

Executive Perspectives on Leadership in Real Estate – Applying Lessons Learned

By Amanda E. Miller,

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Meet the Authors



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Building positive workplace experiences can lead to a fundamental, positive cultural shift, making leadership positions not only more accessible, but at once inspiring and aspirational.



Transcript

INTRO

Welcome to Jackson Lewis' podcast, We get work™. Focused solely on workplace issues, it is our job to help employers develop proactive strategies, strong policies and business-oriented solutions to cultivate an engaged, stable and inclusive workforce. Our podcast identifies issues that influence and impact the workplace and its continuing evolution and helps answer the question on every employer's mind: How will my business be impacted?

Building positive workplace experiences can lead to a fundamental positive cultural shift, making leadership positions not only more accessible, but at once inspiring and inspirational. On this episode of We get work™, we speak with two real estate industry executives about working in the legal field and the personal career journeys that propelled them to where they are today.

*Today's hosts are **Amanda Miller**, principal in the Berkeley Heights Office of Jackson Lewis and member of the Real Estate Industry Group; **Liz Gehringer**, president and chief executive officer of Anywhere Franchise Brands; and **Shacara Delgado**, senior vice president, employment law, and chief ethics and compliance officer at Anywhere Real Estate Inc.*

Amanda represents employers in wrongful termination, pay equity, discrimination, harassment, retaliation and whistleblower matters. Liz is responsible for strategic growth and operations across Coldwell Banker Affiliates, Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate, Century 21 and ERA Real Estate. Shacara leads the company's global ethics and compliance program, oversees legal operations, and manages enterprise employment, benefits and contractor relations legal matters.

Amanda, Liz and Shacara, the question on everyone's mind today is: How has workplace culture and mentorship helped you face challenges and achieve career success? And how does that impact my business?

CONTENT

Hello to all of you *We get work™* listeners. I'm your host for the podcast today,

Amanda Miller, a principal in the Berkeley Heights, New Jersey office of Jackson Lewis. It is my pleasure to introduce Liz Gehringer, president and CEO of Anywhere Franchise Brands, and Shacara Delgado, senior vice president, employment law, and chief ethics and compliance officer at Anywhere Real Estate. Thank you so much for joining us today.

Shacara Delgado

Senior Vice President, Employment Law, and Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, Anywhere Real Estate Inc.

Thank you for having us.

Liz Gehringer

President and CEO, Anywhere Franchise Brands

Happy to be here.

Miller

Could you share with our listeners what sparked your interest in the real estate industry and how you ended up Anywhere?

Delgado

I'll start. I've been in this company for quite some time. I've always had a passion for real estate, but I started with the company back in 2002 when we were part of another larger entity where we had other market segments. When our company split in 2006, I joined the real estate arm which was then Realogy, now, today, Anywhere Real Estate. That has been my journey since 2006 in various roles within real estate. That's how I became involved from a professional standpoint, and I've grown to love it over the years.

Gehringer

And I have been on that career journey with Shacara for a long time. We've worked together at Anywhere for a very long time. I came to the company because I was recruited by a lawyer, actually. I was at a law firm, and I'd been there for about six years practicing litigation. A lawyer had made the transition over from that firm — she actually heads our litigation department today — and she called me and told me about an opening and asked me if I was interested in coming over to interview.

I'm so happy I did that because I have had so many different careers inside of this company; first as a lawyer and then ultimately onto the business side. Many women look to make that journey from a firm into an in-house position. I don't think it was really on my mind so much when she called. I was busy doing litigation, but I do think there are a great number of career paths in-house as well. So, I was enjoying that [law firm] career, but I have been able to do so many things in this in-house setting.

Miller

What are some of the biggest challenges you've encountered as a leader, and do you have any strategies that you found effective at overcoming them?

Gehringer

That is a big broad question. There are a lot of challenges of all different types. When I was first with the company, in the legal department, I was actually soon thereafter working on ethics and compliance — so, culture-setting and compliance programs, regulatory compliance. In those roles, one of the biggest challenges is that you may be really passionate about your work. You're working in your expertise. You love the law. You like solving problems. You believe in ethics and conducting business a certain way. And all of those things are good. You have the passion, but you work in a company in which you are a cost center, so you have to figure out how to translate the thing you love into something that is exciting and interesting for this internal audience for which you're not the revenue center. So, you have to learn to balance your work, to tune into the business needs.

