changed. We should “educate” people how to treat us. If we underestimate ourselves, others will imitate accordingly.

interview. While I was almost maniacally focusing on the details and language techniques of his work (his 60s psychological production), referring to what critics said and interpreted, he told me “not to listen to the interpretations of others, but to focus on my own perceiving”. From that moment on, the interview turned into an informal and such agreeable talk, I will never forget. And my understanding of my own perception was much more deepened and discovered for the years after.

I had a mission and goal and an approach how to reach them (even if for a while unconsciously). The steps have then been several and diverse. In a few words I could say it has always been raising the bar and accepting new challenges. As Bette Davis said “The key to life is accepting challenges. Once someone stops doing this, he's dead”. Well, I followed this passionately (don't want to feel dead-like). Sometimes things did not

go right, but real success is accepting failure, learning from it and moving forward. Much forward. Standing up, even after a KO (“*Inside of a ring or out, ain't nothing wrong with going down. It's staying down that's wrong.*” – Muhammad Ali). Indeed, sometimes failing is useful, because it makes you see things differently, more objectively. It makes you set challenging but achievable goals. It makes you understand better what your weaknesses are and to work on them, and to your strengths.

### Where do you see yourself in five years' time; what drives you personally to move forward?

This is a typical coaching question. And I do like it a lot, thanks for asking!

In five years, I see myself with my business expanded, in the international level but without losing the Italian sphere (for the moment my web site is in Italian but within this sum-

### Can you describe your career journey as a woman? Were there some turning points?

I could say that my journey has been really rich and intense. There have been major turning points which marked it. I have always had a mission, even if it was not clear until a few years ago. I first discovered it when I was seventeen (it had to do with Pink Floyd and Virginia Woolf), then I buried it (in words, but unconsciously not in facts) until a decade ago when I started working as a mentor first and coach later: my mission is being a light for others, sort of a lighthouse to lighten the way, but also to cheer others' lives up. Presumptuous? Maybe, or maybe simply conscious and aware. Idealistic? Maybe, or simply challenging and responsible.

Another turning point has been while writing my thesis dissertation about the Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz. I had the chance to meet him in Cairo and was granted a private



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mer I intend to have the English version ready). It is interesting, though as I started my career internationally, then moved on the national level to spread again the wings... I think passions and “destinies” cannot be tied. Actually, going back to Italy with a product very new for the area was one of the biggest challenges ever; and now that I am getting the results, I can say I made the right decision (I had also to reconnect personally to my roots).

My motivation is the feedback of my clients and following this I expect to change also my offer, accordingly to the needs and desires I encounter on my way. Surely my curiosity drives me, too, as it always did. It drives me to challenge myself and to try new fields, approaches, and roles.

Success is accepting failure, learning from it and moving forward.  
Standing up, even after a knock-out !

I have my plans, but I am always ready to be flexible, to things that could happen and thus getting out of my comfort zone (also this pandemic made me change my offer to lots of services online and not just in presence, and thus even internationally).

As for my private life, well there is the biggest question mark and flexibility needed... I am curious myself to see where it will lead me...

**Have you ever benefited from a mentoring programme yourself? If yes, what was your experience?**

Yes, I have been a mentee and then a mentor myself. I encountered a programme during my training career for the European commission. It was an Anglo-American foundation for the empowerment of women around the world. I later became a pro-bono mentor myself, and the feedback of my mentee at that time (I completely changed her life and let her help in finding the courage and motivation to follow her goals in life and job) made understand the “gift” I had. This was the turning point which made devote myself to the coaching field, in helping other, with a special attention to women leadership and self-esteem. Also the training sphere has found advantages in that, as I redeveloped my skills and approaches more on the personal growth and attention to the individual perspectives.

**Do you have any advice for the mentees at the Court on how to build further on their experience?**

My advice is to find and follow your own goals. Not someone else’s. For doing this it is essential networking with other women and finding mentors or guidance to set and reach the proper goals.

My advice is to understand who you are and who you want to be. In a few – but stony-words: to be authentic. Do not imitate others, do not compare yourself to others (yes, learn, but make the teaching yours). Do not compete with others, but with yourself.

Be yourself. Authentic. Everything else will follow. ■



**Lucia Barbieri**

COACH & TRAINER

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