



Plastics News- Women Breaking the Mold Networking Forum
Nashville, TN November 10-11, 2019
Speaker: Portia Yarborough

Introductory bio: Dr. Portia Yarborough is a senior technology manager supporting the Transportation & Industrial Business at DuPont. She leads global cross-functional teams, driving innovation excellence and building the innovation pipeline spanning the entire lifecycle from idea to impact.

Prior to this role, she was the new business development leader for composites and the strategic planning manager for DuPont Performance Polymers, presiding over business strategy development and long-range planning in tandem with senior business team members. Over the course of her DuPont career, she has demonstrated success in diverse roles ranging from business integration, operations, application development, and research & development. She holds several patents and is certified as a Six Sigma Black Belt.

Dr. Yarborough has a reputation as an authentic, purpose-driven leader who champions diversity. She has a gift for cultivating, coaching and training high-performance teams. She is a Henry Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute and actively supports non-profit organizations focused on education as a pathway to empower the next generation of leaders. She holds a B.S. in Chemistry with honors from Wake Forest University and earned a M.S. and Ph.D. in Polymer Chemistry from Cornell University.

Title: Unabashed: Making an Impact Right Where You Are

Description: No matter where you are right now, you can – and should be -- a leader. Learn from an experienced manager at DuPont who has helped spearhead diversity, equal opportunity initiatives and corporate growth.



Title slide

GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME. IT'S AN HONOR TO BE HERE WITH YOU ALL. THANKS TO THE PLASTICS NEWS TEAM FOR BRINGING US ALL TOGETHER.

I'M HONORED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE VIEWS FROM MY JOURNEY AND SPEAK WITH YOU TODAY ABOUT MAKING AN IMPACT...UNABASHED.

Slide 2

BY UNABASHED, I MEAN CONFIDENCE. KNOWING WHO YOU ARE.... NOT HANGING OUT IN THE SHADOWS, BUT OWNING YOUR STRENGTHS, YOUR IDEAS AND YOUR VOICE.

IN THE BIG PICTURE, I THINK WE'RE ALL WORKS IN PROGRESS. AND IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE THOUGHTFUL CHOICES AS YOU TRAVEL ALONG ON YOUR JOURNEY. MY HOPE IS THAT YOU WILL START DISCUSSIONS TODAY THAT WILL MOTIVATE AND INSPIRE YOU FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.

I BELIEVE WE ALL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY – AND A RESPONSIBILITY – TO MAKE AN IMPACT. EVERY ONE OF US CAN CREATE CHANGE, HELP EACH OTHER GROW, AND SATISFY OUR PERSONAL GOALS.

Slide 3

I RECENTLY SAW A MOTIVATIONAL QUOTE FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST [RENI EDDO-LODGE](#). SHE SAID:

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THE LEADER OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT OR A HOUSEHOLD NAME. IT CAN BE AS SMALL-SCALE AS CHIPPING AWAY AT THE WARPED POWER RELATIONS IN YOUR WORKPLACE. IT CAN BE PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO THOSE WHO WOULDN'T ACCESS THEM OTHERWISE. IT CAN BE CREATIVE. IT CAN BE INFORMAL. IT CAN BE YOUR JOB. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT IT IS, AS LONG AS YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING."

Slide 4

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU DO OR WHERE YOU SIT. YOU CAN – AND SHOULD -- BE MAKING AN IMPACT RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE. YOU DON'T NEED THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY OR THE RIGHT MANAGER OR THE RIGHT PROJECT.... LEAD NOW FROM WHEREVER YOU ARE.



HOW CAN YOU MAKE AN IMPACT – BOTH FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS? AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Slide 5

I THINK THERE ARE THREE IMPORTANT COMPONENTS:

- 1. BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR PASSIONS. (CONSIDER WHAT MOTIVATES YOU, WHAT INSPIRES YOU OR PULLS AT YOUR HEART)**
- 2. FIND MEANING IN YOUR WORK. (BE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER)**
- 3. KNOW AND HELP OTHERS. (ADD VALUE TO OTHERS' LIVES)**

TOGETHER, YOUR PASSION, YOUR WORK'S MEANING, AND THE IMPACT OF YOUR ACTIONS WILL HELP YOU GROW YOUR CAREER AND BECOME A CHAMPION FOR YOURSELF, OTHERS, YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND YOUR IDEAS...

