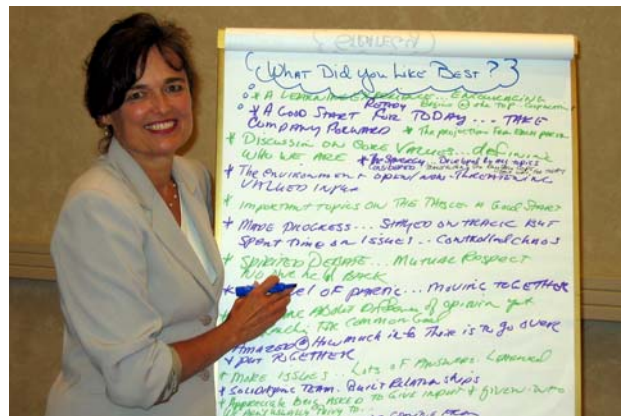


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Maria initially applied her Psychology degree to a career in social work but within a year learned this was not for her. Needing a change of pace, she went on continuous assignments as a runway and photography model – she was the original Kuner Tomato. Modeling enabled Maria to generate income with flexible hours while starting her family (ultimately consisting of five girls). She joined the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, doing voice on-camera TV commercials.

Maria grew up in an entrepreneurial family. Her father is an Oklahoma oil man in his eighties, still operating his small Oklahoma empire. No longer able to resist her genes, Maria founded a dance aerobic business. She expanded the scope of her business by partnering with a dietitian and opening a “Fat Farm”. She was recruited to run the 300 member Christian Women’s Club in Steamboat Springs, her first experience as a CEO of a major organization. When it was clear that her town needed a YMCA, she got everyone in town involved, chaired the committees, and served as the first President of the Board. That YMCA still thrives.

Trying her hand at manufacturing, she created a little handbag out of a bandana, naming her product the Bagdana™. It was an immediate hit. She scaled up, manufacturing to meet demand as the bags sold at JCPenneys, the Sheplers catalogue, and as far away as Japan’s Disneyland. Unfortunately the bandana fad collapsed after only a year, leaving her investment in inventory equal to receivables. (Maria has a few of these left and you can purchase them at the special price of \$55.25. She does have an appreciation for the challenges of manufacturing, inventory management, and the vicissitudes of retail.) Maria designed and currently markets custom manufactured 6”x8” oversized Post-its®. Her Idea-Catchers® are the perfect size for capturing, organizing and prioritizing ideas and project management.

Confucius says to find something you love to do and you’ll never work another day in your life. Maria found her love at a family reunion when she facilitated the campfire discussions of happy family memories and old wounds. For the first time she realized she wanted to be a facilitator – she didn’t know there *was* such a thing, but knew she could be great at it. With this newfound goal, and the encouragement of the other love of her life – husband Charly – she set out to be the best in the world. She was quickly certified by Zenger Miller to facilitate interpersonal skills training. She’s trained front line people as well as management, giving her an uncommon insight into company issues as seen from both sides. Her custom designed sessions covered everything from performance management and conflict resolution to lean manufacturing and visual systems. She joined the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) and studied the art of facilitation extensively. She is one of only 175 Certified Professional Facilitators in North America and one of 35 CPF Assessors in the world. Maria serves as the US Representative on the Board of Directors for IAF.

Working in and with a variety of organizations over the years, Maria’s seen a lot of business fads come and go. She’s seen first hand the effects they have had on the people in the trenches. Training can’t help a company that doesn’t know where its going. Believing strategic planning was the key to unlock a company’s potential she became a student of Lon Shealy and his strategic planning process Destiny by Design®. Under his mentoring she devoured Drucker, Covey, Senge, Collins, et. al. attacking strategic management with the same zeal as she had facilitation. Lon introduced Maria to John and Mary Myrna of Myrna Associates and their planning process.

Often times people are frustrated because no matter how hard they try, they don’t seem to be able to get things done. They then start chewing on each other. It’s not pretty. People want to succeed - to make a valuable contribution. Effective strategic planning with a sound implementation process aligns people and resources to break the cycle of endless talk and no action. Nothing can compare to the Myrna process for mobilizing people in a positive way. Things get done. People get a taste of success and start taking more pride in their work. They take hope in the future.

