

# The Job Hunting Podcast

## [49. Leadership and career success: The career advice you probably didn't get - with Susan Colantuono.](#)

Renata: So my name is Renata, this is The Job Hunting Podcast. And it's a podcast that does what it says on the tin. Together with some awesome guests, I help you nail your next job and have the career that you want. Today once again, we are recording live from Melbourne during the Victorian 2020 digital innovation festival, or as we call it here DIF. DIF is an initiative from the department of jobs, precincts and regions from the state of Victoria. The state of Victoria is well known for its innovation precincts, especially in the area of health and pharma. And it's also growing in med tech and FinTech amongst others. We have a very robust corporate sector in Australia with a strong banking and finance sector, mining and energy companies, Telcos, higher Ed, public sector.

Renata: If anything, a federated Commonwealth structure, creates interesting work at several levels of government. Furthermore, Australia has some amazing NGLs, development agencies, and not for profits. And all of that work is in every sector requires leadership. And today we have a guest who will talk to us about leadership, and I will soon introduce her, but if this is the content for you, that is if you're currently on the market looking for a new job, if you are keen to get a promotion if you want tips on how to advance and change careers, or if you're unsure about what COVID and lockdown and the recession will do to your career plans post 2020, make sure that you subscribe by clicking on the subscribe button on wherever you found this podcast. It could have been iTunes, Spotify, YouTube, Google podcast, your favourite podcast platform.

Renata: You can also pay it forward and share the love by recommending this podcast to someone you care about and believe that they will benefit from listening. Each episode includes show notes, which are really a blog that I write that I love writing with all the links that are mentioned and information on where to find me and how to work with me. In case you were looking for a career coach or interested in checking out my career coaching services and products. My goal is to make career coaching accessible, downloadable, and still very effective for you. I want it to be affordable. To take a step further and always be updated on my services and products and things that I will be launching soon, the best way is also to sign up for my newsletters. And there will be a link on the episode show notes for you to do that.

Renata: I'd like to thank everyone that is attending live today, and have joined the recording. It's really very unique for me to do this, and I'm very excited to have a number of great people attending the recording this morning. Susan Colantuono is currently the co-host of A Career That Soars! She's the retired CEO and founder of Leading Women, a cutting edge provider of leadership development solutions for women in organisations. She's also the founder of the Women's Institute for Leadership at Bryant University and author of 'No ceilings, No walls', what women haven't been told about leadership from career, start to the corporate boardroom and make the most of mentoring capitalise on mentoring and take your career to the next level. Susan has been a pioneer in delivering leadership development and diversity and inclusion solutions to organisations across a range of industries and sectors.

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Renata: Her expertise has benefited organisations, including the CIA, corn products, Exxon, Kodak, Marriott, Pfizer, and so many others. She has advised leaders in organisations like Engine, MetLife, US Bureau of land management, New York life fidelity and so on. Susan has published numerous articles in leadership and management books is the author of many books. Like I said before. And I personally found Susan through her Ted talk where she spoke about the missing 33%. And since then, which was a few years ago, I've been recommending that Ted talks to many of my clients, some of which are attending here today and they are here. They can testify that it is true. And I then a few months ago interviewed her collaborator with A Career That Soars Michelle Redfern. I will link in the episode show notes the link to that episode where I interviewed Michelle Redfern.

Renata: And I mentioned to her that I recommend Susan's Ted talk to my clients, Susan noticed that I had mentioned her on the podcast, reached out, and I immediately jumped at the opportunity and invited her to be a guest on the podcast. So I am so delighted that she accepted. We had quite a bit of trouble finding what time suited both of us. She's laughing because you know, for somebody like me, who has family all over the world, you would think I know how to operate across, you know, different time zones, but no, not really. So I'm glad that we finally found a time that suits both her on the Eastern coast of the US and us here in Melbourne. Welcome, Susan to The Job Hunting Podcast.

Susan: Thank you, Renata. It's such an honour to be here, especially given what it took to get it set up, but also in particular because I love the concrete actionable focus that you bring to your podcasts. They're just spot on. You have incredibly talented and knowledgeable guests. You add your own perspectives and you keep the focus on, 'okay, so how can this help me get my next job or move into my promotion?' So I commend you on the quality of your podcast and it really is an honour to have joined for today.

