

INTEGRATED EQUITY

MANAGEMENT

IEM Employee Feature – Suzi Chochrek

A Special Thank You: My Gratitude for Guidance and Mentorship I've Received

For this month's celebration of National Women's History Month, I decided to try something a little different and reflect on how fortunate I am to be in the position I am today. As a woman in the financial services industry, I never would have imagined the immense possibilities and opportunities I have been able to embrace throughout my career. Looking back at entering this industry over 30 years ago when I graduated from college, I'm incredibly grateful to continue to learn and grow – especially since I've been able to flourish because of some truly special people I've met along the way.

I think it's safe to say that we all have mentors and people of impact that change our lives for the better, and I've had multiple people do just that for me. With the rapid style of life nowadays, often I think we forget to thank those that have helped put us on a path to success. So, with that in mind, I would like to thank Patty, Barb, Tom, Paula, Charlie, Kathy, and so many others who believed in, guided, and influenced me along the way. You have not only made me a better person, but you showed me what it takes to help others be better people, too.

It may not have seemed like it at the time, but your guidance and feedback were just what I needed coming into my own while trying to be the best worker I could be. All of you were patient with my development, gave me time to digest your observations, and your input helped me grow into the person I am today. I'd also like to thank you for encouraging me to take on assignments when I had little expertise or experience. The simple act of having faith in me early on in my career gave me capability to have confidence in my work (instead of sitting and waiting on the sidelines for comfortable assignments).

Looking back, I'm in awe of the power of vulnerability, and how you all saw it as a major strength as opposed to a weakness. There is so much power in being vulnerable when it comes to work including open communication, owning and righting mistakes, sharing aspirations, and how all these things can strengthen relationships and trust for any aspect of life.

Being the "People Pleaser" I am, thank you for showing me how to be successful by building up others – you taught me there is a time to let your own light shine, and a time to shine a light on the accomplishments of others. All of you had one thing in common that will stay with me forever: the responsibility and joy of giving back to community. Your example in being generous towards others has driven me to do my best to emulate you, and to share these values as far and wide as I can. I am also proud to now be part of IEM, where Cammy and Ted have made giving back a core value for all of us.

I have been blessed beyond belief with wonderful people in my life, both at work and at home, who have shared so many aspects of themselves with me. If you ever find yourself wondering if your time investing in others is worth it – the answer is yes, and I hope this message is the perfect illustration of that.

Suzi Chochrek

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