

Simone Janson (ed.)

CHALLENGE - MASTER PROBLEMS WITH COURAGE

Ways to happiness & inner strenght,
overcome life crises take risks &
become successful as opportunity
planner, restart your career & win



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Table of Contents

Imprint

Introduction: Information, Experiences of Success, Inspiration - you'll find all that in this Book

Achieve Goals Interactively: Awards, Press Reviews, Customer Feedback
Your Benefit in concrete Terms: Content, Organization and Structure of the Book

Information as desired with Membership Discounts, eCourses, Workbooks,
and custom, individual eBooks

Successfully use the AI Extension to the Book for your Goals and to make Money

Experience Success and Inspiration: Discover your Way and support Sustainability

TALK | Monika Wulf-Mathies about career, women and humanities scholars: “You can achieve a lot if you want to and don't get discouraged” // By Simone Janson

Fatalism instead of courage and willingness to take risks: “The horse is dead, but at least it is safe!” // By Tom Diesbrock

Change Management on the Limit: Stop the self-optimization mania // By Dr. Cornelia Topf

Wrong decision wrong strategy and planning errors: Experience doesn't help! // By PD Dr. York Hagmayer

Change management in companies: overcoming fears & resistance // By Bertold Raschkowski

Salary Negotiation: Be brave instead of inhibitions! // By Simone Janson

3 tips for agile change management in companies: Leading employees in change // By Theo Bergauer

Turning resolutions into goals: pause, seek meaning to success // By Stefan Dudas

Courage vs. Hesitation: fear of making the wrong decision // By Simone Janson

More money, change lives, achieve dream goals // By Simone Janson

More freedom and fun less outside determination: Get rid of the bullshit jobs // By Klaus Schuster

Don't be afraid of change: the formula for happiness for success is $E = WxV^2$ // By Dr. Marion Bourgeois

Conclusion: How to expand your Knowledge and Experience with interactive AI and discounted Add-on offers for free.

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[Profound Expert Knowledge, Quality Assurance and AI: The Concept of Publisher of the Year Best of HR - Berufebilder.de®](#)
[Appendix: Tips and Prompts for using the AI Extensions](#)

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Introduction: Information, Experiences of Success, Inspiration - you'll find all that in this Book

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Renowned experts from various fields - overview in the table of contents - have compiled their expertise and experiences to provide you with valuable insights and advice, practical and condensed. As a reader, you will also receive working materials as part of your book purchase, which you can download for free at <https://best-of-hr.com/academy/>. In addition, workbooks are available to help you reflect on the inspirations from this book.

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TALK | Monika Wulf-Mathies about career, women and humanities scholars: “You can achieve a lot if you want to and don't get discouraged”

// By Simone Janson

Dr. Monika Wulf-Mathies worked in the Chancellery, was ÖTV chairman, in the European Commission and adviser to Gerhard Schröder. She has been with DHL since 2001. In the interview she reported on her recipe for success.

After studying history, German philology and economics and earning her doctorate in Hamburg in 1968, Wulf-Mathies was initially an assistant to the Federal Ministry of Economics, then to the Federal Chancellery, including head of the Social and Social Policy Unit. In 1976 she was elected to the board of the ÖTV trade union, in 1982 she became chairperson. From 1994 to 1999 she was a member of the European Commission, after that she was European Policy Advisor to Chancellor Gerhard Schröder until 2000. She has been with Deutsche Post DHL since 2001, initially as head of the central “Politics and Sustainability” division, and since 2009 as a consultant to the board. How did you manage to be so successful as a woman and humanities scholar?

Mrs. Dr. Wulf Mathies, you have an impressive CV behind you - despite or because of your studies in humanities?

I don't think you can say that because I am a humanities scholar, I was successful. But in principle, each course provides key and basic skills that enable you to structure facts, systematically develop new topics and apply your knowledge in different areas. Humanities scholars also develop important skills, from language to culture, society and life in general, to good writing and sensitivity to “soft skills” that are useful for many activities.

Scientists are often told that they are alien to the world and can not be used for the labor market. What qualifications have helped you?

In addition to the abovementioned skills, you need additional qualities such as commitment and diligence, motivation, pleasure in work, determination and perseverance, willingness to take risks, a healthy self-confidence, assertiveness and decision-making, and, last but not least, luck!

You're successful as a woman and a humanist - was not that actually a double handicap for your career?

Yes and no. Of course, there are still many prejudices against women in leadership positions. But if you are good and have the guts to do it, you are more visible than a man - and that can help important people become aware of you. Women often have

too much self-doubt if they want to make a career, although they are mostly more qualified than male applicants. A healthy self-confidence is therefore absolutely necessary for the career.

How do you feel about the reproach that anyone who is studying something for joy only, does not have to wonder afterwards if he does not find a job?

Without joy in the thing and in his field of study, you can do nothing. Of course it is easier to study as a lawyer or business economist for the future profession, but even these studies are not a guarantee of lasting success. You also have to be willing to learn a lot there. In Great Britain there was once advice to study The Greeks”, empower one to the highest government offices. The main thing is to study what you study with passion and learn to be open to everything else, then you will also find a job that you enjoy.

They have also studied economics, so they are not a pure spiritual scientist. Did this study help you with your career?

Not necessarily or only in the sense that I have started my study from the beginning, and thus proved that I am not solely based on German studies and history.

What do you think is the most important career factors?

Of course, happiness, chance, self-initiative, networks are equally important. But it remains that in the end your own commitment and the will to prevail or to bite, decides.

It is a good idea to suggest that careers can be planned: what is your attitude to it and what does it depend on your experience?

The experience has taught me that there is little planning, but courage and risk are important because, in the course of their professional life, they are always struggling to make the right decisions: for a rather comfortable and irresistible path or for a challenge. Consequences can not necessarily be estimated down to the smallest detail. Of course, every risk carries the risk of failure, but you achieve a lot if you only want it and do not get discouraged.