

# *Top 10 Rules of the Game for Success and Leading in Medicine*

We are pleased to introduce Dr. Eugenia Gianos here today at In Our Shoes. Dr. Gianos is the *Director of Cardiovascular Prevention at Northwell Health* and also the *Director of The Women's Cardiovascular Center at Lenox Hill*, based in New York City.



**Marisa Santoro:** Eugenia, welcome to In Our Shoes! We're excited to share your success leadership principles and podcast interview with the IOS community, but first tell us why these principles or "rules of the game" as you refer to them are so key to effectively leading in someone's career and in business today.

**Dr. Eugenia Gianos:** My hope today is to give people the advice I wish I had received at the start of my career. Since I played a lot of basketball and other sports growing up, I can relate my career to the "rules of the game" for sports. But somehow in my own career, I ended up getting to half time before realizing that there weren't always referees around, and three-pointers were actually only worth two points, and that I needed to make sure to keep score myself.

My original belief that skills, talent and work ethic would automatically translate into success was not true if you didn't understand the game and unfortunately this is something that is not taught. You need to choose a team that will support you to succeed. You need to clarify the rules, or even set the rules yourself before you start the game for the metrics that you'll be measured by and the clear goals for what success looks like. And lastly, you need to stay focused on the end game- whatever that may be for you personally.

**Marisa Santoro:** This mindset going into your career is so true and not often talked about, especially when we are groomed following our education and learning the skills we need, to assume that we are on an even playing field and everything will be shown to us in good time once we're in the field. What I love about these rules is that they really apply regardless of what industry or career you are leading in. I had a 20+ year in Corporate America and they are very valid!

Well, here they are everyone, the countdown of Dr. Gianos' **Top 10 Rules of the Game for Success!** [Listen here.](#)

## **# 10 *Ynothi Safton***

This is a phrase that I heard very often from my dad growing up which means *Know thyself*. I had a pretty unique upbringing- daughter of hard-working, traditional, immigrant Greek parents growing up in the Bronx and helping out at our quite unusual family business- a bowling alley and bar across the street from Yankee stadium. I learned a lot about hard work, about diversity and completely different cultures for which there were many differences, but yet far more commonalities. And I learned pretty early that I wanted to make a difference in the world. And a lot of my early experiences that shaped my values and priorities taught me who I was.

I had some early exposure to the health care field with an aunt who was a nurse at a nursing home that I volunteered at which left a big impression on me. And through some personal health struggles, I learned about coping and valuing the larger things in life and all of these things helped me to learn about my true self, my values and the potential I had to make a difference in the world.

## **#9 *Think big-***

I certainly think that my career has taught me to think on a much bigger level in terms of what I can potentially have an impact on whereas earlier on, I would have held myself back by only focusing on a far smaller goal. One the contrary, something I've noted is that people can also get caught up in the details of a plan and never make an initial step to start the project. Sometimes taking a first step that is attainable just to get you to the mindset that you can take on the larger project is important.

## **#8 *Never compare yourself***

While it is certainly important to know your value and be prepared to speak up for yourself when it comes to work and negotiating, you shouldn't compare your overall life to others. A friend of mine always says that what you see of people whether in person or on social media is the highlights of their life. You're not seeing the full picture. So to compare yourself to someone's pedigree, their accomplishments or what appears to be their reality is never going to serve you well and likely lead to unhappiness.

## **#7 *Don't narrow your opportunities***

Nowadays- the opportunities for a career are endless because of the merging of many disciplines. I've seen several women leave one industry and create an amazing career in another including you Marisa, having left Financial Services to create your own very successful business. In medicine, if you think more broadly, you can merge your interests in the fields of community outreach, media, business, drug development, research and teaching to create your ideal career, but you need to think more broadly and learn more about the opportunities out there.

## ***#6 Share Selectively***

I happen to be pretty positive about human nature and trust people until they give me reason not to, but you also don't want to be naïve. We need to be cautious about who we share information we share and it should be with people we know we trust. One thing I've learned very well over the years is that we tend to complain at work about the system or our bosses which truthfully is not productive. If you feel the need for empathy in a challenging time, talk to your spouse or friends outside of work. Unless you are going to point out an issue and come up with a constructive solution, it is not going to serve you well in the long term to be someone who simply points out the negative.

## ***#5 Don't get in your own way***

A friend had asked for opportunities for speaking in medicine which was simple for me to create with contacts in medicine. When I came to her with a great opportunity she said: "Oh no- that's too good of an opportunity" since she questioned her qualifications. Had that been true, I would have respected her for knowing her limits, but she was more than adequately prepared for that opportunity and was holding herself back. If anything, you need to learn how to promote yourself and by not taking the bigger opportunities, you will likely hold yourself back.

## ***#4- When someone shows you their true colors, believe them the first time – poet & civil rights activist Maya Angelou***

Hind sight is 20:20 and we often find ourselves saying: "I had a feeling" about that person when I first met them or they behaved in a certain way, and yet we may not have heeded the "feeling". Paying attention to someone's true colors early on is so important and you can apply this to your friends, family, and career. I've used this principle in hiring my current team and realized that if you see certain signs in the interview process, you need to take them to heart and it has proven to be really useful. You can even ask specific questions to learn about someone's "true colors" to choose the strongest team.

## ***#3 - Don't abandon good ideas because of criticism***

Not uncommonly in the workplace, you will face criticism that can be used productively to reflect on and improve your original idea. However, if you know you have a good idea do not abandon it because of criticism. Some of my most successful endeavors came after people either said things were not possible or that they weren't good ideas. And even well-meaning people can hold you back.

For example- when as a kid I said I wanted to become a doctor a good friend said – "Let's be serious, you and I come from immigrant families who own businesses- we're not going to be doctors." And my loving well-meaning family never encouraged me to participate in sports or pursue medicine because they wanted me to have a balanced easier life and family- all well-meaning and all love me dearly, but I had to follow my belief system and know that there was more that was possible for me.

## ***#2- Opportunity- when one door closes another opens***

I've seen far too often that we get caught up on a lost opportunity only to not even appreciate a much larger opportunity that is waiting for us. It is not uncommon that through adversity we end up with far greater options if we handle the situation correctly. It takes the correct frame of mind and the ability to remain optimistic and take advantage of the opportunities in front of you.

## ***#1 Trust your gut***

I know this is something that you base your entire Gutsy Leadership program on Marisa, here at In Our Shoes - and in fact, I do feel that it needs to be a core principle for us to base every decision on- in our relationships, friendships career, etc. Aside from the fact that you are more likely to succeed if you follow these principles, when you live in a manner where your actions reflect your inner belief system, you stay fulfilled and not conflicted. Its actually a much simpler (better) way to live...

**To listen to the full podcast interview with Dr. Eugenia Gianos, [click here](#).**

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