



One Tough Mother: Taking Charge in Life, Business, and Apple Pies

Gert Boyle

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When a heart attack claimed Gert Boyle's husband in 1970, the forty-six-year-old housewife and mother of three found herself at the helm of Columbia Sportswear, a small outerwear manufacturer in Portland, Oregon, that was struggling financially. With no business experience whatsoever, Boyle was faced with the challenge of running Columbia, which had been founded in 1937 by her father — a Jewish immigrant who had fled Hitler's Germany. Boyle and her son Tim persevered, turning a company that in 1970 had forty employees and less than \$800,000 in annual sales into the leading seller of skiwear in the United States, with more than 2000 employees and over a billion in annual sales. Along the way, thanks in part to a creative marketing campaign that billed her as "one tough mother," Boyle established herself as an industry icon, and the first woman ever inducted into the International Sporting Goods Hall of Fame. *One Tough Mother* presents an honest and often irreverent account of Boyle's journey from a childhood in Nazi Germany to incredible success in America. She offers insights into succeeding in business and in life, and shares many of the advertisements and strategies that have made her so recognizable.

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