



Gretchen Lehman (00:24)

Imagine you're fresh out of school and you have lofty goals to be a high impact consultant. You know what you're capable of and you're ready to get started. But then you're told it's never going to happen. And the reason why? You're too blonde? Too young? Too inexperienced? And shock of all shocks, you're not even a CPA? That's exactly what happened to today's guest. But thankfully she decided they were wrong. I'm Gretchen Lehman and today we're talking about charting your own path with an incredible woman who did just that.

We'll learn how to shift your mindset, even when the odds are against you, and what it takes to make your firm a destination company. Welcome to Beyond the Spreadsheet. But before we introduce our guests, there's another accomplished woman here in the studio. It's our own Terri Johnson. Welcome, Terri. Thanks for joining us.

Terri S Johnson (01:11)

It's great to be here today. I'm beyond the spreadsheet Gretchen and I am just thrilled today to have a wonderful guest. Angie Grissom. That's right, *the* Angie Grissom. I know many of you have heard of her and heard her speak over the years and we're just thrilled that she could join us today. Angie is the owner of the Rainmaker Companies where she's devoted to helping accounting firms grow and helping accountants be the best that they can be.

Angie's been one of Accounting Today's Top 100 Most Influential People for the last 10 years running, and she's a frequent speaker and presenter on the national stage. So it's great to have you here, Angie. We're so honored that you spent a little bit of time with us today on Beyond the Spreadsheet. So before we kind of get into the meat of your day-to-day and what you do today, I had a lot of fun reading about you, kind of preparing for this. And I was charmed, I guess is a good way to say it, about your story when you were just a little girl and came up with an idea called Dance with a Star. Can you tell us a little bit about that and how that sort of planted a seed for you for where you are today?

Angie Grissom (02:21)

Absolutely. Well, thank you, Terri and Gretchen for having me. I've been looking forward to this interview for a while. So Dancing with a Star, kind of a funny story. When I was a little girl, I was always inventing businesses and lots of different things, but probably the one that my family brings up the most often is the Dance with a Star. And basically, when I was about eight years old, I decided that it was a really good way to form a business and make money. I would cut the faces out of magazines of famous people, golfers, you name it, and create bodies with construction paper or notebook paper and tape them on, and then charged my aunts and uncles and others to dance with a star. So I say that dance with a star was my original idea, but I never, you know, you never patented, so there's that. But it was just one idea. And of course my family humored me and... danced with a star. It was really funny, I did a women's keynote, gosh, in the last couple of years back in my hometown where I grew up and my aunt, Jeanette, who happened to be in the audience, she walked up stage with her copy of the star that she danced with. She kept it all of those years. I loved it because I didn't have it anymore, but she did and so now I have a copy. It's great, but that's the story.

Terri S Johnson (03:39)

That is so cool.

That is just such an amazing story. I thank you for humoring me and sharing that because I think the audience will really enjoy that. And, you know, you went from this young girl that is so creative and entrepreneurial. And here you are today, one of the top 100 most influential people in our industry. Can you kind of just walk us through the path of how you got from that little eight-year-old girl to now?

Angie Grissom (04:18)

Absolutely. Well, I always wanted to be an entrepreneur or run my own business. I didn't like the idea of working for somebody forever and being stuck at a desk. I was thinking, you know, being stuck at a desk from eight to five doesn't sound like a lot of fun. So I knew that I wanted to do something creative. I wasn't quite sure what, but I ended up feeling like I wanted to either go into consulting or go to law school. So actually my undergrad, first couple of years was a focus in political science and pre-law. And then I ended up graduating with a degree in business administration with a focus in marketing because it had that creative piece.

So when I graduated from college, I searched up consulting firms in the area. I live in Nashville and just looked at, what consulting firms are out there? Where can I get my foot in the door? And I ended up interviewing and ultimately working for a company called WAA and Company, which is now the Rainmaker Companies. I started at the front desk for a month and, you know, hired my replacement and worked in, I think, gosh, every role. I've worn every hat from marketing coordinator, director, involved in the international association. So I worked in that training, ultimately ended up running the consulting division and growing that for several years. And so that's how it happened, really just organically found the right place and adapted with the firm over the past several years. And it's been such an adventure, so much fun.

