

CEO WORLD

LEADERS



NICOLE MARTIN
FOUNDER OF HRBOOST

**EMPOWERING
LEADERSHIP**

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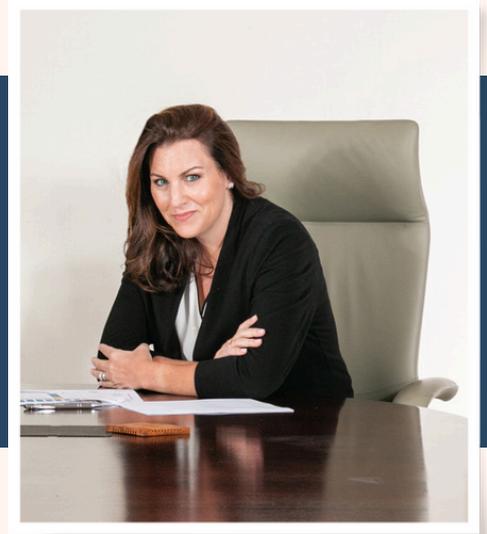


EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP:

Building a Legacy Through Passion and Purpose
Insights on Character-Based Leadership and
Sustainable Business Growth from
Nicole Martin, Founder of HRBOOST®

NICOLE MARTIN

FOUNDER OF HRBOOST



The Outset of a Career

From a young age, I balanced part-time work with school, maintaining good grades, volunteering, and taking on leadership roles like Editor of my high school newspaper and Student Body President in my senior year. Immediately after high school, I entered the job market, prioritizing self-sufficiency over attending university. Growing up with a single mother, this was a necessity. By the time I completed my undergraduate studies while working full-time, I had accumulated five years of solid experience in my field. This led to my first HR Management role at the age of 23.

Early in my career, I realized that while education opens doors, experience is invaluable. When I was promoted to Director, I was proud to break the all-male management team's norm. After completing my graduate degrees, I pondered what could replace my academic pursuits. During the recession, I helped my former employer downsize while maintaining recognition as an employer of choice, despite pay freezes and layoffs.

Throughout these experiences, I learned much about people and workplace culture. Reflecting on my journey, I consider myself an accidental entrepreneur. I didn't plan to start a business; in 2010, I left corporate America to consult, intending to help another CEO build a company from the ground up. My first client was a high-growth business that grew from \$10M to \$26M within 36 months and sold for \$58M. My team continued to serve them for two years post-acquisition.

It was this client who first saw the potential in my business and expressed interest in investing. It took me a year to fully recognize the opportunity he saw. In 2015, I created a five-year business plan and engaged my investor on my terms. Since then, my company has experienced 50% growth year over year. In 2018, HRBoost had its biggest year yet, and we're on track to replicate that success as we close out 2019. With 16 team members, we've served nearly 600 businesses in Chicago, and we're proud to be a viable option for high-growth and transformational businesses seeking HR services.



Driving Motivation and Achieving Milestones

My daily motivation comes from a natural curiosity and the endless tools, resources, and relationships at our disposal. The constantly evolving work landscape drives innovation and staying in close conversation with our clients ensures that we're always aligned with their needs. This customer-centric approach keeps us focused on pushing boundaries and delivering the services necessary to help our clients embrace change at the pace required today.



Staying Adaptable in a Rapidly Changing Business Environment.

In today's ever-evolving business landscape, adaptability is key. We achieve this by closely aligning our HR solutions with each client's specific objectives and P&L. Our hands-on approach ensures that the metrics and deliverables of every HR plan are on track, driving the business forward. We've diversified our offerings to allow clients to engage with us on an a la carte, project, or retainer basis, providing the flexibility to meet their unique needs.

Whether working with small, growing businesses or large corporate employers, our mission is to support them wherever they are on their journey to becoming the best place to work. We focus on delivering talent, not just software, because tools are only as effective as the people behind them. This adaptability allows us to stay ahead of trends and innovations while ensuring our clients maximize their investment.

Fostering a Culture of Innovation and Creativity

To foster innovation and creativity, we employ a flexible approach that emphasizes continuous improvement. We start by aligning clients' HR activities with their financial goals and identifying areas for enhancement.

