



Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, Episode 79
A Chief People Officer's Perspective on Culture, Growth and Empathy
with Rebecca Waits
-- Produced By Suzie Price

Transcript

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Suzie Price: [00:00:00] I'm excited to share with you this episode with Rebecca Wait's, who is the Chief People Officer at SierraConstellation Partners, an organization in Los Angeles, and we have a great conversation about keeping a growth mindset, what they have been doing as an organization around coming back from COVID and empathy, and growth mindset and what it is like to be a female executive. And she gives some great tips about her journey through that. And I think there's something in this for everybody, and I can't wait to share it with you. Michael, hit it.

Intro: [00:00:36] Welcome to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, a show designed for leaders, trainers and consultants who are responsible for employee selection and professional development. Each episode is packed full with insider tips, best practices, expert interviews and inspiration. Please welcome the host who is helping leaders, trainers and consultants everywhere, Suzie Price.

Suzie: [00:01:02] Hi there, this is Suzie Price at Priceless Professional Development, and I am here to bring you another episode of the Wake Up Eager Workforce podcast. At Priceless what we've been doing since 2004, is helping organizations keep engagement and commitment and lessen the drama and increase the wake up eagerness of everyone on the team so we can have an effective workplace and have everybody successful using their strengths, managing their blind spots. And we have tools and resources related to that for every element of the employee lifecycle. If you think of the employee lifecycle, it's when they start, so hiring, when you first or start hiring, how do we make sure they're a fit. We have tools and resources, many, many tools and resources for that. I'm passionate about that topic because I think so many people sometimes end up in roles that are not a fit for their strengths and not a fit for the role, even though they're wonderful people, and there's a lot of angst and problems that come as a result of that in regard to performance. And then just personally and professionally how that plays out. So I think that's a very key piece that we're very passionate about, getting that piece right, making sure there's job fit. And then once they're on board, how do we make sure they stay satisfied? How do we make sure that they know that they matter? And how do we make sure that they continue to develop? So we have onboarding tools and resources and we have leadership development resources and team building resources and so much of, and conflict management and succession planning, that whole lifecycle and so much of what we do is related to the TriMetrix assessment, which is a tool. It's not about selling an assessment, it's about giving you a tool that can help you understand this person in front of you and help them understand themselves. So self-awareness, other awareness, being able to manage themselves and then when they can do that, they can very effectively manage the team, and you can, making sure and helping people think clearly to make good decisions.



Suzie: [00:03:06] So I'm passionate about what we do and it's such a joy to be able to do it. It's a joy to work with people like Rebecca of SierraConstellation Partners. And that's what we're going to look at today. You can go see all of our episodes at wakeupeagerworkforce.com, that's where our directory is, wakeupeagerworkforce.com. That's all one one word.

Suzie: [00:03:29] If you want to leave a review so that other people can find this episode or any of our episodes, you can go to pricelessprofessional.com/review. And you can also see when you go to wakeupeagerworkforce.com, a purple microphone where you can actually leave me a message and share thoughts or comments or suggestions or maybe something you want to suggest for a future podcast. Or maybe you want to comment on a past podcast and I can play it in future podcasts. So that little microphone just makes it real easy to leave a message.

Suzie: [00:04:00] So wakeupeagerworkforce.com is where it's at in regard to all our episodes and where this episode is, it is episode number 79. And what we're going to cover today as we talk to Rebecca, we're going to learn more about what they're doing at SierraConstellation Partners to keep employees connected and working effectively together and, you know, feeling appreciated and valued. And we talk a little bit about hiring people over Zoom and keeping new hires engaged and a little bit about what they're doing there. We talk about motivation and how you can understand what puts gas in another person's tank, or in your own tank and what difference that makes. And I kind of alluded to that when I was talking about the assessments that we use.

Suzie: [00:04:44] And you're also going to learn more about the tools and things that have influenced Rebecca on her journey as a Chief People Officer. How did she get there? Who influenced her? How did they influence her? And then she gives some tips about being a female executive on a team and how to be effective and what's helped her and some great resources that I can't wait to share with you.

Suzie: [00:05:06] So let me tell you a little bit about Rebecca and then we'll go right into the interview. She is the Chief People Officer. She has over 20 years experience in talent management, culture, engagement and training and development, and a vast amount of knowledge on executive level planning and overall in employee experiences. So she does focus on culture, talent development and driving employee engagement. And you'll see, hear that as we talk together and we talk a little bit about what she's doing. Prior to being at SierraConstellation Partners, she held various progressive Human Resource and leadership positions between, within professional services companies and then also worked other areas where she oversaw employee experience and leading best practices and programs. She is, as you'll find during our discussion, we talk about her being her own version of Mother Teresa, she's Social/Altruistic Passionate, which is a drive to be of service to others, to remove pain and suffering in the world, and so it's no surprise that she's involved in volunteer activities. She was a former Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Interpublic Group Women's Leadership Network. She was recognized in 2017 in the Los Angeles Business Journal of Women of Influence. She's originally from Georgia and she and I connected through another connection, I think a friend of ours out of New York or a colleague. And she became certified in 2 of the tools that we have, Certified Professional DISC Analysts and Certified Professional Motivators Analyst, so that's how we connected. And they use some of the tools in their business. So you're going to enjoy this discussion. Let's go to it now.