--

Slide 6

LET'S START BY TALKING ABOUT PASSIONS. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU? WHAT SPEAKS TO YOUR HEART? WHAT MAKES YOU GET OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING?

MAYBE YOU ALREADY KNOW. AND IF YOU DO, THAT INSIGHT IS A GIFT. EMBRACE IT.

Change slide here

IF YOU DON'T KNOW ... GET CURIOUS... FIND A WAY TO TRY THINGS OUT SO YOU KNOW WHAT DRIVES YOU.



I HAD A FANTASTIC CHEMISTRY TEACHER IN HIGH SCHOOL. MR. KNOX BROUGHT ORBITAL FIELDS AND ELECTRONS TO LIFE!! MY CURIOSITY WAS FED IN EACH CLASS AND I DEVELOPED AN INSATIABLE APPETITE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND ME.

BUT LATER, WHEN I WAS MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT COLLEGE COURSES, I HAD DOUBTS ABOUT MY PASSION FOR CHEMISTRY. MY FRIENDS TALKED ME INTO PURSUING A BUSINESS CAREER. BUT AFTER SOME FRUSTRATING COURSES, I WENT RIGHT BACK TO MY HAPPY PLACE – CHEMISTRY.

(PAUSE FOR LAUGHTER. NOT EVERYBODY FINDS THEIR HAPPY PLACE IN CHEMISTRY CLASS...)

IF YOU'RE NOT CLEAR ABOUT YOUR PASSIONS OR HOW TO PUT THEM INTO ACTION, CONSIDER TALKING WITH A MENTOR, COLLEAGUE OR RESPECTED FRIEND TO FIGURE OUT YOUR STRONGEST QUALITIES. SOMETIMES CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM CAN EVEN LEAD THE WAY.

EARLY IN MY CAREER, I RECEIVED CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK FROM MY MANAGER ABOUT SPEAKING UP IN MEETINGS.

WOMEN OFTEN HESITATE TO SPEAK AS A RESULT OF FEAR... OR WE STRUGGLE TO BE HEARD DUE TO LACK OF A STRONG PRESENCE.

Slide 7

AS A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL WORKING WITH WORLD-RENOWNED EXPERTS, I'LL ADMIT THAT MY CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEETINGS WERE NOT VERY FREQUENT. MY TEAM INCLUDED ONE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL WHO DOMINATED DISCUSSIONS AND COULD TELL YOU ALL THE REASONS WHY YOUR IDEAS WOULD NOT WORK – HE HAD TRIED IT BEFORE. MAYBE YOU'VE WORKED WITH THIS KIND OF PERSON TOO?

MY PREFERRED APPROACH AT THAT TIME WAS TO THOROUGHLY VET IDEAS BEFORE SHARING THEM IN MEETINGS.



REALLY, I WAS LETTING DOUBT HOLD ME BACK... THIS, OF COURSE, REINFORCED MY MANAGER'S NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF MY CAPABILITY AND VALUE TO THE TEAM.

Change slide here

MY MENTOR AT THE TIME HELPED ME FIND MY VOICE. HE KNEW I WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION AND ENSURING ALL CHILDREN HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN SO HE CONNECTED ME WITH A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN.

THAT GROUP PROVIDED A SAFE PLACE FOR ME TO DISCOVER THE POWER OF MY VOICE AND I EVENTUALLY HELD A LEADERSHIP ROLE THERE. THE EXPERIENCE HELPED ME SILENCE THE VOICES OF DOUBT, BUILD CONFIDENCE AND SHOW UP IN MEETINGS AT WORK WITH A DIFFERENT PRESENCE.

IN ADDITION, MY WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION SHOWED ME HOW I COULD BECOME A CHAMPION FOR THOSE KIDS. IT WAS A HUGE LEADERSHIP LESSON -- VERY REWARDING AND EDUCATIONAL ALL AT ONCE.