That was a really interesting challenge for me. I spent a lot of time thinking “how can I make this department actually generate revenue?” That was one idea stream. But it was really on pitching the value of the work we do and how legal can be such a leadership center in a company.

We have a franchise organization, so our franchisees look to us for our legal leadership on issues in Washington, for example. The culture-building we were able to do with ethics, that becomes a talent attraction and talent retention, how we get employees here.

I learned a lot through those challenges. I'm really thankful for those. So, I think that's the biggest one, was fun to ultimately make the transition to the business side. I respect the cost center. I respect that work and it's nice to be a little bit on the other side of that and hopefully don't have people feeling that way at this point in time. But that was a big challenge.

Miller

Shacara, what about you?

Delgado

I think for me, it was earlier in my legacy here at Anywhere in that I had come from a law firm, similar to Liz. I had been with a couple of law firms and so I felt really good about my legal acumen, and I joined this in-house company in this department.

What I started to realize was that the business leaders came with a different perspective, and they analyzed things differently than we did from a legal perspective. I thought that it was important for me to really understand where they were coming from. So, I made the decision to go back to school at night to pursue a business certificate program, because I didn't need an MBA, I just really wanted to understand how they thought and how I could better serve them as an attorney supporting the business. I thought that was tremendously helpful for me.

I think that as a leader, you have to know where you have gaps and opportunities and seek out what you need to fill those gaps. And that was one of those times that it worked for me. That's something that I've just put into practice; when I don't know something, you go out and find it because you don't always have to know the answer.

You just have to know where to find the answer. So that's one thing I would say I faced as a challenge earlier on.

Miller

There really are two sides to it. There's the business side and the legal side, and they both have different goals and ambitions. Sometimes merging the two can be difficult if you don't understand both sides.

Delgado

Yes, because the clients don't necessarily need the black letter law all the time. They need to know how you get me to the desired outcome with the least amount of risk. And sometimes you have to kind of shift that hat that you're wearing in that moment and to really help the business get to the solution.

Gehringer

And she is understated but so good at that — like so good at painting the picture of here are the possible paths, here are the likely outcomes, giving you context so that you can sort of see the future, depending on which path. I think Shacara is a humble human, but that is a huge part of her thing. And when we work together, when I was in ethics and compliance and she was in employment law, we had to sit together and do a lot of work together and try to weigh the different options, the different rules, what impact that would be on culture, which employees we were dealing with, in what context, and how we were going to make a recommendation that would work well from all of those perspectives. So, we got to spend a lot of time at tables together, working through the early days of just really forming how this company conducts itself.

Delgado

Those were fun times, Liz.

Miller

Are there any key factors or individuals that have influenced either of your leadership styles or approaches?

Delgado

I think a lot of people have impacted my leadership style. I think even my peers, even Liz, for example. Coming into ethics and compliance after Liz had led the function for quite some time, really not knowing the role the way Liz built it but having sat side-by-side with her, as she just mentioned, on a lot of different matters, I had an idea. But it's different when you sit in that role, so she definitely influenced how I took on this role coming into it.

But just over my career, there have been people who I've reported into who have influenced what to do, some what not to do as well. In terms of leadership style, I was blessed to have someone that I worked with who was very good about listening, being empathetic, talking about the importance of you hearing what the client has to say and checking your own emotion and feelings about the situation and really kind of

hearing where they're coming from. And I've tried to use that in my approach with people.

And also, that we're all human. My leadership style with my team has probably developed based on others that I've worked with over time. Because, at the end of the day, we all come to work to do a job, but we're humans and we're all the same at the end. And so, the whole hierarchy thing is not something that I embrace. I do think that there are people who have different roles; my role might be to manage you, but my job as a manager is to make you the best that you can be. So, that's how my leadership style has developed over the years through my experiences with others and people have done that for me.

