

Business Better (Episode 8): A Conversation with Dr. Lois Frankel, Bestselling Author and Executive Coach

Speakers: John Wright, Emilie Ninan, and Lois Frankel

John:

Welcome to Business Better, a podcast designed to help businesses navigate the new normal. I'm your host, John Wright. For nearly 15 years, I was senior vice president and a general counsel at Triumph Group Incorporated, a global aerospace component supplier. I'm now a member of the securities and M and A groups at Ballard Spahr, a national law firm with clients across industries and across the country.

John:

This episode features a conversation with Dr. Lois Frankel, president of Corporate Coaching International, a bestselling author, executive coach, and internationally recognized expert in the field of leadership development for women. Dr. Frankel talks about her career path and several important tactics and takeaways from her books, including advice on framing messages, executive presence, and managing feedback. She'll also discuss our work to coach future female political candidates. Leading the discussion is my Ballard Spahr colleague, Emilie Ninan, a partner in our Wilmington, Delaware, and Washington DC offices and co-chair of Ballard Spahr's finance department. Now let's join Emilie and Dr. Frankel.

Emilie:

Dr. Frankel, thank you for graciously accepting my invitation to join me today. I listened to your latest books. I'm going to address you as Lois going forward. It's a little uncomfortable for me, but I will do as you advise and assume my equality.

Lois:

Thank you for inviting me, Emilie.

Emilie:

Well, I am absolutely delighted that we are going to have this conversation. I have been a fan of yours since I read your book, *Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office*, and that was in 2004, the year I was up for partner at my prior firm. At that time, I was also participating in a leadership development program called *Leader's Edge*. And it was actually that program that introduced me to your book, which was about 101 unconscious mistakes women make that sabotage their careers. And fortunately, I didn't identify with all of them, but I did with quite a few, including those in your chapter about how you sound, which talked about how asking questions instead of making statements can be a form of self-sabotage.

Emilie:

And I realized that in trying to be respectful to my much older supervising partner, I'd couch statements as questions and inadvertently sent a message that was interpreted as a lack of confidence. And part of that could be cultural. I was born in Philadelphia, but raised in a multi-generational immigrant Indian family in which deference to age and experience is valued and expected. I guess it's not that surprising that as a young attorney, I carried that into the workplace. I just didn't even realize I was doing that.

Emilie:

And so it was only after reading your book that I took steps to change my way of communication and ultimately my career path. To make a long story short, I did make partner that year, and eventually I got a corner office. Thank you for your book and your advice. You have made a positive difference in countless lives as you have my own, so just [crosstalk 00:03:43].

Lois:

Thank you for saying that, and congratulations. You did really the heavy lifting.

Emilie:

That is more than enough background on me, but I want people to hear about you, Lois. You have a PhD in psychology, experience in HR, but how did that lead you to become a business coach and to some of us, a career hero?

Lois:

Thank you. It was interesting because I worked for years for Arco, the oil company. You grew up in Philadelphia, so I know they had offices there at the time. And when I got my PhD, I went to the powers that be and I said, "I'd like to use this in the employee assistance program," and they told me, which often happens to women, "You're doing fine where you are. Just stay where you are." And I thought, "I didn't work this hard and this long to just stay where I am." And I had a good job. It was not like I was unhappy, but I wanted to use my new PhD in counseling psychology and be a therapist.

Lois:

So I quit and I started a private practice of psychotherapy in downtown Los Angeles because I wanted to work with a population I knew, which was working people, right? What better place than downtown Los Angeles? And there were no therapists in downtown Los Angeles at the time. And so I thought, "Well, this is a good marketing idea, too."

Lois:

And I started doing that. And after about a year, I realized I made a mistake and it was really hard to admit to myself that after a lifetime of only wanting to be a psychologist, I am one and I'm not enjoying it. And what I realized was I kind of missed business. And so it was the moment when I knew I wanted to jump across the couch and put my hands around my client's neck and say, "How many times are we going to talk about the same thing?" I realized I should be doing something different.