LOOKING BACK, I CAN SEE THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY WAS POSSIBLE BECAUSE I UNDERSTOOD MY PASSION FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, AND I HAD GIVEN IT A VOICE BY SHARING IT WITH MY MENTOR.

--

Slide 8

I WILL ALSO TELL YOU THIS: ONE-TO-ONE MENTORING...OR BRAINSTORMING IN SMALL GROUPS... PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATE A SAFE SPACE TO BE HEARD AND SUPPORTED AS WELL AS RECEIVE CRITICAL FEEDBACK. IN THESE RELATIONSHIPS, YOU ALSO CAN HELP OTHERS GROW AND LEARN.

JEAN OTTE, A VISIONARY WHO ADVOCATED FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN'S TALENT, BELIEVED WOMEN SHOULD BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT SERVING AS MENTORS AND FINDING MENTORS FOR OURSELVES AS WE CONTINUE TO LEARN, GROW AND IMPROVE OUR LEADERSHIP.



I AGREE.

MY MENTORS HAVE COACHED, CORRECTED AND COUNSELED ME, ALWAYS ENSURING THAT THE LESSON FROM THE SITUATION WAS UNDERSTOOD. WE'VE HELD REGULAR MEETINGS TO DISCUSS SITUATIONS AT THE BUSINESS LEVEL, PLAY OUT SCENARIOS, AND TALK SPECIFICALLY ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TO ADVANCE THE BUSINESS. IF YOU HAVEN'T WORKED WITH A MENTOR, OR BEEN A MENTOR, I THINK BOTH ARE IMPORTANT GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES.

AS AN ASIDE, I HIGHLY RECOMMEND JEAN OTTE'S BOOK, "CHANGING THE CORPORATE LANDSCAPE: A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE." THIS BOOK PROVIDES GREAT INSIGHT AND OUTLINES SOME OF THE UNSPOKEN RULES IN THE WORKPLACE.

Slide 9

IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHERE TO START, HERE'S A SMALL-SCALE IDEA -- MENTOR AT LEAST ONE PERSON FROM AN UNDERREPRESENTED GROUP. PASS ALONG YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND ADVICE. RESPOND TO THAT NEXT EMAIL SEEKING YOUR INPUT. TELL AN EMPLOYEE INCLUSION GROUP AT YOUR COMPANY THAT YOU'RE AVAILABLE TO BE A MENTOR. VOLUNTEER THROUGH A FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAM. THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF WAYS TO MAKE IT WORK.

AND IT'S NOT JUST MENTORS WHO WILL HELP YOU GROW. IT CAN BE ANYONE AROUND YOU. ONE PIECE OF ADVICE THAT HAS HELPED ME SIGNIFICANTLY OVER MANY YEARS IS TO SCHEDULE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Slide 10

I DO THIS AT LEAST ONCE EVERY QUARTER WITH A SENIOR LEADER OR COLLEAGUES IN FIELDS OF INTEREST. IT HELPS ME GAIN PERSPECTIVE AND UNDERSTAND HOW OTHERS ARE SUCCEEDING. THESE MEETINGS USUALLY TAKE PLACE OVER LUNCH OR ARE 30-MINUTE MEETINGS WHERE I HAVE 3-4 QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION.



Change slide here

I ASK ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER TO ME AT THE TIME. FOR EXAMPLE...

- **WHAT ARE SOME KEY COMPETENCIES OF EXCEPTIONAL TEAM MEMBERS?**
- **WHAT LESSONS ARE YOU LEARNING NOW?**
- **WHO INSPIRES YOU?**
- **WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST SATISFACTION/CHALLENGES?**

THESE INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS HAVE BEEN AN AMAZINGLY POWERFUL TOOL TO HELP LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK AND PROVIDE NEW INSIGHTS AND PERSPECTIVES. BEING GENUINELY CURIOUS ABOUT THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCES OF THE PERSON I'M MEETING WITH HAS LED TO THOUGHTFUL CONVERSATIONS AND DOOR-OPENERS TO NEW IDEAS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

Slide 11

JEAN OTTE, SAID IT WELL... *"IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW, IT'S ABOUT WHO KNOWS THAT YOU KNOW."*

EVERYWHERE YOU TURN, THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES – LIKE THIS CONFERENCE -- TO BUILD A STRONG NETWORK AND LEVERAGE IT TO SUPPORT YOURSELF AS WELL AS OTHERS.

