

# HOW TO GET INTO NGOs & NON-PROFITS

By Catalina Escobar, globally recognized social entrepreneur



Catalina is a globally recognized social entrepreneur. Awarded the National Merit Order Award by Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos in 2011, she joined the Fortune/U.S State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership and became a 'Top 10 CNN Hero' in 2012.

## How did you **choose** your career in NGOs & Non-profits?

I didn't choose it, the career chose me and this is how: Over 20 years ago, I had to relocate from Bogota to Cartagena. Cartagena, is the city with the greatest social despair in Colombia. So living there really touches you. I've seen everything. I've seen illnesses, I've seen real misery, as I've seen death. So my soul started being part of those people's souls and I wanted to be a true human being, because my soul already belonged to those people.

## How to **succeed** in NGOs & Non-profits?

Have passion, perseverance and true love for humanity.

## What are the **myths** surrounding NGOs & Non-profits?

That is easy! That running an NGO is very hard!

## What are the **key skills** to succeed in the 21st Century?

I would say compassion. Be compassionate. Love is what drives me, truly. But being compassionate is what the world needs the most.

## What **habits** do you recommend in order to succeed in any career?

Fail fast and learn fast, don't stay there. Don't be a drama queen.

**What's the best piece of **advice** you've been given, or that you'd like to give to our audience?**

Failing as the step before success, fail fast, recover fast, keep yourself passionate. For NGOs, you should always measure impact and be the voice of those without a voice.

**What's a **mistake** that you've made, and what did you learn from it?**

Failing is part of the process. People believe that failure is the opposite of success but I can assure you that it is just a step before success.



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