

Ellevest Network Presents

Women in Power

Defining Success on Their Own Terms

Part One of Five

Changing Paths, Starting Over, and Navigating Transitions



the leading community of professional women

Introducing Part One: Changing Paths, Starting Over, and Navigating Transitions

If we have learned anything from the Ellevote community, it is that women are at their best when they can be themselves. That's why we count authenticity among the values that we live by: Be authentic. We believe in the power of being accountable to our work as well as our personal lives. We work to make everyone comfortable presenting their genuine selves inside and outside of the workplace.

As the world of work has become more complex, linear career paths grow less and less common. This is good news! Each career change leads to new opportunities for growth and self-discovery. Ellevote Network is committed to supplying the resources our community needs to evaluate their options when they reach career crossroads, and helping women of all industries find the path that's right for them.

We are proud to share stories from women who have made tremendous changes in their lives, and thrived. Career expert Caroline Ceniza-Levine guides us on her journey from junior analyst to executive coach and comedian, and May Busch shares lessons learned from quitting at the apex of a 24 year career to try something

entirely different. The women featured here have found happiness and authenticity in their work, and we hope the lessons below will help make your next career change the one where your authentic self can shine through.

These stories are based on interviews conducted via the Ellevote Podcast, hosted by Kristy Wallace and Maricella Herrera Avila. Each week, our team connects with an inspirational woman in our community to learn her story, and discover what success means to her.

Join us for more amazing interviews by subscribing to the [Ellevote Podcast](#).

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Getting Over the Career Slump

with Kathy Caprino



At Ellevest Network, we are committed to helping professional women succeed.

We believe in the positive impact of women in the workforce, and we strive to change the culture of business.

How? By arming professional women with the powerful community and career resources they need to lead.

Learn More: www.ellevestnetwork.com

Kathy Caprino is a women's career and personal growth coach with a knack for helping women facing the kind of career block that leaves them feeling unmotivated, burned out, and unhappy about going to work - and we're not talking about the commute. Sound familiar? Read on, and let Kathy share her perspective on undergoing a personal and career transformation that lifted her from a toxic work environment and led her to combine her talents and passions to help other women. Kathy shares perspective on how other women can similarly pinpoint and get unstuck from career blockages in order to achieve success.

Kathy's Journey

From the start, Kathy knew that she wasn't in the right place. Despite that, she forged on for eighteen years in marketing, publishing, and membership services. In her words, "we get on a path in our early 20's and 30's, we're thinking about achievement...we're not

stopping and saying, ‘Is this aligned with who I really am?’” For Kathy, that meant chronic illness, zero work-life balance, toxic colleagues, and eventually, therapy. Despite taking proactive steps, Kathy struggled to find the right path until she got laid off. It was devastating, but that moment of crisis liberated Kathy. The moment of her worst crisis

became the moment she could finally choose who she wanted to be. Following a conversation with her therapist, Kathy trained to be a therapist and a coach. Not long after, she recognized shortcomings in that role, and pivoted once more into her current niche: bringing

new solutions to the underground epidemic of crisis for women in the workplace. Now, Kathy’s recreated herself as an author and women’s career coach who reaches thousands of women. As her therapist told her when she faced her layoff, “I know that from where you sit, this is the worst crisis you’ve ever faced. But from where I sit, it’s the first moment you can choose who you want to be. Now, who do you want to be?”

“Balance is hard, but balance is not impossible. You have to stand up for yourself. You have to prioritize fiercely and live with the consequences.”

The “Dreading Going to Work” Bucket Challenge

In order to find your path, it’s imperative to know what’s not working now. Kathy puts it best. “If you do not address your challenges in your current moment in this toxic job, with this toxic boss, these challenges will follow you, and they did for me.” To avoid running into the same problems, Kathy advises asking yourself which of the following four “buckets” you fall into:

- You enjoy your job, but want more out of it. More leadership, money, reward, or value.
- You like what you’re doing, but not your employer. You need to be interviewing.
- You’re ready for a completely different way to use yourself in service of the world. This means you are looking for a new career.
- You’re ready to launch an entrepreneurial venture.