Slide 12

YOU ALSO WILL BE HAPPIER IF YOU FIND MEANING IN YOUR WORK. THIS WILL HELP YOU STAY MOTIVATED, MAKE A GREAT CAREER PLAN, AND FEEL REWARDED AT THE END OF THE DAY.

SOMETIMES THIS MEANING WILL BE VERY CLEAR TO YOU AND OFTEN, THERE WILL BE EXTERNAL INDICATORS THAT YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

WHEN I WAS AN APPLICATIONS DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH SCIENTIST, I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TESTING AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS FOR PROTECTIVE APPAREL THAT'S USED FOR BODY ARMOR, FLAME-RESISTANT CLOTHING, HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SUITS, AND SO ON. STATE-OF-THE - ART EQUIPMENT AND TEST FACILITIES ENABLED US TO DEVELOP NEW MATERIALS AND TEST THEM



UNDER REALISTIC CONDITIONS AND WE OFTEN HOSTED TOURS FOR CUSTOMERS AND SPECIAL VISITORS.

Slide 13

ONE DAY, AFTER I HAD LED THE TOUR AND EXPLAINED THE USUAL DETAILS OF THE BALLISTICS RANGE AND OUR METHODS OF ANALYSIS, A GUEST PAUSED, LOOKED DIRECTLY AT ME, AND SAID, “THANK YOU – AS A RESULT OF THIS WORK, I AM ABLE TO SEE MY DAUGHTER SMILE, LOOK MY WIFE IN THE EYE AND TELL HER I LOVE HER, AND ENJOY TIME WITH MY FAMILY.”

I WAS SHOCKED.

[Change slide here](#)

HE WAS A POLICE OFFICER WHO HAD MADE A ROUTINE TRAFFIC STOP. WHILE STANDING BY THE STOPPED VEHICLE AND WRITING THE TICKET, HE WAS STRUCK BY ANOTHER VEHICLE. HE WAS THROWN SEVERAL FEET IN THE AIR AND LANDED IN THE DITCH. HIS LIFE WAS SAVED BECAUSE HE WAS WEARING BODY ARMOR MADE OF OUR KEVLAR®.

THIS MOMENT CHANGED HOW I VIEWED THE REAMS OF DATA, MOUNDS OF TEST REPORTS, AND ENDLESS BOBBINS OF GOLDEN KEVLAR® FIBER. THIS MATERIAL AND THE EXCELLENCE WE BROUGHT TO INNOVATION AND APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT WAS LITERALLY THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. I HAD FOUND A NEW MEANING TO THE WORK I DID EACH DAY.

Slide 14

NOW WHEN IT COMES TO THE IDEA OF KNOWING AND HELPING OTHERS – ADD ADDING VALUE TO THEIR LIVES --THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO DO THIS UNABASHED. FOR EXAMPLE, THIS YEAR, I HELPED LAUNCH A FORUM TO CONNECT TECHNICAL WOMEN IN DUPONT’S TRANSPORTATION & INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS. OUR INTENTION WAS TO BUILD A COMMUNITY OF TECHNICAL WOMEN WHO ARE BOLD, CONFIDENT, AND EMPOWERED TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.



THE IDEA WAS BROUGHT TO REALITY FROM A WOMAN I MET AT A NETWORKING CONFERENCE MUCH LIKE THIS ONE. SHE AND I WERE CHATTING, EXCHANGED CARDS, AND KEPT IN TOUCH. I THINK THAT WAS THE KEY POINT. WE KEPT IN TOUCH.

SHE INSPIRED ME TO THINK ABOUT HOW TO HELP MY COLLEAGUES AND SHARED SOME IDEAS THAT LED TO THE CREATION OF THIS FORUM.

OVER THE COURSE OF THREE 90-MINUTE SESSIONS, OVER 40 PARTICIPANTS LEARNED ABOUT TANGIBLE SCIENCE -BASED TOOLS RELATED TO MINDFULNESS, SELF-COMPASSION AND PRESENCE TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED IN THE WORKPLACE.