Renata: Thank you, Susan. I wrote yesterday about it. And at first, I was so worried that the job hunting podcasts would be misunderstood, but the following-ship is growing. My philosophy is that you should always be job hunting in the sense that you should always be open for opportunities. And, the way that I'm starting to introduce myself now is not, is as still as a job-hunting expert, but more of a visibility coach, you know, you will always be, you know, you have to be visible, you have to be there. So I'm sort of starting to expand the idea that, the jobs will actually come to you if you position yourself in such a way so that you don't actually have to be doing the hunting all the time, right. It will be available to you, but the podcast reaches out to over 50 countries. And it's really lovely. Yesterday in the evening, I spoke to a Mongolian student and she's actually based here in Sydney and I'll be speaking to a group of Mongolian students in Sydney in a couple of weeks. And she said I don't usually cater for a younger target market. My market is a bit more senior, but she said I had been postponing looking for a job because I was so lacking in confidence. But I've binged watched all of your podcasts. And then I found a job.

Susan: Fabulous. Oh my goodness.

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- Renata: There are 44 episodes. So, you know, she did a good job.
- Susan: Wow, good for her. I have a funny story about visibility from my early career stages, which reinforces what you're saying. So when I was just starting out, I worked, Oh, how can I make this a short story? I was one of three women who, with the blessing of the CEO and working with the internal training department, launched one of the first women's initiatives in the United States. So I just went about, I did my real work. And then I went about doing that because I cared about it. Well, it turned out about a year after that initiative was up and running, I got a phone call and the woman at the other end of the line said, Susan, this is Wendy Susko. Wendy was the only woman attorney in the company and maybe the only woman attorney in the insurance industry in Hartford. And she said to me, Susan, there's a job opening in the training department and I think you should apply for it. So that's an illustration. I had no intention of moving in that direction whatsoever. I was totally unaware that this voluntary activity created a brand for me. But by doing that, she reached out to me. I call her my one of my first mentors, even though our only interaction was that one phone call. So visibility matters and opportunities can come. Not always, but,
- Renata: And in your book you say, you know, you can learn leadership and I say, you can learn visibility.
- Susan: Yes, I agree.
- Renata: And let's talk about your career. I really want to know how you became this amazing leadership coach and your focus on women. When did you make that decision that this was, do you say a calling, was it a calling or was it just an organic progression?
- Susan: It was a little bit of both, so I'm old, you mentioned that I'm retired. So, um, I grew up here,
- Renata: Well it's in your bio.
- Susan: And, I grew up in the fifties in the United States. That was the time when the roles for girls and women were quite constrained. And I railed against that from a sense of, it wasn't just to me. So in that sense, it was always a passion. I got involved in the women's movement. And then when I started working in corporate America, I launched that women's initiative, but when I left the insurance. Okay. So I think about my career in three stages, the first was an employee in a private company, privately held company. And, that's where I launched the women's initiative. And I really think about that time in my career as being very much foundation laying. I learned about you have a brand, so you better watch out what you do. From a funny story, if we have time, I learned from the CEO, never bring problems without solutions. I learned from my first boss, how important it is to build teams and how important it is to engage the whole team in moving projects forward.
- Susan: So I had one boss that was horrible. So from him, I learned not to micromanage and not to give sexist feedback or racist feedback. So that was really formative. I learned something about company politics. I learned something about the structuring of organisations and the rationale behind it. So foundational. So after nine years I left the insurance company and I became a solopreneur, a consultant. And I did that for

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quite a long time. And while I was doing that, some of what I did was in the realm of leadership development, some were in the realm of diversity and inclusion, but most of it had to do with managing complex changes. Because my real work at the insurance company was implementing, before I got into the training department, it was running a project to implement a computer system. So I was a pioneer in change management.

Susan: And during that solopreneur time, I did learn a lot about leadership from watching managers and executives who are awesome and some who were horrible again. And one of the important things as a consultant was that I learned to meet the client where he or she was. They would say, Susan, we need XYZ. And I would see that, no, you need ABC, but I couldn't. It was stupid to try to sell them on ABC when they saw that they needed XYZ. So meeting the client where they are. And I think that's the lesson that follows through to developing people on your teams as a manager and executive. And during those years that I was a solopreneur and consultant and I affiliated with some boutique consulting firms, worked in a wide range of industries and government organisations. So that was also brilliant because it gave me an understanding of what works across the organisation.