Lois:

And as the universe works with us, as we make decisions, I had a woman call me and say, "Lois, would you be willing to coach someone?" Now, you have to realize this was in about 1987 and there were no business coaches back then. And so I said to her, "I'm not sure what you're talking about." And she said, "You know, Lois, you've been a therapist, you've been a trainer, you've worked in human resources. You put them all together, you have a coach."

Lois:

I had no idea what I was supposed to do, but I said, "I'd be happy to coach someone for you." And that's also a lesson that I like to share with women because a lot of times we don't do things if we don't think we can do them right the first time. I just figured anything had to be better than being a therapist, so let me give this a try. And it turned out to be life-changing for me, because this person who made the first referral, she was absolutely right. It put together all of my skills, my education, my interests, and it was life-changing for me. And that's how I became a coach.

Emilie:

I know not all your books are in your Nice Girl series, but it's probably what you are most well-known for. And the premise from the titles is that nice girls don't get the corner office, they don't get rich, they don't get it, they don't speak up or stand out. What's wrong with being nice?

Lois:

That's an interesting and great question. And the answer is nothing. There's nothing wrong with being nice. Nice is necessary for success. It's not sufficient. It was not my first choice of title for a book. I was calling the book *Quit Being a Girl*, because that's what I used to say to my clients. I would say, "Quit being a girl. You're doing this because you were taught to do it in

childhood," so I named the book *Quit Being a Girl*. And when Hashtag Books bought the book ... Back then it was time Warner Books ... They said, "The only caveat is we want to be able to change the title," and I said, "Okay, fine," but I never thought they'd change it to *Nice Girls Don't Get The Corner Office* because I said to them, "You realize I'm going to spend the rest of my life saying you can't be nice and get what you want."

Lois:

Nice is necessary for success. It's not sufficient. You just can't be the nice little girl you were taught to be in childhood, whatever culture. In your culture, it was one thing. In my culture, growing up in a Jewish family in New York, it was a different thing. You can't be that nice little girl you were taught to be growing up and expect to achieve your adult goals.

Emilie:

Thank you for that clarification. I'm glad that we can still be nice.

Lois:

Absolutely.

Emilie:

Your books obviously target women as the audience, but when I would share the learnings from your book with my husband, he found them useful, too. And he's of South Asian descent as well, so there may have been some cultural aspects there, but it seems to me that the mistakes or issues you talk about aren't just relevant to women. From your perspective, is there anything in your books or our conversation today that would benefit men?

Lois:

Absolutely. It's interesting that you say that about your husband also being from South Asia and getting something out of it because when the book first came out, I was invited to come and speak to a lot of Asian groups with men because the feeling was that Asian men, stereotypically ... Obviously we don't want to paint everybody with the same brush ... but stereotypically, Asian men have a lot of the same behaviors and characteristics as women because of their upbringing, whether it's respect for authority, not being the first one to speak up, things like that.

Lois:

It was recognized early on that the book was very helpful for certain cultures. And then my brother actually, when he read the book, said, "This isn't only for women. I got a lot out of this book, too." The secret is, is that women buy about 70% of the self-help books out there, so my desire to make it for women, it really was because that was my sweet spot. But also it turned out that they're who's buying the books, not men.

Emilie:

Right. Well, hopefully we give it to some men, too, because wouldn't you think it's helpful for people who are managing women to read it or if they have daughters or something like that?

Lois:

Absolutely. It's interesting because in my keynotes, usually they mostly are all women, but every once in a while, a guy will wander in and he'll say the exact same thing, that, "This was really helpful for me to hear this because I understand my employees better," or they say, "I've got daughters or a wife who works in a corporation and it helps me to help them." Yes, it can be like a how you can coach other people, too.