AT THE END OF THE THREE SESSIONS, ONE PARTICIPANT SAID SHE NO LONGER FEELS STAGNANT OR STUCK IN A RUT. THE TOOLS HELPED HER MOVE FORWARD AND GROW. THE OTHER THING SHE REALIZED WAS THAT CHANGING YOUR MINDSET ALLOWS YOU TO GET THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES.

NO ONE TEACHES YOU THE TOOLS TO DEAL WITH STICKY AND TRICKY SITUATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE...THE FORUM FILLED THAT NEED.

SMALL EXAMPLES LIKE THIS CONVINCE ME THAT IT'S POSSIBLE TO LEAD FROM WHERE YOU ARE. LOOKING BACK AT THE 20 YEARS OF MY CAREER, I CAN SAY THAT I'VE LED FROM MANY DIFFERENT PLACES. AND THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN BOTH BIG AND SMALL.

Slide 15

I ALSO WANT TO BE VERY TRANSPARENT HERE. LEADERSHIP ISN'T ALWAYS EASY. AND SOME DAYS, IT'S DOWNRIGHT HARD. THERE ARE TOUGH CHOICES TO MAKE AND THEY REQUIRE COURAGE.

THERE ALSO HAVE BEEN CHALLENGES. IT'S NOT EASY TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF CONFIDENCE WHEN YOU'RE THE ONLY WOMAN AND/OR THE ONLY PERSON OF COLOR AT THE TABLE. IT CAN BE LONELY.

HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE THAT? LET'S SEE A SHOW OF HANDS...



HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN THE ONLY WOMAN AT THE TABLE? (SHOW OF HANDS)

MORE THAN ONCE? (SHOW OF HANDS)

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN THE ONLY WOMAN ON YOUR TEAM? (SHOW OF HANDS)

HAVE YOU WANTED – OR NEEDED -- SOMEONE TO REACH OUT AND HELP YOU? (SHOW OF HANDS)

YEAH...ME TOO.

IN MY FIRST-EVER SUPERVISORY ROLE, I WAS ASSIGNED TO A HIGH HAZARD PROCESS AREA...

Slide 16

WHEN I STARTED, MY TEAM INCLUDED A DOZEN MEN, ALL MY SENIOR. (ASIDE: THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN NEAR THE END OF MY ASSIGNMENT WHEN I'D BEEN ABLE TO HIRE A FEMALE ENGINEER.)

I WAS MAYBE 30 – THEY WERE MAYBE 50. THESE MEN HAD MULTIPLE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE ON THE UNIT AND THIS WAS THEIR PERMANENT ASSIGNMENT. SO, THEY'D SEEN PLENTY OF SUPERVISORS COME AND GO.

AND NOW HERE'S THEIR FIRST FEMALE SUPERVISOR WHO'S ALSO A YOUNG AFRICAN AMERICAN. THEY WERE SUSPICIOUS, TO SAY THE LEAST.

NOW LET ME TELL YOU MORE ABOUT THIS "OPPORTUNITY."

THE FACILITY WAS AT THE EXPERIMENTAL STATION IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE. IT'S A HISTORICAL SITE FOR DUPONT WHERE INNOVATION HAPPENS. MANY IMPORTANT PRODUCTS WERE CREATED HERE. YOU KNOW THEM AS NYLON, LYCRA, TYVEK, NOMEX, KEVLAR, TO NAME A FEW..



THE HIGH HAZARD AREA WAS WAY DOWN ON A FAR END OF THE FACILITY NEAR THE BRANDYWINE RIVER. IT WAS A DARK AND GLOOMY PLACE. WE HAD A HIGH-PRESSURE, HIGH-TEMPERATURE REACTOR AND A PLAN FOR WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN CASE OF EXPLOSION.

COLLEAGUES RARELY VENTURED DOWN TO THIS AREA – NOT TO MENTION THERE WERE SNAKES AND ALL KINDS OF CRITTERS OUTSIDE.

