



**UBS**

# Leadership in the post-covid world

*Interview with  
Marina Cvetkovic*

UBS Ultra High  
Net Worth  
Industry Leader  
Network



# Leadership in the post-pandemic world

*Marina Cvetkovic*

*for UBS Ultra High Net Worth Industry Leader Network*

The unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic has tested leaders, especially with regard to how they lead their virtual teams. As the crisis shows no sign of ending soon, we discussed how leaders need to change in the new normal with Marina Cvetkovic, who is a certified executive business leadership coach.

**Question** - How is leadership in general forecast to evolve/change after a pandemic such as the Coronavirus?

**Answer** – This is a brilliant question and very topical too! There are, in my view, two types of leaders: those primarily preoccupied with managing risk; and those focused on grasping the newly-emerging opportunities. While managing risk is critical in the short term, leaders with the ability to see this situation not only as a challenge to be managed but also as a unique opportunity for a “Great Reset”, per WEF’s most recent initiative, are those capable of guiding their people and organizations into a brighter future.

The current situation has accelerated exponentially some of the trends that were already on the way, such as: digital transformation; triple bottom line; the need for change makers; and leading through vision and purpose instead of power and control. All of these are typically qualities of NextGen leaders.

**Question** - What are the main attributes that differentiate good leaders and executive teams from others in the COVID-19 era?

**Answer** - Two components are critical: how executives act and how they communicate. In my work as executive coach and leadership advisor, I usually suggest leaders and top teams do both effectively. Since the crisis started, I have seen two “hot topics” evolve around leadership:

- **Communication**. At the individual level, executive or CEO visibility matters more than ever: finding the right messaging and channels to reach your employees and other stakeholders during the crisis is essential for keeping trust high. This is a new territory for many executives, especially now that most of communication is virtual – so quite a few are reaching out for professional coaching support, which is excellent! Continuing to embrace one's own limitations is a trait of exceptional leaders.
- **Alignment** At the executive team level, the current situation has brought to the surface challenges within the top team: how to keep the CEO, executive team and the board aligned in a situation when the strategy is changing continually and each leader is asked to act quickly and decisively? We often work with executives on creating what we call “Leadership Alliance Culture”, as we’ve observed top team alignment to be a critical success factor these days.

**Question** - What is the role of emotional intelligence in times of extremely high uncertainty?

**Answer** - EQ is critical now and will continue to be in the future. Times of high uncertainty are the ultimate EQ test: to lead effectively, leaders not only need to understand and manage their own emotions, but also have empathy for the emotions of the people they lead, as well as the ability to adjust their leadership style accordingly. Not a small ask! And this will not change in the foreseeable future – with digital transformation, AI and automation, many of the technical skills continue to lose importance, but the one thing that remains vital is the human ability to relate to others, inspire, motivate, and engage. If in doubt about which leadership skill to develop for future – my vote goes to EQ!

If you wish to speak directly with Marina, comment below the article and we will connect you with her.



Marina Cvetkovic is a certified executive coach and a trusted board advisor with a diverse executive business background. She is a member of the Forbes Coaches Council, as well as MG 100, alongside iconic leaders like Jim Kim, Alan Mulally and other top 100 coaches and leaders in the world selected by Dr. Marshall Goldsmith.

In her last in-house role, she was a VP of Strategy and Chief of Staff to the CEO of the largest re-insurance organization in the world. Today, as a partner at NH & Partners AG, Marina focuses on coaching executives and top teams on building stronger leadership alliances. In her role as Chief Commercial Officer at The NextGen Project, she supports executives by connecting them with the elite group of global next generation change makers.

In 2019, Marina won the FinNext Award in Orlando, Florida for her transformative contribution to the financial services industry. She is a sought-after keynote and TEDx speaker – her talk "I gamified my life - Here is what I've learned" continues to inspire many.