Terri S Johnson (05:59)

By the way, I noticed that you went to Middle Tennessee State University and I grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee. MTSU, yeah, so I was actually one of my choices for college. So I did a visit there and I was also intrigued that you went there. But I mean, just taking what you learned there and then really working hard, it sounds like, and kind of sometimes probably being in the right place at the right time, but just showing that energy and looking for opportunities to grow. And that's really what it's all about.

So tell me, you have all this passion and I'm sure I can only imagine every day for you probably looks a little bit different. So I don't know if you have sort of like a typical day in the life of Angie? Talk to us about what your days look like and what you're up to today as far as in general with your business.

Angie Grissom (07:01)

Yeah, absolutely. And back to the MTSU comment, they're such a great school and such a great business program. I'm actually involved with the business group now as sort of an Executive in Residence for their MBA program and just love to do a lot of work with them to help their business college be more relevant and successful every year. They're such a great group. So I love that you know about them.

Terri S Johnson (07:08)

Well, it's a great school and I think it's, if you're down in Tennessee, you know a lot about it. But like where I live in Pennsylvania, I bet a lot of people have never even heard of it. And it's just, it's a gem. It's a wonderful school.

Angie Grissom (07:37)

It is, it's a great community in Murfreesboro for sure.

So gosh, day to day, every day is different. And I think that's one of the reasons that this has been such a great career for me because I wanted every day to be different. I didn't want to feel like I had the same career year after year after year. I wanted to grow and develop. And with having a multitude of clients globally even, you know, every client that we have is different. And so every relationship is different, every situation is different. And so my days are different. And a typical day today, for example, I am writing a leadership program for a firm in Atlanta, and it's based on highly functional teams. And so I've spent my morning writing leadership content and pulling together videos and content curriculum. I'm doing the same thing this afternoon for another firm with multi-level training where we have everybody from staff up through partners that we're doing leadership and business development training. So today's a content day for me.

A lot of times I'm involved with things like this, podcasts, writing. One of the things that I started doing early on at Rainmaker, was I started writing articles for Accounting Today within the first year that I worked there. My boss, the founder of Rainmaker, Troy Waugh, had written a book called *Power Up Your Profits*. And so we were repurposing each of the chapters for Accounting Today, just from the beginning. And so I became involved with writing, publishing, speaking, thought leadership early, early on and loved it. And I think that's one of the reasons that, you know, that I've grown as much as I have because I've had a lot of exposure to media and a lot of opportunities, columns and things like that.

So some days I'm writing the "He Said, She Said" column for Accounting Today or I'm writing articles or keynote speeches. We do you know, keynotes globally. We have clients in Europe and all over and of course a lot of the associations we do programming for. So it could be thought leadership, it could be writing, speaking, interviews, content development. We hired about 10 new people last year. So train the trainers, getting people up to speed on that, launching new programs. Every day is different, but it's all exciting. I would say that none of the days are boring.

Terri S Johnson (10:06)

Well, I love that. And it's interesting when you're traveling, and you're also having days in the office. I'm assuming that when you're writing content, you've probably spent quite a bit of time with that firm, interviewing them and really talking about what their goals are and what they're trying to achieve. So I would think the planning that goes into you having a day to sit and write must be pretty extensive, I would think.

Angie Grissom (10:33)

It is, and you know, every firm is different and the profession right now, there's such an opportunity to strengthen existing and up and coming leaders. I have one of my community groups, we have a lot of niche or niche-based communities and then also a service-based community called the CAS Group. One of my communities is called CEO Grow and it's a group of managing partners from all over the country and we get together several times a year.

And I hear from them, that's a lot of market research for me. I hear from them what they need to see in the leaders in their firms, the existing partners as well as the up-and-coming leaders. And I did so much practice management consulting early in my career, I just cut my teeth on it. And so I had a different perspective in terms of what firms need to be successful. So taking that experience, hearing from managing partners, getting to know the players in these firms, understanding what's working with their culture, what's not, what the opportunities are, it really does help.

We do so much coaching, one-on-one coaching with firm leaders and up-and-coming leaders. We hear from them what works and what doesn't work. And so, yeah, it's a lot of ongoing research and it has to be really customized to the association or the firm.

