

## AN ETHICS PHILOSOPHY MANAGEMENT. THE MARY KAY COSMETICS CASE

Professor PhD **Gh. Gh. IONESCU**  
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, West University of Timișoara, Romania  
E-mail: ghghionescu@yahoo.com  
Associate Professor PhD **Adina NEGRUȘA**  
Faculty of Business, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
E-mail: anegrusa@tbs.ubbcluj.ro

Being involved in a project focused on “*Feminine entrepreneurship and equal chances*”, I had to do some research concerning the literature on feminine entrepreneurship worldwide, especially in the developed western countries, and, of course on women’s business opportunities within Romanian economy. This research work has opened me a large and fascinating view on the topic of women in business and management.

First of all, we have to point out some features of feminine entrepreneurship. Latterly, feminine entrepreneurship has become a more and more interesting topic for academic, business and at the same time, the political world. This topic has been interesting, on the one hand due to a general interest in entrepreneurship – where women play an important part-, and, on the other hand, admitting the fact that nowadays, women have a great influence on development of national economy all over the world, creating jobs, wealth and welfare.

Secondly, women entrepreneurs provide original and new solutions for solving company’s issues, at the same time, they tend to be well-trained and experienced as a reaction to “glass ceiling- invisible barriers” and develop carriers in more challenging and non-discriminatory areas, such entrepreneurship.

Thirdly, a major part of the academic literature claims that women have a different behaviour (compared to men, and thus, this is being reflected in their entrepreneurship. Although, within the academic literature, there have been admitted the valuable contributions women brought to the development of business, providing innovative solutions for the current problems and exploiting new business opportunities.

In the fourth, there are only a few studies focused on women business owners. Researching the literature thoroughly, we can say that women entrepreneurship has been neglected both by the academic world and mass media.

In the fifth place, despite all these aspects reflecting an ignorance of feminine entrepreneurship, there are also a lot of useful topics on feminine entrepreneurship that might be teaching materials for starting and developing lasting businesses, bringing about welfare, such as: features and motivations of women entrepreneurs; development patterns of businesses owned by women; feminine entrepreneurship pattern under the circumstances of social, cultural and economic barriers; characteristics and patterns of feminine management; characteristics of assessing feminine entrepreneurship and management a.s.o.

### **Mary Kay Ash, a life dedicated to consumers’ welfare**

Mary Kathryn Wagner was born in a place outside Huston, Hot Wells, Texas, on 12 May 1918.

In 1935 she marries Ben Rogers having three children, Richard Rogers being the one who helps her later to run her own business.

At the beginning of 1940s she gets a job as a sales agent for Stanley Home Products, selling household products. She attends yearly seminars held in Dallas, where the top sales agent used to be awarded the title “Sales Queen” and received a crocodile leather handbag.

In 1953, she starts working for another direct sales company “World Gifts”, where, she is promoted as National Training Director. In 1963, she quits her job in protest, after watching the man she trained, get promoted above her, earning twice her salary.

On 13 September 1963, Mary Ash starts her own business, “Mary Kay Cosmetics”, later called Mary Kay Inc. She has started with an initial investment of 5000 USD, helped by her youngest son, Richard Rogers. She purchased the formula of a skin lotion from the family of J.W. Health, a tanner in Arkansas. In the first year, Mary Kay Cosmetics had nine skin care “beauty consultants” (that was the name for sales agents of the new company) and 20.000 USD profit, operating from a small Dallas shop, of about 180 square meters since the second year she starts holding seminars yearly for her sales agents. At the beginning, 200 sales agents worked for her company. In 1966, she marries Mel Ash, her third husband, who dies in 1980.

In 1976, the company is quoted on the New York Stock Exchange. In 1979, Mary Kay Inc. has more 100 million USD profit and for the first time the money received from beauty consultancy and skin revival system is over 1 million USD. Also, this year witnesses an important advertising event; CBS TV Network allows 60 minutes to show the public a portrait of Mary Kay.

Due to the love and appreciation of her customers, young women within the business world, Mary writes three inspiring books, speaking about her own experience in business, all of them becoming bestseller. Thus, in 1981 her first book, an autobiography is published, simply called “*Mary Kay*”, the second one, “*Mary Kay on People Management*” is published in 1984, and, the last one “*Mary Kay: You Can Have it All*” is published in 1995. After a long lasting fight with “Beauty Control”, this company is bought by Richard Heath, a one of Mary Kate Cosmetics’ former employees. Together with his wife Jinger, Heath re-launches this company to compete with Mary Kay Inc.

In 2001, on Thanksgiving Day (maybe it was not a coincidence), Mary Kay Ash dies at the age of 83. One year later, in 2003 CBS shows for the first time, a film called “*The Battle of Mary Kay*” whose topic was the rivalry between Mary Kay Ash and Jinger Health, the co-founder of Beauty Control Cosmetics. In 2004 Mary Kay Inc. has been one of the top skin care cosmetics distributors, dealing with 200 products, having an impressive sales force, 1.1 million sales persons (also known as beauty consultants) worldwide, on over 30 markets. The wholesale sales of 2003 got to a record figure: 1.8 billion USD. Also, in 2003, Mary Kay’s grandson, Ryan Rogers, according to his confession in the preface of the latest edition of “*Mary Kay Way*” (2008), was honored to accept his grandmother’s award “The Greatest Female Entrepreneur in American History.

