



Janet Valenza

GOGOgracious™ - Creative Director/Wardrobe Consultant

gogogracious.com

Tell us about your firm or business including history, specialization, and years in business.

I help high performing women realize greater authority through style without an extensive, expensive wardrobe.

What's an interesting fact about you or your firm that most people don't know?

We start with your existing wardrobe and do everything virtually!

We have a three-part framework, which is Assemble, Refine and Acquire. For Assemble, we look at what you already have and put together complete outfits. In the Refine step, we refine and focus your wardrobe with an eye toward your body type, the activities and occasions you dress for, and your taste (such as vintage, corporate, poetic), etc. In the Acquire step, we shop, also virtually on Zoom together, from a very specific shopping list of missing pieces that we've defined in earlier phases.

You'd be amazed at how there are incredible products out there for reasonable prices from brands you've never heard of: items that are versatile and functional. If a client wants to go out to shop at a local boutique, we can do that too and I'll be there on FaceTime.

What's a favorite moment of your career so far?

Landing Polo Ralph Lauren as a client. In the beginning, we did a great deal of design concept work, creating 100-piece collections from concept to sample. One of the private labels we signed was Polo Ralph Lauren, and we worked on various collections for them when we were working with brands, before we pivoted to working with individual clients.

What challenge are you most proud of overcoming?

I became the CFO of a \$100 million ad agency my first 10 years out of college. But it was my Dad's dream. One day, sitting in my corner office on Madison Avenue, I had an epiphany. I love clothing and I wanted to be a Designer. At that moment, I realized if I never pursued my own vision of what I wanted for my life, I would become bitter and resentful. I didn't know how to pursue what I wanted to do, but I found the courage to begin my business over 20 years ago and I've never looked back.

I am most proud to be living my own dream and my own life.

Tell us about a recent professional accomplishment of yours.

Winning the Toastmasters Best Speaker Award. Someone told me long ago that to promote any business I need to be able to write, or to speak; that it's important to be good at one or the other. I can write but I never really enjoyed it, and while I liked speaking, I had a fear, similar to most people, about speaking in public.

Toastmasters is a wonderful organization that's not hard to participate in, which has a process that's been honed over 100 years, with chapters all over the world. I was an active member for seven years and have given well over 100 speeches. Through Toastmasters I've learned that feeling butterflies before speaking is normal, but this can be channeled into a positive place. It's about getting out of your own head and delivering a gift to the audience, helping them, and connecting with people. That's what good speaking is all about!

Tell us about a recent personal accomplishment of yours.

I completely re-designed my apartment according to my own vision, including art, some of which is my own!

Like so many women, for years, I put off things related to self-care. Beautiful environments make me happy, but taking the time and energy to design my own space was never a priority.

I've been an artist all of my life, and here and there I've invested time in creating artwork but never did anything with it. Now I live in a beautiful space that includes some of my pieces that I finally framed. Living in this space has increased my happiness and by extension what I can bring to others.

What advice would you offer new business owners?

Learn how to sell. It's a skill and a "muscle" that's so important for any business, yet highly underrated.

How can you help other Women Owned Law members improve their businesses?

I help women use style to enhance their authority. You have 7 seconds to make an impression. 55% is what people see (visual.) 38% is how they hear the words (vocal.) Only 7% are the words themselves. Planning and strategizing for how you look is not frivolous. In fact, it's serious, important business.

How has Women Owned Law been of value to you and your career?

I've had fun, made friends, and helped clients. I've also enjoyed doing some beloved fashion tours of lesser known NYC exhibits that have gotten rave reviews from WOL members.

About Women Owned Law

Women Owned Law is a ground-breaking group created to connect and advance women legal entrepreneurs. WOL supports its members and other women entrepreneurs in the law in their business endeavors at every point in the business lifecycle. We advocate on behalf of women legal entrepreneurs and have been instrumental in raising the profile of women entrepreneurs in the law.

For additional information about Women Owned Law visit <http://www.womenownedlaw.org>