

# Meet Caroline Franczia - revenue expert, author and business Falkor

*No matter how good your product is, as Falkor from the Never-ending Story wrote: "Having a luck dragon with you is the only way to go on a quest." January Barnes spoke to Caroline Franczia, author of "Popcorn for the New CEO" and the newly published sequel "Popcorn for the New CEO II" - discover the business book that people are raving about in business school and wish it was on the curriculum! FROM PARLAYME*

Temps de lecture : minute

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Caroline Franczia (Sprinklr, Datadog alumni) is a seasoned revenue expert. After starting her career with large tech companies (Oracle, BMC Software), she spent 4 years in the Silicon Valley, soaking on the Startup culture and American methodologies. A regular columnist for Maddynews, she's also the founder of Sales and Business leadership consulting agency, UpperCut First.

Today Caroline is focused on helping startups/scaleups with revenue architecture. Popcorn for the New CEO II is a must-have read for those seeking a business book with practical and actionable advice. So sit back and relax as we interview Caroline about her journey from being a sales executive to business leader/advisor for global startups and companies to today as an accomplished author.

Whilst reading this interview we guarantee you will also simultaneously enhance your business insights, sales acumen along with popular blockbuster movie quotes!

Popcorn for the CEO II is the follow-on book from Popcorn for the CEO, is it important that readers have already read the first book before picking up the second instalment? Are you building a body of work with connections between each book or are these stand-alone books?

I would like to think that they follow my own journey. At the beginning of UF, I was building up my offers and my expertise and to do so, I did a lot of mentoring for younger startups that had tremendous questions about revenue.

Book 2 is a reflection of actual missions of Serie's B to F and problems we solved together, always presented in a digestible format.

Is the new book targeting businesses with 5 employees, 50 or 500 employees? Is it suited to the first-time founder or seasoned executive? Or can a CEO overseeing any size company gain practical knowledge and expertise from your book?

I picked up new CEO to avoid saying, entrepreneurs. The book is really for anyone, from business school - engineering school to SDRs, Sales, Pre

sales or a leadership role who is curious about B2B scaling. I have seasoned VPs who praised me for simplifying issues and putting the words exactly where their problems lie.

Many of us dream of becoming an author but few have the talent, drive and dedication to do so. What inspired you to write a book and how did you make it happen?

I have been writing since I was 5, it's a true passion.

I tried to publish a few novels before but never got to the finish line. I took creative writing classes at Stanford. So when I finally created the content for my own company, I think it finally all fell into place and operating rhythm to do so.

You are clearly passionate about sales and business development. Writing two books on the subject is testimony to this, how important is it to approach your work with passion? Or can too much passion cloud better judgement? What is the healthy balance?

AH! I don't think I can do anything without passion.

Life is too short to be boring. I like the challenge; I constantly push the limit of my comfort zone even though it feels overwhelming at times. The trick is to be passionate with a cool, rational head. Somehow, I think I make it work; I cannot talk for everyone though!

Talking about passion. You are also an advocate for challenger sales and had Jen Allen Knuth Chief Evangelist Officer for Challenger sales write a forward in this book. Can you tell us more on how you met Jen and how she has inspired your approach to the sales process?

I have two masterminds in the foreword; Andy has created an incredible empire from his MEDDICC book to now MEDDICC company and platform. I am incredibly grateful to his support and his beautiful text for Popcorn 2. Jen is something, she's now Community Builder at Lavender and I am so impressed with her genuine, positive energy combined with deep expertise. I met Jen through LinkedIn and really hope we can one day meet IRL! recording with her for the challenger sales was a pure moment of blast. We share common views and values one in particular is that you cannot sell without solving problems.

What I love about Popcorn for the New CEO II is that it is such a practical book, where the reader can take away real business practical advice to adapt into their everyday work-life. For example how to schedule meetings and decision-making methodologies – can you perhaps share with us why it's so important for business executives and entrepreneurs to

## have a solid understanding about simple things such as time management?

In all honesty I did not seat one day and ask myself what content would be useful for people - CEOs but also anyone who is entrepreneur at heart no matter their role. All chapters are real life experience of issues I encountered with my clients, issues that in some case cost them a lot.

Another aspect you focus on in the book is corporate values, too often, especially in large organisations where there are various departments, often competing for the same budget, corporate values can be diluted or in some cases overlooked or worse still, forgotten. You importantly stress in this book that everyone should reflect the corporate values of a company. Can you explain further why this is important and perhaps share 2 examples of when corporate values are shared how this positively impacts a company's performance as opposed to when the corporate values don't align and it negatively affects the company's overall performance.

Large companies have program laid out; they often define their path for 3-5 years with a main corporate goal to which everyone in the company

will attach to. It is often publicly presented in the chairman's letter, on the website or in the annual report. All in all, all budgets, all actions, all initiatives must attach to this corporate goal and its supporting business strategy.

Startups and scale ups must do the same even if their program is 6 months instead of 5 years, when everyone know what the goal is, what the supporting strategies are, it is easier to work towards it.

Setting departmental goals is, in my opinion a way to create silos and competition within the same organisation.

A common example is to ask marketing to create leads (poor quality, large quantity) and ask sales to close revenue at a high value. By sending too many leads to sales they cannot treat them all well you have a low-level conversion and the average size deal is lower due to lack of time per deal to work on volume.

Importantly you also bring to the reader's attention the important notion of saying "no", we often look to drive success with a "yes" corporate culture mentality, however knowing when to say no or as Andy Whyte CEO and founder of MEDDIC, who wrote the forward famously quotes - "Nobody ever regrets qualifying out". Can you remind us again why it's ok to opt out of an RFP or business deal whilst leaving the door open

## for future opportunities?

I have recently worked with a client who almost put the company in danger for answering too many RFPs that were not influenced and not in their ICP. We pull out resources to work on extremely low chances of conversion. While these resources work on that, they are pulled away from innovation, bringing value to existing customer and building strong pipeline in the Ideal customer profiles pool of prospects.

Success is often a lot to do with balance. What's your work/life philosophy? And what do you think is a healthy and effective life/work philosophy if you're a CEO?

Most companies I work with have lost the importance of balance. Either because the culture is set this way or because of passionate founders and first employees. There are numerous studies that prove the necessity of recessing and taking the time to think, pause, analyse.

Our brains were never meant to be on 8 zooms meeting a day while managing multiple conversations on slack, WhatsApp and treating emails.

We have to simplify internal and external communication to be more productive, not add more to the mix!

I want to discuss a bit more on your journey of writing this book. What is the most surprising thing you discovered writing your

# book?

That I was capable of doing it!!! I keep on trying to push myself and be surprised when it works

## What was the first business book you read and what were your thoughts?

I read a lot of 'business books' during my college years, but none of them were hands on. The one that changed my perspective was challenger sales, I used to be a lone wolf. Being a challenger, in my head now means: be an expert, work with a team, be a revenue machine that puts the customer at the centre of everything. No problem, no deal!

## Most Importantly - Where can people buy your book? How can people reach out to you directly for more business coaching or advice?

You can get your copy of Popcorn for the New CEO II at all good online retailers including Amazon, Barnes & Noble - find out more at the Upper Cut First website too!



CAROLINE FRAN CZIA

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Article by Caroline Franczia