



July 12, 2023

Attn: OCBJ Women In Business Awards Selection Committee

Re: Carol Marzouk

Dear WIB Awards Selection Committee,

It is with the most extreme enthusiasm that I nominate Carol Marzouk as a candidate for your award.

I am a severe skeptic when it comes to relying on business leadership consultants. In my 18 years of MedTech executive management experience, including interactions with approximately 15 C-suite advisor relationships, I have generally found that an “outsider” to a business rarely has the time, context, and motivation to provide meaningful, informed guidance, or to make a lasting impact on the business or its employees. The white-hot, shining star exception to that sentiment is Executive Lion Tamer® extraordinaire, Carol Marzouk, via her business Leadership ‘N’ Soul.

Carol was introduced to me in April, 2019 by my COO, Richard Oberreiter. As CEO at Modulim, my team and I had just successfully closed a Series B funding round, and we anticipated significant expansion, both in employee headcount and in new business directions. Previously, we’d experienced lackluster history with business advisors, including two that had embedded within Modulim for multi-month periods. However, it was clear to Richard and I that, given our growth plan, today’s new hires would soon be tomorrow’s company leaders, ushering in and promoting the Company’s values, culture, and enthusiasm to the next generation. Leaving these things unfostered would be a significant risk to both morale and business effectiveness, and so we sought to bring an executive coaching experience to the entire team. Enter Carol.

Over the course of the next three years, Carol (and her awesome support Maggie), led our team through multi-day offsite retreats, a year-long, company-wide virtual Zoom course on leadership, multiple multi-session efforts to work on specific business goals, and numerous 1:1 coaching sessions spanning the entire team.

To say Carol exceeded all expectations would be a disservice to her impact. Carol’s efforts were PERMANENT. Employees that hadn’t previously been exposed to business leadership concepts or pitfalls would literally quote Carol at meetings, months separated from the concept introduction. Employee-Manager relationships that were on the ropes turned in entirely new, productive, and lasting directions.

In this short letter, it’s hard to describe how Carol works – you can read more testimonials at her website, and see some of her approach on YouTube. She has 30 years of experience in the field, and of course her professional skill is backed by numerous professional awards and certifications. But she has three superpowers that, when combined, are unstoppable.



Carol's first superpower is her **approachability**: how comfortable she makes employees and teams feel, regardless of their background, personality, or status. She's famous in her domain for "taming lions" – how well she meets strong-willed CEOs at their level and helps them see and conquer important issues in ways that they might not initially be open to. But she's equally capable at helping a timid engineer take on a leadership role, or at easing a "curmudgeonly experienced" VP into collaborating effectively with, and taking guidance from, a "young pup" CEO.

Carol's second superpower is her **empathy**. By that, I don't mean to imply easy-going approach – she'll call BS on anyone at any time (and they'll like it!). Instead, it's that she has a true gift in nearly *instantly* understanding someone from their own perspective, and in the context of the problem/challenge at hand. I'm an engineer at training, and a skeptic, but to see this from someone coming from the outside, this ability to me feels almost magical or God-given. Sure, she has tons of experience, and there's no new problem under the sun, but in my experience every relationship or business challenge is usually steeped in months or years of context and previous personal/professional experiences, and it's incredible that Carol can so quickly truly understand the situation.

Her third superpower is her **simplicity of approach** to addressing challenges. Once she *approaches* a person or group and *empathizes* with their position/need, she can provide "The One Thing" – advice, strategy, practice, etc. – which that specific employee or group needs to hear, which they'll (more often than not, at least...these are humans!) remember, embrace, and work on sustainably.

Carol brings these superpowers to bear in problems of all sizes. She has led our team through enormous company-wide challenges, trained our next generation of leaders (some of which have gone on to new prominent roles in OC MedTech businesses), and saved our butts with a number of potentially-terminal employee relationships. Specifically, in at least three cases involving executive relationships, and two that involved earlier career employees, Carol's unique skill at bringing people together and getting them co-motivated to work through issues has saved our business from coming to a grinding halt and suffering irreparable damage.

Given all of these elements, it is no surprise that Carol has had such a dynamic and lasting impact on the Orange County business community. I wholeheartedly and enthusiastically request you consider Carol as an Awardee for this year's OCBJ Women In Business Award!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DC', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

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