Susan: And what's important to understand is unique. But during that time toward the end is when I started gestating leading women because I was at the point in my career where I knew that I wasn't loving what I was doing. So I took the hedgehog concept from Jim Collins book 'Good to great'. If you haven't read it, it's.

Renata: Oh I have it here. I have it right here.

Susan: Oh, good. Yeah. So the hedgehog was one of the differentiating factors in companies that made the transition from good to great performance and sustained it over time. And it was basically looking for the overlap between three circles: what the company was passionate about, its profit formula, and what it could be best in the world at. And so I read that and I said, Oh, I think that can be modified for people. So I literally did this. I sat down and this is great when you're at a career crossroads. I sat down and I said, what am I passionate about? What am I really good at? And what could I get paid to do? And the overlap of those three circles was leading women. Ah, I could develop a consulting firm that's focused on helping organisations move women into senior leadership positions. So that's what I did.

Renata: Excellent. And, um, we, sorry, were you going to say more?

Susan: I have more, yeah. Well, what I wanted to say about that, and this just came up in a conversation. What I learned as an entrepreneur, there are so many things, but one of them is that leadership grooves will tell you culture eats strategy. If you have a bad culture, you can't execute a strategy, but having a good culture and no strategy also means you'll fail. So yeah. So you have to, as I learned, strategy really matters and I can talk about why a little bit later, cause it comes into another question we wanted to talk about.

Renata: No, I wanted to ask you about your work with women. When I spoke to Michelle, she works with senior executives that manage women. Did you decide that you

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wanted to work just with women themselves in elevating them to the senior roles? Was that your, your preferred area of expertise?

Susan: So when I started leading women, it was definitely a business to consumer organisation. It was providing services to women. But, a few years into it, I realised that strategy wasn't viable for building a business. So then we moved to business to business and there's no good in investing in women, if you aren't also working with their managers and working with the culture of the organisation. So leading women does all of that still, even though I'm retired, they go on and they do that. But now I'm back to my first love in a career that soars it's all about. You know, woman to woman and building a network of support.

Renata: So the reason why I send your Ted talk to my clients, men and women actually is because I, even yesterday, you know, I had Tuesdays and Thursdays are my coaching days and Friday mornings. And I had an afternoon of sessions and I had to correct clients again, men and women, about the way that they position their business acumen, as opposed to their soft skills. You know, I might calling them soft skills. I don't believe they're soft. I'm just sort of using that terminology because it's what people use. And we had to reverse the dot points, reverse the order of the phrases in a pitch, or, you know, when did you realise, well, first of all, it might be useful to explain to the listeners what the missing 33% is, so that if they're not aware, uh, they, they, they learn about it. I'll add the link to that Ted talk on the episode show notes. And, but when did you realise it? Did you have like a eureka moment and you thought, 'Oh, you know, people are not noticing this. I might talk about it.'

Susan: Yes. Kind of. So at the end of my solopreneur consulting time, when I was just stating, what do I want to do next? I had, I started working with a couple of organisations as a subcontractor, delivering leadership development for women, and basically what I saw. So this was 20 years after I started my career and did leadership development for that company. And basically what I saw is what they were offering was generic leadership development with a discussion about work life balance. And I said, if generic leadership development is what it takes to get women ahead, why aren't more women ahead? It's been two generations, it's been a generation it's been 20 years. So concurrent with that really sense of frustration, there was in 2000, the Businessweek article and the title was 'as leaders, comma, women rule: new studies find that female managers outshine their male counterparts on almost every measure.'

Susan: So I read the article, I went to the source studies. It was an article summarising many different studies. I went to the source studies and I analyse them. Now what enabled me to analyse them was that during this time of trying to figure out how to help women move up in leadership, they said, well, I need to be able to give women a simple, clear, actionable definition of leadership. And that is, I couldn't find one. So I developed one, which is that leadership, it's got three parts. Leadership is using the greatness in you, to achieve and sustain extraordinary outcomes, by engaging the greatness in others. So I took all the factors in the study where women were rated as outperforming men. Men were rated as outperforming women, especially those

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where the Raiders were managers. And I slotted the factors into the three-part definition of leadership.