Gehringer

And we have some leaders in common between us today. I would say Marilyn Wasser, who is our general counsel, is like a sage, she's unbelievable. I got to work for her for so many years. Her words often stick with me because she was really good at understanding your personality. As a leader, she understood your thing, your strength and tried to get you to work toward it. She celebrated that I could be a canary in a coalmine, that I could spot a problem and didn't mind saying it and sort of figuring it out. She helped me nuance that and get the right things to the boardroom, how to present and deliver. I mean, she just was like really good at encouraging the thing that was good in you, but also that the company needs and wants. Like she just has a good eye for that.

She also — I'm sure she's told Shacara, too — which I thought was so strange at the time, said, "Be nice to yourself. You work too hard," because we work really hard, "and do your best B work. You lawyers need to do your best B work." And it's like such good advice because we're all crazy type AA students. I have said that to people so many times, "You're trying too hard on this thing. Like, you need to do some B work and that's okay."

So she gave great advice. I get to spend time with Ryan Schneider, who's the CEO of Anywhere. And he is an incredibly focused leader on talent. He sits with all of us and really wants to help guide us in our approach. Recently, I have a new team that's leaders. I had to hire leaders of companies, which was very different, so different than just managing business leaders. It's a different thing. They just need maybe something different. They're experts that you're hiring. And he really taught me how to do that and how to be additive to them. It's different than managing a line leader.

He has a great eye on talent. He cares about it. And I think like the leaders who show that people matter, that we're focused on talent, and that even though I'm running this massively complex publicly traded company, if you're him, that he spent so much of the time one-on-one time talking about talent in the bench. It just kind of says everything.

One of the first times I met with him when I was in the ethics compliance role — we have sometimes hard things to deal with — he said, "You know, the main thing I care about is how we're going to treat people, like how we treat people in all aspects, including if we have to exit somebody." And I thought that's pretty interesting that that's where he went to right away. You know, he really does care, has a deep amount

of empathy. And so, it's good to understand what your leaders value. And it's especially good when it resonates with you. That's great. I love that stuff. I love culture. I love the way we treat people.

Turning to an outside example, because he's been on my mind quite a bit and because he's just a really strong leader in his own space, is a gentleman named Michael Beckerman. He's a leader in the commercial real estate space who I turn to. He's in real estate tech. And I turned to him quite a bit because he's incredibly networked. Like he's all the things I want to be all the time, incredibly networked and incredibly giving of himself. So, you can easily call him, take a walk, take a coffee. He's always willing to give up his own time. Like, no, we're not trying to do a thing, a deal, anything, right? He's just an incredibly networked person who knows other contacts that might help me or has seen enough things where he can give me ideas and he's just giving me his time.

The more people get senior, the more they're willing to do that generally. And I just mean senior in terms of experience and nuance. So, I'm leaning more toward people like that because that's where I think I want to be, really focused on information that you get from those relationships and just getting leadership development from other leaders.

Miller

Yes. I think that's so important. I can tell you, the beginning of my career, I didn't really have a lot of mentors in the legal industry. I was the first person in my family to go to law school, and it really took me some time to figure out my career path, where I wanted to go and how I wanted to do it. And when I started at Jackson Lewis, I found so many people I wanted to emulate and really started to understand why mentorship is so important for career development and growth.

You talked a little bit about some of these individuals who maybe were mentors to you. How do you approach mentoring others?

Gehringer

I think we both do quite a bit of that. I'm super direct, so my mentoring doesn't usually come on a cycle of monthly meetings or something like that. I do prefer if I can do something in person first, like have a lunch or a connection so that you can feel the trust of in-person. I think that works best. But if you can't, you can't.

I try to be really direct and just tell people what I absolutely see as their strengths and how I think that they can play to those. But then if I see a developmental piece, like I don't mind saying that, like here's an idea of something I think where you could grow a little bit, or I'd love to hear in a few months if you could be doing this other thing. Usually for me, I find most people just aren't engaged in their business, getting extra expertise. So, if it's a marketing person that I'm talking to, it's like, where are you learning about marketing other than just here and your work pile and, like, us? Where is the outside influence? I ask people that a lot because I think we all get our heads really down and we forget to be constant students and we can't learn enough inside of a place. So that's a theme I go back to a lot.