Emilie:

Your latest book, which came out earlier this year is, *Nice Girls Don't Speak Up and Stand Out: How to Make Your Voice, Heard Your Point Known, and Your Presence Felt*. It's available as an audio book. And I just want to make a note for my Ballard colleagues here who are listening. This book is among the free downloads we get through the Audible for Business account provided by the firm. And for everyone listening, Lois has provided the companion workbook to be shared. All you have to do is to get a copy is contact me at ninane@ballardspahr.com.

Emilie:

Lois, I really enjoyed listening to your latest book, but why was it important to you that this book be an audio book?

Lois:

When I sold it, it was going to be a paper book. And as I started writing it, I realized the ideas don't transfer to the page. You have to hear the inflection. You have to hear the intonation. You kind of have to hear it in context of a conversation. And so I went back to the publisher and I said, "I don't even know if this is done, but I feel like this should not come out as a paper book, but it should come out as an audio book first, at least." And they agreed with me. And that's why I felt strongly about it because a lot of times in my keynotes people would come up to me at the end and say, "I wish I had you on my shoulder when I had to say this or that. I wish you could whisper in my ear." And I always remembered that, so it was like, "Oh, now I am whispering in your ear."

Emilie:

Yeah. I totally agree. Actually hearing how you would respond to a situation as opposed to just reading the words was tremendously helpful. I understand you had a different title originally for this book as well. Can you share with us what that was and why you changed it?

Lois:

Oh yeah. I always have my own titles and then they always make me change them. My title for it was *The Nice Girl's Guide to Telling People to Go To Hell so They Look Forward to the Trip*. I mean, that to me really said it all because as women, we're not allowed to communicate in the same way as men. I'm not saying you shouldn't communicate. I'm not saying you shouldn't get your voice out there. I'm just saying if you communicate like a man, it may be harder for people to take in your messages because we have different rules for how we expect women to sound and men to sound. Men have their own limitations, too. If they do certain things that women do, that may reflect negatively on their career. I wanted women to understand that that is our key challenge is telling people to go to hell so that they look forward to the trip, and that's what I wanted to help women to do.

Emilie:

That's great. And you do mention that I think several times in the books, so we still get to learn about that phrase. Talking about communication and the differences in the expectations, as I mentioned earlier, when trying to soften a message in the past, I ended up undermining it by couching it in a question instead of making a statement and similarly women sometimes use more words than they need to and as a result, the core message they're trying to relay gets lost. How can what you've termed headline communication address these issues?

Lois:

Yeah. Let me take that from two standpoints. One is why do women use too many words? Because I think first you'll have to understand your behavior before you can change it. And for women, a lot of times we use too many words for the exact same reason that you said. The more words you use, you soften a message and women sometimes do that unconsciously, right? They're not conscious of the fact that they're softening their message, but somehow they know that it'll come across as more palatable if they use more words. And so I want women to remember the more words you use, you soften your message, the fewer words you use, you strengthen your message.

Lois:

We also do it because many times when we're talking to men, we're not getting any non-verbal feedback. We're not getting a head nod. When we're talking to women and if people could see us right here right now, they'd see-

Emilie:

I'm nodding.

Lois:

Right. We're nodding at each other, we're smiling at each other, right? And we're not even in the same room and that's what women do, but men aren't always socialized to do that. What do we do? We keep talking. Absolutely wrong thing.

Lois:

And a third reason we do it, we use too many words, is because we think it's our responsibility to tell everybody everything that's in our heads, because it's only fair. Nobody wants to hear it. Trust me. Nobody wants to hear it. That's why you do it. I want people to catch themselves doing it. And the headline communication model, when you apply this, it's so elegant. It's so beautiful because it helps you couch your communications in a businesslike way. I'm not even going to say a masculine or feminine. It's just a businesslike way.

Lois:

And what the model says is there's essentially three parts. The first one is your headline. This is the most important thing you want someone to remember if you were cut off in 30 seconds, and many times you are, okay? The headline is just one or two sentences, "What do I want you to know?"