- Susan: And basically what it showed in study after study, is that a women were rated by managers as outperform that, well, we were rated as roughly equal using the greatness in you. So individual attributes like smart, creative, reliable, hardworking, women and men were rated roughly equal. When it comes to engaging the greatness in others, team development skills, good communication skills, managers rated women as outperforming men. But when it came to business, strategic and financial acumen, achieving and sustaining extraordinary outcomes, managers rated men is out performing women. Now, so that's what I called the missing 33%. And I always say, it's not that we don't have it. It's not that we can't have it. It's that we're perceived as not having it. So we have to work extra hard to demonstrate that we do. And of course, some of us don't have it. We need to work on it. So that's the missing 33%. And that's what I talk about in my Ted talk.
- Renata: When you brought that to women's attention, what feedback did you, do you usually receive? Now people are aware of it because you talk about it all the time, but did you get some pushback? Because I do. So I was wondering if you do too.
- Susan: So most women were like, Holy cow, you're absolutely right. Nobody's ever made this clear to me. I never realised how important it was. I always thought that leadership was all about engaging my teams. And I'm really good at that. And I couldn't figure out why I wasn't getting ahead. But there were some women who thought I was saying, women can't have business strategic and financial acumen. So they would push back. I said, that's not what I'm saying. We have fortune 500 women CEOs. They have business strategic and financial acumen. But yeah, that's the pushback I tend to get.
- Renata: The pushback that I take is usually that they perceive themselves as not, not that it's not their strong, you know, I'm a strength based career coach. So I say, let's work on your strengths, but they say, Oh, but that's not my strength. You know, I'm not that I've moved away from that. You know, if they have done accounting or finance as an undergraduate, I've moved away from that. You know, I now want to do something else. But it's still part of your executive DNA and it's really highly valued, so it is a strength in the hiring manager's eyes.
- Susan: Absolutely. Absolutely. Yes. And if you want to build a career in an organisation, you have to have and be able to demonstrate your business, strategic and financial acumen. The HR executive, the HR manager who becomes chief HR officer. Why? Because the CEO trusts him or her to be looking out for the business to be making decisions based on the financial performance of the business. You can say the same for the chief marketing officer. So no matter what you're doing in an organisation, if you want to continue to move up beyond middle management, that is the differentiator. Even in the legal department, I was asked to speak to at a conference of women corporate attorneys who were interested in becoming the chief legal officer and, Oh God, the, what they're really called has escaped me, corporate

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counsel. And corporate counsel in the US, they pretty much, they're very active in the board. So it's an excellent entree to board positions. Well,

Renata: They're also called in an Australia company, secretary.

Susan: Yes. Corporate secretaries. So I interviewed CEOs and I interviewed general counsel, and I said what's the most important thing that you look for in people who want to move into a general counsel, corporate counsel, corporate secretary positions. And all, but one of them said, some variation of someone who's able to put the business to move the business forward in their decision making. We don't want to legally go, who's going to find all the reasons why we can't do we, people who can help the business move forward. So yeah, you need it. Even if it's not your strength, you can't, you will get stuck if you don't leverage.

Renata: Yes. What do you think? So when I was starting your book, usually Susan, I read nonfiction books really fast and just breeze through them. Unless it's a book that I really love in which case it takes me forever to finish them because I keep, you know, keep making notes and I keep like putting little things and I write, and then I need to open a client's file and add something there. And, you know, so it will take forever for me to finish a book. But when I started, there was a list of beliefs in the first page of the reasons why you should read this book and you quickly realise that this, these are beliefs that are keeping you from progressing in your career. From attaining, you can be a leader at every stages, as you said, and as many people know, but if you are ambitious for your career and you want career advancement, these are the things that are keeping you from obtaining and it, the book was written, you know, 10 years ago, maybe more. Do you believe that there is any difference today? You know, considering it's been a decade, we're now in COVID in the things that could be keeping people from progressing. So what I am experiencing 2020 with people that are coming to me to chat about their careers, is this complete sense of uncertainty and, paralysis by analysis during coverage. And I would add that to your list. But I would like to get your views as well. If you have thought of other things that are new to the list or things that are still very much real, it hasn't changed at all. If anything, that has been reinforced by the situation that we're in today.

Susan: Right. So some of the things that I write about in the beginning of the book are this book is for you, if you believe that the playing field has been levelled and women are as likely to advance as men, it has not that hasn't changed maybe a little bit. I don't want to be too negative. Yes. It's being levelled, but there's still plenty of potholes. And roadblocks across the field. This book is for you, if you take leadership courses or have in the past and expect them to help you climb up the corporate ladder. Well, some companies have gotten smarter about bringing business strategic and financial acumen into their leadership development courses. So that has changed a little bit. This book is for you, if you can't read a financial report and don't think it really matters that hasn't changed, you have to be able to, you don't have to be an accountant.