Once you diagnose the situation, be ready to pivot. Being fluid and flexible--especially while in the midst of change--can help you navigate to the sweet spot of a career choice that utilizes all your gifts and challenges you to do the work that you love.

Find Perspective on Who You Are

Getting another point of view can help you reconnect to your own unique mix of gifts and talents. Everyone was born with their own blend, and the right career will fully realize each of these talents.

The bottom line, though, is that you don't have to stay where you are. Don't be afraid to seek expert help to find where you want to go, then get there. Kathy sums it up beautifully: "Everyone on the planet is amazing, and has gifts that no one else has. And it's time now to do the inner work to pave the way for the outer success of knowing who you are, knowing what you have to offer, and being courageous enough to go for that."

"You cannot be happy in your work even if you love the function of what you're doing, but you don't like the outcomes... And this was me. There were many things I liked about my work, but the outcomes, what I was killing myself to achieve meant nothing to me."

"Everyone on the planet is amazing, and has gifts that no one else has. And it's time now to do the inner work to pave the way for the outer success of knowing who you are, knowing what you have to offer, and being courageous enough to go for that."

Kathy Caprino

Speaking Up and Getting What You're Worth

with Deepali Vyas

Deepali Vyas is an executive search consultant and coach that advises clients on recruiting and leadership development. Her consulting work has given her an inside look at the recruiting and hiring process that many women will never see. Fortunately for us, she was willing to share some tips and tricks to get you more compensation in your current job or find a new job that's right for you.

Deepali's Mission: Help Women Compete (With Men)

"Dollar for dollar, we're not on an equal pay scale at the moment," says Deepali. "A lot of studies out there obviously state that we're not. And for women not to ask for it, they're cheating themselves."

In order for women to compete, they must speak up. Deepali has observed that cultural and societal factors make women much more likely to question their

abilities than men. They're uncomfortable or afraid of being confrontational.

Don't let the discomfort of the situation, or the mindset that you're simply meeting standards and not exceeding them hold you back. If you feel you have met expectations, it's time to ask for a raise. Start attacking the issue, Deepali says, by raising your hand. Worried about broaching the issue? Here's an icebreaker. "Hey, I'd like to have a conversation regarding my compensation for this year." Remember, raises don't need to be pegged with a dollar value. An extra bonus, schedule flexibility, or permission to work from home are all qualifying examples.

How to Get the Right Job

"When men apply to roles or think that they're qualified for the roles, they may only check three out of the 10 boxes; they're willing to give it a shot. They're the risk takers. I think when women end up applying to the role, they want to make sure that they check all 10 boxes."

Deepali has seen both sides of the hiring agenda. She offers the following advice on getting in the door and getting the right job.

Before you get in the door, you need to land an interview. How can you get noticed? Try:

- **Utilizing your network** - Make calls within your network, be it alumni, Facebook, LinkedIn or through Ellevest. (Don't shy away from face-to-face meet ups, either.)
- **Engaging in dialogue** - This means supplementing your network connections with a recruiter contact. Build your relationship, and let your recruiter get to know you.

“My biggest advice to young people in the market is to be very well-read and have an opinion on what’s going on with current events, elevating your macro perspective. Not everything revolves around just a very small, myopic segment of your day-to-day focus. Seeing the big picture and having a more macro perspective leads to richer conversations.”

- **Seeking out professional advice** - Who else do you know that can help inform your understanding of the market landscape? Think about your resources and use them.

Once you have the interview, get prepared:

- **Be well-read** - Having an opinion on current events and having a macro perspective leads to richer conversations that cause potential employers to engage with you in a holistic way.
- **Come with questions** - Preparing thoughtful questions about a business’ strategy, long-term and short-term operations, or anything else that seems relevant shows a level of commitment and thoughtfulness that is absolutely imperative.
- **Dress the part** - Even if you’re applying to a startup, button all the way up. Even if the company culture is casual, one never knows when an investor or venture capitalist may be in the room. Express your personality through words and actions, not a pair of shorts.

