

WOMEN IN AESTHETICS BY WENDY LEWIS



Get to know Lori Deo, President/Managing Director of NeoStrata, Inc., a Johnson & Johnson Company

Lori Deo is a seasoned people leader with a proven track record. She holds a BS from Wilkes University and an MBA from Rutgers University.

A veteran of the Consumer Packaged Goods world, Lori's in-depth experience includes R&D, Operations, P&L Management as well as Marketing. She has a passion for growing brands through creative marketing approaches and launching innovative products that reflect what consumers want and need.

She joined Johnson & Johnson in 2007 and has carved an impressive path. In late 2016, Johnson & Johnson Consumer Inc. acquired NeoStrata and Exuviance, and Lori stepped up to the prestigious position of President/Managing Director of NeoStrata in January 2017.

Among her many other duties, Lori is currently a member of the Johnson & Johnson North American Leadership Team and sits on the coveted Cosmetic Executive Women's (CEW) Board.

Wendy Lewis talked to Lori about her experience as a female executive with a passion for beauty and skincare.

WL: WHO WERE SOME OF YOUR MENTORS THROUGHOUT YOUR CAREER?

Lori: I have been fortunate to find that one person whom I deemed a mentor throughout all stages in my life. In high school it was my history teacher who

pushed me to broaden my learning and go beyond what is expected. In college and throughout my career, I have had mentors who inspired me and taught me how to create my own luck through networking, taking risks, helping others, and pushing myself outside of my comfort zone. For me, the most rewarding experiences are the most difficult ones, where I have challenged myself in new ways. It's denying the odds and overcoming obstacles that get you to the place where you feel most accomplished. From the early days of my career to today as President of the NeoStrata Co., I find people who inspire me, regardless of what level they're at, how much experience they have, or what function they work in.

WL: HOW DID YOU GET YOUR START IN THE AESTHETICS FIELD?

Lori: I've always had this undeniable gravitation toward the beauty and skincare industry—I believe that skin is a reflection of overall health and well-being. I find the science of the skin fascinating and the creation of new skin care products that delight consumers and professionals is very gratifying. My career started in Research & Development, developing consumer products to include skin care. I moved into an operations role, responsible for manufacturing skin care products and ultimately made a career change to marketing because I wanted to get closer to the consumers, so I could directly learn from them about their wants and needs. The dermocosmetic field brings me close to our patients and consumers through working with doctors, aestheticians and beauty advisors across the globe, and their feedback and insights fuel the NeoStrata Co. to create innovative solutions.

WL: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR WOMEN WHO ARE RISING STARS IN THIS INDUSTRY?

Lori: Women, like men, can accom-

plish most anything when we believe in ourselves and have passion and determination. Women need to empower each other and not be threatened by others. I attribute much of my success to surrounding myself with the brightest, most diverse, talented people in the industry who force me to think differently and be my best. Being confident and knowing your value is what will help you rise to the top. Everyone is different and has unique value to offer, so just be you.

I would also advise not to apologize for being a mom or a caretaker. Being a working mom or caregiver is a superpower. We shouldn't feel ashamed to leave a meeting to make it to a child's recital or to take some time off to spend with a sick or loved one. This is life, and we're all balancing it the best we can, so let's not apologize or judge.

WL: HOW WOULD YOUR COLLEAGUES DESCRIBE YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

Lori: My management style is authentic, supportive, empowering, and fair. I work with amazing talent, let them do their jobs, be there as a strong support system, and help break down the obstacles that get in their way. I don't "play favorites" and strive to create an environment of trust and transparency where opinions are heard, and spirited debates are encouraged. I believe in the philosophy that what gets measured gets done. Beauty is such a dynamic industry, so it is critical to focus, know what success for the business looks like, and measure it to drive progress and accountability.

WL: NAME A QUOTE THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PHILOSOPHY

Lori: From Aristotle: "Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives. Choice, not chance, determines your destiny." ■