This mindset extends to our internal culture as well. I lead with vulnerability and transparency, conducting face-to-face one-on-ones with everyone on my team to ensure authentic exchanges. We prioritize genuine appreciation through appreciation languages rather than mere recognition. Our core values emphasize life-affirming work, and I actively engage in leadership exchanges with everyone at HRBOOST® to support their career and personal growth. This holistic approach extends to our entire team, including remote and out-of-state employees. We walk the talk and practice what we preach

Leadership Philosophy and Inspiring Team Success

My leadership philosophy is rooted in Character-Based Capitalism, where true leadership is driven by curiosity, passion, and a willingness to take risks. I focus on creating an environment where work aligns with our shared values and goals, making it fulfilling and meaningful. By fostering a culture of shared leadership, I ensure our team is aligned with our organizational purpose, driving both profitability and excellence. I take pride in seeing my team's passion grow, which fuels our collective success. My role is to empower and guide them, ensuring we remain adaptable and forward-thinking in building high-performing organizations.

Notable Collaborations and Partnerships

A key collaboration in my journey was co-authoring No Fear Negotiation for Women with John Tinghitella. This project combined our insights to help women navigate workplace negotiations and overcome systemic pay disparities. By sharing practical strategies, we aimed to empower women to advance in their careers and address inequalities in the business world.

About HRBOOST®

HRBOOST® is a dynamic HR consulting firm that partners with businesses to align their HR strategies with their profit and loss (P&L) and strategic objectives. We offer a comprehensive process that includes analyzing current HR activities, identifying areas for improvement, and designing tailored solutions to help businesses attract talent, protect assets, and reduce turnover. Our team takes a hands-on approach, ensuring that our strategies drive profitability and sustainability while fostering a culture of innovation and performance excellence. With over a decade of experience, we have successfully served nearly 600 businesses, helping them grow and thrive in an ever-evolving business landscape

Lessons Learned from Failures and Mistakes

One of the key lessons I've learned is that the greatest enemy of success is fear. As my business experienced high growth, I faced numerous challenges, including securing financing, attracting skilled talent who believed in our brand promise, and most importantly, overcoming fear. Being a disruptor in the industry drew attention from big competitors and acquisition offers came before we realized we were profitable. However, staying true to my vision, upholding my values, and keeping my faith allowed me to build a solid team. Together, we've created an environment where we bring joy and purpose to people through their work. These experiences have taught me the importance of resilience and conviction, which have been crucial to my growth as a business leader.

Balancing Professional and Personal Life

Balancing professional life with personal commitments is crucial to me as a business leader. Success comes from aligning my work with my passion, making it fulfilling rather than burdensome. I prioritize what matters, stay true to my values, and rely on a strong team to take the reins when needed, allowing me to recharge. Setting boundaries helps me stay present in all areas of life. By fostering shared leadership, I've created a purposeful work environment, supporting a balanced and sustainable lifestyle for myself and my team.



UPCOMING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES



HRBOOST® is thrilled to offer a new franchise opportunity available soon, allowing you to own your own HRBOOST® business and join our successful team. With rising demand for outsourced HR consulting due to reduced internal resources and increasing regulations, this opportunity provides the benefits of our proven operating history, strong brand reputation, extensive industry experience, and comprehensive education and training programs.



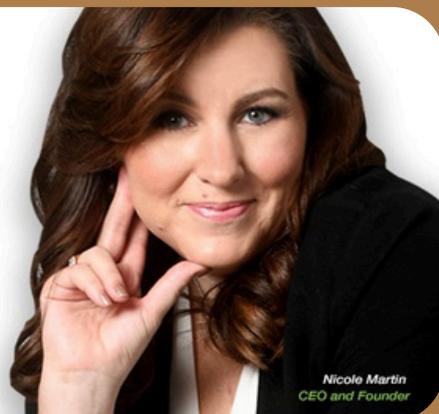
Leaving a Legacy in the Industry

I hope to leave a legacy that demonstrates the power of aligning passion with purpose in business. Through HRBOOST®, I've shown that you can build a successful and sustainable business by focusing on people and creating a culture of shared leadership. My goal is to inspire future generations of business leaders to prioritize character, innovation, and a deep commitment to the well-being of their teams. I want them to see that true leadership is about empowering others, embracing challenges, and driving change that benefits both the business and the broader community. By fostering environments where people love their work and feel valued, I aim to set a standard for leadership that goes beyond profits and leaves a lasting positive impact on the industry.



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