

## C&S PARTNERS MANAGEMENT TEAM KEEPS GROWING

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**Lydia KOUBI** is a global expert in talent strategies and leadership development.

Based in Israel, Lydia will operate on a global basis.

### TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND

**Lydia** I'm a very enthusiastic and curious person; my number-one skill is active listening. I have dedicated my career to the development of global human resources (HR) strategies and business transformation projects. I've very much enjoyed having the opportunity to shape organizations from a human capital point of view, and work with different leadership teams across Europe but also in the US and in Kuala Lumpur. I will bring all of this to bear at C&S Partners, where, once I complete the process of moving to Israel sometime in May, I will begin work in earnest.

I've realized repeatedly how much success comes from how you do things – how you relate to others, and the respect you have for others' points of view. This is key to gaining support and active engagement. My professional experience has mainly been in large international groups; I was in the oil and gas sector for 13 years, hospitality for seven, and the airline industry for five. I've also worked as an HR consultant for public and private companies. Lately, one of my main clients has been an agribusiness leader, on whose premises I spent 18 months working with the teams on the reorganization of its talent attraction strategy.

I have a Master's degree in International Human Resources and an executive coaching curriculum at French universities.

### AND YOU JOINED C&S PARTNERS. WHY THIS CHANGE?

I'm on the threshold of a life transformation: I have decided to settle in Israel. Fortuitously, [C&S Partners's founder and co-owner] Gérald Bouhourd invited me to join as a partner, which allowed me to unite my professional experience and personal goals. I had conversations with several partners and was pleased to note their impressive professional background, not to mention their personalities and team spirit.

When Gérald suggested we could open and run an office in Israel, I was very excited. His proposition came at a perfect time. I hold his professionalism and abilities in great esteem and expect that this will be a rewarding adventure.

There are many other aspects in the way C&S is working with its clients that made me take up the challenge. Besides its solid methodologies and leadership solutions, the firm's partners dare challenge the status quo, ask the hard questions or bluntly tell the truth to executives. Last but not least C&S's business model is about creating value density at reasonable cost. I have witnessed several times in my career companies' efforts and significant financial investments in their leaders' development with sometimes limited impact.

Why Israel? It's been an old dream of mine, and now I can fulfil it. I'm completing a Bachelor's degree in Hebrew, and thereby getting closer to different components of Israeli society. This grounding will be useful. My goal is to help C&S Partners reach the Middle Eastern market.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON HOW C&S WORKS WITH ITS CLIENTS?**

The situation requires us to be creative and to continuously adapt to the evolving constraints. We recently lead a *Top Team Effectiveness* project with a dozen participants across several time zones. We assessed options together with our client and eventually cut a 2-day workshop into several short virtual workshops: we introduced interactive digital tools and used techniques to foster a sense of togetherness and get everyone contributing. An important part of the setting was to provide the team with structured pre-work to reduce the on-line time while keeping the momentum. Adapting to our clients' specific constraints each step of the way remains business as usual.

The COVID setbacks have been an opportunity for C&S to develop roadmaps for successful remote working. Nevertheless, I believe that we need to combine virtual and on-site work as much as possible. Longer-term sustainability and performance require maintaining the ties that bind people together. The post-pandemic challenge ahead for organizations will be to define the appropriate combination and think about its implications in terms of overall performance.

## **WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND WHEN SEEING THE C&S MOTTO "MATERIALIZING LEADERSHIP"?**

I have a personal affinity with this concept: it entails a true commitment to delivering concrete, visible, and lasting shifts in how a business is performing, through its leaders. This is how I've worked so far: my work has embodied my engagement and ability to bring changes that impact an organization.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN ROLES AT C&S PARTNERS?**

I will be working actively in the areas of leadership assessment and development; executive succession strategies; the acceleration of talent allocation to critical roles; team effectiveness; and safety effectiveness. Although I have a particular experience in oil and gas, agribusiness, leisure and hospitality, my experience is applicable to all industries.



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