Suzie: [00:06:46] Rebecca, I'm so glad you're here. Thanks for being here.

Rebecca Waits: [00:06:48] Of course.

Suzie: [00:06:50] So I'm going to jump into our first question. So you are the Chief People Officer, you're in charge of culture and people in your organization. We're now one more, more than a year into COVID lockdown, you're in California, and you've really been locked down, I believe, even more so than Georgia. Is that right?

Rebecca: [00:07:08] Yes. Yes. Just coming out of it, finally.

Suzie: [00:07:11] Ok, this is June 2021, so whenever you're listening to this. So talk a little bit about the things that you're doing to keep employees connected and engaged. What have you been doing for new hires who haven't been able to be in the office? Those are some of the key concerns around people. How do we keep people engaged? What are some things you've been doing?

Rebecca: [00:07:31] Sure. I mean, I think it was the week before the pandemic started, we had all of, a big group of our staff out in L.A. office and they announced the shutdown. So we were kind of not in a panic, but we were like, ok, well, most of our people in our industry, we either work at the client site or work remotely anyway, so staying connected by phone or other means has always been a priority for us. But it was interesting because we were so used to getting together all in person about every 6 or 8 weeks to do kind of town hall meetings, that went away. So we really had to think creatively and we thought the main areas we wanted to focus on was open communication and empathy.

Rebecca: [00:08:12] So really, the first part of our newly minted Zoom meetings, we called them "Know to Grow." So we wanted to make sure that we were developing our people during this time. But in the beginning we just made it being more informal and check-ins and that type of thing, just to see how people were doing and kind of get things off their chest and that kind of thing. And then over time, it did actually change into more relevant topics, learning about different things that are happening in the marketplace or focusing in on case studies for our clients, that kind of thing. Now, as far as new hires, we did actually recruit some people over Zoom, which was really interesting. I just recently met one of the people that we recruited. He flew down last week to our office. But it's been interesting. It's just one of those things where we have to do those weekly check-ins with the new hires, make sure that different people from the team are also checking in with them, too.

Rebecca: [00:09:04] So another thing we also did was send out engagement surveys through Culture Amp, that we wanted to make sure that we are just touching base with people, kind of getting a read on how they were feeling. If there was anything we could do better. We actually did end up reformatting some of our meetings, too, based on their feedback. So that's been good, too.

Suzie: [00:09:21] That's wonderful. Wonderful. So a couple of questions. When you decided to focus on for the "Know to Grow," one, how often did you meet for the "Know to Grow?" And are you still doing that?



Rebecca: [00:09:31] It was interesting at the beginning of the pandemic, it was weekly. And then we moved it to every other week and now we transitioned to once a month. So we do it the 3rd Friday of every month.

Suzie: [00:09:43] Yeah, that's great. And how long is it? Cause I'm just thinking about other people who might be saying, "Well, what's the formula that's working?" And it makes sense, if you think about it, where were we in March, April, May, June last year? We were all like, "Ok, do you have food? Are your kids going school?" Ther was so much that that makes sense that it comes down.

Suzie: [00:10:01] So people might want to know a little bit about the formula. And then in regard to, you decide on open communication and empathy, how did you decide on those two? I think they're beautiful. And I know you do too, because I know the power of them. Sometimes people, if they're focused, and I know you're business is consultants who go in and save businesses. And so there may or may not have had a top of mind, empathy at the moment. I don't know. How did that come about?

Rebecca: [00:10:28] I think that was more from the CEO, Larry Parkinson, myself. We kind of talked through, we really need to show how much we care right now because people are feeling very disconnected and confused and nervous or scared, fearful, all these things. So we need to be able to not just be business as usual and really connect with people. And that's one of our values, too, is having that connectedness. So that was kind of how we came up with it is, like, let's first check in on the people and see how they're doing. And I think our "Know to Grow" in the beginning, they may have even run about 90 minutes, but now we just keep them to an hour at noon California time, or Pacific Coast time, because a lot of our employees are here. But we do have people across the U.S. So that was 3 o'clock on a Friday afternoon. So we just made sure that people kind of understood this is the time for you to share with others, let us know how you're feeling. And then we want to bring up some relevant topics for us to discuss. So it's been really great.

Suzie: [00:11:23] Awesome. That's awesome. And then with the Zoom, hiring over Zoom, do you think you'll continue to do that? I mean, was it successful?

Rebecca: [00:11:33] Yeah, I mean, it's been great. I think we made a couple of Senior hires then and kind of all across the board, actually, we made quite a few hires and we just had to rethink our hiring process, right? We didn't want people to be Zoom fatigued either, so kind of doing some interview panels too, throwing out a case study or kind of some things that we could do in between and making it more, I don't want to say, informal, but not so buttoned up, because that's, again, kind of leading with that empathy, making sure that, "Hey, this is strange for us to be interviewing you over Zoom and hiring you without meeting you in person," but trying to get to know people.