DESPITE ALL OF THIS, I WAS SUPER EXCITED BECAUSE THIS WAS MY FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD PEOPLE. THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AT THE TIME TOLD ME THAT I COULD FEEL FREE TO TRY OUT SOME NEW AND DIFFERENT THINGS WITH THIS TEAM – TO DEVELOP MY LEADERSHIP SKILLS.

[Click to show text](#)

HE BASICALLY SAID, “DON’T BE AFRAID.”

AND BECAUSE HE SAID THAT, IT OPENED THE DOOR FOR ME TO TRY NEW THINGS AND EXPAND BEYOND THE FRAMEWORK OF WHAT I’D SEEN.

WELL, IT DIDN’T START OUT SO WELL. MY ENTHUSIASM LASTED UNTIL THE END OF DAY 1. NO ONE WOULD TALK TO ME. THEY LOOKED AT ME LIKE I WAS AN ALIEN.

AND I HAD NO IDEA HOW I WAS GOING TO MOVE FORWARD. THE PEOPLE YOU’RE SUPPOSED TO LEAD WON’T TALK TO YOU?

AND IT WASN’T JUST DAY 1.

AFTER THREE DAYS, I FINALLY PULLED THE TEAM TOGETHER TO LET THEM KNOW WE’D HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER. I WASN’T GOING AWAY. AND I COULDN’T CONTINUE TO HAVE MORNING MEETINGS WHERE NO ONE ENGAGED.

I’M RELIEVED TO TELL YOU THIS STORY ENDS WELL. I WAS THERE FOR TWO YEARS AND THE TEAM AND I BECAME VERY CLOSE. WE WORKED IT ALL OUT. IT WASN’T EASY. BUT WE GOT THROUGH IT.



AS RECENTLY AS SIX MONTHS AGO, ONE OF THE TEAM MEMBERS WHO STILL WORKS AT THE UNIT SAID THAT I WAS THEIR BEST SUPERVISOR AND A REAL ADVOCATE. IT MAKES ME PROUD.

I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU ABOUT SOME OF THE THINGS THAT WORKED IN THIS SITUATION – JUST IN CASE YOU'RE EVER IN A SIMILAR SPOT.

Slide 17

I SOUGHT OUT LOTS OF ADVICE AND I LEARNED THAT I NEEDED TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST. MY TEAM NEEDED TO KNOW I CARED – THAT I WASN'T JUST PASSING THROUGH AND CHECKING A BOX.

I ATTENDED PERSONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COURSES. I BRAINSTORMED. I SPOKE WITH MENTORS WHO WERE EXPERIENCED MANAGERS AND THEY COACHED ME. I TALKED TO PEOPLE IN SIMILAR POSITIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE ORGANIZATION TO GAIN PERSPECTIVE.

AND I REALIZED THAT THE TEAM NEEDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE.

WE ORGANIZED AN OPEN HOUSE TO SHOW PEOPLE AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE THAT WERE REQUIRED TO KEEP THE HIGH HAZARD AREA RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

AND IT WORKED. WE CLEANED THINGS UP, CHASED OUT THE SNAKES, AND INVITED HONORED GUESTS. WE HAD SPEAKERS AND DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE TEAM FELT VALIDATED. MY FIRST PEOPLE LEADER ROLE WAS NOT EASY. I WAS TESTED & CHALLENGED AT EVERY TURN. BUT WE GOT THROUGH IT. I FEEL LIKE THIS IS WHERE I GREW UP A BIT. WHAT IF I HADN'T HAD THIS GREAT TEAM AND I WASN'T CHALLENGED? I WOULDN'T BE THE PERSON I AM TODAY.

Slide 18

IF YOU'RE ON THE EDGE OF YOUR PERSONAL HIGH HAZARD EXPERIENCE, I SAY, TAKE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND RISE TO THE CHALLENGES. YOU CAN DO IT. BUILD A CAREER THAT MATTERS.



INCORPORATE YOUR PASSIONS. OPEN DOORS FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS WITH THE COURAGE, CONVICTION AND CONFIDENCE TO MAKE AN IMPACT RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE.

