

# LeadershipHQ



Leadership Headquarters

Issue 5 - May 2016

STOP BEING A  
**BOSS AND START  
BEING A LEADER**

**EXECUTIVE  
COACHING**  
HELPING YOU REFINE YOUR  
LEADERSHIP FOCUS

**LEADING  
INNOVATION**

EMOTIONAL  
**INTELLIGENCE**  
THE NOT-SO-SECRET  
TO LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP  
AND MENTAL  
**HEALTH FOR  
TEENAGERS**

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# CAROLYN

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## CRESWELL

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THIS MONTH'S AMAZING LEADER OF LEADERS INTERVIEW



# THIS MONTH'S LEADER OF LEADERS INTERVIEW

**C**arolyn Creswell, Founder of Carman's bought a small muesli business when she was 18 and the rest is history. Now 24 years on, her gourmet range of muesli and bars are now available in all major supermarkets and is exported to many countries around the world. Carolyn has a strong commitment to her brand and employees. She was named the 2012 Telstra Business Woman of the Year and is a leader worth celebrating.



## **What do you love best about what you do?**

At the end of the day, I feel like it's my ability to 'make a difference' to people's lives that I love most about my job. It thrills me to no end seeing one of our products in someone's shopping basket in the supermarket. It's a reminder that my dream has become a reality. It's our aim for our products to 'delight' on a daily basis. People love Carman's and there is a real human connection to the brand. There are no gimmicks needed to sell our products as they naturally sell themselves.

## **What's your purpose - your WHY?**

I think it's to try and leave this world in a better place than when I arrived. We try to add a little bit of sparkle to someone's day with the delicious products we make. Not only do they taste good, they're good for you too. These days I'm also asked to perform many speaking engagements. I'm lucky that I can express my standpoint on issues that are close to my heart too; mainly my feelings on working women and asylum seekers. I also get to share my life's lessons with others. Society really needs to be more appreciative of working women. I believe the more vocal we are; the more we have the ability to change other's attitudes on the subject.

## **How would you describe your Leadership Style**

I have a very light touch and like to treat people just as I would like to be treated myself.



***. I HAVE THE NEED TO KEEP MOVING, TO DO BETTER, TO BE BETTER AND MAKE THE MOST OF EACH DAY THAT WE HAVE.***



My expectations are high; however I've employed the most incredible team at Carman's with an amazing 'can do' attitude. I have a collaborative and problem solving approach; it is not so much about me but what we can do as a team. We've got a really solid corporate strategy and a great company culture - backed by the most brilliant people. I am very adept at linking everything back to our strategy when we execute. I often refer to a sign that sits on my desk that says Culture Eats Strategy For Breakfast!

#### **Key achievements and successes - any come to mind?**

I have four beautiful children and a wonderfully happy family. Now that's what I consider my biggest success. And to top off that, I have a number one brand in the Australian marketplace. I've also had the honour of being named Telstra Business Woman of the Year. Carman's has also had strong success with exporting. It was so fascinating when I recently visited Dubai to see our 100% Australian brand in a foreign supermarket.

#### **Who has made a difference in your career?**

My mum. She has been very good in ensuring I always put myself into our customer's shoes. I actually have a huge

list of people that I admire and I'm lucky enough to be able to tap into them regularly so that I can find answers to help me keep moving forward. It is important to have access to people who motivate you to be your best- and use them when you need to.

#### **What are your strengths and unique talents?**

I have a strong EQ which when it comes to leadership, I believe is even more important than IQ. Recently I did the Australian Institute of Company Directors course. 25 CEOs and CFOs started, yet only 5 of us graduated. It is not about being the smartest but rather who will work the hardest; the one that will take risks and put themselves on the line. I am a strong people-person. I really like dealing with our clients. I am very focused on strategy, time management and the big picture; yet all the while not ignoring the attention to detail along the way. I cross the T's and dot the I's at every turn.

#### **What does the future hold for you?**

At this point in time, the sky is the limit. Carman's still has enormous potential and opportunity for bigger growth across the globe in Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). I also have more clarity on how we can execute our new ideas and future growth. I am talking

double digit growth, which is amazing, and I can't see that stopping any time soon.

#### **Key Learning in your Career**

Don't do something in a big way. First do it in a small way. Test and tweak what you are doing, execute and then evolve so you can be better tomorrow. How can I be better tomorrow? I'm happy to tweak our packaging every print run (which is unheard of in this market). I am always doing this in my personal life too - I tweak this, I try that. I have the need to keep moving, to do better, to be better and make the most of each day that we have.

#### **What would you say to your younger self?**

Learn to use the word NO. It is not so much about what you do but what you don't do. It comes back to your strategy and what you do well. Use the data you have at your disposal to make a difference and if you don't have it, get it. Having fun has always been an important element in my workday too. Not every road will be a smooth one. I have had distractions, which, while frustrating at the time, made me who I am. I have had difficult suppliers who have made me stronger than I ever thought possible. You need to just put yourself in the arena and see what happens. Navigate through the rocky parts with confidence.