Suzie: [00:12:09] How has it worked out? The new hires that you did over Zoom, is it, are they're working out ok and things are going good?

Rebecca: [00:12:17] Yeah, yeah. It's worked out pretty well for us, actually. And now since we're able to kind of connect in person, it's been great because they're like, "Oh, finally we get



to meet" you know, "How often are we going to start doing this again?" And so we're trying to get some things on the calendar for the remainder of the year so people can plan.

Suzie: [00:12:36] Neat. Yeah, yeah, because like the first 90 days of a new hire, they're deciding whether they're going to stay or go. I mean, all along, by the first 90 days are pretty crucial. And so you've had some good, good success with that, that's great. Making that connection is the key piece, I believe.

Rebecca: [00:12:53] Yes, absolutely. And not just between manager and the new hire. It's numerous people checking in on that person, too, to where they can really get a feel for the culture and the rest of the team members that work there, so...

Suzie: [00:13:06] They know who to call if they need help? I mean, their manager is not always going to be available. That's a very busy person, usually.

Rebecca: [00:13:12] Exactly.

Suzie: [00:13:15] "Who else do I call, I am by myself?"

Rebecca: [00:13:18] Right.

Suzie: [00:13:19] So you were a star student of our certification process. Yay, go Rebecca. You aced, 100% on the DISC and the Motivators, or pretty darn close to it on the exams. And one of my tools that I'm a big fan of, I'm a fan of all the tools, but the Motivators really stands out to me because it tells you what puts gas in people's tank. And you seem to really resonate with that, that is my opinion, I don't know you could tell me, but how did it impact you to learn about Workplace Motivators, if it did resonate with it or like it, particularly, why? Talk a little bit about that.

Rebecca: [00:13:58] Sure. It's so interesting to me, personally, for me, it definitely made it easier for me to understand why my friends and family gave me the nickname Mama Bear, because I'm a passionate person with the Social/Altruistic like number one motivator, right? More so than the norm. And my second is the strong Individualistic. So I love being the leader in a group, to plan big events like trips, parties, etc., and ensuring everyone's taken care of, very much putting others before myself, so some of those blind spots that come out. So when I did the assessment, it was just a big eye-opener as to why am I that way, right? And why do I love my role as Chief People Officer? Because I'm just so people focused so it aligns nicely.

Suzie: [00:14:41] Yes, it's perfect. I remember saying, "Ok, that's the perfect, Chief People Officer right there," in regard to, especially in your organization, when you have remote consultants and they probably need a Mama Bear sometimes because they're out there slaying the dragon.

Rebecca: [00:14:54] That's right.

Suzie: [00:14:55] They are walking into strange businesses trying to help them succeed, getting hit at everywhere they turn, I would guess, I'm just guessing at what it's probably like. But then to have someone they can come to as the Chief People Officer, and so those who aren't familiar



with Motivators, the Social/Altruistic, Rebecca, she alluded to it, she scored Passionate. So she scored stronger than 68% of the population. And what she just said, it's a really strong tendency, and it has some of the Mother Teresa qualities, which is "I love to be of service. This is what I love to do. This is how I want to spend my time, 7 days a week." And then the 2nd one that was highest was Individualistic/Political, which is about leading and being in charge. And if you see Rebecca, you usually have a lot of charisma, and so she is the person in front of the room and she's just glows. And so she wants to lead people and serve them, basically, according to the assessment.

Rebecca: [00:15:50] Well, thank you. You're too sweet. That was a great description.

Suzie: [00:15:52] Yeah, you're like, "Yes, that's me." And the funny thing about Motivators and I don't know if you've noticed this because you did a lot of, running assessments on people as you were getting ready for the certification, to practice, people, friends and colleagues, and then you've been using it in your company. And I don't know if it's for new hires or how you're using it some. But talk a little bit about that, about knowing that about someone, how that helps you, knowing what puts gas in their tank or any observations about that?

Rebecca: [00:16:20] Yes, absolutely. When we first rolled this out, I think it was February of last year, right before the pandemic.

Suzie: [00:16:26] Yeah, it was right before.

Rebecca: [00:16:28] Right before. And I had all these big plans do all kinds of in-person team building activities with it, but anyway, we moved on online.

Suzie: [00:16:35] You did do a team event, didn't you?

Rebecca: [00:16:37] Yeah, we did.

Suzie: [00:16:37] Was it online?

Rebecca: [00:16:38] Before, it was right before. So it was good for everyone to understand that. But now we do it for every new hire and they love it. I just did one yesterday, I'm doing another debrief tomorrow with a new hire, and it's interesting for people to understand why they may feel a certain way too, with some of their responsibilities in their role. For instance, if someone has their lowest or their least interest or the lowest motivator, number 6, it really says a lot, especially if the leader has expectations of like, "Why is this person not performing in this area?" Like, "Well, it goes against everything that, they are high Tradition, and you're asking them to change everything and think through every new process." And so it's really been interesting. We've really encouraged team members to share their Motivators with their managers. So having that open dialogue too, because since it's not anything that you can see, it's not observable. So we highly encourage to build that bond with the manager so they can understand how it impacts performance.