Delgado

Yes. For me, I have the informal mentorship. It's the daily, bi-weekly conversations you have with people who might ask for feedback. And then I have the more formal mentor relationship. What's been most important for me is just for me to be me, listen, and really hear where somebody is trying to go, try to help them navigate there with the most amount of ease.

But I do believe in real-time feedback. I believe in telling people in the moment what could have been done better. I'm a constant learner of improvement for myself. So, I ask people, I ask my clients, probably every six months, what could I be doing better? What can my team be doing better? What can we do to better service you? And then I encourage the people I mentor to do the same. Go out and meet with people. You know, there was someone that I've worked with recently and they wanted to know what they could do to get better in the business and have better relationships. I said, set up 15-minute meetings on calendars with people in the organization. That's how you're going to get to know the business better.

Really, it's easy for us and what we do for us to just be able to answer questions, but to know the business is the only way for you to really work closely with them, understand their pain points, and they will then let you in. And it's that sort of real-time advice that I think is necessary when you're mentoring people and telling them where they have opportunities. I think we tend to try to come in and be nice sometimes. You can be nice and candid at the same time. That's the only thing that's going to help someone get to where they're trying to go.

Miller

Totally agree. I don't think mentorship should be just checking the box of met with my mentor this month. It should be more about having these meetings that are more often and not just something on your schedule. And to that point, I found in my experience that many young lawyers, especially in the earlier part of their careers, whether they're in a firm or in-house, sometimes just feel they aren't good enough for that role or that firm or that company, and they suffer from either self-doubt or imposter syndrome. I think it's something that happens all too often.

Can you share any strategies for overcoming either fears you've had or anxieties or even tips for boosting confidence in those moments of self-doubt?

Gehringer

I don't know if, Shacara, we have the same view on this. I don't make too much time for it. Don't attach yourself to the idea that you're an imposter. You don't have time. Just keep going. Get the skills; if it's because you don't think you have the skills, then go acquire the skills. But I think there is a lot of just your own mindset, giving yourself the confidence, walking in the room with your head up. The way you carry yourself communicate so much to people. You're going to get what you're giving, so come with as much as you can muster and you will just power through it.

I think you build the skills and then find fans. We can be a fan of other people and then they will be fans of us. Like your best, closest friends. I have a couple of my closest friends, have been best friends with them for life, literally, since I was born. In one case, I was put in the playpen with the one and in the other place, put in the crib

with the other, you know, it's like, my gosh, that's all the littlest days. I am their fan. They are my fan. Even when maybe we don't think we should be fangirling each other, we do. We're supportive, we say what we need to when we need to. You have to find the people who boost you up and then make time for them. Whether they're working in the same kind of thing you are or not, you just have to find those people and be those people for other people. Don't just look one way and be like, can you please make me feel better? You have to be a friend back. Those baseline friendships are really important, but you can look for those at work also.

Delgado

I absolutely agree with that. I wouldn't even comment on the one thing you just said, but it's certainly my village, is my two girlfriends from my school. We've been best friends since high school, and we still stay in touch. We have our quarterly check-ins as a threesome and we build each other out. We talk about what's going on careerwise and that is certainly something that is helpful to stop you from doubting yourself in different moments.

The other thing internally — I often equate this to when someone says “you're taking the driver's test, imagine the person with no clothes on” or something like that where you make it silly. But I often think about that when I worry about things in a meeting or somewhere else. And I think about how many meetings I've been in where somebody else has said something dumb. And guess what? They're still there. And everything is good. And everything is fine. And they survive. Every now and then, you're going to say something that's just not exactly perfect. Probably in this podcast, I've said something that's not exactly perfect, but you know, it's just going to be, and you have to move on because if you keep sitting in those moments, you're going to continue to doubt yourself.

You know what you bring to the table. You have to know that. Don't stop and reflect upon it. You wouldn't be in the role that you're in if somebody didn't think you were capable of doing it. Trust me, there's always somebody wanting to be in that role, but you're in it and you're in it today. And so, what are you bringing to it today? And you build yourself up that way. You're there for a reason. And the more you tell yourself that, the more you believe it. And like Liz said, you have to constantly be a student of learning more and bringing more to it. Over time, you will build the confidence and have the confidence you need to be successful wherever you are, whoever the audience, whatever the challenge.

