

Marilyn Johnson, CEO, International Women's Forum

| Laura Dunn

Marilyn Johnson, a leading advertising and marketing strategist and business growth executive, joined the Worldwide Women's Forum as CEO, following a thirty-five yr occupation with IBM. Ms. Johnson retired as the IBM Vice President of Market place Development primarily based in Armonk, New York. In her previous capability, Ms. Johnson led an organization accountable for creating IBM's method for, and advertising to, organizations owned or operated by Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Ladies in the Americas. In 2005, she expanded her mission to include women-owned and females-led firms in picked markets around the globe, expanding IBM market place share substantially. She has held executive positions in key IBM business units and has had management and operational accountability in North America, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Asia. With professional experience in training, broadcasting, corporate advertising and marketing, improvement and income, Ms. Johnson's job trajectory displays a deep knowing of the broad industries and sectors that exist inside of the membership of the International Women's Forum.

In her early career, she was an elementary college educator and a television character, reporting news and climate. A graduate of John Marshall University, her advanced degrees are in Schooling, and she attended the Harvard Business School Strategic Leadership Forum representing Finance Sector Advertising and marketing for IBM.

She has held positions on the Executive Board of the Council for Far better Business Bureaus and the Executive Boards of the Asian Pacific Islander American Scholarship Basis, the Nationwide Council of Negro Women, and American Airlines Marketing Advisory Council. She has been applauded for her lively commitment to mentoring and coaching females in various profession paths. Ms. Johnson has been a featured speaker for many professional organizations and universities close to the world, like The Globe Diversity Conference in the City of Prague in the Czech Republic the Black Girls Executive Roundtable hosted by the Mayor of Paris, France B.I.G. (Blacks in Government), Washington, D.C. AWAKE in Mysore, India Girls Chiefs in Canberra, Australia and Worldwide Organization for Leadership and Diversity (GOLD) in Tokyo, Japan. In recognition of her many enterprise and specialist achievements, Ms. Johnson has obtained quite a few awards, which includes the "Corporate Supporter of Females Entrepreneurs Award" in Beijing, China "The Profiles of Prominence Award" from the Nationwide Females of Achievement, Inc. and the Center for Women's Organization Analysis "Top By Example Award." She also was named 1 of "The Leading 25 Influential Black Women" by The Network Journal magazine and was inducted into the YWCA of New York City's prestigious "Academy of Females Leaders." She has been featured in Operating Mother magazine, ESSENCE magazine, Minority Company News, The Monetary Occasions, The Atlanta Tribune, International Executive Women, Enterprising Girls magazine, and Uptown Expert magazine.

How has your daily life knowledge made you the leader you are right now?

A quite substantial bar was set by my family members values, academically educators pushed me and supported my ambition, my 34+ years of corporate orientation enabled me to operate with some of the smartest men and women on the planet. I am a leader that models some of the very best leaders in academics, enterprise and the non profit worlds.

How has your previous employment experience aided your position at IWF?

As a advertising and revenue executive who spent time finding out buyer sets, international business operations, and strategic marketing arranging in my early executive job and possessing leadership seasoned in a merger and acquisition, I was lucky to garner a breath of capabilities that gave me self-assurance to face challenge and change.

What have the highlights and challenges been during your tenure at IWF?

The challenge first-- I followed a CEO with outstanding expertise in increasing this organization globally. Assessing how to make a excellent worldwide organization greater is an awesome challenge. The membership has quite higher expectations and deserves the exact same growth final results and good quality programs that my predecessor delivered. The highlight has been truly functioning with the board of directors and meeting some of the preeminent ladies member leaders who make up the illustrative roster.

Marketing on a tight budget

As we find ourselves in the most difficult market conditions our industry has ever faced, it is now more important than ever to market yourself effectively.

Business is increasingly difficult to find, and you can no longer rely on people to find you. The competition in the industry has nearly evaporated, the Big Four banks are taking almost every opportunity and clients seem to want much of a choice anyway. They are happy indeed, enjoying more often than not to go with the "Big Four," so why do they need the services of a broker?

Brokers are critical for our industry, offering choice, competition and customer service that the banks simply cannot match. Try contacting a bank regarding your mortgage application and you will go with a broker every time!

So, how do you get yourself noticed? Even though there are fewer brokers, how do you market yourself when you have no marketing budget?

Networks The first thing to do is to call every one of your existing clients. Yes, every one. It is far easier to sell to an existing customer than to find a new one, and far less expensive. If they personally do not require your services at this time, then ask for referrals. "Who do you know who would also benefit from the services I provide?" This is the cheapest, and by far the best, form of marketing you can do.

Local groups Call into your local RSL, tennis or cricket club and ask if you can place a note on their community notice board. Your flyer needs to be very simple and eye catching, promoting your ability to save people money while offering excellent service. Something along the lines of "Save \$50 each month!" or "FREE Homebus Check!"

Networking Most people either do not know what networking is or fear it -- or both. Networking is simply getting yourself, and what you do, known to as many people as possible. For example, there are internet sites dedicated to assisting you to network locally as LinkedIn which you can join and invite people to 'connect' with you. There may already be a group of people in your local area on LinkedIn, who meet regularly specifically for networking. There is one such group in Adelaide and I can see there are numerous ones around the country. All you need to do is search for them.