Suzie: [00:17:38] And talk a little bit for anybody who's not familiar with, what the number 6 means, you kind of touched on it. But say it again, just from a bigger picture.



Rebecca: [00:17:46] Yeah, I would say number 6 is the least motivating, what doesn't put gas in your tank, as something that you're indifferent to?

Suzie: [00:17:55] That's a good way to put it, you're indifferent. It's not about ability, "Oh, yeah, I could go do that." But unless there's something else in it, that's not how I want to spend 5, 7 days a week, right?

Rebecca: [00:18:05] Exactly.

Suzie: [00:18:08] I like how you said indifferent. So any other thoughts about, how about the coaching? When you're coaching new hires, you talk them through the assessment?

Rebecca: [00:18:17] Yeah. Where I really, we do the debrief, explaining everything. And the part I love to focus on is actually where it kind of marries both the DISC strengths with the Motivators, as well as the conflict. I spend a lot of time on those 2 things, make sure they understand everything after we've gone through it all and really thinking about how it kind of matches up to their role within the firm and just highlighting different things, have an open dialogue about it and mentioning, "Hey, you may want to talk to your manager about this and so they can align maybe some of your job responsibilities really to your strengths, and then things to look out for with the conflicts or things that could be potential conflicts for you just with the DISC and Motivators." So that's been a big help too, that's where we focus a lot on.

Suzie: [00:19:03] That's smart. I always say that part is like gold and that's the part where they take someone, how someone communicates, tends to communicate, which is the DISC assessment, and they take the what puts gas in your tank, so it's how you drive, which is DISC, what puts gas in your tank, which is motivation, and gives you statements and is really customized. I know, I don't know, when you first read yours, were you surprised or did it seem like stuff you knew? Do you recall how you felt or what you thought?

Rebecca: [00:19:29] Yeah, I think some of it was new, but some of it was probably a little bit of blind spots, especially the conflicts, what was in conflict with one another. I'm just trying to remember a few of them, you caught me off guard on that one.

Suzie: [00:19:42] That's ok,

Rebecca: [00:19:43] I remember that was really interesting to see that for sure.

Suzie: [00:19:46] Yeah. Yeah. Do you see that when people are reading theirs, do they go, "Uh huh," or, "Oh I never thought about that, is that what it is?" I know, I read about my blind spots, there were things that I think, "Oh I'm thinking I'm all bright and shiney," it is like, "Yeah, you know how that could be perceived sometimes as a self-promoter," or different things that it would say be like, "Oh man, I don't mean that."

Rebecca: [00:20:07] Right, yes. I give people a minute to think about it and then I kind of give them some situational things that may come up for them. And they're like, "Oh, yeah, that's probably right." So, yeah, I think it's a real eye opener.

Suzie: [00:20:21] So I want to go into some more information about you as a person and your role. But one more question about the assessment. You led the team in a debrief, talk a little bit about that process, I know it was a while ago, but you were newly certified, I thought it was really cool that you just jumped right in and said, "Ok, yeah, I'm going to have everybody take it and I'm going to debrief their assessments and I'm going to do a team meeting." And you don't need too much particulars. But just how was that? That can be, you were relatively new in the role at the time, maybe I guess maybe a year in or something, I don't remember.

Rebecca: [00:20:51] Yeah, not even, I think I was 6 months in or less than 6 months. No, I was really excited to do it because, like I said, I had all these big plans to do a series of events, team building that type of thing. But I kicked it off with just doing team dynamics, like going over the DISC and the insights we all at the end of the presentation and now with the Insights Wheel, where everybody is seeing where everyone's plotted on the Insights Wheel, that is something we maintain and we put it on our Slack Channel. I have a Slack Channel for the assessments, where we just kind of keep updating the Insights Wheel with the new hires and stuff, and people are always referring to it, just to try and understand, "Ok, what's the new hire?" And people are guessing and that type of thing.

Suzie: [00:21:32] That's good. That's good.

Rebecca: [00:21:34] So I post it every time we have a group of new hires, I post a new one out there on the Slack Channel and it's been really interesting and fun, so...

Suzie: [00:21:42] That's good, to carry it through a little bit.

Rebecca: [00:21:44] Yeah, definitely, and I think we're planning on having a summer event, we're going to do some team building exercises, so I think I'm going to do something around Motivators.

Suzie: [00:21:52] That would be fun.

Rebecca: [00:21:54] Especially with all of these new hires that we have now. It'll be interesting to do some of those activities.

Suzie: [00:21:59] Well, there's that one activity where you can have them read from that part we were just talking about the gold, what I call gold, the combined strengths and conflict, where they pick what they're going to share with the group and why it matters to them and that type of thing. That could be really interesting because that would get you DISC and Motivators.

