

Leaders

# A global first

## Janet Truncale: EY Global Chair & CEO

As the first woman to lead a Big Four accounting firm globally, Janet Truncale is not just breaking glass ceilings - she's shattering them with purpose. A champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Truncale's rise to the top is a testament to resilience, determination, and an unwavering belief in the power of leadership. *Business Insider* recently ran a profile on Truncale, reporting that "she feels 'uncomfortable' being known as the first female Big Four boss, but has learned to embrace it."

Born in Mountainside, 1970 New Jersey, Truncale pursued a Bachelor of Science in Economics from The Wharton School, followed by an MBA from Columbia University – the foundation for a career built on grit and ambition.

Her professional career began as an intern at Ernst & Young (EY) in 1991, climbing the ranks with determination and skill. Holding pivotal roles including Initial Public Offering Leader and Banking and Capital Markets Assurance Leader, Truncale made her mark in a male-dominated field. Her leadership was cemented when she became Vice Chair and Regional Managing Partner of the EY Americas Financial Services Organization, leading a team of over 14,000 professionals

across 90 offices. Truncale's defining moment came in November 2023 when EY announced her as the Global Chair and CEO-elect. Truncale now oversees a global network of nearly 400,000 employees in over 150 countries.

However, Truncale's impact extends beyond the boardroom. Recognised by the *Financial Times* as one of the "25 Most Influential Women" and by Forbes and Fortune as one of the "World's Most Powerful Women", she is a role model for aspiring leaders. Truncale also chairs Women's World Banking, serves on the boards of UNICEF USA and the New York Jobs CEO Council, and is a key player in global business councils. As a member of the EY Global Social Equity Task Force, Truncale has been instrumental in launching the EY Uplift campaign, along with other social equity initiatives.

Balancing a demanding career with family life, Truncale and her husband have built a modern fairytale - one where ambition and love coexist. Raising three children while rising through the ranks, she proves that success is possible without compromise. In a world where leadership is evolving, Truncale's vision is set to create a more inclusive, innovative, and profitable future for all.

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“The best way to predict the future is to create it – and that takes confidence

Janet Truncale”



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# Legacy and leadership

## Akio Toyoda: Toyota Chairman

Shaped by legacy, education, and a passion for cars, Akio Toyoda earned his place at Toyota Motor Corporation – not as an entitled heir, but as a leader who worked his way up. Before becoming CEO in 2009, Toyoda gained hands-on experience across multiple sectors, proving his commitment to the company's success.

Born in 1956 Nagoya, Japan, Toyoda was expected to join one of the nation's most influential industrial dynasties. However, he ventured abroad, earning a law degree from

Keio University before pursuing an MBA at Babson College in Massachusetts. Exposure to Western business strategies shaped his leadership approach, and to broaden his experience, he worked in various finance and business-related roles in New York and London before returning to Toyota in 1984.

Unlike many corporate successors, Toyoda followed the standard career path, starting as a junior manager and gradually climbing the ranks. He joined the board of directors in 2000 and became president in 2009, a tenure marked by crisis and

transformation. Amid a major recall and the global financial downturn, Toyoda faced scrutiny over vehicle safety issues. By personally testifying before the U.S. Congress and committing to enhanced quality measures, he rebuilt consumer trust and strengthened Toyota's reputation.

Toyoda also championed a shift toward performance-driven, fun-to-drive vehicles, drawing from his motorsports enthusiasm. Following the Japanese principle of "Genchi Genbutsu" ("go to the source"), he actively tested cars alongside engineers, fostering innovation and continuous improvement.

Breaking from tradition, Toyoda became the first company president to address international dealers in English. His goal?

Strengthening relationships and bridging cultural gaps, reinforcing a more collaborative corporate environment.

A visionary leader, Toyoda ensured Toyota remained financially resilient while pioneering sustainable solutions. He led the company's push toward carbon neutrality, advocating for hybrid and hydrogen fuel-cell technologies instead of solely following the EV trend.

Stepping down as CEO in 2023, Toyoda now serves as Chairman, guiding the company's long-term strategy. His journey underscores that legacy is not a given – it's earned through authenticity, dedication, and a relentless drive to innovate.

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“It is in Toyota's DNA that mistakes made once will not be repeated”

**Akio  
Toyoda**