Terri S Johnson (11:55)

I work with a lot of accounting firms too, and they're all different. They all have their own cultures and their different needs or their strengths and weaknesses. So I'm sure you're kind of collecting all these best practices and then you can share, but then it has to kind of relate to them where they are and where they want to go.

And it's funny, because when I was reading about you, the word superpower came up, that you help people find their superpowers and kind of grow into the best leaders that they can be. Which if you're doing change management or you're working with the firms to be the best that they can be, that it really starts with the individual leader. So I wanted to ask you about that -- I mean, in your heart, do you believe that everyone has a superpower? At least one?

Angie Grissom (13:00)

I absolutely do. I read a quote one time that said, "*don't show people your superpower, show them theirs.*" And I think that that's really important. I absolutely believe everybody has a superpower and multiple superpowers, but I think it's really important if you can help people to discover what that is within them, where they get energy, where they get engagement, where they get passion.

And not everybody has the same superpower. You know, our team at Rainmaker, for example, we have a lot of different personalities on the DISC profile. We have a lot of different gifts in terms of, gosh, you name it, processes to content development to artistic ability to change management. And I think that if you have a culture where you can really uncover what people are really good at and what they like doing, and you find a way to create a role for them where they're doing those things, that impacts the success of your business, whether it's an accounting firm or a consulting firm or any firm.

I think that is a secret weapon of firms that have really good retention and recruiting strategies. Don't put people in a box. There are things that need to be done, of course, but uncover what people want to do, can do, help them develop that, and then they're part of it, invested, they act like owners in the business, which is great.

Terri S Johnson (14:32)

And you're creating leaders. I think there's sort of a common misconception that leaders are like the people that are just running the company, the managing partner or the partners. But, you know, I see here at Capstan, I see leaders at every aspect of our business. And, you know, I'm one that believes that you can be a leader no matter what you're doing.

I think part of it is just the buy-in of having people see themselves as a leader. What do you do to bring that out?

Angie Grissom (15:15)

You know, I think it's a mindset from the top. And we have worked with people that have said, not in these words, but "*Crown me a leader, crown me a partner, crown me a leader so these people will follow me.*" And that's not how it works. We all know that leaders exist within organizations and groups, whether they are deemed a leader or

not. So I truly believe that. We all have influential people within our organizations that might be right out of school but they're still leading the charge, whether they have the title or not. I believe that everybody has the opportunity to lead, some lead in different ways, just like with business development. Not everybody's gonna be that really outgoing extroverted person that's a great business developer of new clients, but most people in this profession are really good at what they do and they create a lot of loyalty within their client base, that makes them a rainmaker.

The same concept applies for leadership. So you can be a leader of people internally and develop people. You can be a leader in the market. You can be a leader, you know, with clients. And so I believe that their leadership at many, many levels. And I think when top partners are not threatened by that and they can find ways to get everybody to sort of row in the same direction and tap into their creativity and leadership, then they succeed. It's when they have that scarcity mentality of "I'm the leader, I'm in charge, do what I say," that they run into issues, I think.

Terri S Johnson (16:56)

I agree with you 100%. If you look at an organization, everyone has different skill sets and these superpowers that we were talking about. And you might, I read that you love to clean up clutter. That's kind of a thing you like to do. So if you walked in my office on most days, you'd be like, oh, she's a train wreck, you know, but at the end of the day, I clean it all up, but it's just the way I work.

So I mean, we all have different ways of working and different facets, you know, what I might find super interesting would maybe bore you to tears. And I, I think when you have that insight, where you accept that everyone has these superpowers and these unique abilities, that you let them shine. Instead of focusing on weaknesses, you focus on strengths. And that was something that you said that really spoke to me. I love that. And I think it's, you're in a position where you can help, help not only individuals, but the companies discover how you have that all work together. And it helps a company become very strong and focused in the right direction.

Angie Grissom (17:56)

Absolutely.

Terri S Johnson (18:17)

I had an experience last night that was really interesting, I've been very involved over the years in a group called Commercial Real Estate Women. It's a national organization and I was Past President of Crew Philadelphia. We celebrated last night our 40-year anniversary, which was so much fun. They had 17 of the 40 past presidents there. They had three of the founding women speak about what it was like 40 years ago as a woman in that industry. And I was thinking about our time that we were going to have together today.