Rebecca: [00:22:16] Yeah. That would be great, that would be great. That would be cool.

Rebecca: [00:22:18] Cool. And so you survive doing the team event and you did all the coaching with everybody one-on-one before the team event too, went through their reports with them.

Rebecca: [00:22:27] Yeah.



Suzie: [00:22:27] So and that worked out well, I think it did it give you an opportunity to get to know people a little better?

Rebecca: [00:22:32] Yeah, it did. And we've actually gone back to those some times, we did a few reporting changes and we've had some different team meetings where they're like, "Can we revisit where everyone is on the Insights Wheel and kind of talk through communication styles before we go into this big meeting," or that type of thing. So that's been really interesting to use that. So that's why I'm really wanting the more focused on the Motivators now.

Suzie: [00:22:55] Yeah, that's neat. I'm just glad it stuck. Sometimes it does, and people, it's normal to have a one and done. And you were able to not do that. I mean you prefer it not to be that way. We try to create it differently, but things happen in life, like COVID. Now, let's talk a little bit about you and your background and talk about who has influenced you to your greatness. We talk about that, we want to help people see how great they are and how they can become and do whatever they want. Here you are in L.A., Chief People Officer, Culture Officer, and a bright light in the world with all your friends and family, who most influenced you? And what do they say that was most useful or helpful to you? Say or do?

Rebecca: [00:23:39] You know, it was one of my former mentors, he was the CFO of a company that I worked at years ago, and he was my reporting manager, my boss at the time, years ago. And he was, he always believed in me, encouraged me to think bigger, not be discouraged, confidently voice my perspectives and supported me throughout my career, even after I left the company. We have really good friends. I'm still in touch with his wife, unfortunately, he passed away a few years ago. But I think about him often, and a lot of the impact that he made on me in my career, just kind of words of wisdom and that type of thing. But yeah, I think that's the main part of it is coming into a company at that time where I was the first female to sit at the table with the executive team. At that time, I was a Senior Director, he just really helped me come out of my shell at that time.

Suzie: [00:24:27] What would be, and this maybe putting you on the spot a little bit, but what would be, so if you're thinking about if, if other women are listening to this and they're saying, "Ok, what are some of her tips for when you're working with the team? And maybe you're the only female at the table and it's an executive team or a hard charging team," any things that come to mind that maybe he taught you or that you just know, that help you?

Rebecca: [00:24:54] Yeah, I think there are a few things. I think, again, oftentimes our voices tend to come across softer or not as confident or bold. So I would say, and this was another coaching tip, to take the emotion out of your communication when you talk confidently and maybe not use the words, "I feel, I think," and those types of things and say, "We need to be doing this, this is how this should be," and those types of more commanding terminology. It was interesting, I went to a seminar, this is kind of off the track here...

Suzie: [00:25:29] It sounds like it is right on track.

Rebecca: [00:25:29] They talked about feminine and masculine words, and how to use more masculine words and some of those meetings that you're in with a lot of men, which is interesting. But that goes back to also the emotional side of things, too, just like taking the emotion out of your communication.



Suzie: [00:25:51] Do you remember any of the masculine words? I'm curious.

Rebecca: [00:25:54] Oh, my goodness, that was 2008.

Suzie: [00:25:56] So mostly it is, just take the emotion out. Right, right.

Rebecca: [00:26:04] I could probably dig up, I think she was a professor at Stanford or something.

Suzie: [00:26:09] Well if you run across it, we will put it out there. I know I'm putting you on the spot, but the biggest thing at the table is to speak up, don't qualify it, so maybe consider just go ahead and be direct. Was that hard for you to do at first?

Rebecca: [00:26:27] It was really, at first it was. I was always used to trying to get people on my side and being an influence and being the optimist, which is a high I influence, from just kind of pulling that back down a little bit and being more direct, bringing up the red, the DISC, the Dominant.

Suzie: [00:26:48] Yes.

Rebecca: [00:26:48] In order to tailor my conversation.

Suzie: [00:26:51] Any other tip that comes to mind? One other thing that you feel like has helped you?

Rebecca: [00:26:56] Just believe in what you're doing. Again, I didn't dream of being an HR person, that wasn't a dream of mine, "Let me get into HR," but it just matched up with the people. I have such a passion for people. And so just believe in what you're doing, even though people will say, "Oh, you don't have the traditional experience in HR. Yeah, but I have a passion for the people." There's that Human Resources, human, right? The human side of things. So that's how I look at it. Just stay true to who you are and believe in yourself.

Suzie: [00:27:32] And it sounds like too, you just kind of when that to people conversation, I'm just guessing, but when people conversations come up, you are there. You know what needs to be happen if the executive team is making decisions, you don't back down, you own what you're doing so much that they listen to you.

