



Wishing our candidates (and Coaches) a

Wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday!

Thursday, November 24, 2022

Please enjoy some

“Early Career Lessons and Inspiration”

for which our Global leadership Team and
Coaches are thankful!

A big “thank you” to our Coaches and Global
Team for sharing your heartfelt wisdom too!





I am very grateful to have a grandmother who I admire very much, and although she did not *tell* me anything useful that I can remember, by observing her over the years, I drew a lot of inspiration from her.

I saw her resilience every day. She had bound feet, so every step she made must have caused her pain, but yet she still did so much when she was already in her 70s. She lost many children (gave birth to 14 and only 4 survived), she had a husband who beat her up all the time (he was bad tempered), and she was persecuted during Cultural Revolution, because her late husband was a wealthy businessman. She was left living by herself in her 70s when her daughter's entire family went abroad. But I never saw her complain, cry or give in, she just got on with it and fulfilled her duty as a grandmother, looking after the family, even when she was quite old. I was too young to ask her how she did it, but the older I get, the more I think of her as a remarkable woman and a role model.

-Carrie Waley, CEO

One of the first memories I have is from back in the late 1980's in South Africa, when I was about 19 years old. Back in those days, there were many political problems present, due to the ongoing transition to a democracy from the old apartheid system, and I was concerned that this might cause problems for me as a young trainee engineer working with many different local tribes and cultures.

I remember voicing my concerns to my manager, who told me not to overcomplicate things, and just to *treat all those around me the way I would want to be treated*. I took his advice, and it gave me a clear direction in which to progress with the many members of my team, and really helped build their trust in me. This is still good advice I use today and often share with my team.

-Ronald Hughes, Global Managing Director

The thought I remember from my first day starting in a civil engineering position was this: I was very proud of getting through Imperial College at the tender age of 20. All the new starters for the company were gathered in a room, maybe seven or eight people, a complete cross-section of the construction industry. One person had a Ph.D., others had nothing except high school certificates. The head of HR (known as "Personnel" in those days) came into the room and went around the room asking us about our qualifications. When he had finished, he stood back and said "those of you who have them, forget about your paper qualifications. From now on you will be judged by your *achievements*. If your qualifications are worth anything, you will rise faster than the others."

The lesson is: it's not what you have on paper but **what you can do that is important**.

-David Peckham, Director

A memorable piece of advice that has never left me was given to me by my first supervisor out of school. He said, "Work to be a little better each day. The little incremental steps over a long course of time will help you to achieve whatever you want." This stems from the concept of Kaizen, which can be applied to all aspects of one's life. This philosophy has helped me to reach many goals and has shaped me to be a better person.

-Andrew Lee, US Human Resources and Accounting Manager

My most memorable piece of advice was from my supervisor at my first Part-Time role, when I was a college student. "Treat people well and spread the joy. Even a small compliment can make their day and we need more people like this in the world." Everyone knows this, but for some reason, it just really stuck to me when he told me this and gave me \$20 to buy lunch for myself at random. This shaped me to be a better person and I want to make the same difference for others.

-Sharon Lau, North American Program Manager



A very memorable conversation I had when I first started working as an accountant was with the Partner of the firm. Even though I was just starting out, he said to me. "We're going to send you out to clients. You'll need to talk through their financial statements, or you'll need to produce their monthly accounts, print them out and discuss them with the Board. We may ask you to give advice to clients too. It's sink or swim. Are you up to it?" I absolutely was up to the challenge and relished all the opportunities. I spent most of my time at client offices, with my laptop and little printer, calculating, discussing and advising! It was wonderful to have somebody who had faith in my abilities and potential so early on. It increased my confidence and means that I will now confidently take on any challenges that I face.

-Sarah Olsen, UK Head of Coaching

Always remember that managers are people too. They have lives outside of work. They have families and hobbies, as well as good days and bad. Perhaps a curt response to a question you asked at work has nothing to do with their feelings towards you. They could be going through a tough time at home.

-Dan Lozavatsky, Coach

Pay attention. Bring undivided focus to the task at hand, whether it's creating a killer business growth strategy, or helping a colleague unknot a gnarly business problem. Also, measure twice, cut once. What this means is that people often assume they know something even when it turns out they don't [and then they make a premature decision]. This a common mistake, but rarely admitted. Question yourself—and others if necessary-- to reduce unforced errors.

-Steven Faigen, Coach

A lesson I learned from my first supervisor was to always look for opportunities to contribute and to be open to new challenges. Overcoming a challenge and learning from it is a great feeling!