Lois:

The middle part, the second part is the supporting data. Why do I believe this? Why is this true? Okay? And then the third part men don't have to use, but women do, and that's what's called a tagline. And that's that invitation to others to join in the conversation. Too often, women use a tagline of asking permission. That's not it at all.

Lois:

Let me just put it together very quickly so people can hear what this sounds like. And it might be something like this. And again, you and I have never had this conversation so I don't want people to think that I'm trying to sell you something here because I'm not. But if I were to say to you, "It sounds to me as if your firm could use a woman's leadership workshop," I say that for three reasons. Number one, from what you've told me, women are ready for the next level in your organization, but don't always have the skills together. Number two, your competitors are doing it and as they do it, that means they're attracting more talent. Number three, it enables the women to form a cohort group of support so that as they get promoted, they're going to be supportive of one another. Now you can hear I feel strongly about that. I'd like to know what you think it would take to move this idea forward.

Emilie:

And that's the tagline? That last sentence is the tagline?

Lois:

That's the tagline, that invitation to, "Now let's have a dialogue," because if I just stopped ... See, men could just stop after the third thing and say, "Form a cohort group." If I just stop right, some people may see a woman doing that as a little bit strident, right? And so remember the more words you use, you soften the message. Without using too many words, I got to my point quickly, I provided the data and then the tagline added a few extra words to just mitigate any impression of being too strident.

Emilie:

Your book has a series of tips, including how to say no without using the word no, but one of the situations you discuss that was of particular interest to me was when we are asked to be, as you call it, miracle workers. That's a situation that sets us up for failure, not success because of limited resources or unreasonable delivery deadlines. What's your advice for someone facing unreasonable expectations?

Lois:

Yeah. For women, when they're asked to make a miracle or given unrealistic expectations, they tend to roll up their sleeves and just get it done no matter what it takes. And that's a mistake because miracle workers don't get recognized, they get canonized, right? And so I'm a big believer in providing excellent customer service, whether they're internal customers or external customers. I'm a big believer in that.

Lois:

I'm also a believer in setting parameters for people so that when people ask me to do something, I will almost always say, "Yes, I'm happy to and let me tell you realistically what I can deliver in that time period for that amount of money, what it will cost you and then let you make the decision.

Lois:

Again, if we go back to a realistic example in the workplace, maybe somebody gives you an unreasonable deadline and you say, "I'd be happy to do that project for you. Now, let me tell you with the other high priority items I'm currently involved in, this one is going to be put at the back of the queue and probably can't get started until at least Wednesday. Now, if you would like me to start it sooner, let's have a discussion of what gets prioritized differently," or, "If you want to give me some more people to work on it, I can get it started, have other people working on it, then come back and finish it up as soon as my schedule frees up. What would you prefer?" Now, you can hear I'm not being unreasonable. I am not saying I don't want to do the work. I'm going to do the work and I'm going to give you some choices for how it's going to get done.

Emilie:

Yeah. And I hope people listening heard that you never said no and you also didn't agree to bend over backwards and turn yourself into a pretzel to do something that probably won't be appreciated at the end anyway.

Lois:

Exactly.

Emilie:

Yeah. Getting a little bit more specific, what's your advice to communicating as effectively as possible in a meeting?

Lois:

Well, especially now that we have so many Zoom meetings and virtual meetings, the advice would be somewhat similar. In any situation, I would say, first of all, be at the table because if you're not at the table, you're not in the meeting. And what I've seen women do is if it looks like the table is going to be crowded and there are seats on the periphery, they'll take the seats on the periphery. That's the wrong thing to do. First of all, make sure you're at the table. Now, in virtual meetings, that means your video is on.

Emilie:

Right.

Lois:

Right? What were you going to say?

Emilie:

No, I was going to say one of the things I like about video, if you put it on is that everyone's at the table and you all have a good seat, which I find is different [crosstalk 00:22:11].