Rebecca: [00:27:50] Yes, it's, yes, I think that's it, I mean, it's always key to look at things through a people lens and get others to see that as well, because not everyone is a high Social specifically in my business or our industry. They're highly Utilitarian. But for me, it's just making sure they are leading with the empathy and understanding where people are coming from or what may be coming up for people, or what's going on in the industry that we need to look out for from a talent side.

Suzie: [00:28:20] And it sounds like your CEO is also on the same page, which makes a difference if you, or you and he were together figuring out the "Know to Grow" communication, empathy he's with you, so people will follow that to help with that.

Rebecca: [00:28:34] Yes. Yes, absolutely.

Suzie: [00:28:36] Talk a little bit about the books or training programs. We talked a little bit about it just now, but things that have been instrumental in your development.

Rebecca: [00:28:45] Yeah, it's really interesting because I love learning more about what makes people tick or more about myself or how to develop people, those types of things. So I think I got the MBTI certification years ago and then the DISC and Motivators has helped quite a bit and it's been enlightening. Actually, right now I'm taking a very interesting course called *Zero to Dangerous* by Steven Kotler. And it's another self-paced learning course and it's a flow hacking course that trains you on how to become a high performance corporate athlete.

Suzie: [00:29:20] Yeah, wow that sounds really cool.

Rebecca: [00:29:21] It entails everything from sleep and nutrition, how to reduce cognitive load, developing Monk-like focus and prevent burnout, and how to activate flow and stay in flow state. So for me, especially coming off this pandemic, I know a lot of people are burned out. And so it caught my eye and I thought it was super interesting. I'm about halfway through and I'm making adjustments, even sleep schedule, like that whole sleep hygiene, taking out or turning off electronics, not reading emails and all those things a couple hours before bed, just kind of unwinding, but also really kind of goal stacking. All my goals for the week, then to the month and then kind of like continuing to ladder up to my ultimate goal eventually where I want to be and what I want to get to, just personally and professionally. So it's interesting, again, halfway through. So I've made some adjustments to my schedule, tending to focus on things that I can really make an impact on. And then the sleep thing has been huge for me.

Suzie: [00:30:22] Has it been huge?

Rebecca: [00:30:23] Yes, it has. It has. And then building in, they say, 90 minutes of intense Flow State or Focus State, you need about 15 to 20 minutes of Recovery State, kind of like high performance athletes. So getting up, walking around, going to meditate, getting out in nature, something like that, for to, like bring back the Flow State.

Suzie: [00:30:45] Were you in a home office prior to this? You weren't, were you? Did you used to go to the office mostly, prior to COVID?

Rebecca: [00:30:53] Well, we were actually moving our office, our headquarters, right in the middle of the pandemic. We were building out our office and we moved, I think it was end of April or May of last year and so myself, the CEO and his Executive Assistant, the 3 of us were in the office quite a bit, just making sure everything was put together and, everything from deliveries, everything was delayed. It was just, it was a lot to try and get all of that done. And we all always just thought, "Ok, in a few weeks people are going to be, it's going to be back to normal." And it just kept extending and extending. And we just finally officially really opened in California or in L.A., what was June 15th.

Suzie: [00:31:34] So I was just thinking about, I've had a home office since I started my business. So that's been since 2004 and I remember having to learn that piece and I still lose it sometimes, but that whole, you can only be so intense for so long and then you have to go walk your dogs, flip on the TV or go read or go meditate or go write and you have these breaks and you feel like, especially if you're a type A personality, you feel like you can't stop because, you get in office and, or you're at home office, and there's that part of your monkey brain that says, "You need to make stuff happen," and you need to make stuff happen by backing off, getting in the flow prior to, it's always a lesson. So that's interesting. You'll carry that with you forever. I'm going to put a link to that in the show notes, *Zero To Dangerous* by Steven Kotler. You recommend it?

Rebecca: [00:32:28] Highly recommend.

Suzie: [00:32:29] That's awesome. And it's self-paced, which is really cool. So you feel a little less burned out?

Rebecca: [00:32:34] Yeah, I am. And now, since we have people coming back in the office, there's more activity, there's more excitement, but people wanting to interact again and feeling that kind of face-to-face interactions has been wonderful.

Suzie: [00:32:48] Feels good. I know here in Georgia, we've been open a little longer and it's so nice to go to the grocery and see like, "I can see everybody's face." I'm going to see my high school friends that I've known for all my life this weekend, so it's like, "I get to see them." So, yeah. So it's all those little things we're all enjoying, right?

Rebecca: [00:33:09] Yeah, that's great. That's great.

Suzie: [00:33:11] When you think of the word successful, who is the first person that comes to mind?

Rebecca: [00:33:16] I follow Sarah Blakely, the Founder of Spanx on LinkedIn, she's very inspirational. She created a very useful product for women that became a hit. She's out going, fought hard and never gave up when people told her "No." So I love seeing what she posts, that's someone I would aspire to be from a kind of lifestyle, I guess you could say, perspective, since she has time for her family, she's super successful, she's very inspirational and wanting to do good in the world. So.

Suzie: [00:33:47] Yeah. And she's from Georgia.