-Dave Rice, US Coach

An important lesson I learned from my supervisor in my first full-time position after college was how to "flex" to adapt to the styles of different types of individuals. While visiting sales prospects on foot in the Arizona heat, he modeled that while he left his tie on, and his shirt sleeves down, to approach some people, he removed his tie and rolled up his sleeves to visit others. I've since learned that this "tailoring" assessment, based on others' preferences, is valuable not only for external customers, but also when collaborating with internal partners, as well.

-Amy-Louise Goldberg, VP, Head of US Coaching & Talent Management and US Coach

My first professional role was working at a fashion retailer in the corporate office in San Francisco. A big part of the company culture was for employees to "have a strong point of view" for the fashion design and merchandising side of the business. Designers needed to provide their point of view on fashion products they created, to help their products make it through the seasonal edits.

As a fashion retailer, having a strong point of view was encouraged in *all* parts of the company. At the time, I was working in the HR function of Learning & Development and I was encouraged by my supervisor to adopt the "strong point of view" mindset, so as to always add value to conversations, brainstorming sessions and projects. This approach has served me well throughout my career, and I am grateful for this early lesson, which has helped me in all my career endeavors since then!

-Julie East, Coach

My most memorable lesson came from a meeting with the senior HR leader of my very first HR position, many years ago. I felt intimidated, as this was my first HR role at a large bank based in Miami. I met the senior leader at the downtown office, which was 55 floors high!! A small-town Ohio boy is thrust into the big world of business! The senior leader looked right at me and said, "Failure is not an option." However, this was not said as a fear tactic. It was the opposite. She [actually] gave me hope when she promised to support me and let me know that the team would work with me to advance my career in human resources. To this day I remember that. In an instant, she changed my fear into confidence, that I would not be left to succeed on my own. My career of service and helping others to become successful was born on that day.

-Jay Rombach, Coach



Early in my career, I believed I had to be perfect and do everything without mistakes. I reacted defensively whenever anyone provided feedback that felt critical. On one occasion, I told my manager how upset I was after hearing negative feedback. She listened to me defend myself and then said, "Were they right?" I repeated how hard I had worked. And she said very quietly, "Yes, but were they right?" That made me stop talking and think. She told me that "when you are busy defending yourself, you stop listening and miss the chance to learn and improve." I am thankful for my manager's willingness to discuss my behavior in a direct, kind, and supportive way.

-Lori Kondas, Coach

You can tell a lot about someone by "how they treat the people [working] in the Mail Room." This reference may be somewhat dated, but the essence of the statement remains as true today as in was [back] then. Treat everyone with professionalism, respect, and appreciation, regardless of their perceived role within your organization. Browbeating or demeaning people [who are] in a "lesser" position does not reflect well on you or your character. You can be demanding [have high expectations] and considerate at the same time. Everyone has a job to do, a role to play. Respect that.

Also, you will make mistakes. [While] striving *not to* at all times, [know that] mistakes will happen. When they do: Own it. Fix it. Take steps to prevent repeating the mistake. Do not compound a mistake by hoping that nobody notices. This is a recipe for disaster and could put your teammates and superiors into embarrassing situations later. Instead, own that the mistake was made, fix it immediately and communicate this to the team. Then be sure to take steps and implement processes to ensure that the same mistake will not happen again.

-Ian Gallagher, Coach

I was passed over for promotion very early in my career by another team member who started at the same time as me. I was outraged and charged into my boss's boss' office and quickly stated why it should have been me. He listened quietly yet briefly, and [then] cut me off. Calmly, he looked me in the eye and said, "Bart, you need to concentrate on one thing and one thing only. You need to come into work every day with your goal being to be the best Assistant Buyer in the company. If you do that, everything else will work out." It was great advice, and I coach every candidate to be their best self every day.

-Bart Litvin, Coach

One of the most valuable lessons I learned from a co-worker on my first day on the job was to "lay in the weeds." Meaning, before I start my agenda, or am the first to answer a question in the meeting, observe the players. Who are the "go to's" in the office? Who do people avoid? Most importantly, how am I going to use my strengths, based on the current players, to become an important player on the team? I took the time to learn about the team and get to know them, both so that I could be of value to them and could learn from them as well.

-Joelle Cook, Coach

The most important message I learned from my first supervisor was to have confidence in myself and my intelligence. As a new employee in the business world, I was full of self-doubt. He reminded me that the work I was contributing to the department was high quality. I will never forget him saying "the only person who did not believe in me, was me!" Now, when I occasionally slip into a moment of doubt, I remember his words.

