

# IEDC alumni Success Story



*A School with a View*

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Daria Illy, CEO and Member of the Board of Mitaca, and Member of the Board of Illycaffè

## **“YOU NEED THE ABILITY TO INSPIRE OTHERS TO GIVE THEIR BEST”**

*After working at Illycaffè as a Coffee Science expert, teaching and lecturing with the Università del Caffè, Daria began working with the International Account Department in February 2010. This new position gave her the opportunity to use her management and marketing skills, commercial experience and scientific expertise in the field of coffee, drawing together all her talents to meet the challenges of this new and rewarding position.*



*In September 2011, she took up the reins of the International Key Accounts department, managing corporate relations with chains in the premium HoReCa business sector. Her goal was to bring the best coffee in the world to premium locations, managed by companies that share the company's values and dedication to quality. This can only be done by providing the most dedicated service, complete after-sales support and promoting coffee culture around the globe through one unique international point of contact.*

*In December 2013, Daria became head of the New Business Development team in the Portioned Systems product sector, supporting their mission to seek perfect solutions while always following and promoting the company's values of ethics and excellence.*

*In 2017 she completed a General Management Program at the IEDC-Bled School of Management.*

*In her private life, Daria is the loving mother of two children, Riccardo (8 years old) and Angelica (4). Her friends describe her as lively and enthusiastic with a great desire to make things happen; she is a lover of everything that is beautiful and well made, and always pays attention to all the details. She is highly motivated, cheerful, determined and definitely a people person.*

*By Iva Eibel, Head of Corporate Communications, IEDC*

**illycaffè was founded in 1933 in Trieste, and today the company is led by the third generation of the family. Daria, you are a member of the fourth generation, running one of the most successful coffee businesses in the world. Could you tell us about the opportunities and challenges of working in a family-run business?**

There is a great opportunity to make the most of my knowledge of the world of coffee, drawing on the experience that has been handed down to me by my family. We have the chance to overcome the challenges and break into emerging markets, and the possibility to involve more and more young people, who are our future. The challenge is to keep on being a family company while instilling a distinct managerial style. This requires continuous development, and ensuring we attract the best and most talented professionals to our team.

**You started your career as the owner of an agency providing personal trainers and later joined Illycaffè. Which skills do you think are relevant to both businesses?**

I think the essential skills are entrepreneurial acumen, clarity of vision, and an innate enthusiasm for the 'beautifully and the well made'.

**You are now a CEO of Mitaca, a company that designs, produces and distributes hot drinks and espresso coffee capsule systems in close collaboration with Illycaffè. What are the main developments your industry expects to see in the future?**

The future must be based on sustainability. It's very much about le-



arning and improving our behaviour, knowledge and understanding. Economic sustainability is achieved through the principles of shared value and caring about the future of this planet for the future generations who will live here next.

**What does leadership mean to you?**

When I think of leadership, I think of inclusion and guidance through motivation and helping people develop. You need the ability to inspire others to give their best. A real leader is naturally recognised by the teams they lead. Those who try to impose themselves when they lack empathy or people skills are rarely successful. Shimon Peres, Nelson Mandela and Eleanor Roosevelt were all ethical leaders, uniting people and achieving great things, focusing on the needs of others while devoted to transformation.

**You've attended a four week IEDC GMP Program in 2017. What was the most beneficial outcome of the program for you? To whom would you recommend it?**

All the subjects and areas of study

were very interesting and generated a mix of skills that I apply at work now and will use in the future. Some were great for refreshing skills, but from a very different perspective as I worked my way through the company. I had excellent Professors who inspired me to develop different views about what I wanted to achieve.

I would recommend it to all managers who want to broaden their skills in an environment that is open to exchange, with a very international approach. One particular recommendation for participants would be to try to use this time to really immerse yourself in the masters and try to shut out work for the duration of the course. The course is very challenging and if you can't concentrate on it exclusively you will not be able to reap all the benefits of the Program.

**What is your favourite memory of your IEDC studies and professors?**

Working in teams, and Professors Danny Szpiro and Lynn Isabella. Lynn inspired me to work on my soft skills, and I have definitely benefited from that, and Danny made Finance easy and fun.

## MEET DARIA PERSONALLY

### **My friends would describe me as ...**

... motivated, cheerful, with an attention for detail, resolute and definitely a people person.

### **I am passionate about ...**

... nature and outdoor sports. I love surfing. I find tranquillity and relaxation at the seaside where I am at peace with the world.

### **My favourite book is ...**

... 'First, break all the rules': a very perceptive management book by Marcus Buckingham, who explains how thinking in a different way can lead to great solutions. When it comes to literature I've always loved Romeo & Juliet. My literature teacher taught me the power of language through Shakespeare's work.

### **My next journey is to ...**

... California, Spain, or Portugal: any place where the waves are good for surfing. My children enjoy skiing so I would like to take them back to the mountains soon, and then the summer is coming! Sea, sun and the beach.

### **My vision for the future ...**

... can be described with the word ...INCLUSION. Inclusion always leads to shared thoughts and long-term strategies. We have to invest in the education of the future generations, because it is their open minds that will lead us to the next steps of change and innovation.