

## BARBARA CASSANI



### Founder of Go! Airline

Barbara Cassani created British Airways' no-frills Go airline. From an initial investment of £25m she steered Go through a £110m management buyout (backed by 3i) and remained as CEO until the sale to easyJet for £374m five years later.

A Veve Clicquot Businesswoman of the Year, Barbara started out as a management consultant with what was then Coopers & Lybrand working in both Washington and London. She moved to BA and held a variety of strategic, sales, customer service and marketing roles on both sides of the Atlantic. She also served as General Manager in North America, responsible for the alliance with US Airways and a joint venture with American Airlines.

After leaving the airline business Barbara founded and led London's 2012 Olympic bid, before handing over the reins to Seb Coe. She then became chair of the Legacy for London Advisory Group, helping to secure a lasting benefit from the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Dividing her time between London and her native US, Barbara has a range of business interests in the travel and leisure sectors. At Jurys Inn she oversaw a group of thirty city-centre hotels in the UK, Ireland and the Czech Republic; and as a director of Air Berlin, she oversees activities within Germany's second largest airline.

In presentations Barbara argues that we've become so focused on survival and cost-cutting since the recession that we need to remind ourselves how to grow: "Now is the time to focus on new products, new markets and new ways of doing things."

#### Topics (Selection):

- Leadership
- Customer Service
- Strategy
- Transformation
- Managing change

#### Publications (Selection):

- Go - An Airline Adventure, 2003