

Celia SWANSON

Author . Consultant . Speaker

Celia Swanson is an accomplished senior executive who spent 25+ years at Walmart Inc. championing its culture and its people. She is notably recognized as the first female executive vice president at Walmart Stores, Inc. breaking the glass ceiling for women. Her deep expertise in retail, large-scale transformation, company culture and multi-generational workforce engagement serves as the cornerstone of her career legacy.

Swanson joined Walmart Inc. in 1994 as Vice President of People at Sam's Club. Based upon her contributions in this role, she experienced numerous promotions to senior vice president and executive vice president leading membership, marketing and logistics at Sam's Club. As a member of the executive team, she saw the Sam's Club division through five company president transitions.

Her growth at Sam's Club led to succeeding roles at Walmart U.S. as SVP, Change Management and SVP, Talent Development. She completed her career at Walmart serving in a global HR capacity as SVP, Global Associate Experience. In that role, Swanson led global labor relations, global culture strategy and enhanced the foundation of the global associate experience.

Among her notable leadership assets, Swanson's deep experience in culture and change management are not to go unnoticed. She earned a reputation for being a key culture ambassador throughout her career demonstrating a people-first mindset. In addition, she was hand-selected by the Walmart U.S. CEO to lead a cost-savings and associate engagement strategy transforming store operations for 1.4 million associates.

In addition to her professional career, Celia is known for her community leadership in Northwest Arkansas. She was recently selected by the Northwest Arkansas business community as the 2016 Athena Woman of the Year for her excellence in community service, board leadership and regional impact in Northwest Arkansas. She was also the only leader to receive the top two operations awards from Sam's Club and Walmart U.S.

Originally from Nebraska, Celia is based in Bentonville, Ark. She enjoys traveling, the outdoors and spending time with close friends and family.

Celia received her bachelor's degree in fashion merchandising and honorary MBA from the University of Nebraska. She recently completed the Northwestern/Kellogg Women's Director Development Program. Her professional network includes National Association of Corporate Directors and Network of Executive Women.