Miller

Yes, I love that.

Gehringer

You'll find in a few months, like, “I know the stuff.” It's just working at it. You will know it, then the confidence will come. Know that that is going to happen, and the path will feel shorter.

We actually have a whole program for this for women in real estate at our company. Sue Yannaccone, who's another incredible leader at our company that we get to work closely with, who tells it like it is, has had career experiences that have led her to want

to help women have career movement and have career support and have these fans, people picking them up on real issues and really having an eye, looking back and pulling other women along with you. We have a whole program called “What Moves Her” that she leads. You may have seen it on social. It’s open to everyone. We’re not trying to do this just for us, it’s open to everyone in the industry. We’re trying to be that informal, or formal, I guess, boost that people need — a place to kind of come talk, find topics that resonate, but actually find real contacts, too, if you’re looking for those other connections. Careers do happen through relationships, oftentimes, and we have an opening for that; not just education, but a way to network to other women. We’re really proud of that program.

Miller

It’s a fantastic program. I’ve listened to some of the podcasts and they really are just so empowering and they cover so many different topics. I know you’ve even been featured on an episode, Liz. I think it was earlier this year sometime. I really think it’s a great podcast and program.

Gehringer

It’s fun. There’s a lot of commonality and issues for all people in careers. Women in particular, there are certain topics that just resonate. We have a lot of supporters that have joined as well, so it’s just been good. It’s real career topics, and I think that’s it, too. Women are serious people, and women who have gotten to leadership roles have worked really hard and take themselves really seriously and want to be surrounded with some serious topics and have a program that stays to that level. So, yes, it’s been good. We’re getting a little bit of a following there that we’re enjoying, but it’s always like, “Okay, what can we do next?” We’ve got our eyes out.

Miller

I know in March of this year, Anywhere was recognized for the 13th year in a row as one of the world’s most ethical companies. And I know it’s one of the many awards received by your company. Shacara, what do you believe distinguishes Anywhere from other organizations?

Delgado

From earlier in the days of the company’s inception, we really focused on building up a strong ethics and compliance program. Liz was the leader at the time. She was actually the first one to reach out and figure out how could we get to possibly be designated as a world’s most ethical company. And it doesn’t come easy. It’s not an easy feat. What I would attribute the most to in our company is we have a strong ethical leadership at our core. Our leaders are touting the importance of ethical behavior. It is the tone from the top. It’s the tone from the middle. It is ensuring that as we are driving hard to be successful, we are equally saying it’s not at any cost. It is to be done correctly. It is to be done ethically. How we treat our partners, how we treat our vendors that we engage with, who we choose to not do business with — it’s all of those decisions that we make. It’s at the core of everything we do.

If you look at our ESG reports, you look at anything that we put out there, we tout ethics as a business imperative. We understand that we win business by doing

business ethically. That is what (1) earns us the designation and (2) is at our core. And whether we got the designation or not, I don't think that would ever change.

Miller

I totally agree with you that leadership starts at the top. Go ahead, Liz.

Gehringer

It's been amazing to get to the business side and see the truth of that, right? There aren't conversations about should we do this or not. I mean, we're never, like, in the gray trying to figure out if we should do something. We know what we should and shouldn't do. It doesn't even have to be debated. It's just so much a part of who we are and how we operate that that just feels really good. I don't have to operate in a business in a confusing space. And I bet people do. We don't. We just know what we stand for and that's good. There's not noise around that. Our culture is clear: How we want to treat people, how we want to be treated, who we're going to do business with. In moments of industry change or market change or anything, we can consistently know who we are.

It's reflected in our brands, right? We have some of the most storied brands in real estate, Coldwell Banker, Century 21, Better Homes and Gardens, ERA, Corcoran, Sotheby's. These companies have great reputations. And that's just not happening automatically. It's because of the people who represent those brands and how they conduct business — our agents, how they do business, and all of us who guide them and provide the background for them. It shows in how we deliver. That's ultimately it.

