

LARISA MILLER

Exeleon looks into the story of Larisa Miller, CEO of Phoenix Global. An inspirational leader who has empowered the lives of millions through her actions.

A success story is incomplete without the failures that helped shape its journey. Those misfirings make room for better strategies and firmer steps that bolster success. Larisa Miller, the CEO of Phoenix Global, is one of those rare individuals who prefer to learn from her mistakes and build her success by having a premise on the knowledge gleaned from that.

In her own words, *“For me, I take those failures, analyze what I should have and could have done differently, and then I move forward. I don't get lost in the despair; regret, or let those mistakes cause me to second guess myself.”*

'What ifs' are a part of growth. The important thing is to make a decision. And then, follow it till the end no matter what forms the hurdles and how much you benefit at the end. Bitter or sweet, the *“conclusion you reach will leave you stronger than you were at inception.”*

The Butterfly Effect

People often think of possibilities or missed chances that could have impacted the outcome. But Larisa is different. She believes in accepting all the *“magnificent success and dismal failure”* she had throughout her career. All of it together has led her to where she stands now.

Changing things in the past could lead to a different present, just like a butterfly effect, and she does not want to ruin her present by altering things from the past.

She enjoys charting a proper course right from the beginning to the end. Each step from thinking, strategizing, 'the independence and the latitude to be able to pursue the opportunities' help her ensure a sustainable impact, something that corroborates her belief of business having a conscience.

This conscience triggers social responsibility. Larisa incorporates this “social responsibility” into her *“business model, with a priority toward educating and empowering women and youth to be able to pursue their dreams of entrepreneurship and independence.”* For her, 'peaceful oblivion' is no longer an option, and success cannot be achieved alone.

The sustainability depends on collaborations; on joining hands that will help in reaching out to a broader audience and enriching the portfolio. It will secure a better tomorrow.

The Foundation

Larisa always found meeting new people as a positive influence. This, especially, helped in broadening her 'weltanschauung' or the worldview.

Her humble upbringing in a grain farm outside of Hershey, Pennsylvania, gave her the knowledge of agricultural setup. Therein, seeds of realizing the value of being a human being above class and creed were sowed in her mind. The small town had people who knew everything about each other. Yet, she felt disconnected from the place, as an insatiable curiosity to know the outer world drove her ahead.

In her words, she *“is blessed (or plagued) with a great imagination.”* She has evolved into a global thinker by learning from a myriad of people with diverse cultural backgrounds. This experience shaped her *“into a true global thinker.”*

Her journeys took her to countries both flourishing with opportunities and revenues, and financially-challenged ones that are teeming with refugee camps. This experience of the

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It was once said that life never stops teaching, so you should never stop learning.

opposites made her realize that it is *“how we relate to one another, the lessons we learn from one another, and the collaborations and partnerships we form, help shape and distinguish us as global enterprises – and global citizens.”*

It is the exposure she has after working for years with governments, business, and industry leaders that helped her in adding a *“global perspective and understanding of the diverse business strategies at play in foreign markets.”*



This was a big plus for her clients. She is known for reaping its benefits by digging deep into strategies to ensure her clients get what they want in their endeavors to expand their businesses.

The Motivator

Larisa gives her father credit for inspiring her into achieving her dreams. In the Pennsylvania circle, in sectors like agriculture, environment, and politics, he is considered as an icon. From her mother, she attained the *“love of culture, history, and travel.”*

Her parents taught her well to drive by imparting the knowledge of the steering. She learned more on the road while charting her course.

As Larisa grew up, she realized, each and every person she met or interacted with has left a mark in her. People who defy odds made her realize they *“contribute to the world in unexpected ways and find ways to be successful without most of the resources and tools available to those”* who belong to the more privileged societies.

They remind her that the *“ultimate goal is to leave the planet better than*

we found it.” Someone like a 17-years of age Nadeen Qatameen, with her non-profit foundation called *Read and Past, Write the Future*, taught her of selflessness and empathy.

At Phoenix Global

Larisa likes to keep the mantra simple - *just pay attention*. The past is always there to distract the one willing to take the initiative. The trick is to stay present and be brave enough to chart courses as per the need. To stay ahead of the competitors, one needs to be receptive enough to embrace new strategies and models. The path also demands staying ahead of the herd and be wise enough to be prepared for unexpected industry shifts.

From her father, Larisa learned that finding gaps is crucial- both in terms of problems and opportunities. Often others fail to see these gaps but these can provide an edge in the competition.

This opens up opportunities that can lead to *“innovative and forward-thinking solutions that will help”* organizations in accelerating their operations. Larisa believes it is an advantage for her as, over the years,

BRIDGING THE GAPS

“When you are adept at looking for the gaps in the industry – regardless of industry, you can help clients to innovate their processes, offer first-of-their-kind services, and optimize operations, all of which translates into domination in the sector, improved efficiency and greater profitability.”



she has mastered this gap-finding ability. Now, irrespective of the industry, she can help clients in launching innovations in *“their processes, offer first-of-their-kind services, and optimize operations, all of which translates into domination in the sector”* with *“improved efficiency and greater profitability.”*

At Skopje Technology

Larisa believes that she is *“fortunate to serve as a principal partner and senior vice president of the Skopje Technology Park, founded by a significant group of individuals representing many sectors – finance, intelligence, security, technology/data, education, and hospitality.”*

The opportunity brought her closer to the Office of the Prime Minister of North Macedonia. The technology used in the process is the first-of-its-kind technology ecosystem. It encompasses all the latest technologies with top-notch facilities like robotics, cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence, e-government, and blockchain. However, she points out *“the heart of the project is our state-of-the-art mega-data centers.”*

The technology is also supporting innovations in Agritech, which helps the organization in bolstering and enhancing the agricultural industries in the regions.

In this project, she and her peers are focusing on quality collaborations that would provide them with an opportunity

to harness the best brains and build human capital, and ensure the project gets the requisite funds to spend on research and development.

The Leader

As a successful businesswoman, Larisa knows what can put a leader ahead of the rest. She believes in a life-long learning process that would always help in personal growth and development.

In life, the topsy-turvy road can pose challenges by putting up unexpected shifts but it can never take away the knowledge earned in the process. In a bid to develop, one can pick up hobbies and undertake new experiences to widen the vista and emerge as a 'well-rounded and innovative professional.' It will also help in becoming more 'understanding and reflective as an individual and responsible as a global citizen.'

This process of evolving will allow us to *“refine our character, expand on our dreams, be open to change and be more resolute in our commitment to impact, allowing us to realize unimaginable success, both personally and professionally.”*

In her journey, from a small town with an agricultural background to humdrums of some of the largest cities in the world, Larisa followed this belief. The things she has achieved so far can vouch for it.