### **The 23 principles used in managing by “Mary Kay Cosmetics” pointing out the Christian protestant moral and culture**

- 1. Golden Rule Leadership.** The Golden Rule is one of the world’s oldest and best-known philosophies, yet it is frequently overlooked in business circles. Mary Kay demonstrates that this rule is still powerful in today’s complicated world.

2. ***You Build with People.*** Leaders are dependent upon the performance of their people, and so is a company's success. Good people are a company's most important asset. People are more important than the plan.
3. ***The Invisible Sign.*** Every one has an invisible sign hanging from his or her neck saying, "MAKE ME FEEL IMPORTANT!" Never forget this message when working with people.
4. ***Praise People to Success.*** Each of us craves to be recognized. Let people know that you appreciate their performance and they will respond by doing even better. Recognition is the most powerful of all motivating techniques.
5. ***The Art of Listening. Good leaders are good listeners.*** God gave us two ears and one mouth, so we should listen twice as much as we speak. When you listen, the benefit is twofold: you receive necessary information, and you make the other person feel important.
6. ***Sandwich Every Bit of Criticism between Two Heavy Layers of Praise.*** Sometimes it is necessary to let somebody know that you are unhappy with his/her performance. But be certain to direct your criticism at the act, not the person. It is important to criticize effectively – in a positive way, so that you don't destroy morale.

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7. ***Be a Follow-through Person.*** Be the kind of person who can always be counted on to do what you say you'll do. Only a small percent of people possess follow-through ability and they are held in high esteem by all. It's particularly important for your team members or employees to know that you possess this rare quality and for them to think of you as a totally reliable person.
8. ***Enthusiasm ... Moves Mountains!*** Nothing great is ever achieved without enthusiasm. Leaders are enthusiastic, and enthusiasm is contagious. Interestingly, the word enthusiasm has a Greek origin meaning "God Within".
9. ***The Speed of the Leader Is the Speed of the Gang.*** You must set the pace for your people. Real leaders aren't afraid to get their hands dirty, and they set examples for others by demonstrating good work habits, displaying positive attitudes, and possessing a team spirit. True leaders establish success patterns that make everyone think success.
10. ***People Will Support That Which They Help to Create.*** An effective leader invites people to participate in new projects that are still in the "thinking" stage. By confiding in associates and seeking their opinions, they generate support at the initial stage of each new venture. It's a fact that people often resist change when they don't participate in the decision-making process. Some of the best leaders "plant the seed" that permits others to propose the idea and take credit for it!
11. ***An Open-Door Philosophy.*** At Mary Kay corporate headquarters, there are no titles on executives' doors, and there is ready access to all management levels. Everyone within the Company – from mailroom clerk to chairman of the board – is a human being and is treated accordingly.

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12. ***Help Other People Get What They Want – and You’ll Get What You Want.*** As the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30) tell us, we are meant to use and increase whatever God has given us. And when we do, we shall be given more.
13. ***Stick to Your Principles. Everything is subject to change – except one’s principles.*** Never, absolutely never, compromise your principles.
14. ***A Matter of Pride.*** Everyone within an organization should have a sense of pride in his or her work. They should also feel proud to be associated with the company. It is a manager’s job to instill this feeling and to promote this attitude among his or her people.
15. ***You Can’t Rest on Your Laurels.*** Nothing wilts faster than a laurel rested upon. Every person should have a life time self-improvement program. In today’s fast-paced world you can’t stand still. You either go forward or backward.
16. ***Be a Risk-Taker.*** You must encourage people to take risks; let them know that “nobody wins’em all”. If you come down on them too hard for losing, they’ll stop sticking their necks out.
17. ***Work and Enjoy It.*** It’s ok to have fun while you work; good managers encourage a sense of humor. In fact, the more enjoyment people derive from their work, the better they will produce.
18. ***Nothing Happens Until Somebody Sells Something!*** Every organization has something to “sell”, and every person in the company must realize that nothing happens until somebody sells something. And accordingly, they should be fully supportive of the selling effort.

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19. ***Never Hide behind Policy or Pomposity.*** Never say “That’s against company policy” unless you have a good explanation to back up the policy. It infuriates people. It’s as if you were saying, “We do it in this way because it’s the way we’ve always done it”. By the same token, pomposity can also be a transparent cover-up for incompetence.
20. ***Be a problem-Solver.*** The best leader recognize when a real problem exist and know how to take action to solver it. You must develop the ability to know the difference between a real problem and an imaginary one.
21. ***Less Stress. Stress stifles productivity.*** Leaders strive to create a stress-free working atmosphere for their workers by using physical and psychological approaches.
22. ***Develop People from Within.*** The best-run companies develop their own managers from within – rarely do they seek outsiders. In fact, it’s a sign of weakness when a company goes outside too often for management personnel. The morale of the company is likely to suffer; people may begin to feel threatened and think, “No matter how well I perform, an outsider will probably get the position I want.”
23. ***Live by the Golden Rule On and Off the Job.*** Don’t be a hypocrite – live every day of the week as if it were Sunday. There’s no place for two sets of moral codes. Conduct yourself in business with the same scruples you would want your children to observe in their lives.