

# Dr. Vanessa Collingridge

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## Biography

Dr. Vanessa Collingridge is an award-winning journalist, author and BBC broadcaster. Her international career has taken her across the globe, making programmes in all seven continents including flagship News & Current Affairs, Science and History series for BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5, along with leading international broadcasters. She wrote and presented her multi-award winning documentary series *Captain Cook* based on her best-selling biography, and sailed to the Antarctic for her acclaimed Discovery TV/BBC Radio 4 series on the science of climate change. As well as her Cook biography, her other books include a biography of the Iron Age warrior queen, *Boudica* and *The Story of Australia*, plus other works on natural history, maps, landscape, geology, and exploration. Vanessa is now back in the UK writing for newspapers and magazines, making documentaries for the BBC, Discovery USA and other global broadcasters.

Vanessa has over 25 years' experience in media training, executive and impact coaching and Public Engagement. She has led coaching programmes in the UK, Europe, USA and Asia, with clients ranging from national governments, global banking, finance, legal, whisky, shipping, utilities and tech companies to government departments, the NHS, and the university/business school sector. She is an experienced TED speaker coach and works well with those needing to translate complex, technical information into something more widely accessible. She specialises in small group/one-to-one executive and fast-track training, from preparing and delivering presentations to full leadership, media and crisis coaching. She has a particular passion for developing high potential women leaders.

She holds a First Class Honours degree from Oxford University and a PhD from Glasgow University.

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## **Executive Coaching and Impact Coaching**

Vanessa works with senior executives and high potential talent to improve their personal and professional impact both across their own businesses and with suppliers, customers and key stakeholders.

Vanessa helps them to develop and shape a compelling message and then coach them to create an effective communication style and deliver their message with lasting impact. Many senior executives still lack the skills and confidence to do this well, preventing them from reaching their full potential as leaders. In some cases they fail to connect effectively with their teams and can erode not only their own personal brand but also their company's brand and image.

She is able to assess people quickly and identify a style of communication that will work for them whether for a meeting, giving a speech or in day-to-day interactions with other people. She has experience of structured, long-term coaching (1 year +) as well as short, sharp interventions to support significant events such as crisis communication, high profile speaking engagements or communicating major change programmes.

Specific skills such as pitching & IPOs, preparing for and giving print, TV and radio interviews as well as crisis and presentation skills training can be built into a programme with individuals or with a team.

Some of her most satisfying results have come from working with senior executives who have felt, or have been identified as having, poor impact and communication skills. Very significant improvements can be made in a short period of time and, for more accomplished performers, she has been able to work with them to hone a personal brand that amplifies their impact and helps them maximise their potential.

## **Facilitation**

Vanessa frequently works with leaders and their teams to develop their communication skills and improve the team's impact across the wider business and externally. This has included teams pitching for new business or leading a complex change programme across several business units.

Clear, impactful communication can only be delivered by teams when built on a solid foundation of shared understanding of, and trust in, a coherent strategy and plan for execution. Developing and testing plans and messaging to get a team to this point is the central pillar of any facilitation work. Her work has covered facilitating large groups such as an entire department at one of the world's largest insurance companies, Hong Kong's Gifted Young Leaders programme, Heathrow Airport, the Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship (GCSEN) based at Wheaton College, USA; Strathclyde Business School, Warwick Business School, and Krakow Business School in Poland; the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Strathclyde, Edgehill and Warwick; WiBF (Women in Banking & Finance); SWIB (Scottish Women in Business) as well as smaller executive leadership teams

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in major financial institutions, public and private sector companies, and in the education sector.

In addition, Vanessa has over 25 years' experience of hosting and leading major international conferences, festivals and events - from awards and sales conferences to academic and business leaders' events. These have included the bi-lingual moderation for the 2-day visit of the Turkish Prime Minister, Binali Yildirim, and his high-level delegation of Ministers and MPs to the UK Government & business leaders in 2017; The British Library "Captain Cook" Conference; the iBioIC 2018 conference; the Children in Scotland Annual Conference 2018; the Open University/BBC's "Blue Planet" sessions in 2019; and the Scottish Government-funded "Scotland-India Forum" in June 2020. She has been booked to host & chair the 2021 Global LEAN Management conference in Glasgow and also the forthcoming World Rotary Conference. For the last 16 years, she has co-hosted the monthly *Café Scientifique* forums in both Glasgow & Hong Kong with top-level speakers from around the world, including multiple Nobel laureates.