

LORIDERNAVICH

When Lori Dernavich founded her company in 2002, she brought skills and expertise amassed from an unexpected career path driven by her compelling personal journey.

Today, Lori is a highly sought after and trusted business advisor who helps businesses and their employees become more successful, providing the skills to improve communication and accountability for a more efficient, revitalized workplace.

Lori's ability to influence change and drive business performance for her clients mirrors that which she applied to her own life, often in the face of extreme adversity and uncertainty.

Born in the Midwest, Lori was the youngest of four siblings by nearly two decades. With her brothers already in college, she took on very adult responsibilities at a young age to help her mother who suffered from depression following her father's untimely death when Lori was two years old.

As a teenager, she dated a young man five years her senior to whom she became engaged immediately after graduating as her high school's valedictorian. In the year surrounding her wedding at age 21, unthinkable tragedies struck. Just months before Lori and her fiancé exchanged vows, her future father-in-law died. And before they marked their one-year anniversary, her mother, mother-in-law, two aunts and an uncle were killed in a horrific car accident.

Reeling in the aftermath of grief at age 22, Lori found herself also faced with myriad responsibilities including selling the houses of her recently deceased mother and mother-in-law, college courses, modeling work and tending to her home amidst a new but failing marriage. Despite the hardships, she achieved her bachelor's degree in food chemistry from the University of Minnesota and started her career in product development at Land O'Lakes.

Divorced and living alone for the first time at age 23, Lori shifted her focus to modeling for a few years but, unsatisfied with this career path, felt compelled to aim for and achieve more from life.

She enrolled in an MBA program where she was encouraged by a professor to instead pursue coursework in psychology, at which she excelled – and was surreptitiously able to use in the confines of her own life. After receiving a master's degree in counseling psychology from St. Mary's University of

Minnesota, Lori was a practicing psychotherapist, working with female abuse survivors who were suffering from serious mental illness.

A move to the east coast set in motion another major career shift. While wanting to apply her counseling training in some way, Lori felt a strong connection to the culture of performance and results-driven orientation that can be found in the business world. Her next role as a career counselor in the corporate world was a natural fit.

She traveled extensively as a corporate leadership coach and trainer for the UNICCO Services Company and then spent several years serving as a senior recruiting consultant in Boston's thriving high tech industry.

Through her work in the laboratory, psychosocial sciences and business, Lori brings a compelling perspective to her role as an advisor, consultant and coach. Her clients – which include Absolut Spirits Company, Legal Sea Foods, Sean John and Credit Suisse – tout her perfect balance of street smarts and book smarts, understanding people, sales and the bottom line.

Lori is regularly quoted and recognized by national media and speaks at conferences across the country about techniques for effective managing, hiring and mentoring, among others.

Through her work with Step Up Women's Network, for which she sits on the national board and chairs the New York board, Lori contributes to the development of the next generation of female philanthropists by developing and mentoring young professional women and underserved teen girls – a natural extension of her passion for and ability to help people achieve success.

As she counsels and inspires through her hallmark tough-yet-tactful approach to problem-solving, Lori aims to be the role model she didn't have early on in life and tips her hat to a business school professor who gave her the encouragement and confidence to pursue her passion, even in a world where the unthinkable can happen.

She currently resides in the New York-metro area with her husband Drew, a professional cartoonist.