Lois:

That's a good way to put it. Everybody's at the table and you have a good seat. And so, yeah, so make sure people can see you because remember, if you're not at the table, you're not in the meeting, you're not in the room. Now, when you're in a real meeting, my suggestion is also that you sit next to or pretty close to the most powerful person in the room, just because it adds a cache to who you are, right? It adds a little bit cache.

Lois:

Next thing is be among the first two or three people to speak up in a meeting. I don't recommend that you always be the first, because if you're always the first out of the gate, you're seen as a grand stander and people tend to remember that. But if you're the second or the third, they don't remember you as a grand standard, but they remember you as having self-confidence.

Lois:

Now, if you're saying to yourself, "But I don't like to speak up just to have my voice heard, just to hear myself talk," well, you don't always have to give ... I said speak up. You don't always have to give an opinion. What you can do is support what someone else had to say. Especially for women, you can amplify what another woman has just said. And amplification is one of the best ways for women to support each other in meetings so that no one can steal your idea.

Lois:

If you say something and I say, "I would like to affirm that and agree with that for this reason," now I've built an Alliance and I've also helped your idea stay on the table longer. You can affirm. You can ask a question. You can answer a question. There's so many ways you can participate. You can also ask other people who are quieter to participate. You can say something like, "Hey Emilie we haven't heard from you yet. What are you thinking about this?"

Lois:

Speak early and speak often, okay? If you're in a long meeting and you spoke up in the first 10 or 15 minutes, don't wait another half hour to speak, okay? Remember, your presence at the table is what's important. People are going to be making judgements about you all the time with regard to that.

Emilie:

The next topic I'd like to explore is communicating executive presence and your bonus materials have a quiz that people can take to gauge where they are in terms of executive presence. But what is it? Is it something you can learn? And maybe you can give us an example, like if you're interviewing for a new job, what that might look like.

Lois:

Sure. Executive presence are the non-technical ways in which you telepath your capabilities and you're usually telepathing leadership capabilities. And it consists of image, communication, and gravitas. And there's a wonderful book on this that's called Executive Presence by Sylvia Ann Hewlett. And I highly recommend it because she really gives a lot of detail, more than I can possibly give here.

Lois:

And so let's say that you're in an interview. Executive presence would include being willing to say things that other people think, but they won't say, right? Being willing to toot your own horn a little bit, to speak with confidence directly. The headline communication really helps. In an interview, it might be, "Before coming in here today, I researched some of the challenges your organization is facing and one of the biggest ones is the reduction in sales over the past three quarters and I'm wondering what you attribute that to and whether this role would be able to help address that moving forward."

Lois:

Now, that exhibits executive presence in a number of ways. Number one, I took initiative. I showed that I did my homework. Number two, I identified a problem. This is what executives do. They identify a problem. But more importantly, I didn't just ask you to tell me what the problem was. I asked if I could help solve it. That would just be an example of how you go into an interview prepared to telegraph executive presence.

Emilie:

Great example. And you talking about tooting your own horn reminded of Peggy Klaus's book Brag, which I think has the tagline Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It.

Lois:

Yeah, it's another great book. That book I wish I wrote.

Emilie:

I think it came out about the same time, right, as yours?

Lois:

Yeah. It was about the same time. It was a great book.

Emilie:

In your book, you talk about how to handle mansplaining, appropriating and maninterrupting. What are those behaviors and how do you respond to them?

Lois:

Mansplaining is when a man explains something to you that you already know, right, and assumes that you don't. How you handle mansplaining is ... and let's say it happens a lot of times when you're in client meetings, right, and you're asked a question and the man starts to answer, and so you don't even get to telegraph your capability there. You can do something that's called ... In a basketball, it's called a hip check. And a hip check is when you see somebody out of the corner of your eye and you just bump them a little with your hip to let them know that, "I see you." A verbal hip check is when you say, "Hang on, I've got this one," okay? That's a verbal hip check. You don't let someone mansplain for you when you know the answer.