I'm just curious because you're, obviously you haven't been doing this for 40 years, but when you started, did you ever experience discrimination as far as your age or experience, gender, that kind of thing?

Angie Grissom (19:13)

Oh my gosh, absolutely. Well, when I started out of school, I was about, I think, 24 when I started with Rainmaker, most of the consultants that were in the industry were male and had gray hair. And, you know, that was just, that was the deal. And CPAs. And here comes this, you know, business administration marketing, blonde, 24 year old, female, that doesn't really fit the mold. And so yeah, there was some pushback, I think, initially, just with just a few people around, wait a minute, you're not exactly the material that we're used to, you know, to be a consultant. But I knew that I had a marketing degree, but I didn't necessarily wanna go into marketing. I wanted to tell the managing partners how to run their firms.

And that was fun for me, that was important for me. And so I just never accepted it. I never accepted, yeah, I don't have gray hair and probably won't if I can continue coloring it, right? So, and I'm probably not gonna go get my CPA,

I have my MBA, but probably not gonna get my CPA. And you know what, I'm not trying to teach them accounting. What I'm teaching them is what I know in leadership and accountability and...

Terri S Johnson (20:09)

I love it.

Angie Grissom (20:35)

So yeah, absolutely have run into that. I have not been one to ever pay attention to it. And I think it helped me be successful because I would go in my 20s into firms and sit at boardroom tables with lots of older people that were my parents' age and tell them how to run their firm. And I had to go in there with the confidence that I knew what I was doing and you have to establish that very quickly through building trust. I had one experience where I worked with a firm in the northeast and I walked in and they said, "Just so you know, you're one of like six consultants in the past five years and we chew them up and spit them out." And I said, "Okay, let's, let's take a look." I stayed in that firm for 8+ years.

I think it's just about how you approach it. We're in the people business, it's about building relationships. So it doesn't matter how old you are or how blonde you are or how gray you are or whatever. I think it's a matter of just not paying attention to that and forging forward.

Terri S Johnson (21:49)

I couldn't agree with you more. And I feel like it's a level, you mentioned the word confidence and a level of trust. And when you're confident in yourself and you project that and you build, maybe there's a little skepticism at first, but you're building that trust. And then eventually, it's sort of, it's in the rear-view mirror. Nobody really thinks about it anymore. And I'm sure in your work that you're doing, that you're also imparting this to the folks that you're working with too.

If you're young and you're bright, and you know, forge ahead and you can really get in that mindset and accomplish.

Angie Grissom (22:29)

Yeah, but I will tell you one differentiator. I was never given anything, for example, I never walked into a, you know, cushy job where, "Oh here you go, here's a this, here's a you know promotion, and you know you've been here for five years do this."

I had to work really hard to get every promotion, everything I ever had to do. I almost had to work harder, it felt sometimes than those around me because I was a little bit younger. But I'll tell you, if you were willing to work for it and study and get your hands on anything you can and read and work harder, really harder than those people around you, nothing will stop you. Nothing will stop you. You got to have the confidence, but you've also got to work really hard.

Terri S Johnson (23:27)

You know it's funny because the younger generation today, you know, they're very bright. But it's also like just imparting on them like that just old-fashioned hard work is really part of success, it's sort of a combination to me. And hard work is part of a culture.

You're transforming firms, you know, by building these healthy and cohesive internal cultures and nurturing success. And it sounds like you're in some cases, you're working with firms for a while. Changing a culture doesn't necessarily happen overnight. I've seen that here at Capstan, you know, when we started our firm, we were just so, I don't know what the word is, kind of just really committed, I guess, to having a very positive, healthy culture where everyone could sort of be their best selves and bring that, their unique ability and grow in the way that they wanted to grow and have the company move forward through that.

What are some of the key things that partners need to consider when they're intentionally crafting their culture or thinking about making some shifts in their culture?

Angie Grissom (24:59)

When I started at Rainmaker, one of the things that kept me here was we were going through a program called Five Star Client Service. It's a program that we actually teach and go into firms and implement. I learned early on that there's no way that you can treat your external clients better than you can your internal clients. A lot of times firms are more focused about how they're perceived by their clients than their team. They're just not thinking about it, it's not on their radar. And so I learned through that program that really starts, it begins internally and then it flows externally. So I think that's important. Your number one client is your team period. And it's about trust.