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- Susan: But you do have to understand the key aspects of financial reports, but more importantly, the story that the financial report is telling so that you understand the financial, the strategic decisions that companies are making. So I would say most everything that I write about is still of concern. And what's added is that back when I wrote the book, most organisations were totally unconscious about the role of gender dynamics or what other people call unconscious bias. I don't like that phrase cause a lot of biases, absolutely conscious. So I taught gender dynamics talk about the impact of people's beliefs, about women and men. So that's where you get into bias conversations. But gender dynamics also have to do with beliefs about leadership and career success. So beliefs about what leadership looks like. If someone believes that leadership is authoritarian, tell people what to do, and that it's weak to ask people their opinions, then that's going to have an impact on women's career progression because many of us are have is our strength, that ability to engage others. So, anyway, so a lot of organisations were unconscious about the fact that gender dynamics and they were then 10 years ago, but now they've begun to do more work or head before COVID on helping managers understand the ways that gender dynamics impact their talent decisions. So that's something that's different.
- Renata: It's interesting to see with, in politics, with international leaders and countries where we have females in power that there's this discourse now, and this conversation about how well these countries are doing. We don't have a big enough sample, but it's you know, it's exciting to see that that these countries are doing well. On the other hand, with 2020 in Australia, we have never had as many unemployed women as we have today.
- Susan: Right. That was a point that I was also thinking about as having a very disproportionate negative impact on women.
- Renata: No, it has to do with the type of industries and sectors that women work and the casual nature of the work that women do. One of the things that I was surprised when I arrived in Australia was the lack of funding for childcare in the country. I expected to see more in Australia for that. And because of that, and other issues, women tend to work part time when they have kids for many, many years, even if they are very well educated and they have corporate careers, they tend to then take a step back for a decade before they go back into the workforce. But also because, Australians tend to have lots of kids, middle-class Australians.
- Susan: Really? More than two?
- Renata: Two and a half. Yes. So if you're okay financially you have three, you have four, many of my friends have four kids. And if you have four kids and it's a pandemic and they're all home. Yeah.
- Susan: Oh, home in different grades, virtual learning, Oh my God.
- Renata: There's this awesome tweet. It's not somebody in my connection, but it's somebody connected to my friends on Twitter. And she is like super woman. And, you know,

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she has four or five kids and the husband decided to resign. One of them had to resign, but it wasn't her. So she's like, superwoman.

Renata: Because if you have four kids and they're all staying at home, you know, studying it's driving everybody insane. So all of these things are considerations. And I think country by country, it's changing. We were all in this together at the beginning of the pandemic, but now things are becoming quite different depending on the country you're in.

Susan: One of the things in the United States has been in the past when we've had recessions, infrastructure, investments in infrastructure, roads, bridges, school buildings, et cetera, has been the traditional path out. Well, women are vastly underrepresented in the jobs that have to do with building infrastructure. But Elizabeth Warren, during the democratic convention last week said that caregivers childcare and eldercare, for example, disabled care, she said, that's also infrastructure. And I was really glad to hear her say that for all the reasons that you just mentioned, because you cannot have an economy if people aren't able to work and to work, you need help with children, and you need help with elderly parents and you need help with disabled family members. So, yeah,

Renata: Yeah. With the no ceilings, no walls, there's a lot of research about how we perceive women and men's leadership style, right? And also you discussed that and in the book, and that perception is different from, and you've mentioned this before in the podcast just now as well, but I'd like to reinforce that with the listeners, many of whom will be women listening of how they can access some tools to be perceived as ready for promotion Susan. What would you identify as tools and resources that people can start considering and actioning to move them forward in their careers?

Susan: Well, of course, I would say join 'A career that soars!' and buy 'no ceiling, the walls' and make the most of mentoring. I mean, they're really action oriented. So, you know, not to toot my own horn, but they're very effective. Women tell me that when they've put the content in use that it has made a positive difference in their careers. But more generically, what I would say is take every opportunity that you can to do two things. If you don't have your business, strategic and financial acumen in hand, if you're not able to understand the business, the totality of the business, where it's going, your role in taking it there, if you're not able to understand the story that the financials are telling and how they influence decisions like all companies today are conserving cash. If you're unable to understand how strategy is set and tap into what's happening, the external environment and beyond COVID, then develop those skills.