--

LET'S USE A SPORTS ANALOGY – I ALWAYS LIKE THOSE – HOW MANY OF YOU WATCHED THE U.S. WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM THIS YEAR? (PAUSE FOR HAND RAISING)

I THOUGHT THEY WERE SPECTACULAR. I WAS FASCINATED BY THE WAY THE PLAYERS BROUGHT THEIR UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL TALENTS TOGETHER TO TRIUMPH OVER IMPOSSIBLE ODDS AND ULTIMATELY, LET THEIR VOICES – AND ACTIONS -- BE HEARD.

Slide 19

A FORMER TEAM CAPTAIN, ABBY WAMBACH LED THE UNITED STATES WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM TO A WORLD CUP CHAMPIONSHIP IN 2015. IN A COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS THAT SHE GAVE AT BERNARD COLLEGE IN 2018, SHE TOLD THIS STORY...

NOW TO SET THE STAGE, ABBY WAMBACH HAD SCORED MORE GOALS THAN ANY HUMAN BEING ON THE PLANET...MALE OR FEMALE.

SHE WAS A CO-CAPTAIN AND LED TEAM U.S.A. IN ALMOST EVERY CATEGORY FOR A DECADE. AND SHE AND HER COACH DECIDED TOGETHER THAT SHE WOULD NOT BE A STARTER IN HER LAST WORLD CUP GAME.

HERE WERE SOME OF HER REMARKS ABOUT THIS SITUATION:

YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BE DISAPPOINTED WHEN IT FEELS LIKE LIFE'S BENCHED YOU. WHAT YOU AREN'T ALLOWED TO DO IS MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD FROM THE BENCH. DURING THAT LAST WORLD CUP, MY TEAMMATES TOLD ME THAT MY PRESENCE, MY SUPPORT, MY VOCAL AND



RELENTLESS BELIEF IN THEM FROM THE BENCH, IS WHAT GAVE THEM THE CONFIDENCE THEY NEEDED TO WIN US THAT CHAMPIONSHIP.

Click to show text

***IF YOU'RE NOT A LEADER ON THE BENCH, THEN DON'T CALL YOURSELF A LEADER ON THE FIELD.
YOU'RE EITHER A LEADER EVERYWHERE OR NOWHERE.***

I COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER. OUR LANDSCAPE CHANGES. SOMETIMES WE SIT AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE AND SOMETIMES WE DON'T. BUT LEADERSHIP DOESN'T REQUIRE A TITLE...OR PERMISSION. YOU CAN LEAD FROM WHEREVER YOU ARE.

IF YOU HAVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE – I ENCOURAGE YOU TO OWN IT & MAKE ROOM, BROADEN THE SCOPE. RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE MORE WOMEN COMING THROUGH OUR COLLEGE PROGRAMS. THEY MAY NOT BE AT THE LEADERSHIP TABLE JUST YET, BUT PLEASE, EXTEND AN INVITATION – OR YOUR HAND – WHEN YOU SEE THEM. THEY'LL HELP US ALL BE BETTER.

THESE INCOMING WOMEN ARE REMARKABLE. AND TO PERSONALLY HAVE WITNESSED THIS LEADERSHIP MOMENT COURTSIDE, GAVE ME GOOSEBUMPS

Slide 20

IN THIS YEAR'S THIRD ROUND OF THE U.S. OPEN TENNIS MATCH, THE REIGNING CHAMPION, NAOMI OSAKA, AGE 21, SHARED THE SPOTLIGHT IN AN EMOTIONAL JOINT POST -MATCH INTERVIEW WITH HER OPPONENT, COCO GAUFF, 15.

DID YOU GET THAT? THESE WOMEN ARE 21- AND 15-YEARS OLD. PLAYING IN THE THIRD ROUND OF THE U.S. OPEN.

OSAKA, WHO WON, SAID SHE WANTED COCO TO WALK OFF THE COURT WITH HER HEAD HIGH AND BE AWARE THAT SHE HAS ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH.



HOW'S THAT FOR SETTING A HIGH STANDARD? THESE WOMEN KNOW THEIR PASSIONS, FIND MEANING IN THEIR WORK, AND EVEN AT YOUNG AGES ARE ABLE TO HELP OTHERS ALONG THE WAY. BRAVO!