Talking Career Transitions and Negotiations

with **Caroline Ceniza-Levine**

Caroline Ceniza-Levine is a career expert, executive coach, recruiter, author, speaker, and comedian. She's also the founder of SixFigureStart LLC. Here, she talks about her non-linear career path, negotiating a raise, and how to redefine your career.

Caroline's Journey

Caroline is a self-professed wearer of many different hats. Although her many roles initially seem disconnected - comedian, executive coach, author, etc. - she explains that there's actually a thread.

Caroline trained as a pianist at Juilliard and Manhattan School of Music while also attending Barnard college. In that sense, she's always had a "do the serious stuff and do the art stuff" approach. One of the three jobs she worked in college was in career services. Her motivation for working that position was that she would be the first person to know about incoming jobs, as well as

have the chance to talk to employers about what they liked and didn't like. But first, she explored banking as a summer analyst at Goldman Sachs. Caroline realized she found the transactional nature of banking boring and moved into management consulting. In her early twenties, Caroline made six figures advising billion dollar companies, but she had a few realizations which sparked a potential career change. She realized she wanted a career that would allow her to be more accessible as a parent. From there, Caroline transitioned to the executive search industry, which eventually lead her towards career coaching. Caroline mentors people who are looking to make transitions within their career, as well as to help them negotiate pay raises and other fundamental factors of success.

A Career Coach's Work

Caroline says that while she sometimes gets clients who know exactly what they want to do, most people come to her because they're confused. These clients don't have a pull towards a specific vision, but instead are being "pushed" from something. This "push" could be that they don't like their current job, lifestyle, or consequent emotional response. Caroline works to get clients "from the push to the pull." She explains that in order to be attractive to employers or clients, it's necessary to feel pulled towards something: a bigger mission, a bigger goal, a cause. In that sense, Caroline navigates

clients out of their negative mindset into more positive territory.

The most common “push reasons” for changing one’s career is a feeling of not being challenged, not growing, or not being adequately paid. And still other people, in a more holistic sense, find that their life is in a different space than their career and need to figure out how to meld the two again.

Whatever the case, Caroline works to help clients touch base with what they want and find ways to activate it. For instance, if a 60 year old woman comes to her and says that she dreamed of being a prima ballerina, Caroline doesn’t quash that instinct. Instead, she invites clients to explore that urge, since it could lead to something useful for their career decision. “Why is that?” she’d ask, instead of setting an idea aside as unrealistic. “Is it the dance? Is it the performing?” Find what appeals to you, and pursue careers based on that.

Caroline on Getting What You’re Worth

Caroline acknowledges that a double bind exists for men and women when it comes to negotiating--but she doesn’t dwell on it. “I’m very outspoken, I’m pretty loud, I’m a comic, and I’m Asian,” she says. “Those adjectives don’t usually go together either. But I’ve never had it be a problem for me because I don’t see it as a problem.

I just assume that the person across from me is okay with it. And if they’re not, we weren’t going to get along anyway.”

Instead of focusing on gender differences, Caroline frames salary negotiations and job offers as binary: “You’re either successful or you’re not successful. You’re happy with the result or you’re not happy with the result.” That being said, she shares some valuable tips on getting what you’re worth.

Pro Tips:

- **Don’t censor yourself** - Too many people censor themselves too quickly around taboo subjects like money, prestige, and lifestyle. Instead, Caroline urges her clients to lead in terms of money. Be realistic about who you are and what you want. If you don’t speak up, there’s no way you’ll get it!
- **Remember that negotiation is a process.** There’s a before, a during, and an after to negotiating. Most people jump to the “during part,” instead of realizing that it’s the moments leading up to that part, as well as the expectations for after, that are the actual heavy lifting.
- **Do the hard analysis.** Know yourself and what it is that you’re asking for. Take honest stock of

where you're at and where you want to be, and make decisions accordingly.

- **Practice.** Run through the negotiation with a friend, a coach, whoever. Practice the actual conversation, and practice it in performance condition.



Like what you're reading?

