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AI Insights: How Melissa Solis breaks barriers as a female tech entrepreneur



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Inbenta CEO Melissa Solis has turned struggle into strength, showing women in AI how to lead boldly, even when there's no seat at the table.

Building a successful company takes more than just a good idea. It takes inner strength, a clear purpose, and the drive to work through hardship.

Melissa Solis, a leader in the field of Artificial Intelligence and Inbenta's CEO, knows about overcoming adversity. From modest beginnings, Melissa went on to build and sell a major technology company, GIACT, and eventually take over the leadership of another — Inbenta. Her path shows how personal strength and deeply held values are vital qualities in the business world.

The power of perseverance

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to give up, and how it taught Melissa and her brother, Merlin, now Inbenta's CTO, the vital lesson of perseverance.

Melissa also faced her own struggles, like dyslexia. If she wanted to overcome them, she says, she would have to make an extra effort and refuse to be defeated. It's how she approaches every challenge to this day. "Regardless of what you're faced with," she says, "if you don't give up, you will win. It's when you stop and quit that you lose."

Regardless of what you're faced with... if you don't give up, you will win. It's when you stop and quit that you lose.

Melissa Solis Inbenta CEO

Melissa and Merlin started their first company, GIACT, in 2004 with just \$300. Each had different but complementary skills: Merlin built the technology, while Melissa focused on running the business and getting the product to customers.

"The reason why so many companies fail is because they're lopsided," Melissa explains. "They have all tech and no operational people, or they're all operational and don't have strong tech. That's what makes Merlin and me such a strong team — we balance each other perfectly."

If you're just doing it for money, you already have the wrong plan. You have to know why you're doing it. You have to have a purpose that drives you every day.

Transitioning from a small startup to a scalable enterprise is a common challenge for businesses: how to get bigger without losing what made you successful in the first place. Melissa believes that staying true to her core convictions and having a clear sense of purpose have helped her succeed as a business leader.

"If you're just doing it for money, you already have the wrong plan. You have to know why you're doing it. You have to have a purpose that drives you every day," she says.

They would go on to sell GIACT for \$610 million.

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ated spaces hasn't been easy. She remembers attending a major AI tech trade show where she was one of only two women CEOs. "There were no activities for women. No breakfasts, no workshops."

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Instead of accepting the status quo, Melissa keeps pushing boundaries: “I have got to lay the groundwork so my granddaughter someday can walk into a room and feel like she has a place.”

Her approach to leadership rejects external validation and champions inner strength.

“I don’t need someone’s acceptance in a room to be successful,” she says. “If they won’t get you a seat at the table, go build your own table.”

In Brief:

- A clear sense of purpose is more important than chasing profit.
- Balanced teams combining tech and operations are critical for success.
- Women in AI still face barriers but leadership can help change that.
- Authenticity and self-worth matter more than external approval.
- If you are denied a seat at the table build your own.
- AI works best when used strategically not just for the sake of it.

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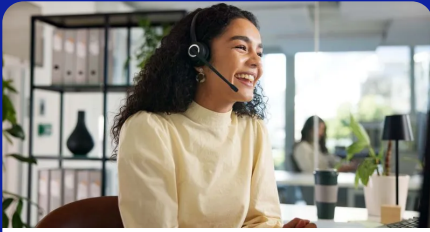
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