Lois:

The other thing you can do, if it's just the two of you, and I saw this happen ... Oh, this happened in the debate with Kamala Harris and Mike Pence where he started explaining something to her and she just cut him off and she said, "I don't need somebody to explain to me," blah, blah, blah, whatever it was. And I thought that was a perfect example of cutting off a mansplainer. You need to interrupt them and just explain why, "You don't need to explain this to me because," and you may say, "I have a PhD in psychology. I've worked in human resources for 40 years and I've had my own practice for 30 years, so I've got this," right? And that may sound a little bit egotistical, but that's the point with a mansplainer. You got to stop them.

Lois:

Maninterrupting is when ... This happens to women all the time ... is when you're talking and you get interrupted, right? Men interrupt women far more than women interrupt men. And in that case, what you need to do is I call it talk to the hand. Somebody on my LinkedIn page said she didn't like when Kamala Harris put her hand up. And I said, "Sometimes you got to talk to the hand," right? And you say, "Hang on a second. I wasn't finished." Okay? And so you interrupt and you say, "Hang on, I'm not quite finished," or maybe it's not appropriate for you to say, "Hang on, I'm not quite finished," so you let them talk, but then you always bring it back to you and say, "I'd like to just pick up where I left off. I wasn't quite finished," so don't let yourself feel interrupted.

Lois:

And then the third thing, brocreating is when men take your ideas as their own. That's where amplification helps, right? Nobody can steal your idea if I amplified it.

Emilie:

Remind people where the idea first came from.

Lois:

Exactly. And the second thing that you can do if someone has stolen your idea is you let them finish and you have to practice doing this so it just comes naturally to you. And you say something like, "You know, Joe, thanks for expanding on my idea. It made me realize there's some things I'd like to add."

Emilie:

Okay, good.

Lois:

You bring it right back to yourself. You thank the person who brocreated the idea for expanding on your idea and bring it back to yourself. That's how you handle those three unique challenges.

Emilie:

So far, we've discussed some ways women don't speak up and stand out. On the flip side, can a woman speak up and stand out too much? For example, how should a woman respond to feedback that she's overly assertive or overly confident, or maybe even at the other end of the spectrum, overly emotional and overreacting?

Lois:

Okay. Let's start with overly confident first because that's a whole different thing than overly emotional. But when it comes to getting feedback that you may be too assertive or you're too aggressive, that's often code for, "I'm a guy and I don't like it and you're making me feel bad," right? It's usually just code, usually. I mean, sometimes it's true. The feedback is true, but a lot of times it's not.

Lois:

But in either case, what I tell women is not to be any less confident, but to add more listening. See, in my belief, when I do coaching, it's not about getting someone to stop doing something. I don't want you to stop talking. I don't want you to stop being confident. How do you teach someone to be less confident? I mean, that's a stupid thing to ask them to do, but if I say to you, "All I want you to do is listen more after you give an opinion. Use more taglines after you've given your opinion, after you've been your most assertive self," just like in the example that I gave, which was, "My recommendation is that you need a leadership training program," if I had just left it at that, someone might say, "Well, who's she thinks she is to say this?" In

some situations I might say, "That's how I see it. I'd like to know how other people see it and how we could take this idea and really build on it."

Emilie:

You're softening it with that tagline.

Lois:

Exactly. Exactly. But I'm not softening it to the point where I'm asking permission like, "What do you think?" A tagline should not be asking a question about the veracity of the idea or anything like that. It should be always about moving it forward and getting input.

Lois:

Now, on the other end of the spectrum, you have the women who are emotional. There's another great book. It was written by Shaunti Feldhahn. It's called *The Male Factor*. And Shaunti Feldhahn has interviewed thousands of men and asked what was it like working with women, and one of their main complaints was about emotionality and it was also about like, "If I ask you when you come back from maternity leave, 'How's the baby?' I don't want to hear about the childbirth." That's not what guys want.