Ellevate Network's *Women in Power: Defining Success on Their Own Terms* will return in February of 2018 with Chapter Two: **All About Entrepreneurs** followed by Chapter Three: **Challenging the Norm.**

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Resilience and Public Relations

with Jennefer Witter

Jennefer Witter is a public relations expert after thirty years in the industry. She is the founder and CEO of The Boreland Group, and the author of “The Little Book of Big PR.” She’s also one of the most resilient women we know.

Jennefer’s Journey

“No one gave me anything and my mother gave me love,” Jennefer says of her childhood, raised by a single mom in the South Bronx. Jennefer watched her mom bounce back from a divorce that left her financially shattered, and build a life for herself and her two children. Jennefer credits her mother’s hard work and resilience for her own work ethic.

No matter your work ethic, burnout can strike. By 2001, Jennefer was vice president at Ketchum, a public relations firm. However, in the aftermath of her mother’s passing and 9/11, Jennefer reached her limit. When she was ready to go back to work in 2002, she

decided to return to public relations on her own terms. As she put it, “I wanted to create an environment that I wanted to work in.” Jennefer took her first ever business classes and launched her own PR firm. She named it The Boreland Group, after her mother. Now, fifteen years into running her own PR business, Jennefer shares the following tips from her practice on establishing your name and reputation.

Define Your Brand

Write a thirty second elevator pitch that defines who you are, what you are, and what makes you unique. You must be able to differentiate yourself or your company from others.

Jennefer defines her brand by its high level of honesty, hard work, and integrity. “Nothing can impugn the integrity of my company,” says Jennefer. “Because if my integrity is impugned, it’s my mother who’s being tarnished.”

“Nobody will know how great you are until you tell them how great you are.”

Grow Your Social Media

Social media is effective and a must-do, even if it can be time consuming. Pick one or two channels to share

information on. Post regularly, be authentic, and be generous: like other people's content, join forums, sing the praises of your team, and keep an ever watchful eye on your newsfeed. Social media helps you engage, connect, and learn what other people are looking for. Building those relationships can really drive your business.

Reach Out to the Media

Seek out publications and outlets that reach your target market. When you reach out to the reporter, make sure that the person you're reaching out to is the person who covers the story that you want to have addressed. Once you get the coverage, be sure to promote it across your social media platforms.

Supporting Yourself and Others

- **On resilience** - "You have to work hard, don't expect handouts. If you get slapped in the face, and believe me I was slapped many times hard on my face, pick yourself up, give yourself a pity party (like a weekend), and then that Monday, start off again."
- **On women supporting women** - "When one [woman] is strong, we all become stronger."

"In our lives we always will have some kind of obstacles and challenges, and we have to learn to get through them. There was this one person who said if the door doesn't open, climb through the window. If the window isn't open, then go through the back door. Just keep trying. And eventually something will open up for you."

Jennefer Witter

Finding a New Path

with Karen Davis-Farage

Karen Davis-Farage and her husband co-own five indoor electric go-kart racing arenas. That was never the plan, but the sudden transition led to unprecedented success. Now, Karen has lessons to share on overcoming setbacks, building a business with your spouse, and making time for yourself.

Karen's Journey

Karen dedicated 32 years to a successful career in sales and marketing. Then the recession of 2008 cost her her job. Her husband also found himself unemployed. How did Karen bounce back? It wasn't easy, especially not at the beginning: "I basically went home and went to bed, I cried for weeks, I got myself up to prepare three kids to go to school, and I did very little else," said Karen. Suddenly unemployed, Karen's husband decided to take their eldest son on a cross-country road trip to college. They went to an indoor electric kart racing arena in L.A., and when they got out of karts after their race, Karen's son said, "Dad, this is what you and mom should do next in life. You should open these on the east coast." And

that, Karen says, "is the story of how we got to where we are today. It was someone else's idea."

As she stood on the sidelines unable to imagine not returning to a career in technology, Karen's husband made moves for the business. Eventually, she realized that although it was a risky time, they could both jump in with complementary skill sets and build a better career together.

On Working With Her Husband

Karen describes working with her husband as alternatively trying and rewarding, and a difficult transition for certain. But at the end of the day, she says, "we have a pie, if you will, and each one of us has very much a half. Our skill sets are so different that if we stay on our side of the pie, it can be very, very smooth. If we can be very respectful of each other when we get into each other's pieces of the pie if you will, then it can really be very advantageous." It's not for everyone, she warns, but at the same time if your partner does have a complementary skill set, it is an amazing gift.

