

womeninprint

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CEO profile

Mary L. Catona
From the Philadelphia Business Journal

Personal information

Name: Mary L. Catona

Title: President and CEO

Company: Environmental Waste Solutions Inc., Media.

Type of company: National management company for trash and recycling services.

Education: BS, physical education, West Chester University.

First job: I worked for a farmer when I was 13. I unloaded his truck, made displays and sold the produce.

Little known fact: I enjoy doing carpentry work and house painting.

Home: South Jersey.

Business philosophy

Essential business philosophy: I have always believed that upper management should listen to their employees. I listen to my staff regarding my business and I use their input to better my business.

Best way to keep a competitive edge: Always do your homework. I try to talk personally to my clients to find out what it is they are really looking for and then I incorporate what I discover into our service offerings.

Yardstick of success: The satisfaction of my clients and my ability to retain them.

Goal yet to be achieved: I would like to start a shelter for abused and neglected animals.

Judgment calls

Best decision: Hiring staff that I can consistently rely on and trust. Having people like that work for me makes for a comfortable working environment and higher productivity.

Worst decision: I had a client for six years who filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. When they were back on their feet, I signed another contract with them, against my better judgment. They shortly filed for bankruptcy again and my company lost a significant amount of money.

Toughest decision: Having to let employees go when I really care about them but they're not getting the job done.

Mentor: Two elementary school teachers of mine: a guidance counselor, Mrs. Cavanaugh, who told me and my parents I'd be very successful as an adult; and a math teacher, Barbara

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Mary L. Catona

March 2004

Calendar grid for March 2004 with dates 1-31.

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True confessions

Word that best describes you: Determined.

Like best about your job: Selling our services.

Like least about job: Having to fire someone.

Most important lesson learned: When I first started out in business, I gave away a lot of advice and services for free. I soon learned that if you give too much you get little back in return.

Life motto: My mother taught me to go always with my gut feeling. It is the greatest indicator of what's to come.

Greatest fear: Not being able to use my hands one day.

Person most interested in meeting: Madonna. She is the ultimate salesperson.

Most respected company: Nordstrom, for their unwavering commitment to customer service.

First choice for a new career: To start a company selling unique and healthy animal products and services.

Greatest extravagance: Buying my niece her first car.

Etc.

Award/honor most proud of: I'll have my black belt in karate by the end of the year.

Most influential book: "The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom," by Don Miguel Ruiz.

Favorite movie: "When Harry Met Sally."

Favorite restaurant: My mother's kitchen.

Favorite vacation spot: Italy.

Favorite way to spend free time: Hanging at the beach and listening to waves.

Automobile: 2003 Volvo XC9. •

-- Mia Geiger

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