One of the first business books I ever read in consulting was Patrick Lencione's, *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, which I love. Lack of trust is the number one issue in building a strong team/culture. It comes down to having the trust with one another and that is an active, proactive thing that you have to work on. Covey's *Speed of Trust* was one of the best books I ever read. We actually went through a workshop. But really understanding the importance of trust at every level, understanding how to, you know, not fear conflict and challenge each other, but then, you know, get on the same page and commit to what you're going to do as a group and hold each other accountable. All of those things are important for culture because it can fall apart at any point. And if you have people doing different things, different priorities, different partners, reporting to them, it's a mismatched culture and it creates conflict. And so I would just say understand the importance of a cohesive team, what makes them effective. *Five Dysfunctions* is just such a great little narrative.

And then hold your partners accountable and your people accountable to that culture. We would do something called a code of cooperation years ago, where I would go into an accounting firm and start with the partners and we would build trust with one another. We would talk about what their view of success was around the table, which was interesting because a lot of times they hadn't even shared it with each other. So they were hearing each other say, "Oh, this is what success looks like." So that was really powerful. So they got on the same page and then we would do a code of communication where we as a group would determine what are the things that are non-negotiables for us being loyal to the absent, being collaborative, being focused on excellence, those things. And once you establish that and people sign off, you can hold them accountable to it. It's when you don't have those things that you can't hold them accountable. So once you have that at the top, then you can hold your team accountable because you should be as a leader representing that kind of behavior, demonstrating that behavior. So mindset, put those non-negotiables in front of them, let it be their idea, and then hold people accountable when they're not living up to it for whatever reason. I think that consistency is what creates strong cultures.

Terri S Johnson (28:21)

And once you work through that with the partners and you kind of funnel that throughout the organization and everyone is accountable to it, right? Every single person.

Angie Grissom (28:31)

You hope. And there are always a few that aren't. But that way there are exceptions and you can address them. But yes, that's how you roll it out firm wide. That's what I have found anyway.

Terri S Johnson (28:42)

I love it. I love it. And, you know, it's interesting because as I meet with CPAs, and I'm sure you've experienced this too, one of the biggest issues that they're having today is just resources and finding staff and finding partners, managers, staff members. I think it keeps people up at night, you know. I mean, I read that 70% of the CPAs today are probably going to retire within the next 10 years. And so the industry is having to deal with this. We're talking about culture. What are some cultural things managers and partners can be doing to not only attract talent but also to retain it?

Angie Grissom (29:44)

If you look at the reason why we have the turnover we have, I think that it points to as a profession, we tend to be slow to change. And it's the nature of the people in the profession typically, super smart, consistent people that, "if it's not broke, then don't fix it," kind of thing. So, I've seen tremendous change over the past four or five years in some of those antiquated ways, those things that kept us from progressing and COVID really, you know, shined the light on the whole virtual hybrid opportunity because we were behind in that. In other professions, there is a virtual component where we can move around. And so I think, you know, just being open to the way the world is changing is a big, big thing, and those firms that are adaptive to that, sometimes younger managing partners really get it, sometimes non-CPAs really get it, and they come in as a CEO to their organization and they shake things up, and then they have no retention or recruiting issues. But I would say, pay attention to what the profession looks like, pay attention to what your people need and want within reason.

Everybody might think they want a complete virtual environment, for example. I have these conversations all the time with managers and they're frustrated with their staff. But the reality of it is, if there is a mandate for once a week or once a month or whatever it is for the teams to come together and work on a project, it's actually ultimately going to strengthen the culture of the team and probably make your people more likely to stay because then they have friends in the organization. And so, I think pay attention to what's happening within reason, but also lead. Leaders are meant to lead.

Terri S Johnson (31:40)

Exactly.

And also showing your team that when they come into the office, there's a lot that you can gain from working with other people, face to face versus being over the phone. Just learning the business and learning the nuances that you might not get on a Zoom call or when you're just working independently. I think this sort of hybrid situation is probably here to stay.