On Weathering Transitions

Because so much of her identity was wrapped up in her professional career, Karen's job loss hit her hard. At the same time, when she looked in the mirror, she saw

a woman with three kids and a successful career who wasn't really taking care of herself. "I think the first thing you have to do is you have to look in the mirror and make sure that you like yourself. So when I looked in the mirror, I saw some things about myself that I felt I had an opportune time now to change." She started working out, did research online to hone certain skill sets, reached out to people she'd lost touch with, and started cooking again - a hobby she loved but did little of during her career days.

When she looked back in the mirror a few months later and saw the results, she "felt like she could tackle anything." She advises other women to address whatever issues they have with their self esteem--whether it's fixing a bad relationship with yourself or with others--in order to get back to feeling great about themselves. Do that, she says, and that's when "the

"Address whatever issues you have with your self esteem - whether it's fixing a bad relationship with yourself or with others - that's when the transition really becomes life changing, because then you can change anything."

transition really became life changing because you can change anything."

That being said, it's important to be proactive and assertive with making those changes. Don't look in the mirror just once and set goals. Check in with yourself on a continual basis and ask: am I doing those things that are important to me? Have I grown as an individual? This practice, advises Karen, does require you to carve out time to meet these goals.

Going from Corporate America to Being an Entrepreneur

Synchronistically, Karen's work on her personal development benefitted her new career path as an entrepreneur. "When you're in corporate America, there's a lot of personal and professional development opportunities that you have. But when you're an entrepreneur, you're making them for yourself." The more confidence, personal ambition, and self pride you have, the more rewarding you'll find your work and be rewarded as a result.

Military Veterans and Career Transitions

with **Amanda Veinott**

Amanda Veinott is a military talent expert who works to help companies hire veterans. Coming from a family of veterans, Amanda has learned a lot from supporting members of the military, and agreed to share that knowledge to drive new opportunities for all.

Amanda's Journey

Amanda earned her degree in organizational psychology and leadership development. Amanda ventured out as an entrepreneur, dabbling in employee engagement analysis. She struggled through a rough patch that landed her back to working full-time for a project with Amazon that asked Amanda to diagnose and improve veteran retention. From that niche experience, Amanda went on to become a full-time military talent consultant, gaining experience in eight different industry verticals with over 50 companies to date. Amanda helps companies create programs internally with their HR and diversity and inclusion teams to promote the recruiting,

hiring, engagement, and retention of veterans, military spouses, and current guard and reservists.

Why Hiring Veterans Makes Business Sense

Companies find that hiring veterans increases the bottom line success of business, because the military is the largest training organization in the world, and invests heavily in its members. When an employer is considering hiring a veteran, says Amanda, they're considering hiring one of the most highly trained individuals in the world.

Supporting Veterans Transitioning to Working Life

Amanda sees the transition from military to civilian life as similar to the transition from college to the workforce. The insecurities are the same, but the stakes are higher for veterans because they often have families to support.

“The best piece of advice that I can give to veterans or military spouses is, think about your personal self, not just your professional self, because you need to figure out who you are outside of the military in order to be successful... Six months from now when you find yourself in your post military career, you want to make

sure that you're in a role that aligns with your values, what you find engaging... Because in six months, you don't want to find out that that was the wrong position.”

Words of Wisdom for Changing Careers

- **Embrace the challenge** - Challenge, opportunity, and success are all inextricably linked. Since you can't have one without the other, it's best to embrace them all.
- **Surround yourself with great people** - Finding like-minded individuals that want to change the world in the same way are prime circumstances for collaboration. Once you find these people, be sure to establish trust and check your ego during the collaboration process.

Killing it

with Sally Hubbard

Sally Hubbard is a master of career transition. Conquering her fear of changing jobs has led her down a number of winding roads. But now, she finds herself the happy editor of The Capitol Forum and the host of one of our favorite podcasts, aptly named “Women Killing It.” Read on for wisdom on finding your place in your career and connecting to other strong women from someone who has done it more than once.

