

Trisha Scudder attended Mizzou in a very different era. Though a "Republican, Episcopalian 'good girl,'" raised outside of Chicago, her eyes were quickly opened to the inequities people of different colors faced on the campus and in the U.S. when she arrived in Columbia, Missouri in 1963. Before she graduated in 1966 from the Journalism School, she'd founded the *Columbia Free Press* journal with articles favoring civil rights and voting rights legislation, advocating local integration efforts, and questioning the Vietnam War. She notes that "it seemed brave and radical, even dangerous, at the time — but from today's viewpoint our approach was very moderate and polite."

Trisha's career started as a copy chief and editor, at such publications as the *Minneapolis Tribune*, *Wisconsin State Journal*, and *Capital Times* (also in Madison, Wisconsin). After a few years, she decided that she'd rather try to make her living as a copywriter for advertising.

While she says she "missed the Mad Men era by about 10 years," she is amazed in hindsight at the levels of drinking, smoking, and sexism that she saw every day in the office and while working with clients. One client wasn't comfortable with having a woman in a meeting, so they placed her behind a screen for the duration of their meeting. Another insisted on going to a strip club while in town, so Trisha and the other women on the creative team went along stoically.

After advertising stints in Chicago and Los Angeles, she worked at several agencies here in New York. She worked her way up the corporate ladder, eventually working as a Creative Director on such accounts as Avon, Cover Girl and Revlon. Her big break came in naming a new brand, Swatch, playing off of the terms "Swiss Watch" and "It's S'Wonderful." Trisha lights up discussing the launch of a new type of product and brand:

A Swiss fellow came to the agency with a \$30 black plastic watch and said, "What can you do with this?" He represented a consortium of Swiss watchmakers who were losing their shirts to Casio and other Japanese digital watchmakers. ... With my fashion background, I came up with the idea of a fashion approach for styling the watches — pink-green/black-silver, etc. — and the brand name Swatch.

While working as an advertising exec, Trisha felt that she needed to learn more about how to manage client relationships and her advertising team, so she hired a philosophy professor to teach her about human behavior and leadership. She was so fascinated by what she had learned that she applied these lessons to Ad-Net, a volunteer organization she co-founded to do marketing and public service advertising.

When let go by her agency, Trisha realized that she felt liberated. It gave her the opportunity to leave advertising and help others. Trisha has studied leadership principles and personal and organizational transformation for over 20 years. She took this chance to apprentice with the originators of executive coaching for two years, and then launched her company, [Executive Coaching Group](#), in 1987.

Trisha loves how much she affects the careers of those she works with. They are generally people who are already fairly successful in their careers, but are looking for ways to get to the top of their professions. She says, "When one of them gets a promotion, turns an important work relationship

around, gets a huge bonus or takes their company to a new level, it just makes my day. I was a fairly good copywriter; I was born to be an executive coach."

Often cited by such business publications as the *Wall Street Journal* and *Forbes* as an [expert in her field](#), today Trisha is one of the top CEO coaches in the country, [according to Gotham Magazine](#). Her company has 5 coaches based in New York, Charlotte — and Bangkok! While their focus is on leadership, Trisha is still applying lessons from her days at the J School to her job today; she notes that "every day I draw upon my written communication skills — learned at J School and on the *Columbia Missourian* — for everything from client e-mails, to designing management team off-sites, to writing our website copy and marketing materials. It has given ECG yet another competitive edge."

Asked for advice for new graduates moving to New York, or even those that have lived here for a few years, she says:

I would advise the opposite of what I did! Give 100% at work, certainly, but **don't have work be your life, your only focus**. Our relationships atrophy and we miss what New York has to offer. I only woke up to this 10 years ago! Not only was I missing out on fun and friendship, but I'm sure it hurt my business as I did not stay connected to past colleagues and clients.

Invest the energy and time to create a wide network of friends and colleagues. Part of this is making the effort to stay in touch with classmates and roommates; participate in alumni events and events at work; join groups and museums so you are invited to openings and events; get season tickets. Otherwise, why did you and I leave the Midwest and move to New York?

Trisha tries to enjoy so much that New York has to offer: season tickets to the Metropolitan Opera, walking in Central Park, shows at Lincoln Center. She also enjoys member events at the Museum of Natural History, the Met and the New York Historical Society, but makes time to go to Equinox six times a week for spinning and yoga, and eats often at Nice Matin on 79th and Amsterdam.

Trisha lives on the Upper West Side in a brownstone with her fiancé and their Westie, Scooter. Executive Coaching Group is based in an adjacent apartment, with a private garden. They also have a weekend place, a condominium in New Jersey that's a 10-minute bike ride from the beach.