Other networking opportunities involve attending meetings of local groups that interest you. This can be a sporting group, a business group, or a special interest group (political, environmental, local government). Once they get to know you they may offer you services or refer you to people they know.

Every time you meet someone, they always ask what you do. Have a 30 second 'pitch' rehearsed and ready, and finish by giving them your business card. "I save people thousands on their mortgages by finding the best product for them," is one way to start your 'pitch'.

Always have business cards on you, no matter where you go. Every person you meet is a networking opportunity!

Summary All of these marketing ideas take up time, your time, but they are also very inexpensive. All you need are business cards, some colour flyers and you are a one-person marketing machine!

Not everyone can afford advertisements in the local newspaper every week, and these often only show a return after you have placed half a dozen advertisements in it.

The secret is to be your own business development manager and marketing, albeit it is very difficult to take a step back and work on your business rather than financially making, in your business, but you need to spend one hour per week thinking about your business in order to be successful.

Sometimes, several hours spent with someone who specialises in assisting small businesses do this can be money well spent.

So get out there and sell as many people as you can what you do. It is surprisingly effective and extremely economical."



Craig Pickering

Are mortgage managers obsolete?

With the decline in the fortunes of non-banks have come questions about the long-term future of mortgage managers.

Consultant Craig Pickering remains optimistic.

What are extreme changes to our industry over the past year, many of us are asking: "What will be the next big change?"

The number of mortgage managers nationally has significantly decreased and, with all players in the channel to market (lenders, wholesale funders, banks and mortgage managers) suffering margin squashes, there is need to further rationalisation.

The major banks have cut commissions and now offer cheaper rates on their own products than those available through the broker channel. By doing so, they have made their intention very clear -- minimise the number of businesses that originate from brokers and therefore reduce the cost of delivering their product to the end customer.

So, where to from here?

Some funders, such as Challenger, have expanded their business models. Challenger now owns a significant proportion of the aggregator space. There is no doubt that the wholesale funders generally are looking for ways to reduce their costs -- let's not mention GE Money!

In the past, lenders have preferred to deal with mortgage managers rather than brokers because it is far less expensive to manage two hundred mortgage managers than it is to look after thousands of brokers.

But margins are tighter now, so will this change?

Economic reality

I have no doubt that the current wholesale funders (like Challenger) would prefer to continue to utilize mortgage managers, but economic reality may force their hand.

The market channel currently involves the wholesale funders obtaining funds and adding their margin, which they then pass on to the mortgage managers that add their margin, and finally the brokers earn a margin (commission), which they either set themselves or have set for them. Add into this mix referral fees to accountants, financial planners, incentive schemes and so on and you have many fingers in a rather small pie.

So far, the remaining mortgage managers have survived by reducing their margins and rationalising. Brokers have also had their margins cut and wholesale funders are making a lot less money than they were 18 months ago.

The result is that everyone is making less money (except perhaps the major banks, forcing many to leave the industry or change their business model). Australian Central Credit Union becoming a broker is one example, and CBA purchasing one-third of Aussie another.

Where to now for mortgage managers?

Are they a dying breed? Many of them were brokers as well as mortgage managers and have simply gone back to being a broker.

Rationalising these hybrid businesses from the equation provides a growth opportunity for those businesses that specialise in only mortgage management. This will, in turn, increase their importance for the market channel.

In these market conditions, quality always rises to the top. With less money being earned for the mortgage industry overall, it will be those businesses with efficient processes, excellent service and solid business relationships that will flourish.

Put simply, their earnings will grow because their market share will increase at a greater rate than their margins have decreased.

And, yes, the best mortgage managers will succeed."



Craig Pickering

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What do you consider is the recent status of females in company?

The energy of women in company is currently being measured much more and much more by academics, boards of directors and those that decide worth in human sources. Ladies are the engine of inclusion and continue to prove the advantage of diversity.

How do you sustain a function/life stability?

I operate everyday intentionally -- performing my work nicely. As for balance --FaceTime with grandchildren who live 2400 miles away aids tremendously. Also, I have acknowledged when my physical limit of energy is expended, I view tension elements everyday, and reward my own

accomplishment by mastering in domain compensatory consumption. I like to think of myself as a spa aficionado and retail therapy with excellent pals and performs.

What do you consider is the most significant issue for women in the workplace?

Females are as well frequently overlooked as a important talent pool for leadership. Merely place, we are also typically anticipated to "support" and we ourselves with the aid of wise men need to change that narrow paradigm in the enterprise planet.

How has mentorship produced a difference in your professional and individual lifestyle?

I develop as I aid other folks throughout their climb. I enjoy it when my mentees increase beyond my job achievement. I am proud of the function I do in this space.

Which other female leaders do you admire and why?

Dr Dorothy Height (50 years of Civil Rights and Human Rights Activism)

Deedee Coradini (very first female mayor of Salt Lake City and IWF former president)

Shelia Johnson (initial man or woman to have ownership in 3 significant sports activities teams and brilliant entrepreneur)

What do you want IWF to achieve in the up coming year?

Three huge factors: a Recognized leadership improvement status globally.

Continued strategic international expansion of our forums, and a voice [Hobbies](#) of impact at the United Nations (on Women's Troubles globally.)

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/laura-dunn/girls-in-company-_b_7426776.html