Susan: And if you have them, learn to speak the language of power. To your earlier point, Renata, what do you lead with? And if you're building a resume, or if you're proposing an idea, leading with business impact is the smartest thing you can do, especially the higher you are in an organisation. The more it will be assumed that you're good with people. So if you're very early in your career, yes, develop your interpersonal and team skills, hone them while you're also working on business, strategic and financial acumen. Learn how to build teams, learn effective one-on-

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one communication. Learn how to give feedback. I want to take a little aside here because I had, I talked to two people today who, if they were my employees, I would need to give them really hard feedback about their over the phone slash zoom communication. I thought it's really hard in virtual settings to do that anyway. So, develop business, strategic financial acumen, demonstrate it by using the language of power leading with your contributions to the business. Those are, does that get at what you're asking the concreteness?

Renata: Yes. That's very good. Using the language of power and positioning yourself for opportunities I think is, is what I was getting at. But it made me think Susan of something else, when you mentioned, you know, if you know that managing people will be the next level up, it's good for you to understand that. What sometimes concerns me, you know, this is from, you know, a coach to a coach is when my dad, I always think of my dad when this problem happens. He used to tell me, be careful what you're good at.

Susan: Be careful what you're good at. Yes. Yeah.

Renata: Yes, because it may keep you from being promoted. If you become very good at a certain level of leadership, you know, so if you are a great middle manager and maybe your skills and your capabilities are perceived to be at that level and not at the level above, because you are so competent at that level, even though you are performing at the highest of standards at that level, that does not mean you are going to be promoted to the next. Exactly. And that's the hardest conversation I've used really have to have with clients that are very keen on a promotion and don't understand why they're not considered for the promotion, right. If they're performing so well, and there are meeting all the time gets, and then what happens with that wonderful person who is so good is that they start to underperform.

Susan: Yup. Yup. I sometimes will tell somebody if you're the only one who can do the job you have, you'll always have the job you do. Develop your successor, which is shortcut for what you're just saying that you've got to not be seen as the only one who can do the job that you're doing or else you get stuck.

Renata: Yes. Yes. And it also, you know, it's that about, the succession planning, but I also have concerns about the behaviours and the traits, really the skillset that you're developing as a professional, that you're not in that growth mindset of. Okay. I need to learn something else about leadership that I haven't yet, you know, it's my black spot. I do. There's something that I don't really quite get about this next level up and in your book. I think, there is a sentence that I wrote down and I emailed to a client. Am I not going to find it here now? But it's something like, okay, I can remember by heart, your job doesn't look, the promotion looking up, does that ring a bell? The way the job is looking out is not the same as the hiring manager looking down.

Susan: Exactly. Yes. So you have to understand what the hiring manager expects and their perspective. This happens, well, I wanted to talk about something about an early career transition, but remind me about the hiring manager perspective and strategy. So, one of the dangers that people, when they're making that early transition from careers start into the first supervisory management positions. What's seductive is to

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keep doing the technical work and the blind spot, that dark spot that you talk about is no, I have to let my team do the technical work. My job is to develop them to do the work. And that's what, that's the new leadership thing that has to be learned.

Susan: So I think that's really important that leadership that if you keep doing the work that got you into the job, that into the new job that you're in, you're not doing that new job. So the other piece about, our perspective as an employee is different from the perspective of our manager looking down on us, what the most common example of that, that I've seen in all of these years that I've been doing this work is women will say to me, my boss says, I'm not strategic. I am strategic. She says, I am strategic. You know, I see the big picture and I say, okay, have you ever, instead of being defensive and telling your boss, he or she is wrong, have you ever asked them, what does strategic look like from your perspective? Oh, no, I've never done that. Well, maybe you want to start there because it is really different. Yes. Yeah. Where they stand.

Renata: And I, the thing about working with people when they're job hunting and they're in frictional unemployment, which is, you know, specific unemployment where you're in between jobs. Everything happens in a very small period of time. You know, it could be three months, six months, but it's still, it's a lot of learning. It's a lot of new experiences and you're dealing pretty much like a consultant if you're a, an executive applying for jobs, because you're speaking to several stakeholders involved in the process, aren't you? And it can be very frustrating if you don't get the job. So I usually play as a coach as if we were going into different tennis tournaments. And if my clients don't like tennis, they struggle with me because that's all my analogies are all tennis. I said, well, we went through this cup and it didn't win. And are we going to another cup? And, you know, are you, you know, if you're going to be a tennis champion, we need to, you know, continue training and coaching and so on. But ultimately, it's you know, when, when they ask, why is this taking so long? Why am I meeting all these different people?

