

Gloria B. Mangoba: Under Her Tutelage

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They say that whatever or whoever you are today is a result of what you have gone through in life. This is very true because I have observed through the years how some people become more successful than others simply because they have been through situations that demanded them to bring out their best.

My personal experience in climbing the ladder of success was not an easy one. Having come from a poor family from Bataan and being a product of the public school system, I had to be really diligent in my studies to compete in the university to maintain my scholarship. I was not only after the honors but also more importantly, I wanted to be less of a burden to my parents who had to be spared from my tuition fees.

Striving to graduate summa cum laude to be able to join the top accounting firm in the country was part of my plan. That was the start of my very promising career in the field of accountancy. And it was a very important milestone in my life, because I met my mentor, my first boss, Mrs. Gloria B. Mangoba. She was the head of what was then called the Research and Training Department, which later became the Accounting and Auditing Standards Group in the SyCip, Gorres and Velayo (SGV) Accountancy firm.

She was a woman of great intelligence and unquestionable integrity. I admired her so much because of the way she made it easy for me to find solutions to difficult issues in auditing and accounting, whether as a result of an application or an interpretation of the applicable U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAPs) or in determining whether or not our firm has issues on independence and ethics with regard to a particular client.

I have learned from her how to be firm and stand my ground

when the position I have taken on a certain issue was challenged. I remember how she corrected my research and other technical papers over and over again as we tried to improve on them. She would not settle for anything less than perfect! There were times when I thought I had already given my best but she would press me to come up with something better. Looking back, I had no regrets. Rather, I had a lot to be thankful for because I developed a sense of perfection by looking for all possibilities in any given situation. I must have inherited from her my work ethic and high sense of professionalism that if I made a promise to deliver something to a client, I had to make good on that promise even if it meant working overnight and foregoing some personal choices.

Another trait that she possesses is being soft-spoken even when she was already angry.

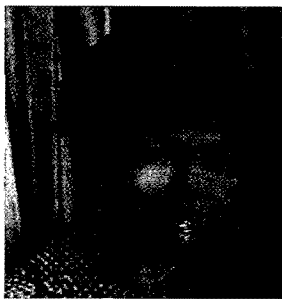
She never raised her voice to anyone, something that up until now, I wish I could do. She is also a speed-reader and since my work required reading volumes of technical publications, she shared with me her secret: she said that when I read those materials, I shouldn't be reading line by line but in a snake-like fashion. Her great influence on me was tested when I bid good-bye because of another job offer as Head of Internal Audit in one of the larger clients of the Firm. It was a very tempting offer, which was hard to resist, because I would be supervising a whole department consisting of around forty accountants, not to mention a very attractive compensation package that was triple my pay when I was with SGV. She advised me to rethink my decision and stay longer to gain more experience because she had other plans for me. She told me that the grass or pasture land always looks greener from afar but as one goes nearer, one would realize that is not that verdant at all. I deferred to her and followed her advice, which, in hindsight, probably could have been a crucial point in my career. Perhaps, had I followed my initial decision, I would not have been a lawyer, much more a tax specialist and thus, not in the practice I am now.

So I stayed for some more years under the tutelage of my boss and tried to master my craft, that is, to be the one to consult with when it comes to compliance with accounting and auditing standards. Mrs. Mangoba recommended me to the SGV Scholarship program for an MBA course. I chose to take it up at U.P., because I was already on my third year in law school. She knew probably that I would, at some

point in time, eventually make a shift in my career. Nonetheless, she allowed me to find my place under the sun realizing perhaps that after she had nurtured me, I would be ready and armed with the virtues of wisdom and fortitude to face the ever complex and challenging world of business.

Eventually, my mentor also made a significant career move when she accepted the post of Head of the Internal Audit Department of the World Bank in Washington, D.C. I was saddened by the fact that she had to leave us and the Firm but whatever prompted her was probably worth it. She stayed in the U.S. until she retired.

As for me, I obtained my MBA and my law degree almost at the same time and transferred to the Tax Division to be able to practice both professions. Later, I pursued a more active law practice when I left the Firm after nine years of stay and joined a group of companies as Chief Legal Counsel. Eight years later I went back to my first love, the practice of accountancy.



Gloria B. Mangoba



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