-Gerry Cappelli, Coach



It's important to be grateful and humble for everything we [currently] *do* have, in preparation for attaining the *future* goals we have set for ourselves. It is only through hard work, and by counting our blessings, that we will be better prepared to graciously earn more blessings to come. Even in our darkest days, remember that the only antidote to despair is ACTION! Let any frustrations with what you cannot control spur you to ACT on what you can... By pursuing career coaching through Mandarin Consulting International, you have set yourself on the right path to success - just don't be discouraged by the bumps in the road, [as] every road has them.

-Deidre Hudson, Coach

My best piece of advice for students starting their careers is to work hard to build trusting professional relationships with their early career managers and peers. For me, the approach has translated into several lifelong mutually beneficial relationships.

Personally, my first manager was also my last manager, during my career in the global financial sector. We grew up together in the business, and both had successful careers. I worked with and for him at three different companies, which was largely due to a trust and friendship we developed over 25 years of collaboration. My motto is "People like to work with people they like and trust," and that [trust] can only be built over time. Start early!

-Jason Gurewitz, Coach

My first manager's best advice was regarding building strong relationships with your colleagues in other departments. Requesting work from people in other departments can be tricky, as they have their own priorities/agendas. My manager advised me that when requesting work from other departments, to always make sure that:

- (1) I have [first] pursued every avenue to gather the information myself;
- (2) I understand that department's current priorities (e.g., the Finance department is typically very busy at month/quarter/year-end); and
- (3) provide the *context* for the request, to reinforce that "we are all on the same team," and so that the person in the other department can provide the most useful information [needed] to fulfill that request.

-Mark Weinberger, US Coach

When I took my first job out of college, I was in a position where I had to write scripts in Python and Korn shell. However, I had only taken Fortran in college, and my programming skills were lacking. My supervisor came to my desk and said, "You can do anything you put your mind to." This really resonated with me. He paired me with a more seasoned coworker. Before I knew it, I was writing code and running simulations like a pro. The experience taught me that you don't need to be an expert in everything right away. Building relationships with people who can help you to develop the skills you need, and shifting your mindset about what you can achieve, are key.

-Karen Bliss, Coach

One of my first jobs, that I held from when I was 16 years old through college, was at a racetrack, which was an education in itself. The "tips" I got there were mostly related to horses. 🐾 Years later, I worked for Marriott Hotels, and Mr. Marriott Sr., who founded the company, had dozens of sayings. The one that stuck with me over the years was, "Take care of your people and they will take care of your customers." I have remembered this throughout my career. You need to hire good people, train them well, let them know what you expect and then let them flourish and succeed. Your staff, in most businesses, are your greatest resource, so respect them and treat them as such. This has always been a valuable lesson.

-Keith Feeney, Coach

An important lesson I learned in one of my first positions in finance was to be curious. Asking questions - to my colleagues and superiors. Knowledge is the key to much success, and, with this in mind, eventually or later people will come to you as the expert or for unique advice. You can then *charge* for your expertise. Happy Thanksgiving to you all!

-George Sanne, Coach



One of the biggest things I have learned over the years is the value of different perspectives. As we go through life, we tend to view the world around us based on our personal experiences, our cultural backgrounds and family ties. Everyone has a unique perspective that governs how they interpret the world around them. I have learned that by inviting other people to share their perspective with me about different topics, whether in the job space or in more personal settings, I have grown in immeasurable ways. I have developed my understanding of others and their cultures, gained insights that have directly impacted my career and personal development, and most importantly, built a network of trusted friends and colleagues to walk through life with me. And for that, I am Thankful. I wish you all the best during this holiday season! Keep up the great work and always aim to gain more perspective!

-Devin Canaday, Coach

The most important lesson I learned from my first supervisor was to 'ask questions.' She reminded me that it didn't matter how many people were in the room or their level of education. If I had a question, others probably had the same question. She encouraged me to be clear, concise and put myself in their shoes. I've lived by this advice for over 20 years and even now, supporting business leaders with a MD, PhD and many more degrees, I simply focus on my question and keep my first supervisor's advice front and center 'if you had the question, others do as well. Be clear, concise and bring folks along the journey.'

-Wendy Pennie, Coach

My advice to people often is this: You can tell someone how you feel, or you can get what you want, but very seldom both. If you're going to get angry with someone, you must accept that they'll probably not be responsive then to what you wanted from them. If you want cooperation, don't show your anger, even if they deserve it.

By implication, we all need to address the challenge of how to express what we are requesting, as well as how a particular ask might ultimately benefit a relationship/the company. We want to do so in such a way that the intensity of our existing frustration (even if justified) still facilitates an individual's ability to successfully influence and persuade, in the interest of ultimately gaining cooperation and a longer-term relationship. I know that this approach has helped some students in the past.

-Peter Ward, Coach