When you think about those brands, I believe you have a very high impression of them. That springs from way back here, the work that we've done and the work, of course, our agents do every day. Everybody knows what these things stand for when you affiliate with one of those brands. It's polished, it's professional, it's trusted. It's just good business. It also does make it an easier place to work and to lead because there's not noise and distraction. There's a lot of commonalities on the way we're going to operate and in the way we think.

I've worked here for a long time. I have worked in other places. I'm also reputable. I worked at Ford before law school and represented Johnson & Johnson doing some legal work. Some great companies to be affiliated with, but I would imagine not everybody has that ease. And I think we've made it, we've created it, but I feel lucky to operate in it.

Miller

That's amazing. We've talked a bit throughout this podcast about different challenges you've encountered. Can you share a significant career achievement or milestone that you're particularly proud of?

Gehringer

Shacara, do you want to go first?

Delgado

No, but I will. That's a tough question. What am I particularly proud of in my career? You know, I'll start with one. I am the first attorney in my family. That was a proud achievement in and of itself. But just for being able to grow a career in something that I truly love and enjoy. I'm so privileged to be able to do that, to say that I really enjoy what I do every day.

One thing I think that I am proud of is being able to be in a position as compliance officer, as the employment attorney for the company, to really be able to influence decisions that make us do the right thing for a large group of individuals who work for the company. That's something that I'm very proud to be able to say and do.

Gehringer

I think there are so many little, mini things along the way that are soft things that I feel really proud about. I feel proud that my three children are interested in the business. I love talking about real estate with my three children. I love that two of them are already agents, that they've tested and are licensed agents. One just took his broker exam as a licensed broker as of yesterday. It's cool. I don't think I saw that coming. And they have other positions, too. My daughter is in software sales and my son is in commercial real estate brokerage. And then another one in school who has the breadth of knowledge and loves to discuss real estate. They see the investment potential of residential and commercial real estate. They understand the market far more than I would have at that age. I love that. I love that I've been able to bring business home and that made a dinner topic of a really big part of the economy. Housing is super interesting. And so, it's fun. It's fun to have that as a milestone that we can have those kinds of conversations.

Personally, I run for it. I wanted to get to be number one when I was selling for Ford, run to the top of the list. I wanted to get to be an attorney. I logged a lot of hours as an attorney. I'm always trying to do the best at whatever is in front of me. I was proud to be ethics and compliance officer. I think that's when it started to come together, like this is a thing I really care about topic-wise. I'm proud. I was extraordinarily proud to lead Coldwell Banker as its president. That just felt like a really big deal.

And now, a real milestone has been to find other leaders and step back. To put other people out in front is such a cool experience. Every time I get an offer to do anything now, it's like who else could do it or how else can we bring other people into it? And I'm really proud of the presidents that run our brands, they're an incredible team of leaders. Not proud because I had something to do with it, just because we've been able to attract them — they're doing a great job running our companies — and that I can hopefully be part of their support team to make them awesome.

So, it's from the little to the big. I feel a little bit like I'm in a groove. That alone feels like a milestone. Now I should never say that, especially on the record, because the minute our CEO thinks you're comfortable, he makes you do something else. Just like how we talked about how Shacara just got additional responsibilities to run all of legal operations, the minute you are comfortable, someone's going to ask you to do more. And that's good. We should stay uncomfortable.

Miller

It's a really amazing thing to bring other people forward and let them shine. When you know you could step into that role and do it yourself, but to bring somebody else along and to have them have the opportunity to shine is really an amazing thing.

Gehringer

It's easy to do things if you just pick that that thing is going to be your habit. Everyone's like what are we going to do about AI? I just make myself in the morning, start with AI. I get in Copilot, I ask her a bunch of questions. We have a nice little chat. Otherwise, it's just going to sit there like, "what is AI and how do I work with it?" I just try to set things up as habits. Sometimes they are just 30-day things, but if I go on a little sprint of something, I can get myself there. So, the minute I decided this year whenever I heard something, I was going to offer to someone else, it's easier for me to say that and set that as a thing I'm going to definitely do rather than to just have loose concepts in my head because I'll lose track of them.

Miller

Now, Shacara, I know that giving back to the community is important to you. What are your favorite ways to contribute or different causes that you're passionate about?

