

What's on Your Label?

Former global CEO *suggests businesses take a fresh look at how they see their brand.*

Maureen Chiquet is a keynote speaker during The Individual. The Business premier event scheduled for September 20, 2018 at Rowan University.

Scheduled to discuss her expertise in branding and women leadership, as well as her book *Beyond the Label*, Chiquet provides clear and actionable insights into how we attach, sometimes erroneously, labels to our work and our lives and the ways we can break past those limitations.

Here are a few excerpts from her best-selling book before her scheduled appearance this month.

Finding Your Groove - Chiquet summons the reader to ask themselves the following questions.

"What's your trademark? How can you bend the rules to create something more compelling? What traits and talents might you be able to use to define success on your own terms? What "music" enters your soul and tickles your heart, yearning to be called forward and put to use in your job?"

What part of yourself can you bring to your job that creates your singular identity? And through whose eyes can you look to stretch your ability to see and find those things. What passions make you dizzy with excitement and expectation? Let's hear you riff on those."

With Fresh Eyes chapter - Chiquet

provides ideas on how to challenge your perception of a situation. Rather than examining something from your own point of view, the executive advises readers to look outside themselves for other options.

"Think about the times you've been at the movies with family or friends, and you walk away with different impressions. While you may share some ideas about what the film meant, you each experience the cues in a myriad of ways and no one will ever entirely know what the creators "meant..."

The idea that there might not be simple "right" and "wrong" answers about constructs like plot, theme, and character – that there were, indeed, an infinite number of interpretations, and that creation wasn't a one way street – made an indelible impression on me, one that would show up years later in how I thought about products, advertising, business strategy and leadership. These new ideas gave me permission to examine the world with fresh eyes and to notice my own biases and bias in general."

Making Your Mark - In this chapter Chiquet discusses some of her school of hard knocks training at The Gap. The leader said speaking up just for the sake of speaking up is not the best course of action when making your mark within your business or organization.

"Speaking up, taking a stand: staking

your claim – they aren't a matter of challenging authority to prove a point. Staking your claim only matters when you have something valuable to offer – a fresh perspective, a new vision, or a way of tapping into new sources for insights.

Speaking up and taking a stand matter most, of course, when there is something at stake for you personally (like your life!) and for your business. It's not about grandstanding or being a hero, either. Otherwise, you're just making noise and often causing others to silence their own voices."

Taking Charge - On leadership, Chiquet writes that when first starting out it may be easy to think leadership is about being bold and decisive, but the CEO came to learn leadership development runs much deeper.

"Once you actually become the one in charge, you realize that the role is a complex and a deeply human endeavor. Positional power and titles – taking the corner office – only gets you so far.

The real authority comes when you are able to strike the right balance between empathizing with the needs and desires of those who follow you and having the confidence to set the conditions and the tone for getting things done.

It can be hard to resist the temptation to spend your time getting everyone to like you, especially for women, but that's not

YOUR

“HOW HAVE YOU CHALLENGED THE STATUS QUO TO INVENT SOMETHING NEW?”

—Lavin Agency Speaker Bureau



As Global CEO of Chanel—and, earlier, as President of Banana

Republic—

MAUREEN

CHIQUET steered global brands through a decade of disruption, and she did so with traditionally ‘feminine’ skills of empathy and communication.

Now, she speaks on the value of having women in top leadership positions—and what we can all learn from injecting more compassion and collaboration into the workplace.

—Lavin Agency Speaker Bureau

sustainable – nor is it the point.

In order to lead – and to get anyone else to follow you – yes, you do need to listen to others...a lot. But you also need to be attuned to yourself – your hungers, your drives, and your trigger points. In other words, you have to manage yourself in order to lead others.”

Embracing Paradox - In one of her final chapters, Chiquet once again asks probing questions to her readers to get them to think and act beyond their own labels.

“Are you doing enough to stimulate your curiosity? What would it mean to be the artist of your own life? In other words, how have you challenged the status quo to invent something new? What have you unlearned lately to better know yourself?”

I have tried to become the artist of my life by continually questioning what has existed, jumping into unfamiliar situations, absorbing new contexts, and, eventually, finding a different way to be.

Are you willing to ask these kinds of questions of yourself and others and, alternatively, can you play by the rules and bend them to make yourself distinctive?” ■