Renata: It's a \$1 million investment they're making in you. People forget how much so they, if they want to keep you for four years and your job is 250K, if they want to keep you for three years and your job is 150K you know, it's a lot of money, it's a big investment in you. And once that sort of sinks in, then I think it starts to become more of a peer to peer conversation. And it becomes more strategic. And I think that the strategic knowles, you know, the, the strategic acumen is probably more important in a candidate, especially external candidates applying for job opportunities, than some of the other, you know, cause you may not have access to the financials. You may not know that may not be your, your strength personally, but it may be that you don't have all the information anyway, being able to talk strategy with your hiring manager, with the hiring managers be, is and show leadership. When you're talking to HR and growth mindset and all of that is really important. I'm going to use your book a lot for that.

Susan: Oh good. What you said about the investment. It's another reason why being able to speak about your contributions to the organisation and demonstrate that you understand the contributions you're expected to make to the organisation is so

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important because if they're going to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in you, they want to be relatively sure that they will get a return on that investment.

Renata: That's right. Yeah. Yeah. We have a question here from Manisha. I'm not sure if she wants to ask it herself, she's been very active on the chat box. Manisha. You're welcome to ask.

Manisha: Hi. Sorry. I was just not unmuting this back. A lot of background noise with TV and little children in the background. So, no, I was just, I'm very curious in terms of the conversation that we were having earlier, I think you do, you did kind of get to that to, um, an answer that was the question around, when you're, you know, you're looking at the promotion from a promotion perspective, how, um, you know, you, you all seem so good at doing what you're doing at the moment. How do you kind of break that, you know, boundary and kind of try to get above, even though you know, that there is you across the organisation, you see that happening and you are actually dealing with people at much higher levels and also the hierarchy within the organisation, plays or undermines your position sometimes as well, especially in the higher education sector.

Manisha: And like I was saying before, so I think there's a number of elements here because of how higher education operates specifically. So I just wanted to see one of the tips and tricks there to kind of get to that level and promote yourself.

Susan: So you talking about moving from, so I know the verb, the, the terms are different, uh, there, but are you talking about moving in higher education from the professorial track to the academic management trap?

Manisha: Not necessarily, no, I'm not in academia. I am a professional staff, but just in terms of how the sector operates, there are sort of, you know, the people who are promoted, within that, it's like, you know, seem to have certain skills, but even within that professional realm, I think there is this sort of it is very high hierarchical.

Manisha: So sort of like an, a, you got to be at a certain level to do certain things. And, you know, you've got to be at certain levels to even be in some, some of the meetings and how even within the meetings, how the dynamic plays, where you know, that everyone's aware that who's done the work, but you it's kind of, it's credited to someone else. If, if you know what I mean, like it's just, it plays at every level, especially because I think it's a little bit, the sector is a bit of, if I can use that word is a bit traditional in its approach.

Renata: The higher education professional staff, which is not the academic staff here in Australia, Susan is operates very much like the public sector. So it's very stratified. And you have all these sort of, layers of hierarchy.

Susan: Yeah. Yes. So a couple of things come to mind, one going back to Renata's point about the importance of visibility, to not be afraid to self-promote and to shine, shine lights on the accomplishments that are yours or theirs, or the people that you're working with. Because even if it's the norm that more senior person gets credit for the research of a more junior person, you that more junior person it's essential that they have visibility in a, what we call a graceful way, which is talking

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about the contribution to the field, to the institution, whatever. So that was one thing visibility to Renata's earlier point. Renata you may want to.

Renata: Yeah, I agree with Susan. And I think there is also an understanding of the politics of the place, you know, it's there, it's a very strategic game I come from, like, Manisha from that background working in higher ed I've worked either with higher ed or in higher ed most of my career, and it is very strategic and you have to play cards right. And have advocates internally to support you. Yeah.

Susan: Yes. Building your network. That makes absolutely perfect sense. Yeah.

Renata: How are we for questions team? Does anyone else would like to ask Susan a question? If so, just unmute yourself.