Delgado

Fortunately, I have a senior in high school, so I get to do a lot of community service with her. That's something that I really enjoy doing. We go and feed and cook breakfast for homeless people who are in transitional homes. That's something that I'm very passionate about. I believe it's very important. We do a lot of things that relate to that, like sleep out the night in the cold and raise money for that and things along that line. Hunger is really a big issue for me. I don't know why that is, but I cannot stand to see people who are not able to have the basic necessities. And so, we donate time at the shelter here in town. Just anything that's going to enable us to provide food and opportunity for people who have less than we have.

I'm very passionate about giving back to the community. I spend a lot of time with my daughter doing this because I think it is critically important for kids who are more fortunate than some who are around them. And certainly, she is more fortunate than I was growing up, but I need her to be grounded. I need her to know the importance that she will be okay no matter what happens. All of the things that she has are just things and that she's solid in who she is — and she has to know that. And the only way to really know that is to see the other side of it and understand that those people are okay and will be okay because she too would be okay if in that circumstance. It's very important for me to teach her that and to teach kindness and generosity so they're just a part of who she is.

Miller

I love that. I think teaching kindness isn't taught enough these days, especially to young kids. And it's so important to teach kindness and giving back. And for me, giving back to the community, managing family and young kids, my physical and mental wellness, my career, it's been a bit of a balancing game as it is, I think, for most people. And sometimes, as Liz said before, I find myself running from one thing to another to another, quite literally. I think we've all had our fair share of late nights

and mornings and weekends with work. And then you have so many other responsibilities looming. This isn't just a struggle for women, it's a struggle for men as well. What do you do for self-care, and do you have any advice for our listeners on maintaining that hard-to-reach work-life balance?

Gehringer

I think there shouldn't be shame in getting help from other people. So, if you can figure out what you can do or what you can get help with, I think that's always good. I used to paint every room myself like it was like a badge of honor or something. Okay, I have to stop doing that. You can't do everything. And it's silly. It's like, you're not even that good at it, some of the stuff. So, I think that's self-care.

Self-care, very much like, you know, getting up and walking in the morning, getting that first cup of coffee at this little local coffee shop. Love that. Walk down, walk back, just clear the mind to the beginning of the day is great. Also, what if you don't get time to exercise later? So just get moving. I love yoga, hot yoga because, of course, I have to have something that's wickedly difficult. So, I like that hot yoga.

I'm not as much into like organized stuff, but those are things I can do anywhere, anytime. Pick a thing *you* can do — if it's a team sport, it's just harder to always find people to do it with — something that you can do [solo]. Hotels are not an excuse. Business travel is not an excuse to go eat a bunch of food. There's a gym. There's always a gym, so I try to do those kinds of things. And then, think differently in different places. Some people will feel like travel is taxing, but to me, you think very creatively, you're in all new environments.

You can't suspend your life all the time: "Once I get back from these two days or once I'm through this trial brief" or whatever. You can't keep suspending your time, like, you're always going to be suspending your time that way. So, you have to get it and not allow yourself to do that. It's more like, what is it while I'm working on this in this other place that I can keep doing? So, I try not to suspend, you know, which I think a lot of people do. It's a struggle for all of us.

Miller

That's true.

Delgado

You can't see it here, but I have my walk pad that's here. Calls where I'm not on video, I raise my desk and put on my walk pad and I walk. I have a set of weights that are by here. If I don't get out to get my walk in the morning, I start my morning with a stretch every day, regardless, because I hear that it's very important as you get older. So, I decided to get "21 days to a good habit." And so now I'm past that 21 days. But I do think it's important for self-care, especially with us — we work virtually from home and it's really easy to fall into this work-life integration as opposed to work-life balance. It just becomes a part of everything and every hour of your day if you let it, but you have to take that time.

Liz, I'm so much in agreement with you that sometimes you have to throw money at a problem and sometimes you can't do it all. And I've learned that, too. And I am no

longer painting my own walls either because I was in that space, too.

