

DIGITAL MAGAZINE

WEI 4U

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DANIELA LOTZEN

DAY ONE OR ONE DAY!



A close-up portrait of Daniela Lotzen, a woman with dark hair, wearing a red top and a pearl earring. She is smiling slightly. The background is dark with some greenery visible at the top.

DANIELA LOTZEN

DAY ONE OR ONE DAY!

by Elena-Carmen Lincă

Board Member of WomenEsteem International Association

Sprachschule



Selbstbewusst Deutsch Sprechen!

“Anything is possible through hard work, commitment, perseverance, willpower, and assertiveness. What are you waiting for? Day one or one day!”

Daniela Lotzen makes people fall in love with the German language. Any of her students would tell you that, she is not only a gifted teacher but also an empathic and motivating person. Teaching came as a second role for Daniela, a German diplomat. As you can guess, my guest has an interesting life story. She is one of the persons I admire, and I am honored that she agreed to share her story with us. Happy Reading!

1. Daniela, welcome to WEI 4U magazine, and thank you so much for accepting my invitation

to share your story with our readers! Could you please tell us who Daniela Lotzen is? What words would better describe you?

I'd gladly let you know, but it's not easy to describe yourself because there are so many different things that make me who I am, and, I decided to let someone else (a colleague) describe me:

“Daniela Lotzen, who is originally ethnically Romanian decided to make a life-changing decision and start working for the German Government. How had she done this without being German herself? The recipe is: A strong will, focus on the goal, determination, and staying motivated were all crucial characteristics that enabled her to learn Ger -

German over such a short period of time. As a German diplomat, she has seen all crevices of the world, such as Switzerland, the US, Croatia, Uzbekistan, and even her home: Romania, through the lens of her work.

Now she resides in Geneva where she also takes on a second role as a proud German as a second language teacher! Having studied at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, she got the degree that enabled her to use her so-called "superpower" of languages to help others understand from a foreign point of view. This hits home as she has been in that position herself with three other languages and, as a result, can utilise specific learning methods that aid foreigners. To create change, she proudly calls herself the founder of the International Language Centre called "Selbstbewusst Deutsch Sprechen", which is home to a community of German teachers all over the world who connect over the German language."

2. How would you describe your professional path? How did you get into this line of work?

Ironically, the Corona Virus that left the world in shatters was actually the first piece of the puzzle that started everything out. I got a request from a determined 15-year-old Romani-

an girl who needed a mentor to guide her to achieve her deepest desire of being able to attend the Goethe College of Bucharest. At that time, we were all at home and so I decided it would be the perfect time to seize the opportunity and try it out. At the same time, I started studying German as a part-time foreign language offered by the University of Jena and the Goethe Institute in Munich. During the online course of study, I had to complete several practical exploratory projects. The first project was "Maximum individual support in a group lesson". Every single day for 6 weeks, the participants had to, among other things, learn German for several hours, summarize the news, and submit it for correction... that's how it all started.

December 16th, 2020 will always be remembered as the Day I embarked on a great Journey.

3. I got to know you thanks to Sprachschule SDS, your online school that offers German courses. How did this wonderful project of yours come to life, and how do you manage to stay on the market?

As I said, it all started three and a half years ago. I wanted to create something that would





have helped me as an 18-year-old German language student, something between teaching and coaching. That's why I established the language school "Selbstbewusst Deutsch Sprechen".

Many people may speak German, but they are afraid of it. According to my experience, once you've mastered the grammar, there is no need to be worried. German grammar is like mathematics, it has its rules and is highly logical, just like Algebra. When you've battled the core basics, you've got all it takes to master it!

4. I am proud to be one of your students, and I must say you quickly became my role model. Do you have a role model or a mentor?

I'm delighted to hear this; it makes me incredibly proud! There are many people I admire, one of them being Angela Merkel. Her biography is remarkable.

5. What is the most overrated (or false) opinion about learning German?

"Life is too short to learn German." - Oscar Wilde. This statement is justified, but I would like to rephrase it: *"Learning German is a lifelong task."* I have been learning German for over 30 years now, and I am still learning more every single day. This is what makes it so interesting and challenging, like a puzzle.

6. So beautifully put! How do you make it so easy for your students to learn German?

I love the German language and transmit this feeling into my lessons. Furthermore, I do not use academic terms in my courses. For example, we always try to find the rule for a grammatical problem together, instead of just forcefully learning it without any meaning. Afterwards, you're excited about how you've managed it and realise it wasn't that difficult...

7. What makes you a good teacher?

Since I learned German myself, I know exactly what challenges students face right from the start. Due to this, I always teach from the student's perspective and try to teach the language as simply but efficiently as possible. Creating an atmosphere of trust right from the start is very important to me. I remember my first German course 30 years ago at the Schillerhaus in Bucharest. My first reaction was: "You will never master this language". Luckily, things are looking different now and I have the opportunity to pass on my knowledge.

8. What has been your proudest moment so far in your career?

Many of my students pass the G1 language exams with excellent results, which shows me that I am not only passionate about teaching but

also successful in the ways that I teach. Furthermore, I am happy every time I offer a scholarship and can help a young person like Mohamed from Morocco, for example, get a little closer to his dream of becoming a specialist in anaesthesiology in Germany.

It makes me feel one step closer to fulfilling my divine purpose.

9. What do you love the most about what you do?

What I love the most about teaching is not only taking the fear of speaking German away from others but also providing them with the tools to master it confidently. This is a meaningful challenge that I strive to fulfill every day. My motto: "If I did it, then you can do it too!".

10. How do you keep a balance between your professional and your family life?

Good organisation is essential here. Since my family supports me unconditionally in all my projects, I can experience every task with fun and joy.

11. Where do you get your energy from? What are your hobbies?





I am often asked this question... and I always answer the same: The positive stress increases my performance and motivation and, therefore, enables me to bring life to both my work as a diplomat and as a language coach.

For me, the German language is both a hobby and a skill constantly being practised and improved.

12. What book(s) inspired you or influenced your life?

„Gute Mädchen kommen in den Himmel, böse überall hin“ (Good Girls Go To Heaven, Bad Girls Go Everywhere) by Ute Ehrhardt.

13. If you could go back in time, would you change anything?

I wouldn't want to change anything because I know I wouldn't be here today without the experiences I've had so far. Everything happens for a reason in life, and even negative experiences guide us on the right path. Once you understand that, everything is very simple. However, I believe it is essential to do your best every day and try to make a difference. Everything else comes automatically, as you will be blessed tenfold.

14. What projects are on your list for the upcoming years?

I would like to continue in my position as a German Language ambassador. I have achieved everything by learning it and would now like to give back as much as I can by sharing not only my tips and tricks but also my

story as it can help to inspire others.

Thank you once again for your time. I invite you to end our interview with a message for our readers or with anything you would like to share with us and I haven't asked you about.

Anything is possible – you just have to want it and be ready to give EVERYTHING to get it! Hard work, commitment, perseverance, willpower, and assertiveness are the ingredients that make your dreams come true. What are you waiting for? Day one or one day!