Wanda: Yep. I've got a question, actually. Um, so Susan, just during the stint of your solo sort of consulting career said you did that for many years across many different industries, did you notice from a diversity and inclusion perspective, did you notice, um, a big variation from industry to industry across, you know, women in leadership and, and, um, for myself, I've worked mostly in financial services, but I've done some small stints in other industries as well. Do you have any advice on how to, I suppose, manage some of that out, some of your diversity and inclusion insights from industry to industry, or do you have any advice from your experience and what you've seen?

Susan: Well, I absolutely concur that there are differences industry to industry. The organisations where the primary workforce was women were in the United States, the organisations that got women into management and senior management quicker, for example, insurance and banking, consumer goods companies. Companies where the primary workforce was male, oil and gas technology, finance, for the investment side, they lagged way behind. And what I, so what I think is important about that and what I've learned through my trials and tribulations is that what works in the companies that have been at this longer, will be different from what works at companies that are just beginning. So a lot of companies that, and I don't know if you've seen this yourself, Wanda companies that have been doing this for a while. They have a higher tolerance for doing gender dynamics, where companies that haven't, their executives get all defensive when you talk about the fact that there might be, might possibly be some adverse impact on women in their culture. So that's the first thing that popped into my mind when you asked your question, but I'd love to hear what you're seeing.

Wanda: Yeah. I sort of, I can from experience, I, I do agree. I think the hard thing is, is that, um, you know, there's all these, you know, it gets spoken about a lot diversity and inclusion. And I think depending on you know, who the CEO is in the executive team, whether it's within financial services or technology, it just differs company by company. I don't think there's, you know, a textbook sort of way that, that people go about it. But I, I do agree. I think, um, the companies that are more open generally to people, investment in career development do have better practises and culture around that diverse diversity and inclusion.

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- Wanda: So I think that, I think that's, that's a good correlation. It's, it's funny, you mentioned the three sectors in the U S you said technology, you said financial services. And I think infrastructure, and I think they're the three most, you know, fastest growing, you know, industries across the world. So it's, it's still a bit concerning how, you know, you do see them as more male dominant, um, still to today. And I think there's, you know, they're probably the most influential going forward, but probably the most, we still have a lot of work, um, to do so I think the stretch is bigger. There are more women leaders within those industries. I think the stretch is bigger because they are, you know, technology is a future and digital a future, and, you know, obviously finance and the way we go about FinTech going forward, um, is the future. So I think there's still a big gap, but on a positive note, um, there are some companies that, from what I've noted in Australia that do, you know, a lot of tech and telecommunication companies that do have wonderful women in leadership programmes from some of my former colleagues that now work there. But again, I think it really does depend on tone from the top and who the CEO is and who the executive team are on their willingness to invest in that kind of, um, that kind of on those kinds of programs. Just interesting industry by industry differences.
- Renata: Susan, just as a context as well in Australia, there is a lack of diversity and women in leadership, but there's also lack of diversity in so many other aspects, CALD and also, skillset, you know, most of our boards are populated with lawyers and accountants. There are no scientists and no, you know, people from a humanities background. So that kind of really steers the conversation into specific directions really to see, how much work we still have to do in Australia. Some of which is being done by your collaborator, Michelle Redfern. Yes. And the team I work with Michelle a little bit with Mind Tribes as well and I don't know if she's told you about Mind Tribes. So we do some work in that realm as well. So it's really exciting to be working on diversity and inclusion. Yes. Well, ladies, I think it's time for us to wrap up Michelle, do you have any final thoughts for, for us? Oh, Susan, sorry. So yeah.
- Susan: Well, I do want to, because I kind of focused on myself here. I do want to say what a privilege it is to be working with Michelle on a career that sores. And, I love that we've been getting feedback about the positive impact intentional, known to us and, and surprising to us women who were saying, Oh, you have no idea how this helped. So that's been tremendous. And it's a wonderful thing to be doing in this new phase of my life.
- Renata: I'm so glad to hear that I'm on the platform as well. So I'm really excited. Thank you so much for the knowledge and wisdom. Yes. Thank you for including me. And, you know, I participate both as, you know, somebody who's there to support you and Michelle as well as, you know, somebody who needs help myself.
- Susan: Don't we all.
- Renata: It's really good. Thanks for the listeners who came live and asked lovely questions and participated in the chatbox. It's been quite active and I hope to see you all next time. Bye everyone

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Susan: Thank you everybody. Thanks so much. Renata, take care. Bye. Bye.