



Our Moderator - About Diane Hessian

Diane Hessian is an award-winning entrepreneur and innovator in the market research field, and a nationally recognized expert on the American voter. Since 2016, she has been engaged in an in-depth longitudinal study of the electorate, culminating in the June 2021 publication of *Our Common Ground: Insights from Four Years of Listening to American Voters*.

She is the founder and Chairman of C Space, formerly Communispace, which was the first company to leverage social media to help companies get insight and inspiration from their consumers. Diane was CEO of the company during 14 years of exponential growth, as C Space worked with hundreds of global brands across 12 countries. She was honored as a disruptor and innovator in the market research industry because of her work in conducting breakthrough longitudinal research via the internet. Communispace was sold to Omnicom in 2011, and as Chairman, Diane remains an advisor to the company, its clients, and many other Omnicom CEOs.

A serial entrepreneur, Diane has consolidated all of her investment and advisory work into a new company called Salient Ventures, which is helping to accelerate the next generation of growth companies in tech.

Diane also co-authored the book *Customer-Centered Growth: Five Strategies for Building Competitive Advantage*, a Business Week best-seller that is published in 11 languages. She has keynoted over 50 events in the last five years, focusing on leadership, entrepreneurship, women's issues, and customer centricity.

Diane has received many honors, including the Pinnacle Award from the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Most Admired CEO award and Boston Power 50 awards from the Boston Business Journal, Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year (National Finalist), and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year.

Diane serves on the boards of Panera, Eastern Bank, Brightcove, The Schlesinger Group, Mass Challenge, Tufts University, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and NACD. In 2017, the Boston Globe appointed her to its Editorial Board. She received her M.B.A. from Harvard Business School and her B.A. in Economics from Tufts University, and she has received honorary degrees from Bentley University and The New England College of Business. She has 2 grown daughters, and is also founder of The Sound Bytes, an a cappella group that sings about business.