



There is no general equation for success in life, at least not a specific one that has been researched and tested. One may argue, however, that each and everyone can conceive their own magic formula. With his or her own strengths and weaknesses, one simply needs to strive for the right measurements. As I interviewed Wiam Samir, I immediately thought that she had figured it all. In her recipe for success, I could indeed discern zests of passion and huge cups of learning opportunities.

Wiam's leadership story kicked off as she was interning at Bureau Veritas, Casablanca in 2015. As an engineering student, she had the opportunity to do a capstone project combined with an internship for 5 months. This internship was the turning point in her entire life where she discovered a passion for construction sustainability, and which eventually traced her career and success.

Wiam loves challenges. In fact, at Bureau Veritas, she took so many initiatives that her manager, who is now her mentor and who played a key role in her professional life, noticed her abilities. This gave him the idea of including her in a much bigger project, that of reviving an NGO, The Morocco Green Building Council (MGBC). **MGBC** is the **Moroccan** branch of the World Green Building Council and a member of its MENA regional network. Its vision is to promote green building knowledge and practices while ensuring the needs of the present and future generations without compromising present needs of Moroccan citizens (for more information <http://www.moroccogbc.ma/>).

At that same time, Wiam enrolled on an online course on social entrepreneurship. Little did she know that this would make all the difference in reviving the MGBC. She designed a strategic plan as part of her course using the MGBC as a real case study and submitted it to the World green building council. Too much of an ambitious project? (you might think).

It was not.

She later heard from people at The World Green Building Council, whose headquarters are in London. They were so impressed with her proposal that they decided to allow for the elections to take place and revive the NGO. Her mentor even encouraged her to apply to be the president of the NGO.

However, there was a teeny problem; at 22 years old, she was deemed too young to lead an NGO. She had no proven experience and no one from the former board knew her. The challenge of trusting a young millennial was real. Nonetheless, while her mentor applied for the role of president, she would be the vice-president part of the board.

Being the youngest on the board and having no further responsibilities than merely being a student, she was the most available. This delightful advantage would lead her to various conferences and meetings all over the world from Egypt, France, India to Sweden.

“You have indeed travelled the world!” I exclaimed.

-Laughs-

While she journeyed for work, Wiam took immense pleasure in discovering new countries, learning new things and building her network. Although she was usually the youngest in those conferences, Wiam did not let herself feel intimidated. She had a goal in mind, re-establishing the credentials of the MGBC. In fact, her hard work paid off when in Sweden, she received the document certifying that Morocco was finally part of the World Green Building Council. Not only was this an enormous achievement, but this meant the start of a flourishing career. Indeed, shortly after, Wiam was immediately employed at Bouygues construction.

“How?” You might ask.

Wiam had, by then established a solid network. During her travels, she never refused opportunities that were offered to her. It was during one of the business trips that she built her network and convinced business representatives of what she was capable of at such a young age. Upon their request, she sent her CV to those who were interested in her profile.

That is how, shortly after her graduation, she was employed as the health and quality manager at Bouygues Construction in Casablanca. It could have been strange to think that she was managing 5 people who were older and more experienced than her. Additionally, Wiam knew nothing about quality and safety in construction. However, she knew enough about sustainability construction. While she was honest about the lack of technical skills for the job, she went on saying that she was a quick learner.

“Nowadays, it is easy to learn about the job through the internet or through books”.

What she could offer and what she did best was mastering people skills. This truly made the difference, and which later proved beneficial to the organization. Her more experienced colleague even thanked her for showing him how people skills could be as important as having the technical skills at an organization.

Fast forward to the present date, Wiam is the current president of MGCB, project manager at Alto Eko and completing a masters’ degree in Interdisciplinary Design for the Built Environment at the University of Cambridge. Below is her own personal touch to her success recipe, addressed to the next female leaders:

"Dream big, focus on your goals and take people's critics and barriers as a motivation to prove them wrong. You are the only one who should be setting your true value".

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