



M

Much has been written and said about Anne Doyle since she began breaking new ground and pushing through ceilings, beginning as one of the first women TV sports broadcasters in the United States, on CBS-affiliate WJBK in Detroit in the late 1970s. She's been called a "change agent and pioneer"; "a woman who broke through not just the glass ceiling but the 'automotive steel ceiling,'" "a woman working and winning in a man's world"; and "a veteran of turbulent times and seismic culture change."

"I think of myself as one example of a tremendous number of American women who came of age at an incredible time in history," says Doyle, "Just as we were coming out of college, a cultural window of opportunity opened up to women, as a result of the civil rights movement and equal opportunity and affirmative action legislation. I'm part of a generation of American women who were able to break out of the limiting boxes that women had been locked into for centuries. We were unconventional at that time. Today, women who do what I did are more mainstream."

It wasn't mainstream or commonplace when Doyle began interviewing athletes wearing towels, or less, in locker rooms. The website of the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame, to which Doyle was named in 2007, says,

"Today, when a woman anchors an evening network newscast and most major networks and sports channels feature women sports broadcasters, it is easy to forget what television reporting resembled in 1978 when Anne Doyle became the first female TV sports broadcaster in Detroit to conduct a post-game locker room interview previously open only to men."

HOW DOES She Do That?

By Teri Allbright Wildrick

NAME **Anne Doyle**

OCCUPATION **Communications, media and leadership coach and speaker**

FAMILY **15-year-old son Kevin**

BALANCE **Family time and exercise, including horseback riding and tennis**

AGE **50-something**

FAVORITE QUOTE **“Never eliminate yourself. If you aren’t the right person for an opportunity or just aren’t ready, others will eliminate you. But if you never try, you have eliminated yourself.”**

— Anne’s father,
Michigan sportscaster
Vince Doyle

Doyle left broadcasting to join Ford Motor Company and eventually became Director of Ford North America Communications. She was part of the executive team that handled the Firestone tire and Ford Explorer crisis in 1999–2000, and in 2000 was named one of the “100 Most Influential Women in the North American Auto Industry” by *Automotive News*.

Today, as head of Anne Doyle Strategies, Doyle is a motivational speaker and does consulting as a communications strategist and leadership coach.

“The fundamental thing is to know yourself,” says Doyle. “Start with your talents, the God-given things that make you happy and come so naturally to you that you take them for granted; then develop those into skills.

“Drive is absolutely essential to accomplishing things,” adds Doyle. “You’ve got to want it inside yourself. Think big. Stretch high. Surround yourself with people who believe in you and lift you up. Get away from people who discourage you—whether it’s bosses, family members or friends who undermine you in any way.”

Doyle is currently working on a book on women’s leadership. “I’m interviewing fascinating women from all over the country and learning so much from their wisdom,” she says. She’s found that these women, trailblazers and pioneers share qualities such as confidence, persistence and the willingness to take risks. They also follow the advice of one of her personal heroes, Billie Jean King, who encourages women to “dare to lead.”

“I’m discouraged that women are often still their own worst enemies. We need to learn how to support other women, particularly those who do have the courage to lead, rather than undermining and competing with them.



Anne Doyle at Michigan Stadium earlier this year — “a place I worked many a Saturday through five seasons of covering U of M football in the early 80s”

“All of the opportunities are there for American women today,” says Doyle. “Women still have to be a little bit smarter than most of their male peers in order to be considered as good. But if you go after your dreams with tenacity, American women today can do absolutely anything they want. Balancing is the big challenge, particularly when children are young. But it’s doable. You have to insist on and create your own balance. If you own it, you can make that happen.” 🧘