“I can't be unhappy on a daily basis. I just don't have a tolerance for it. So for me, it's way more scary to stay somewhere where I'm unhappy or not being challenged than it is to go and try something new.”

Sally's Journey

Sally attended NYU Law School with the goal of being a women's rights lawyer. That didn't happen. There were few jobs available, and Sally's student debt was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. Taking a job with a large law firm was the only real option, and it was miserable, but she knew she had to stick it out for at

least a year in order to make a dent in her debt.

Exactly one year and one day later, Sally left. Four years after that, Sally had worked her way through six jobs since leaving school. She covered a wide spectrum, from working at the D.C. circuit court to teaching legal writing. Finally, Sally found her place in antitrust law.

Then, the familiar boredom struck. The catalyst this time? Maternity leave. As Sally tells it, “Of course you put a Type A woman on maternity leave, and I’m like “I wanna start a web startup.”

Unfortunately, as many founders do, Sally ran out of time and money. It was time to secure another paycheck.

This time, it worked. Sally landed a job that merged her experience as an antitrust lawyer and an enforcer by writing for an early stage startup and began hosting “Women Killing It” on the side. And now? “I feel like it’s all coming together. It didn’t feel like it made sense at

“Find your joy. Challenge yourself to think about what you want, what you desire, and what makes you happy. Go after it for a month, and see how it impacts your focus and your priorities.”

the time, but it’s just all coming together.”

“I always kind of saw that as a weakness of mine, I get bored too quickly. Once I master something, I’m bored with it...But now, I think it’s a strength. I’ve come around to thinking it’s a strength as long as I just continue to challenge myself in different ways; I’m just constantly growing. But for me, I don’t really have a choice. It’s not really an option for me to sit around and suffer.”

Homework on How to Kill It

Sally developed an action plan based upon conversations she’s had with women on her podcast. The two most important steps? First, find your joy. Challenge yourself to think about what you want, what you desire, and what makes you happy. Go after it for a month, and see how it impacts your focus and your priorities. Next, focus on what your ideal life looks like. Too many people, she says, get caught running in the hamster wheel and never actually accomplish what fulfills them. Make time to articulate exactly what your ideal life would be like without limits. Open yourself to possibility without censor to realize and achieve your dreams.

Emotional Intelligence

with Betty Liu

Betty Liu is a journalist, author, podcaster, and host of Bloomberg's "Daybreak Asia." Emotional intelligence helped build her career, stay focused, and equipped her for navigating the turbulence of a shifting media landscape.

Betty's Career Path

"One of the things that has helped in my career as a journalist, as a reporter and now as a news anchor, is I've always been very curious about the world around me. I'm curious about people. I always wanted to learn and continue to learn and I've had that ever since I was young."

Betty's curiosity translated into an emotional intelligence that has guided her throughout her career. Success is less about following a formula than it is about maintaining that healthy connection and interest in the world around you. "Working hard is not going to get you to the next level," says Betty. "The 'I'll do anything' hustle is useful in your 20's, but emotional intelligence--

about yourself and others--is the actual key to achieving goals." So what does that mean in practical terms?

Grow Your Network

Networking is directly related to emotional intelligence. Betty describes connecting with people, helping them, and giving to them as getting her "a lot further ahead than just doing a great job." Being a good listener is one of the most practical ways to network using emotional intelligence. "I allow people to do and that I want people to do is I just want them to tell me their stories, and I love listening." Honing this skill has earned Betty the moniker "the CEO whisperer," because of her ability to quickly gain the confidence and trust of CEOs that she interviews.

Stay Focused and Self Motivate

"You're only as good as your last show," is advice that Betty lives by. When she landed her dream job at Bloomberg Television, she held off celebrating the win until offered a long-term contract a few years later. Beyond staying focused, a person must self motivate. Know that this doesn't necessarily come easily. "People like us who are go-getters and ambitious wake up every morning scared," shares Betty. Staying determined despite obstacles means, practically speaking, that one must counter long-term goals with short-term strategies

for dealing with setbacks. “Every day contains mistakes or moments of doubt,” she says. “Get over it and move on. The person who succeeds is the person who can get up and move on after a number of failures.”

