

Susan O'Malley

Former President of the Washington Capitals and the Washington Wizards, First Female President of a Professional Sports Franchise

As the first female president of a professional sports franchise, Susan O'Malley is a pioneer in two fields: Sports and business. She knows what it takes to be a leader in a tough business environment and how to create an organization from the ground up. Once an intern with the Washington Capitals and the Washington Bullets (now the Wizards), O'Malley joined Washington Sports and Entertainment in 1986. Since that time, her groundbreaking business ideas and proactive approach to customer service brought her—and WSE—to the top of the sports business world.

During her presentations, Susan O'Malley speaks about leadership and thriving in a male-dominated field, calling on anecdotes and lessons learned from her life of unprecedented success. In engaging and upbeat presentations, she outlines seven seminal 'rules' for leadership and life and shares insider stories about entertainment, hockey, and basketball. Exclusively represented by [Leading Authorities speakers bureau](#), O'Malley is hilarious, brilliant, genuine, and inviting. Her warm sense of humor, self-described "folksy" style, entertaining stories, and sharp wit make her lessons memorable and an instant favorite among audiences. She leaves listeners thoroughly entertained and uplifted and with practical takeaways for their own lives and organizations.

A First In Sports. O'Malley joined Washington Sports and Entertainment during lean times. Under her guidance the company improved its bottom line and its winning percentage. In her first season handling off-court activities, the team experienced the largest ticket revenue increase in the history of an NBA franchise. The club also achieved the highest renewal rate of season tickets ever by the franchise, including the year following the 1977 to 1978 Championship season. O'Malley's magic helped attract over 21.2 million patrons through the turnstiles of the Washington, DC-based Verizon Center. The 2005 to 2006 Wizards season saw the franchise tally 14 sellouts, averaging over 17,000 fans per game en route to their second consecutive trip to the NBA playoffs. Her accomplishments also include innovative marketing and customer service initiatives that are still in use today.

Reaching Lifetime Goals. From a young age, O'Malley identified her career goals and was supported strongly by her mother. As a grade school student, she wrote a paper declaring her intention to run a sports franchise. Her teacher deemed the goal "unrealistic," but O'Malley was not swayed. With family support and strong female influences, O'Malley's life and career have been an example for women who want to break into male-dominated industries. Her message is influenced by her family and the management lessons she developed in her unprecedented career. Due to her expertise in connecting with employees, transforming organizational culture, and hiring the right people for the right positions, O'Malley was able to blaze a trail for herself and others.

After leaving Washington Sports and Entertainment, O'Malley earned her law degree from Georgetown University, where she also taught a sports business marketing class and was awarded the Adjunct Professor of the Year Award. She served as St. Joseph's University's first sports marketing professor and is currently a full-time faculty member at the University of South Carolina. She is also consulting with The Sports and Entertainment Company (Sports-EntCo). In 2022, she was inducted into *Sports Business Journal's* Champions class for her contributions as a pioneer and innovator in sports.