



MARLEN ESTÉVEZ

An international voice on conflict, listening, and leadership who transforms difficult conversations into agreements, trust, and new possibilities

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- Turns conflict into opportunity. More than 20 years managing highly complex disputes, with over 100 arbitrations and matters worth up to €800 million
 - One of the leading voices of the culture of agreement. She has brought a new way of understanding conflict — less confrontation, more understanding, dialogue, and value creation — to the business, legal, and institutional worlds
 - She doesn't just talk about leadership: she builds movements. She founded Women in a Legal World from the ground up and turned it into an international community of more than 2,000 female executives across 15 countries
 - A global voice on world-class stages. She has spoken at Davos, the United Nations in New York, three Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State, and international forums across Europe and the Americas

- Builds bridges where others see trenches. She brings together law, business, and human behavior to teach leaders to listen better, make difficult decisions, and move seemingly irreconcilable positions
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Marlén Estévez Sanz is a lawyer, international mediator, and one of the leading voices in conflict resolution, negotiation, and leadership in the Spanish-speaking world. For more than 20 years, she has advised companies, institutions, and leaders in highly complex disputes, handling more than 100 national and international arbitrations and matters worth up to €800 million.

Her work is based on one conviction: analyzing a conflict is not the same as understanding it. Before moving another person, a leader must understand what is also happening within themselves. From this perspective, she has developed her own approach around the culture of agreement, listening, and conscious leadership as tools for making better decisions, building trust, and transforming seemingly irreconcilable positions.

She is the founder and president of Women in a Legal World, an international network bringing together more than 2,000 female executives in more than 15 countries, and founder of Más Cultura del Acuerdo. In 2024, she directed the book *De la cultura del litigio a la cultura del acuerdo* and, together with Eliseo Martínez, translated into Spanish *Challenging Conflict: Mediation Through Understanding*, by Gary Friedman and Jack Himmelstein, one of the internationally recognized reference works on mediation.

She has spoken at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the United Nations in New York, three Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State, and numerous international forums across Europe and Latin America. Forbes has recognized her among Spain's most prominent lawyers, and she has been included in various rankings of the country's leading and most influential women.

She is a professor of arbitration, mediation, and negotiation and has completed leadership and senior management programs at Harvard, Wharton, and ESADE. She is an accredited mediator with CEDR London and the Singapore International Mediation Centre. She speaks

Spanish, English, and French. She chairs the Madrid Business Mediation Center (CMEM) and the Mediation Section of CIAM-CIAR, and serves as Secretary of the Ibero-American Section of the Royal Academy of Jurisprudence and Legislation. She directs various programs, including Legal Leadership, resulting from the collaboration between Harvard and WLW.

TEMAS

Marlen tailors each presentation to the needs of her audience and is not limited to the topics listed below. Please ask us about any subject that interests you:

- The culture of agreement: transforming conflict into opportunity
- Listening to lead
- Conscious leadership: understand before resolving
- Negotiation, trust, and difficult conversations
- Humanistic leadership in the age of AI
- Talent, female leadership, and meritocracy
- Ibero-America: leadership, talent, and bridge-building

PROGRAMAS

Marlén Estévez's keynotes transform conflict into an opportunity to understand, engage in dialogue, build trust, and create value. Through listening, negotiation, and conscious leadership, she invites leaders and organizations to make better decisions and navigate difficult conversations. Her humanistic approach connects leadership, talent, and technology to build bridges, strengthen relationships, and open up new possibilities.

Those Who Listen Change the World

We live surrounded by noise, haste, and certainty. We form opinions before understanding, respond before listening, and too often confuse being right with moving forward. Drawing on more than twenty years working on highly complex conflicts, Marlén presents a simple but profoundly transformative idea: listening is not a communication technique, but a way of

leading and making decisions.

The keynote explores the three forms of listening that precede any difficult decision: listening to oneself, listening to others, and listening to the world. Before understanding a conflict, we need to recognize our own fears, prejudices, and needs; before moving another person, we need to understand what they are trying to protect; and before deciding, we need to understand the context around us.

A deeply human keynote about leadership, responsibility, and relationships that leaves the audience with one question: what would change in our organizations and society if we truly learned to listen? Those who truly listen do not just change conversations. They change relationships, organizations, and sometimes the world.

From a Culture of Conflict to a Culture of Agreement

We live in an era of polarization in which every disagreement seems to require choosing a side. But disagreement does not have to end in conflict. For more than twenty years, Marlén has worked inside conflict: stalled negotiations, seemingly irreconcilable positions, and disputes in which every party was convinced they were right. That experience has taught her something essential: resolving a conflict is not only about determining who is right, but about discovering what possibilities we have not yet been able to see.

Through real cases and lessons, she shows how dialogue, curiosity, listening, and trust allow us to move beyond the logic of winners and losers and build solutions that create value. Her central thesis: reaching an agreement does not mean giving something up; it means creating. A keynote about negotiation, but also about leadership: how to build a culture in which disagreement does not destroy relationships, but can become a source of innovation, trust, and progress.