I BELIEVE THAT UNABASHED LEADERSHIP – LEADING FROM WHERE YOU ARE – MEANS THAT WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT IN THE ROOM. TO HIGHLIGHT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHERS, BRING DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES INTO THE ROOM AND VALIDATE OTHER WOMEN. TAKE THIS RESPONSIBILITY SERIOUSLY - AS SOMEONE OPENED A DOOR FOR YOU, WE SHOULD CREATE SPACE FOR OTHERS.

[Click to show text](#)

RECOGNIZING OTHERS' GREATNESS WILL NEVER DIMINISH YOU NOR WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

BE INTENTIONAL AND RAISE AWARENESS OF OTHER WOMEN WHO ARE TALENTED. IN CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS, WE NEED MORE WOMEN TO BE POWERFUL BEACONS FOR THE REST OF US. NO GOAL IS TOO LOFTY AND NO CEILING IS TOO HIGH. THERE IS ROOM FOR EACH OF US TO ACHIEVE OUR FULL POTENTIAL AND A LIFE OF SIGNIFICANCE.

--

I'D LIKE TO ENCOURAGE YOU ALL TO KEEP GOING. KEEP LEARNING. MAYBE THERE ARE SOME PASSIONS THAT YOU CAN'T PURSUE RIGHT NOW BECAUSE OF WORK, FAMILY OR OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES. BUT DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT BURNS IN YOUR SOUL.

Slide 21

I JUST STARTED A NON-PROFIT TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN AFRICA WITH A DUPONT COLLEAGUE. IT'S CALLED HOPE ACADEMY FUND AND WE PARTNER WITH SCHOOLS, CHURCHES AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. WE LAUNCHED THE PILOT IN GHANA TO GIVE CHILDREN THE TOOLS THEY NEED FOR



EXCELLENCE, LEADERSHIP AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT. WE WANT TO HELP THEM SUCCEED AND BRING THE CHANGE THAT'S NEEDED.

I TEACH THE CHILDREN OF HOPE ACADEMY ABOUT SCIENCE. THIS YEAR ONE HANDS-ON ACTIVITY WAS ABOUT ACID-BASE CHEMISTRY. MIXING ACETIC ACID AND SODIUM BICARBONATE TOGETHER AND CAPTURING THE EVOLVED CARBON DIOXIDE GAS IN A BALLOON WAS PRETTY COOL. I HOPE TO BRING SCIENCE ALIVE AND INSPIRE THEM LIKE MR. KNOX, MY HIGH SCHOOL CHEMISTRY TEACHER DID FOR ME.

I AM ENERGIZED TEACHING KIDS WHO ARE SO EAGER TO LEARN. WE'VE GOTTEN BOOKS, LAPTOPS AND GAMES TO HELP BRING A PRACTICAL ORIENTATION TO THEIR LEARNING.

THIS IS A WAY I CAN COMBINE MY PASSION FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING WITH MEANING IN MY WORK. I'M TRYING TO OPEN DOORS FOR THESE STUDENTS, RAISE THEIR ASPIRATIONS, AND FEED THEIR CURIOSITY TO ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL.

--

Slide 22

AND NOW HERE WE ARE. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAXIMIZE THE INVESTMENT OF YOUR TIME TODAY.

INTERACT WITH THE PEOPLE WHO ARE SITTING BESIDE YOU. EXCHANGE CARDS AND STAY IN TOUCH.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO INSPIRE EACH OTHER? HOW CAN YOUR EXPERIENCE OR YOUR STORY ENCOURAGE SOMEONE HERE?

HOW WILL YOU LEAD FROM WHERE YOU ARE?

[Change slide here](#)

GO AHEAD...BE FEARLESS ...STAND YOUR GROUND. AND LEAD FROM WHERE YOU ARE.



BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR PASSIONS.

FIND MEANING IN YOUR WORK.

KNOW AND HELP OTHERS.

Slide 23

THANK YOU. I'M HAPPY TO TAKE QUESTIONS NOW AND I'M HAPPY TO CONNECT ON LINKED IN FOR FUTURE QUESTIONS.