Angie Grissom (32:13)

Yeah, for sure. And it's great. I think it's just you have to balance with your culture and your firm and I think it is an improvement. I think it's a happy balance. And, you know, in not all cases is it possible to do that. But I think if you can find ways to build your culture, no matter what your setup is, and you get really serious about it and listen to your people and give them an open door so that they can tell you when things are going on. Then they trust you and they know that you're there for them - even if they move away or get another offer, they're likely to stay because they appreciate that.

Terri S Johnson (32:50)

And they like that they like they appreciate the culture and they enjoy where they are and that stands for something. It really does.

I want to switch gears on you a little for a minute and talk about business development because I know that's a big part of your practice. I read in one of your articles that professionals need to transition from the old mindset of "always be closing" to "always be connecting." Today business development is driven by genuine relationship development.

And I truly understand how powerful that is. And you know, it's funny, I kind of laugh with my clients sometimes and say, "I'm probably the worst salesperson in the world," but I love my clients. I enjoy them. I want to make sure we're doing the right thing for them. And if there was an issue then you jump right on it, and it's really all built on relationships. So, when you're working with firms, how do you get them to think more of this kind of relational way versus transactional?

Angie Grissom (33:53)

You know, I think people have a misconception around sales or business development and, you know, it's difficult to sell business development training to CPAs for a thousand reasons. I think if you understand really what we're selling, you get it and we do. We've had tremendous growth. We really haven't run into issues, but it's just kind of funny because nobody went to school, yeah, *nobody* went to school and said, "Oh my gosh, let me get my CPA so I can sell." [Laughter]

Terri S Johnson (34:24)

I mean, you're cracking me up, Angie.

Angie Grissom (34:35)

Well, yeah, so it's a mentality, but what you said, you know, I'm probably the worst salesperson, you are probably one of the best because if you look at *selling as helping*, which is what it is, then we owe it to our clients to serve them and give them what they need. Now, it might be introducing them to somebody else, it might be introducing them to somebody outside the firm, it might be giving them a referral for somebody to work on their basement, whatever it is.

If you look at those relationships as holistic, I'm here to help you, I'm here to learn about you, open up to me, tell me what your personal goals are. What are your professional goals? What does success look like? When you open those conversations up to your top clients, which we should, they should be looking at you as a trusted advisor.

If you go in with blinders on and you have a little checklist, *I need to sell an audit. I need to sell returns*. Nobody's gonna listen to you. Nobody's gonna buy that. That's not what this is about.

So I think just the mindset of, it's about making friends in business. It's about caring for people and helping them, however you as a firm or an association or a company can. That's the difference.

And you know what? We have a process, a sales process called Teams. It's Target, Explore, Align, Motivate, and Serve. And we, a lot of our programming is based on that. And what we say is, if you are targeting the right kind of client, you're truly exploring the needs holistically. You're aligning your approach with their needs. You are overcoming objections. You're including the right people. And you know, you don't have to have fancy clothes because guess what? You've already won the proposal because their fingerprints are all over it. They did it with you.

So that's the difference. And I think with that mindset, people say, oh, I was thinking car salesman, that has nothing to do at all with what we're talking about. It's more of a client service. So that's what we focus on.

Terri S Johnson (36:42)

Absolutely. And you know, I find it fascinating because in an association like with Capstan, we have a lot of engineers, our professionals, and they're very similar in a lot of ways to accountants. But they're all very relational, all of them. And I just love working with them and seeing how clients respond to them. And they're not in a sales role at all. But I always tell them, "You know, our company is able to grow because you do such a great job and you care so much." And it makes such a difference, you know? And their role is not at all business development, but they're a secret weapon because they care, and that in itself develops business. If you've got a manager that really takes that extra time and care and *let me look into it, I'll research it, I'll get back to you*, and you've got a client for life basically. You know?

Angie Grissom (37:18)

Absolutely. There are so many truths to that. And we tell people in our academies, sometimes and a lot of the time, an interested introvert is more effective than an interesting extrovert. And that's because it's about the client. It's always about the client. And it's so much better.

Terri S Johnson (38:02)

I'm writing that down, Angie.

So say that again, an interested introvert...

Angie Grissom (38:13)

is many times more effective than an interesting extrovert, because it's about the client. And I believe that we work with the smartest people on the planet and the most caring, loyal, incredible people, that's why I love this profession. And people are understanding that this is a profession where you are considered the highest and most trusted advisor, take a little bit more time, ask more questions, be intimate in terms of relationships, ask them about their personal lives.

