

## BUSINESS COACHING LEADER OF YEAR

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*Co-owners and  
Co-CEOs of  
Heimann Cvetkovic  
& Partners AG*

**Marina  
& Cvetkovic  
& Nicole  
Heimann**



## EXTRAORDINARY BOTTOM-LINE IMPACT STARTS WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY TOP TEAM

*Driving Triple Bottom Line Through Strong Board  
and Management Leadership Alliances*

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**M**arina and Nicole, Co-CEOs of an award-winning executive advisory firm Heimann Cvetkovic & Partners, believe that the culture of every organisation starts at the top and should therefore be a matter of highest strategic importance. They work with boards, CEOs, and executive teams to build strong and authentic Leadership Alliances, setting them apart from traditional top-to-bottom coaching programs. They encourage each of their clients' boards, CEOs and executive teams to work together by forming an authentic, intentional, and committed relationship. In order to do so, they urge leaders to connect five driving forces: a compelling vision, a shared purpose, a shared mindset, Leadership Alliance behaviours and how they work together. "In order to create a healthy

and safe culture, it's important that the Leadership Alliance encompasses all five of these driving forces, constantly reinforcing them as necessary in order to keep the alignment in the top team," Nicole says. "Just because a senior leadership team or a board is a collection of highly successful individuals – it does not mean this will be a highly effective team. True leadership alliance that unlocks tremendous value for the company long term is something that does not just happen organically – no matter how successful the individual leaders that make the team are", Marina adds.

The role of the board has changed significantly over the past decade and even more so over the past year. Increasingly, boards are asked and challenged to be a true strategic asset

to organisations, moving past the outdated mandate rooted purely in governance and oversight. This poses a question: What is the optimal way in which management teams and boards should work together going forward to successfully master the emerging business challenges? "Most leadership teams and boards we work with would agree with the vision of creating a true partnership, however, almost all of them struggle with how to do that," Marina explains. This is why their company, Heimann Cvetkovic & Partners, focuses on helping boards and management teams across the globe create strong leadership alliances. "It takes a high collective awareness to build a true leadership alliance and unfortunately, seniority and success are not indicators that one's self-awareness is at a peak," Nicole shared with us. "A



true leadership alliance presents a strong platform from which a board and management team can tackle all the business challenges much more effectively together", explains Marina.

"What makes our concept different, is how holistic it is. We don't just focus only on the vision, or team norms, or culture. We look at all of those factors holistically, help a management team identify where they are today vs. where they would like to be, and then take them on that journey as their sparring partners. Our Leadership Alliance Culture signature concept for accelerating performance and alignment in top teams has been endorsed by Alan Mullaly, the former CEO of Ford Motors Company, and many other C-suite members across the globe," Nicole added.

In addition to executive coaching and team-journey work with senior leaders, we have noticed that Marina and Nicole have a busy keynote speaking agenda. "Every leadership team is different, and we do our best to meet them where they are. That is the only way to take them where they want to go. Not every team is ready for an intervention or a team coaching journey – but they may be curious to hear us share some of the best practices we have observed in other boards and management teams", Nicole explains. "Keynotes create awareness and creating awareness is essentially opening the door to transformation" Marina adds. For Marina and Nicole, keynotes are often a beginning of a long-term strategic partnership with clients.

We were of course very curious to understand – are Nicole and Marina walking the talk in the way they lead their own company?

Marina explained, "Walking the talk is very important to Nicole and me– as we are advocates of stronger leadership alliances at the top, we of course have a leadership alliance of our own, reflected in the Co-CEO title, which we both share. We share the same mission and vision about the impact we strive to have on the executives and leadership teams we work with. On that journey, we not only fully respect each other's differences and freedom, but we strive to actively leverage them for the benefit of our alliance and in the interest of allowing each other to stay in our individual "Zone of Genius".

"Last but not least – our leadership alliance is only successful because we can rise above the ego and fully allow the magical co-creative process together to evolve for the benefit of our clients and the higher purpose, we both care about. We support each other's values, love each other's differences and allow each other to grow and flourish more every day. That might mean that one of us takes the stage and the other one stays backstage at times – and we are perfectly fine with that!" Nicole added.



## About Marina Cvetkovic and Nicole Heimann

Nicole Heimann and Marina Cvetkovic are the co-owners and co-CEOs of Heimann Cvetkovic & Partners AG – a boutique executive advisory firm of the world's leading experts in leadership alliances and awarded last year with the CEO Today Europe Award in the category "outstanding leadership, vision and entrepreneurship" and the Global Excellence Award as the Best Executive Coaching & Advisory Firm in Switzerland for 2021. Their work focuses on supporting boards, executives and top teams in creating and strengthening leadership alliances among themselves as well as across the organisation in order to unleash its full performance potential. The leadership alliance program is a transformational journey that good top teams commit to in order to become great. It is a journey that elevates not only their team effectiveness but has also proven to accelerate business performance. Marina and Nicole's philosophy is that investing in top team leadership development should be the starting point in the effort to transform and align any organisation. In the current environment when resources are tight and business goals ambitious, it is essential to mobilise all its forces in one direction. Top team leadership development also offers the highest multiplier and return on investment – helping a top team get even only 10% better has a tremendous ripple effect on the organisation and is one of the most critical elements within a broader culture transformation effort.

Nicole is a multi-award-winning CEO coach and adviser, author of the book *How to Develop the Authentic Leader in You: Integrating the Seven Dimensions of Leadership Intelligence* (BoD - Books on Demand 2018), and a Keynote Speaker on authentic leadership and leadership alliances. She was honoured as a Top 10 Mentor of the Globe 2022 and a Top 15 World Class Mentor 2021 by IFLD (International Federation of Learning & Development). As an expert in authentic leadership, Nicole supports conscious CEOs who want to take themselves and their teams to higher levels and strive to make the world a better place through their work and legacy. Nicole is a topic partner for leadership trends, a thought leader on Forbes Coaches Council and has contributed to leading publications such as the *Leader-to-Leader Magazine* and the book *Coach Me! Your Personal Board of Directors. Leadership Advice from the World's Greatest Coaches*, edited by Jonathan Passmore, Brian Underhill, Marshall Goldsmith. (2022, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.)

Marina is a multi-award-winning CEO Coach and Board Adviser, supporting boards, executives and top teams on the journey to extraordinary leadership and legacy. She has personally advised and coached hundreds of executives across the globe. Marina is a sought-after keynote speaker on boardroom-related topics as well as a TEDx speaker and founder of TEDx in NYC. She serves on the board of Boardstrong NYC, an organisation committed to fostering a better board governance and a higher quality dialogue in boardrooms across the NY state. In partnership with The NextGen Project, Marina advocates for generational diversity in the boardroom and inclusion of the valuable and diverse NextGen perspective on top levels. She is a member of the Forbes Coaches Council as well as an Executive Board Member at Fast Company.

Both Nicole and Marina are members of the 100Coaches, initiated by Dr Marshall Goldsmith and members of the International Coaching Federation.

