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How Breast Cancer Made Me a Better Leader

Sure, breast cancer (or any major illness) changes a woman's perspective on a lot of things in life. But what is the positive impact at work. These three execs say it made them better leaders.

Glynis Legrand
Owner, Urban Tea Loft

"I learned that, in the corporate world, more empathy needs to be shown towards people with illness. It made me a better manager in that respect. Now, I think family is the most important thing in life, and you should be able to focus on that *and* work. If you're sick or your family is, don't come to work. Before I had kids and got ill, that wasn't my philosophy."

Claudia Patton
General Manager, Edelman Southeast

"Your Myers-Brigg type changes when you go through suffering. Mind did. I developed *F*, the feeling/empathy gene. The gift of breast cancer is compassion. I don't think people are weak when they are sick. I encourage them to take care of themselves and their families."

Dara Richardson-Heron, MD
CEO, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Greater New York City

"I could no longer do things that didn't benefit others. That became evident when I took a job as special assistant to the CEO of Conn Edison. The opportunity was great, but the further I got away from helping people, the unhappier I got. Having breast cancer made me a better person, wife and leader, because it helped me realize what is really important in life - really making a contribution to the lives of others."

Maimah Karmo
President and Founder, Tigerlily Foundation

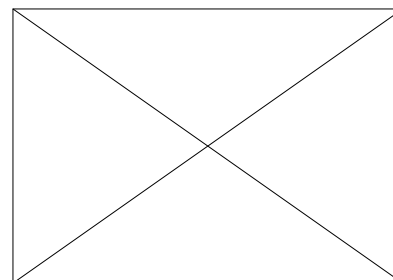
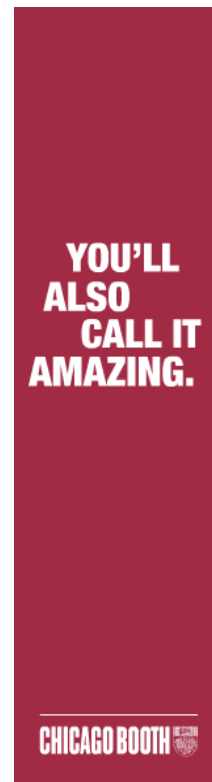
Having breast cancer, particularly being diagnosed at a young age and when I was at a pivotal point in my career, forced me to evaluate what I was doing, to pursue a career that I truly loved, that would make a difference and to *lead by example*. Now, after creating and launching my foundation, Tigerlily Foundation, which provides education and resources for women under 40, I can truly tell other women that it is important to pursue a career that involves doing something you love. For me now, the focus is less on climbing the corporate ladder, and more about leading my organization and leading a life that could change the lives of young women worldwide, particularly as it pertains to the issue of young women and breast cancer.



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