Gehringer

It's like delegating, too, right? People who are like us are often geared toward trying to do it themselves. You know, like, "It's just faster. I just know how to. I know where I'm trying to head with this thing" or whatever. And you just can't get far enough, or you'll never get as far as you could, if you do everything yourself. You just have to let go of that. And it's amazing because when you let someone else do it, you're always impressed that they actually did it differently, in some way that you hadn't thought of. Letting go and letting others do things actually teaches you that they're better at it.

Delgado

And then, bringing it full circle, think about this, we're talking about leadership. The reality is we lead people every day who do jobs that you've once done or could do. It doesn't mean that it's your job to do it. You have your job to do. I'm not a painter, so why am I taking it on? Just because you can do it doesn't mean you should. There's always someone who can do it better.

Miller

When I was in high school, my mom always told me she wished she could go back in time with the knowledge and wisdom that she had as an adult. And I really didn't understand that sentiment until I got a bit older and realized how different my perspective, given we're talking about perspectives, would have been if I had known then what I know now. Shacara, if you could go back and give yourself one piece of advice at the start of your career, what would it be?

Delgado

Probably, "Get out of your own way." Early on, I was very shy and I struggled. People who know me now wouldn't probably believe this. But when I got out of law school, I used to force myself to go to networking sessions and I would sit in a car and I would say, "Okay, you're going to go in here and you're going to get three contacts before you leave here today. And you can't leave until you get those three." Because it wasn't something that I really enjoyed doing. Fast forward, I'll talk to anyone, it doesn't matter. But it took a lot for me to get over it. So, the piece of advice I would say is, "It's not that serious, get out of your own way, do what you have to do. It's going to be okay. Breathe. It's fine." Maybe that's the advice.

Miller

And Liz, similar question. What advice would you give to women who aspire to reach executive-level positions?

Gehringer

I think hard work works. Did we know that when we started working hard? I'm not sure. We were just hard workers, whatever our parents did to us. So, "thank you" to them. The hard work does pay, people notice. Working diligently, that's all good.

But you do have to form relationships and speak up, too. And you have to have that

substance. The things we've said here: Be a student, learn, produce and then hold yourself to that next thing. Be ready for that next thing. Walk into the room like you're ready for that next thing. I've given so many women advice to please stop coming into the room ready to be the note taker. Take the risk that you might forget something, like it's going to be okay. Come in and don't jot down everything or take the stance that everyone else is doing the business and you're the scribe or something. Watch people around you, watch how leaders conduct themselves and do that.

If you're at the point where you're supposed to be the diligent person tracking it, you better do it. But know when you have a little room to sort of stretch and grow. Women have a tendency to try to be everything all the time, and you have to lean a little bit toward projecting where you're heading. And then reminding women, because a lot of people are this hardworking and driven, to make sure they're seeing you. It's fine to just ask for a coffee. I have plenty of people's careers here who I have given special attention to because they have given special attention to me. They've asked me to have a coffee. We've had lunch. I love that. I love those connections. And not "special" in a weird way, special in I've taken the time to notice and see your work because you've told me. You've made a point to make sure I know. It's my job to know what everyone's doing, but at some level it helps when people are also communicating their accomplishments and everything.

It is hard work, but also don't expect it to come only for that or that you automatically get it for that. It's not like the company's obligation a 100 percent to do your career. You also are part of the career. You also are part of the conversation.

Delgado

I tell people all the time that we're not a company that promotes based on time in. We don't promote just because you've been here for X number of years. You have to show your work, you have to show your worth. And sometimes people know your worth and they rely on what you do because you contribute so much. But sometimes it's okay to speak up and say, "Hey, I'm looking to do more, I can do more, I can take this on." And I think sometimes women tend to do the work and expect to get noticed and be recognized, but you have to be vocal sometimes. If you don't express your interest in doing more, sometimes people think that you're satisfied with what you're doing. Sometimes you have to speak up.

Miller

I couldn't agree more with that. And I'm very sad, but we're going to be ending our lively discussion here. I want to give a heartfelt thank you to both of you, Liz and Shacara, for sharing your journeys and insights into your careers. We truly appreciate you taking the time today to join us on our podcast.

Gehringer

It's been great chatting with you. Lots of great reminders here — even to ourselves. So, thank you.

Delgado

Absolutely. Thank you so much for inviting us. It's been a great time.

OUTRO

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