Rebecca: [00:33:49] Yeah, she lives in Atlanta and...

Suzie: [00:33:51] Her office is here, I think. I think I met her CFO at a meeting or something, but yeah, that's so interesting. That's great. You feel like you ever want to create another product or do you want to stay in Human Resources, or create a product?

Rebecca: [00:34:04] Yeah, I thought about it. Yeah. My best friend and I thought about a lot of different things that would be useful for women, but we don't put the energy into it. Life gets busy with kids and everything else. But yeah.

Suzie: [00:34:17] Yeah. You never know what's coming.

Rebecca: [00:34:19] You never know.

Suzie: [00:34:21] So fun get to know you questions. What's your favorite guilty TV show?

Rebecca: [00:34:25] Well anything on HGTV. But lately I've become hooked on HGTV's No Demo Reno, and it's where this designer goes in, she's awesome, she goes into homes and she doesn't rip out walls or anything, but she completely transforms kitchens and bathrooms and things like that. So I binge watch that.

Suzie: [00:34:47] Do you have a designer talent, you design?

Rebecca: [00:34:50] Yes, I love interior design. I'm kind of excited, I'm about to move again and so I'm excited about the new place, so in designing that.

Suzie: [00:35:00] Where was your Aesthetic on the Motivators, do you remember?

Rebecca: [00:35:04] Yeah, I think it was 3rd for me after Social and Individualistic.

Suzie: [00:35:09] Yeah. So Aesthetic on the Motivators is an interest or I get energy, it puts gas my tank to think about how things look and feel, design type stuff. It can be outdoors too, can be very refreshing, or put gas in your tank and... You think it's interesting, what's your number 6? Do you remember?

Rebecca: [00:35:27] Theoretical.

Suzie: [00:35:28] Yeah, that is what I was going to say, look at you learning like a theme. But it's, that's a mistake people make, Theoretical is the amount of love for knowledge. And so it's your number 6, which means, doesn't mean you don't love knowledge, but you don't want to spend 6 days a week in a research library.

Rebecca: [00:35:45] Correct.

Suzie: [00:35:46] But you're instinctive, according to the assessment in learning, and you pick up the things that are immediately of interest to you, which is what you did with the assessments and with MBTI. And I'm sure many other things, the design stuff is *Zero to Dangerous*, you see that?

Rebecca: [00:36:04] Yeah. I mean, I think if it's something of interest to me, absolutely, I'll sink a lot of time into it and become passionate about it. But if you ask me to go off and take some crazy course on whatever, some sort of research or something, you're going to lose me.

Suzie: [00:36:20] That's not going to happen. Yes, I know. I always was thinking, "Ok, have to make sure I don't overwhelm," because I'm Theoretical Passionate, almost Extreme. So it's like I got to make sure I'm not sharing too much information, but I'm sure I do at times, but it's my



blind spot. I try to manage it. It's my passion, and my blind spot. But so HGTV, I've never seen it, No Demo Reno, we'll look for that.

Rebecca: [00:36:44] Yes. Write it down. You've got to watch it.

Suzie: [00:36:46] I've got to watch it, ok.

Suzie: [00:36:47] And then actress, who would play you? You're a beautiful blonde, who would play you as an actress, you think, in a movie?

Rebecca: [00:36:56] It's really funny. I would think just because I watch the Netflix series, The Politician, I love Gwyneth Paltrow, I love her and all of her movies. And yeah, just most recently, The Politician on Netflix.

Suzie: [00:37:08] I could totally see that. Yeah, that's cool. All right, we'll let her know whenever we're ready to do a movie for you. Ok, so what advice would you give your 25-year-old self?

Rebecca: [00:37:19] Oh, I think I've touched on this earlier, but believe in yourself and be authentic to who you are. Don't be discouraged by others or change who you are to please someone else and go along with the rest of the group. If you have an opinion to give, give your opinion.

Suzie: [00:37:33] That's wonderful. Yes. And then how did you get so good at that, is it the influences? Because I do think you don't hold back, I mean, I think you do share. Is it just by the exposure you've had in the positions that you've had? I know there are people, our listeners that are saying, "I want to speak my truth, I want to be authentic." I mean, what are some of the things that have helped you the most?

Rebecca: [00:37:55] You know, it's really interesting, I think, because you being in HR and dealing with people, you're under the microscope for every leader to comment on the job you did, whether it was hiring someone, firing someone, what you said in a meeting, like everyone's a critic. So I think being direct sometimes, early on in my career, I was a little emotional, I would take things personally. And they would come across as that, especially in my late 20s, early 30s, early in the career. And then people would give me feedback, so the CFO or the CEO, would pulled me aside and say, "Hey, just FYI next time you may want to say this," and give me coaching feedback. And I thought, "Oh, I didn't realize the CEO really wanted me to, the fact that he pulled me aside after to have words with me, that's not great." But you know what? It was a great learning, kind of a way to learn how to do better as far as voicing your opinion and not sounding defensive or being direct without coming across as too aggressive or emotional, etc. So it really helped.

