

Clients First

An Interview with Lynn McMahon,
New York Metro Office Managing Director, Media and Entertainment Lead in North America, Accenture

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to her current role, Lynn McMahon served Accenture as Communications - Industry Client Account Lead; COO - Communications and High Tech - North America; Communications, Media and Entertainment and High Tech Sales Lead; and Accenture Innovation Center Lead. She serves on the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Ballet Company. McMahon received her bachelor's degree in finance and M.B.A. from Florida State University.



Lynn McMahon

COMPANY BRIEF Accenture (accenture.com) is a leading global professional services company providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions – underpinned by the world's largest delivery network – Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With 482,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives.

What are the keys to Accenture's industry leadership and how do you define the Accenture difference?

I feel like we are always looking around the corner and reinventing ourselves for the next thing that our clients are going to need. We do not think as much around what's here now or how we continue to evolve things as they are, we really look at what the next thing will be. Whether it is new technology or new business models or changes in industries and disruptive factors, we try to determine how it's going to impact our clients and also how it could potentially disrupt us.

I think that visionary aspect – the fact that we are consultants and we turn that consulting lens on ourselves a lot – is one of the things that leads to our sustainability and leadership as a company.

It also has to do with our core values, because creating client value defines who we

are. We look at everything through the lens of a client. We think client outcomes first.

We have six core values. The one I think that really allows us to continue to create a new generation of leaders and a new generation of thought capital is our focus on integrity. We're always trying to do the right thing for our clients and for our people.

The other one that I would mention around core values is stewardship. We have a very strong commitment to creating the next generation of leaders. We need to constantly reinvest in our people. We put a tremendous amount of our company's earnings back into the business in terms of developing new thought capital or developing new skills and training our people.

You have spent your career at Accenture and have had many different roles. Does it feel as though you've been able to have a number of different careers within the same company?

When I got out of school and I graduated with my M.B.A., I was trying to decide what to do. My concentration was in finance and I had opportunities in banking and capital markets.

The beauty of consulting is that I didn't have to make that very linear choice about what I was going to do in my career. I like the versatility of being able to move around in different roles and certainly this firm provides that opportunity.

We have five major industry groups and I have actually worked across all five of those groups in my career.

Will you highlight the media and entertainment industry group at Accenture?

Our media and entertainment practice in North America supports the work that we do with broadcasters, programmers and publishers. This industry is going through a tremendous amount of disruption and we are helping our clients think through these forces and adapt their businesses to be successful.

Will you discuss the mission of the Women's Leadership Forum?

We have had the Women's Leadership Forum for almost 20 years. Early in my career, I was one of the few women at the table. I

was starting to see a few women clients at the table. However, everything we did from a marketing perspective or a client relationship building perspective tended to involve golf or a basketball game or a baseball game.

I realized that we had an underserved population here and went out and polled some of these women and asked what would be of value to them and heard back that they really didn't value the type of pure social interaction we were doing. They had a different set of things that they wanted to get out of any type of event or interaction. They really wanted something that had more content related to it and that was fairly crisp so that it wasn't a two-day, off-site seminar.

We created something that was very bespoke. We bring our clients together around highlighting great women role models and strong women business leaders and then we give them a chance to get together and build a network of women that they know.

How critical is purpose for Accenture and to having a commitment to the communities it serves?

We really believe that, besides serving our clients and building our people, the third leg of the stool is about being a good corporate citizen in all of the local communities where we work and where our clients reside.

I think the New York metro area is a great example. I'm really proud of what we do here. We have more than 5,000 people in the New York metro area and we realize how we can multiply our impact in a huge way by having that many people.

Also, this is really important to our people. People want to work hard, but they also want to see how they are making an impact in the community. We have several dimensions to this so that people can be involved in things that they care about.

For example, we had our day of service where our people volunteered across the New York metro area. Some were delivering meals to people that are homebound, some were revitalizing parks, some were mentoring in schools, and some were building houses.

Our people are also generous with their money and we have established a My Giving campaign to facilitate this. As importantly, we do pro bono work to help with special projects for many of the organizations we are involved with that support the local community. ●