

Be Like Susan



Please allow me to introduce you to Susan.

Susan is believed to be around 65 years old.

Susan was a completely wild and free Orangutan until she was attacked in her own territory by farmers. Farmers who thought their needs were more important than hers. She was around 35 years old at the time. Her life changed in an instant.

Susan went from being totally independent to now having to compete with others to get enough resources to survive in a new home. Decreasing habitat, changes in organisational dynamics and more competition for food was forcing her to adapt or perish.

Susan didn't give up, Susan did adapt.

Rather than fight the forceful males who go to the food first or the other females and juveniles that scrambled for the food afterwards, she used her skills to work for her. In this photo she is waiting in a tree by the Rangers station. Instead of going to the feeding station, she negotiated with the rangers that they come to her with own packed meal. No waiting, no jostling with the others. Just being treated like the Queen she is.

There's a lot we can learn from Susan. We don't always get to plan what changes happen to us, and we don't always get to choose the people around us as we figure out what's next. We can control how we respond. Unplanned change can knock our confidence, but it doesn't negate our skills or experience. Apply and adapt them to the new situation and make it work for you. Find the rangers that bring the food to you.

This International Women's Day, be like Susan!

Get in touch to find out how LoGho Executive Coaching can help you find your inner Susan.

Backstory:

I encountered Susan on my bucket list trip to Borneo, during my recent gap yaaaah. She is based at Camp Leakey in Southern Borneo. One of the world's leading authorities on Orangutans is prominent anthropologist Birute Galdikas. She is one of the "Trimates" alongside Dian Fossey (Gorillas) and Jane Goodall (Chimpanzees), who were all mentored by Louis Leakey. They are a wonderful example of how one person's allyship and mentoring helped develop the next generation of leaders and did not discriminate because they were women.