Conscious Leadership

Understand Before Resolving: Conflict always seems to be outside us: in another person, the team, a partner, or a client. Until we discover that it is also happening within us. Leaders are trained to analyze problems, but far less to observe what is happening within themselves while making a decision: fear of making a mistake, the need to be right, haste,

ego, or difficulty listening to a position that challenges their own.

Drawing on her experience in dispute resolution and work developed alongside the methodology of Gary Friedman and Jack Himmelstein, Marlén distinguishes between analyzing a conflict and understanding it. The keynote proposes a leadership competency that can be trained: recognizing how our emotions, stories, and biases affect the way we interpret a situation and, from there, making decisions with greater freedom. Because there are two conversations we often confuse: who is right and what do we want to do now? This is not a keynote about mediation. It is a keynote about how we make difficult decisions.

The Art of Agreement: Transforming Conflicts into Opportunities

The most important conversations are often also the most difficult. A decisive negotiation, a stalled relationship, a client who says no, a partner with different interests, or a conversation everyone has been avoiding for months. What do great mediators know about these situations?

Marlén brings more than twenty years of experience in real conflicts into the everyday lives of leaders and organizations: how to listen beyond words, ask questions that change a conversation, uncover unspoken interests, and rebuild trust when it seems to have been lost. The keynote shows why negotiating is not only about defending our position more effectively, but about expanding the space of possibilities. A practical session on difficult conversations, negotiation, and value creation for those who need to influence, persuade, and build agreements without damaging relationships.

Humanistic Leadership: Leading in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

The more intelligent technology becomes, the more important the capabilities that make us deeply human will become. Artificial intelligence is transforming how we work, make decisions, and access knowledge. But as information and many technical capabilities begin to become commodities, a different question emerges: what will humans need to do better? Marlén explores the capabilities whose value increases precisely because of technology: judgment, listening, ethics, critical thinking, empathy, curiosity, the ability to ask good questions, and trust-building.

Drawing on her experience in conflict, leadership, and corporate governance, she argues that the real challenge of AI will not only be technological. It will also be human: how to preserve our ability to understand, decide, and connect with others in increasingly automated organizations. A keynote for leaders who want to use technology to expand human capabilities, not replace them.

Women Who Lead: Talent, Authenticity, and Purpose

What happens when women stop competing only for a seat at the table and also begin building new tables? Marlén founded Women in a Legal World from the ground up. Today it brings together more than 2,000 female executives in more than 15 countries. This experience has allowed her to observe closely what drives —and what holds back— female talent within organizations.

This keynote does not frame female leadership as a confrontation between men and women. It addresses something more ambitious: talent, meritocracy, authenticity, collaboration, and the creation of opportunities. Through her own journey and the stories of women who have broken barriers in different fields, Marlén reflects on how to build organizations where talent can develop regardless of gender and on a new form of leadership: one that measures success not only by what it achieves, but also by its ability to help others grow.

Ibero-America: Leading and Competing in Spanish

More than 600 million people speak Spanish. We share a history, a language, and a culture, but we are still far from turning all that common capital into a true competitive advantage. Drawing on her experience working between Europe and Latin America and participating in three Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State, Marlén asks a question: what would happen if we began to think of Ibero-America not only as a cultural community, but as a global platform for talent, investment, and influence?

The keynote explores how trust, alliances, legal certainty, talent, and greater connections between leaders and companies can turn the Ibero-American space into a genuine competitive advantage. An invitation to build bridges between countries, generations,

institutions, and companies, and to take a more ambitious place in a global conversation in which Spanish still has enormous room to grow.

PUBLICACIONES

Libros



MANUAL DE LA CULTURA DEL LITIGIO A LA CULTURA DEL ACUERDO



ESPORTS

RECONOCIMIENTOS

- Forbes Lawyers 2024 — one of Spain's 20 most prominent lawyers

- El Mundo / Yo Dona — Top 500 most prominent women in Spain (2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024)
 - Iberian Lawyer — Top 30 lawyers in Spain (2024, 2025) and Top 50 Most Inspiring Women in the Iberian Legal Sector (2023, 2025)
 - Mujeres & Cía — Top 100 Women Leaders in Spain (2020-2026)
 - Government of Spain — “Leading Woman in Innovative Entrepreneurship” (2021)
 - Barakah Award for Mediation, Valladolid Chamber of Commerce (2023)
 - Recognized by Chambers & Partners, Legal 500, Leaders League, and Best Lawyers
 - Esade Alumni — Professional Career Award, II Annual Women Empowerment Club Conference (2024)
 - CEAJE — Recognition at the XIX GEN Awards (2023)
 - Todo Juristas — one of the 100 leading women in the legal sector (2025)
 - ACIJUR — “Puñetas de bronce” Award (2022)
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CONDICIONES

- **Travels from:** Madrid, Spain
 - **Fee Range:** Please Inquire
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