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FAVORITE QUOTE OR MANTRA THAT YOU LIVE BY?

There is a saying that I have heard is an old Chinese proverb, and I used to have it printed and hanging over my desk during the six years that I served at the food bank. To paraphrase it is: "Those who say it cannot be done should get out of the way of those who are doing it."

A simple internet search has proved that it has been quoted many times with slightly different variations, however this version has always been my "mantra."

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Founded in 1992, Suited for Change empowers women by increasing their employment and job retention potential. We are the Washington, DC area's leading nonprofit for women in need of professional attire, mentoring and job-readiness education. Through these services, we help women achieve financial independence.

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WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WORK IN YOUR FIELD OF EXPERTISE?

Like many "Moms," when I was home with kids or working part time, I always volunteered. I did all of your usual fundraising activities, which is a critical skill for anyone who wants to work in the nonprofit field. I found that I was usually drawn to activities that directly helped those in need. I was lucky enough to be able to go back to school when my kids started grade school. By that time, I knew that I wanted to work in a nonprofit organization, and pursued a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Nonprofit Management. During this time, I started working with my local food bank and I was hooked. That was when I really realized that if you love what you are doing, it is never "work." I have been in direct service nonprofit work ever since.

ONE TIP THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO WOMEN THAT ASPIRE TO BE IN LEADERSHIP ROLES.

Always remember to support other women and work together. My experience has always taught me that working as a team is always more effective than working alone. The best leaders lead by example but always listen to the counsel of others and always, always mentor when they can.

THE BEST PROFESSIONAL ADVISE THAT YOU RECEIVED?

Identify your core strengths! My previous organization (DC Central Kitchen) invested in creating a "Strengths-Based Culture." Learning to find out what your natural strengths are and to focus on activities that allow you to use those strengths was a game changer for me. In person, I am a great communicator. I find energy when surrounded by a lot of different people. I achieve much more by working on a team than by working alone My best leadership skill is probably that I am motivating, and that cannot be done in a vacuum. I would that everyone check out the Gallup StrengthsFinder Assessment.

ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE SOMEONE THAT WOULD LIKE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR CAREER?

Again, remember to support other women. We are always stronger

CONTINUED...ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD GIVE SOMEONE THAT WOULD LIKE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR CAREER?

together. And to not be afraid to take chances and be creative. My colleague just reminded me yesterday that creativity happens during times of trial and/or stress. Especially during these challenging times, that is a good thing to remember. That and to *take time to take care of yourself*.

NAME A LEADER THAT YOU ADMIRE AND THE QUALITIES THAT YOU BELIEVE MAKE THEM A SUCCESSFUL LEADER?

I thought long and hard about this question. There are so many women in the news and across history who have inspired me. It would be so easy to throw out one of those names. However, the leaders that I admire most and who I have learned the most from other women that work in the many nonprofit organizations across our country. Nonprofit work is not glamorous. The hours are long and the stories that you hear can be heartbreaking. Many of these women have children of their own, and still manage to make it all work. If you work in the nonprofit sector you have to be flexible, courageous and have a lot of faith. You have to be willing to work very hard and make miracles happen every day. You have to paint a better future for your colleagues and clients and lead the way toward that future. Those are the qualities that I think make a successful leader.