Other Emotional Intelligence Pointers

- **Receive your company's blessing for side projects** - Companies are aware that employees want to be their own brand. Just make sure that you okay your side project with them, for the sake of sensitivity.
- **Write down your goals** - “Experimenting in your 20's is fine,” Betty says, “but try to determine what you want to do by the time you're 30.” Set goals for where you want to be in five to ten years, instead of making it up as you go along.
- **Know your image** - Betty tailors her image according to her channel. There's a difference between her personal Instagram, and how she shows up on television. She says that both sides--one as more professional, the other more personal--are fundamental in modeling the emotional intelligence so crucial to her job.

Creating Value and Staying Interested

with May Busch

May Busch had a stellar career in finance, culminating as Chief Operating Officer for Europe at Morgan Stanley. She now uses her experience as a senior executive in a very competitive industry to help top leaders advance their organizations, and to promote greater thought leadership, diversity and entrepreneurial spirit in the workplace. While carving her career path, she learned to create a role that adds value to the company and maintains personal interest in her work.

“I'm so grateful that I had this 24-year career, because it gives me just a lifetime's worth of knowledge, experience, and content that I am now able to put together in a way that I can share with others and help them to be better, do more, and make the difference they're meant to make.”

May's Journey

May spent the first 24 years of her career in investment

banking and worked her way up from financial analyst to Managing Director. She covered major corporate clients from investment banking through to capital markets. May accepted a transfer from New York to London, where she filled the role of Firm Relationship Manager, helping knit the firm together, breaking down business unit silos, and encouraging cross-collaboration between departments. Ultimately, May became Chief Operating Officer in Europe.

Although May stayed in the same company for 24 years, she transitioned and tried something new every couple of years. Looking back, May is grateful for her experiences, but eventually realized she wanted to leave her company and do something else altogether.

“I think of leaving as one of the most courageous things I’ve had to do...which I’m almost embarrassed to say, because it’s psychological fear. You read about all these terrible things happening around the world, and then to say, ‘Well, the bravest thing I ever did...was step away from my really great job with wonderful people to go into the unknown.’ But that was really scary for me.” No matter how wonderful her job was, May couldn’t deny that she wanted a change. Eventually, she realized “If I don’t go now, I’ll never go.”

So May left without a clear plan, and a series of experiments followed. These included being a Non-

Executive Director on not-for-profit boards, speaking, and designing workshops. However, none of May’s experiments panned out. “I was splashing around in the pool, but I was not getting to the other side,” she says. Ultimately, it was a piece of unsolicited advice that helped her get to that other side. A woman at an event in London suggested she get her coaching credential. Despite some resistance to the idea of a job that only catered to “senior executives who are doing well,” she went for it and found that it allowed her to pull upon her 24-year career experience in a way that allowed her to share with others and help them be better, do more, and make the difference they’re meant to make.

Now, May has found her niche in four interlocking roles. She spends a quarter of her time as executive in residence at Arizona State University, a quarter of it coaching one-on-one, a quarter designing and delivering

“I’m almost embarrassed to say ‘Well, the bravest thing I ever did... was step away from my really great job with wonderful people to go into the unknown.’ But that was really scary for me.”

speaking engagements, and a quarter of her time developing an online and virtual aspect to her business, which has an ambitious mission to serve a million people over the next decade.

Takeaways from May's Career

May says that even though her own job has her playing to her unique strengths and abilities, she still catches herself turning opportunities into anxiety-producing events. At these moments, she reminds herself that she is choosing to do this work and that it is supposed to bring her joy, not worry. Try not to worry, and remember not to close yourself off to new opportunities.

There is a role out there for you, whether you realize it or not. When you find yourself longing to make a change, try it when the time is right. Keep trying until you find a fit.

Ellevest Network's *Women in Power: Defining Success on Their Own Terms* will return in February of 2018 with Part Two: **All About Entrepreneurs** followed by Part Three: **Challenging the Norm.**

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