And sometimes CPAs aren't great about that. We're in a hurry and not thinking about that, but we're in a people business. And so when it comes to culture, when it comes to growth, we are not in the debit/credit business, we *are in the people business, period*. And I think when people start to understand that, which most really, really do, then any fear of failure really goes away because they see it for what it is. It's a relationship business.

Terri S Johnson (39:22)

And it's actually a lot of fun and very gratifying. I might add. It is the most fun.

Angie Grissom (39:26)

It's the most fun. And that's the thing with the people who are doing it, they're like, this is so much more fun than what I was doing. I love these meetings.

Terri S Johnson (39:33)

Right? Exactly. So I have to ask you something. You are, you know, so busy, high power, you've got a lot going on. So give me a little secret of when Angie wants to relax and recharge, what do you like to do?

Angie Grissom (39:52)

You know what? I just bought a little convertible and I haven't had one in a long time. And this sounds crazy, but I have found in the past month or so that one way to really disconnect for me is to put that top down and drive for an hour and focus. That's been a new one for me. I love it. It's so much fun with the sun out and the whole thing. So that's one way.

Terri S Johnson (39:58)

Nice!

Angie Grissom (40:21)

I love to be outside. I love to walk. It helps me think. I'm very social. I have lots of friends and family. We do dinner parties and lots of lots of activities. Love to travel. Do that with work too. So we have a lot of global clients where we're on the road and love to plan the travel and spend time with my husband. I am really interested in food. If I had a little bit more time, I would love to become a better chef, cook, you name it. My husband's really good at it. I need to work on that. So there are lots of things that I find that help me relax, but I do love the work I do. So I have to check myself and say, okay, turn it off. Walk away. Yep.

Terri S Johnson (41:05)

Burn it off. And you know, and it's funny that when you're that high energy and focus, that when you do get in that convertible and go for your hour drive, you come back more energized, I guarantee it. Right.

Angie Grissom (41:18)

Absolutely. It's like taking time off. You know, you take time off and you come back with all of these ideas and you're rested and you're clear. It's that kind of thing. So, yeah.

Terri S Johnson (41:26)

Yeah, I love that. So now we have a vision of you, Angie, driving in your, what color is your convertible?

Angie Grissom (41:33)

It's a little white BMW 4 Series with red seats, which is outrageous, but I would have never bought that, but I did and I love it. Anyway, yes, that's the car.

Terri S Johnson (41:36)

Oh, I love it.

So, you know, we're kind of winding down here and I wanted to just, you know, as we close out, do you have any like little tidbit, a message that you'd like to leave for our listeners to kind of sum things up today?

Angie Grissom (42:02)

You know, I would just say that I think success depends on your vision for what it looks like, getting a clear vision for your career, for your firm, for your culture, for growth, getting clear, getting people on the same page, having confidence in yourself, having confidence in other people, empowering other people, focusing on relationships above everything, above everything. No matter what your profile is, relationships are critical. Some people will spend more time than others in that, but it's important for everybody to place value on those. And you know, don't let the doubters bring you down. I mean, you know, depending on whether you want to be the managing partner of your firm or you want to go into consulting and you're a 24-year-old blonde that doesn't have a CPA, whatever, just forge your own path.

Terri S Johnson (43:00)

Well, thank you, Angie, for that piece of wisdom. I think that is worth probably the whole podcast and I appreciate you being here. It's just been really nice to kind of spend some time with you and I was thinking as you were talking, "I've got to figure out where she's speaking that's near Philadelphia and come see you in person." That would be a lot of fun.

Angie Grissom (43:22)

Anytime, anytime.

Gretchen Lehman (43:26)

That does it for another episode of Beyond the Spreadsheet. Thanks so much to Angie for joining us. If you'd like to learn more about the Rainmaker Companies, visit www.therainmakercompanies.com or you can also reach out to Angie directly at angie@therainmakercompanies.com.

If you like what you heard, why not subscribe? We're on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Podbean, or just go to capstanetax.com slash podcast. I'm Gretchen Lehmann.

Thanks for joining us on Beyond the Spreadsheet. We'll see you next time.