Suzie: [00:38:55] Yeah, that's great. I mean, so he really, he, while it probably didn't feel good in the moment, he really was bought into your career, where you could go, it sounds like to me. So..

Rebecca: [00:39:06] Yeah, it's interesting, I actually had a conversation recently with a leader and we were talking about people that have performance problems, wanting to save the people that you really see high potential in and wanting to really coach and not throw the baby out with



the bathwater, like a lot of leaders or managers do, is they are like, “Oh, this person screwed up on this one pitch, I'm going to write them up.” So I think being able to really believe in someone and give them the feedback is huge, especially for their career. They're either going to take it and learn from it, or they're going to be upset by it and go look for another job. But at least you've given them the feedback to where they can have a learning moment.

Suzie: [00:39:46] They have an opportunity. Yes, yes.

Rebecca: [00:39:49] Yeah.

Suzie: [00:39:49] The Hartman Institute is something I'm really involved in. And that's the 3rd assessment, that is Axiology. And he speaks about this all the time and it shows it mathematically how this plays out. But that people are greater than tasks, are greater than systems. So relationships are greater than results, are greater than strategy. You still need strategy, still need results, and when we started this conversation about that with you and your CEO talking about empathy. What a great gift you're doing by having received the gift of empathy, while it felt kind of not so great in the moment when the CEO is pulling you aside, but like, wow, somebody, he took the time, you know.

Rebecca: [00:40:29] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Suzie: [00:40:30] Seeing what you can do in giving you suggestions. So if you're out there, find mentors, you can nominate people to be your mentor, you know, those who are listening and I know I have, I've said, “Ok, that person is going to be my mentor whether they want to be or not.” And I'll just learn from them by watching them or ask for feedback and then just be open to feedback. If you're someone who's getting it, say see it for the gift that it is, which is what you did.

Rebecca: [00:40:56] Yeah, I mean, look, there's always more to learn about yourself and to develop, especially, you know, keeping it kind of that growth mindset and finding someone that is willing to believe in you and give you that feedback that you need to take you throughout your career.

Suzie: [00:41:09] They obviously saw that in you, that you are willing to take the feedback or they wouldn't have bothered. So that's another trait. I mean, if you're the person, you've got to be open to receive the feedback.

Rebecca: [00:41:23] Right.

Suzie: [00:41:25] So last question, if there's one last bit of advice or wisdom you'd like to give every leader and coach from our discussion of what we talked about today, from your viewpoint of someone who has been in Human Resources career most of your adult life, I believe, and all the work that you're doing around culture and people, what kind of things would you say?

Rebecca: [00:41:48] I think it's probably less for coaches because they pretty much know this, but for leaders that don't have a growth mindset, I've run across quite a few that have the fixed mindset. You really need to have that open mind to where you know there's more for you to learn and there's more for you to develop, like I was just saying, building stronger emotional



intelligence through the use of these assessments is a great way to start. But there's always something to learn.

Suzie: [00:42:15] Yeah, so be open, be learning, continue to grow a growth mindset. Well, thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to have this conversation. I can't wait to share it and appreciate the opportunity to work with you and know you.

Rebecca: [00:42:32] Well, thank you so much for having me. This was fun. I appreciate it. Love these.

Suzie: [00:42:36] Awesome.

Rebecca: [00:42:38] So I love what Rebecca said about having a growth mindset, and I loved learning the different things that she's doing, that *Zero to Dangerous* sounds very interesting. And just overall, I hope you enjoyed the discussion.

Suzie: [00:42:51] If you go to our show notes, you'll be able to find a transcript of this podcast and links to everything we talked about. If you go to pricelessprofessional.com/rebecca and it's all lowercase. So go to pricelessprofessional.com/rebecca, and you will have the show notes and the transcript and the links to everything. You'll have a link to Rebecca on LinkedIn, some of the tools and resources she talked about. I'll put a link on there about Motivators. Since we talked so much about the Workplace Motivators assessment, I'll put a link to the Memory Jogger card that we use. It's a one page, two-sided document that gives an explanation of each of the different motivators there are 6 of them. And you'll see, like Rebecca's is Social/Altruistic and Individualistic, what does that mean? And again, is measuring what puts gas in your tank. And so that might be helpful or interesting to you.

Suzie: [00:43:45] So if you'd like to connect in the future with me, go to pricelessprofessional.com/Suzie, S-U-Z-I-E, and we will get on a call, have a complimentary call. If you would like to try a complimentary assessment or just talk about what you're focusing on and what your objectives are. And I'll just be a good listener. And if I'm not a resource for you, someone else I know might be. So I'll try to just connect with you that way. So pricelessprofessional.com/suzie. The directory for all of our podcasts is at wakeupwagerworkforce.com. And the show notes for today's episode, I'll give you that one more time, the shortcut go to pricelessprofessional.com/rebecca and this all lowercase, Rebecca. We'll see you on the next podcast. Can't wait. Take care.

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