Lois:

And so I think using the headlines is one way to control some of that. But also, women are wired to be emotional. If you find yourself getting emotional, the most important thing is that you not make people uncomfortable so that you excuse yourself from the situation. That's number one. If I find myself getting emotional, I need to say something like, "You can see I'm having strong feelings about this. Let me collect myself and come back."

Lois:

When you're gone, ask yourself what you're angry about because emotionality in meetings in the workplace is often about, "I'm really pissed off," but women aren't allowed to be angry, so what they do is they turn it into tears. Ask yourself what you're pissed off about, and then put words to it and go back and say something like ... and you can have two bites of the apple in this case, and you go back and you say, "Okay, what I realized, what was making me so emotional was that we've had this conversation on three or four other occasions and nothing ever seems to change," okay? And then you can use some of the other techniques that I talk about. You combine it with some other things, but that's the main thing is take yourself out of the situation, collect yourself and put words to the emotion.

Emilie:

All great advice. And I have to tell you, your book is so full of useful tidbits from the very fresh chapter that talked about the salami method and rapport being the WD40 of communication and how facts speak louder than feelings. And obviously we're not going to be able to cover all of it in the short podcast. And it was really tough for me to pick and choose what I did want to talk to you about. I do hope people will download the book for themselves and discover all the other helpful tips. In the interest of time, I want to wrap up with a couple of questions. Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give your younger self?

Lois:

Yeah. I grew up in a family where it was almost like the tall poppy syndrome where the tall poppy gets cut off of the knees. And so I didn't have confidence. I know people now find that hard to believe. I didn't have confidence. And I think that the advice I would give myself is that you are good enough just the way you are.

Lois:

Now, I don't know that I would have gone on to get a master's and a PhD, and then after my PhD, I was thinking, "Maybe I should get a law degree," and I think that was all in the service of not feeling confident enough, not feeling good enough about myself, not believing that I was enough. And I think the advice would be you are good enough just the way you are. And I think if I had that message in my head, I wouldn't have spent so much time trying to prove it.

Emilie:

Well, you now give other women a lot of confidence in the workplace, so I'm glad it worked out the way it did. I understand that this is the last year that you'll be doing keynote speaking and that you're going to focus on helping women get elected to public office. Obviously we have an election coming up and I also understand you are offering free coaching to any woman who runs for public office on the local or national level, which is fantastic for them. What advice do you have for women candidates or even those thinking about running for public office?

Lois:

Yeah. If you're even thinking about it, the first thing that you want to do is get involved in an organization that helps women get elected. Now, I don't know the Republican equivalent, but I do know that Emily's List is a group of democratic women who help them get elected. It provides training, it teaches you how to do fundraising. It does all kinds of things. As a matter of fact, I've been in touch with them because they don't have a coaching component. And I said, "One of the things I like to do is help women to craft and communicate their messages clearly," because a lot of times that's what gets in the way.

Lois:

Women have great ideas. Was it Laozi that said, "May you have a wonderful idea, but not be able to convince anyone of it." It's like a Chinese curse, right? And I think we suffer from that Chinese curse. I want women to be able to communicate it clearly. That would be the number one thing is that you get involved with a woman's group that's going to help you kind of just learn the tricks of the trade and it is a trade.

Lois:

I think another thing that I would do is see if you could find a politician who would be a mentor of sorts. Now, I don't know of any women that are doing that right now, but I have a hunch we're going to see more, especially after this election. I think you need to find a mentor so that you're not reinventing the wheel. And of course, contact me if you'd like some free coaching.

Emilie:

Well, Lois, this has been such an enlightening and educational session. I want to thank Dr. Lois Frankel, executive coach and author. Thank you again for joining me today.

Lois:

Thank you for having me.

John:

Thanks again to Emilie Ninan and Dr. Lois Frankel, make sure to visit our website, www.BallardSpahr.com, where you can find the latest news and guidance from our attorneys. Subscribe to the show in Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, or your favorite podcast platform. If you have any questions or suggestions for the show, please email podcast@ballardspahr.com. Stay tuned for a new episode coming soon. Thank you for listening.

