

# JULIE ROSS

## Steering Toward the Quantum Leap

**A** recognized thought leader and innovator in the life-sciences industry, Julie Ross is at the forefront of championing initiatives to improve clinical research. As president of Advanced Clinical, Julie has worked extensively on targeted strategies to improve risk-based monitoring, electronic trial master files, business intelligence tools, and business process automation.

Beyond Julie's zeal to improve clinical trials to benefit patients worldwide, she is passionate about developing high-performing teams and mentoring future talent, which is reflected in the culture of her company and in her roles as a mentor and board member with the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association. Julie's leadership philosophy incites people to be their best and do their best.

She has created such a special and unparalleled culture in the CRO field, the people who come to Advanced Clinical stay invested in the company, which is shown through the company's competitive retention rates. Julie firmly believes that when people know they are supported, safe, and loved, their potential is unleashed.

As a leader, she is known for taking problematic situations and implementing long-term solutions for venture capitalists, private equity firms, private owners, and thousands of employees. Julie has never been about the short-term dollar. Ingrained into her mindset are long-term goals and creating a compelling vision that motivates her teams to go beyond what they thought might be possible. In her career, she has grown companies' profitability and footprints, while increasing efficiencies that create sustainable work environments that offer rewarding cultures to employees.

She is a thoughtful leader in that she takes great care to ask questions that incite new ways of thinking. As she continues to drive meaningful change and innovation in the industry, she is paving the way to achieve her legacy, which is to inspire and influence a generation of leaders to challenge the status quo and embrace all points of view.

**PV: How do you believe your leadership style inspires others to reach their personal and professional goals?**

**ROSS:** I seek to ensure we have a safe space where people can bring their whole self to work and where failure is embraced as a step in the journey of seeking a better way. Only then can they feel free to be mentally stimulated and creative. My job is about helping others be their best in the work environment. Not everybody works the same way. I grew up in a generation where you came in at eight and you left at five. Now we have a new generation that works differently, but also remains accountable, responsible, motivated, and engaged.

**PV: How do you strive to drive innovation and transformation in your company and in the industry?**

**ROSS:** Innovation begins with creating a safe space. Then the magic happens. When people feel safe they bring their best selves. My role then is to provide opportunities for the team and to think and network with others, allow for failure, and wrap a learning culture around the people, which leads to innovation and real transformation within my company and the industry.

**PV: How do you encourage your leaders to think differently?**

**ROSS:** First, I challenge our people to network more than they do. Second, I encourage them to ask questions from those who are not in our industry — why, why not, how, to what degree, where have we fallen short? This is one of the reasons I joined the

Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA). I get the chance to learn about different perspectives from leaders from across the industry and surround myself with a network of people who are different from me. By asking questions, listening, and probing, you grow and your thinking extrapolates in so many different ways. This is the power of innovation.

**PV: As a leader who is striving to change the trajectory of the industry, what does that mantle of responsibility mean to you?**

**ROSS:** We must ensure we have diversity in our thinking and make sure all voices are heard. Our industry has always looked at the world through scientists and drug developers; now we've started to embrace other stakeholders such as service providers and academics. But that's not enough. We must look socially across the ethnicity domains

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### Julie Ross

**TITLE:** President

**COMPANY:** Advanced Clinical

**INDUSTRY AWARDS:** 2019 Healthcare Businesswomen's Association's Chair Award; 2016, 2014 PharmaVOICE 100

**COMPANY AWARDS:** 2019 Outstanding Leader; 2018 Outstanding Leader

**ASSOCIATIONS:** DIA, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association

and gender domains. We need to blend the social disparity that we have in our worlds with a new road map of how we're going to work and develop drugs and products together. When this happens, we will have made a quantum leap.

**PV: What are some of the qualities you look for in the next generation of leaders?**

**ROSS:** I look for people who lead first with their ears and then their voice. Future leaders are the ones who are making sure all voices are heard. It's hard to be influential if you don't demonstrate the core qualities that show you don't have all the answers yourself. A leader never has all the answers as an individual. A leader is only as good as the team he or she is surrounded by. I believe the other

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part of leadership is caring, and loving, and really understanding that all people are good.

**PV: What advice do you share with leaders in your organization?**

**ROSS:** As a leader you need to understand your role is just one of many, and no one role is more important than the others. Also, make sure you have all the right people in the right seats. It takes

a village to drive results, so ensure you have captured all points of view.

**PV: How important is it for you to mentor and develop the next generation of leaders?**

**ROSS:** It's critical to mentor and develop the new generation if we are striving to drive innovation as well as better and more timely results. By sharing our thoughts on life and business lessons, including successes and failures, others are empowered to not repeat failures of the past.

**PV: There has been a huge level of collaboration with COVID-19. How do we maintain this going forward?**

**ROSS:** The pandemic has driven us to break down barriers and to engage with others outside of our silos. We have been driven to put humanity first and above profits and individual/company accomplishments. This is allowing us to have better, faster outcomes as brilliant minds across companies and stakeholders work together to break barriers, challenge the status quo, and find a COVID cure. We all need to make sure that we don't go backwards as we leave the pandemic. We've accomplished so much in such a short, crazy amount of time. Yes, the cure isn't here yet, but it's right around the corner. If we continue to wear that lens of humanity first, business results will follow all of us. I'm hoping we can replicate this way of working to create a consortium of stakeholders committed to addressing other diseases, such as Alzheimer's and ALS.

**PV: Let's talk about your passion for bridging the gender gap. Your company was one of the first to join the HBA's Collaborative. Why is this so important to you?**

**ROSS:** A lot of times in my career, I was held back from being my best self because of my gender. I don't think people did it intentionally, it's just the way the world was. But it's wrong. Working as hard as I did, I should have had an equal opportunity. So I've been committed to not only being a voice for change, but demonstrating action to change. Our company joined the HBA Collaborative so I could be involved with other leading companies that say this is important, it is wrong, and we're going to change it. Also, when you fix gender imbalance, you begin to fix other imbalances across ethnicities and races. This is something I'm very passionate about.

**My up-at-night issue is knowing we have people with horrible diseases dying without a cure, and I keep asking, What more can I do? Where is my opportunity to do more? What am I missing? How can I help?**

**PV: How would you describe yourself as a leader?**

**ROSS:** I am compassionate, because we need people in our lives to survive. Understanding and having concern for those around you helps you focus on what's most important. It keeps your moral compass in tune, and when others know they are supported, safe, and loved, it's amazing how their potential is recognized. I also believe I am brave because I do not shy away from path finding. My inner being is in a state of constant turmoil questioning what else, why, and is the time right? Keeping this in balance and alignment allows me to be brave and not foolish. Challenging the status quo, surrounding oneself with different points of view, and then focusing on what matters most is the best way to embrace risk and be brave.

**PV: What is the one thing that keeps you up at night? Conversely, what's the one thing that brings you joy?**

**ROSS:** My up-at-night issue is knowing we have people with horrible diseases dying without a cure, and I keep asking, What more can I do? Where is my opportunity to do more? What am I missing? How can I help? Joy comes when I witness meaningful progress in finding cures, but on a daily basis my joy comes from others when they see the rainbow on a cloudy day.

**PV: What mark would you like to leave on this industry as your legacy?**

**ROSS:** I would like to be remembered as a leader who inspired and influenced a whole new generation of leaders to challenge the status quo and embrace all points of view. A leader who drove meaningful change, diversity, and innovation in the industry. **PV**



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