



## Regions Next Step Podcast

### Young Professionals Series: Overcoming Common Challenges at Work

In this podcast, we explore the challenges that many young professionals today often face in their careers, and how to innovate and overcome them.

Check out the podcast to hear how four successful young leaders are overcoming common obstacles in the workplace, as told by:

- Shannon Beube, Commercial Banking Solutions Relationship Manager for Regions Bank
- Chyna Bowen, Regional Director of Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship
- Kendra Elaine, Millennial Leadership Expert and Certified Corporate Trainer
- Jason R. Hall, Co-Founder and CEO of Arch to Park, LLC

### ***Episode Transcript***

Narrator:

You're listening to Real Talk with Regions Bank. In this special podcast recorded in St. Louis before a live audience, Laura Hettiger of KMOV News 4 continues her panel discussion with four young business leaders.

In part two we'll hear about the challenges young professionals face today and how they innovate and overcome challenges in the workplace. Chyna Bowen is the Regional Director of Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship. Kendra Elaine is a millennial leadership expert and certified corporate trainer. Jason R. Hall is the co-founder and CEO of Arch to Park LLC and Shannon Beube is a commercial banking solutions relationship manager for Regions Bank. Now, let's hear from St. Louis' young leaders at this Real Talk with Regions live event.

Laura Hettiger:

What is one of the biggest challenges you feel today's generation of young professionals face as they start their careers?

Shannon Beube:

I would say it's patience. So, I see a lot of people that graduate, and they want to be a CEO in a year.



Laura:

That's not usually how it works, right.

Shannon:

And we are in an environment right now where we have a society that, we can get real feedback and stuff. So, don't be scared to have the patience to take an entry level position. And know that that entry level position often times is building the foundation of what your career is going to become. So, don't be scared to take that. Take the time to really get to know what the business is about. You don't know what you don't know about the industry that you want to get into until you're actually there. So, take the time to take that position. It may not have a glorious, glamorous title at first but it will literally lay the foundation of what you will become.

Chyna Bowen:

So, I kind of take a different approach to this question. I think the biggest problem facing millennials and leadership today is we have a branding problem. So, millennials are either going to save the world or we are going to ruin it.

Laura:

Which is it today?

Chyna Bowen:

Which is it today? And I think that there is so much pressure that goes beyond -- behind that for millennials entering the workforce today. It's like either you are going to sweep in, uproot everything, disrupt everything, change it, break it apart, build something new or you are going to completely tear this down and not sustain it. So, I think really shifting that perspective of we're just starting like everyone else. Like our father's generation, our grandfather's generation, nobody really knows when they started and we're all figuring it out. So, but to take that pressure off of ourselves to become these readymade leaders already. The problem is with patience there are some CEO's that come out of high school. So, it gives us a misleading outcomes.

Kendra Elaine:

To piggyback off that, I think one of the biggest challenges we have is distractions. And that affects our level of motivation. It's difficult to see the CEO's who come fresh out of college. It's difficult to see the YouTube millionaires and all these people doing all these things, and then we go to a job that we may



or may not want. And I feel like a lot of millennials struggle with motivation, and it's hard to zone in and just focus and take that time to get to know yourself, focus on yourself, what it is you love to do, what it is you want to do and figure out what it is that you are here for and what it is that you want to do.

Jason Hall:

To me, the biggest pressure is just the current state of the world we're living in, the pace of technological change and career change the way work is changing is, by the people that study this stuff I mean, we're on a progression that we have not seen in decades like this with the digital era taking foot. And so, I think it's like how do I get a career? That career may not even be there in ten years and what if I get on the wrong track and how do I reinvent myself? And that's a level of pressure that a prior generation simply didn't have to deal with at quite the same scale. There's no easy answers to it other than, again, focusing on the fundamentals which is your network, investing in yourself and different skills so that you have a bit of nimbleness, but I mean the reality is people are going to have -- people starting their careers now especially are going to have many different careers and in jobs that may not even exist. And I just think that's scary and it's a lot of pressure to take in as a young person when you're just trying to start life as well. So, no easy answers, but that's just the reality and it's tough.

Laura:

It is. It truly is. How has your own innovation helped you become a better leader and were there times that you were stumped and how did you overcome those obstacles? Kendra, let's start with you?

Kendra:

Working in traditional jobs I could see that when I stepped up as a leader and I took control of my attitude and I could have took control of how I reacted to things that it changed the atmosphere around me and that it really did affect my coworkers and my team. So, being able to step outside and say no matter what I'm doing I would consider myself a leader and acting accordingly that kind of pushed me to the next level not only in my careers but in finding my path as an entrepreneur and starting my business and it gave me a good foundation to put myself out there as an innovator and as a thought leader.

So, laying that foundation when I was in a corporate space of being a leader no matter what I was doing and treating everybody the same way kind of gave me that foundation and that push. What I did for myself was instead of listening to music in the car I started listening to audio books. I listened to audio books and I would have long drives or in the car or if I just had some down time. Me and some friends actually just talked about getting a book club started where instead of reading a book we get



together with some wine and we listen to a couple audio -- like an audio book like a couple of chapters like if you see those books out there, grab them. the content is useful and be sure to apply it to yourselves because it will definitely help. It helped me.

Jason:

And I would say and this is a little bit I think for personal growth getting out of your comfort zone, and that's going to mean a lot to different people and there's different degrees of it. To be specific, I mean I was again going up in the corporate environment where I started my career in a place like Bryan Cave you got like every resource, the best of technology. It's hard work but you're highly supported. They invest in their people.

And then in as I mentioned on a dime, I say let's go to Jefferson City, Missouri. And go down to state government which has I mean our state, you can look at the numbers, we're 49th of 50th depending on the year for lowest pay, not a long history of investing in employees, technology is what it is. It was a very different environment and I think it was helpful doing something like that in my career to early on to operate in just a radically different environment than I had started my career in because you learn to be nimble. You learn to adapt, and I think the longer you stay on one pathway it just the reality is the older you get the harder it is to be more nimble. And so, I think trying some radical change. That may be career path. It may be hey I normally go here for vacation, but I really want to go to this exotic locale. Just do something that pushes you out of that comfort zone because as humans you do learn to adapt but it's like working out. If you don't sort of flex that muscle and put yourself physically in an environment that is not comfortable to you or meet people at places you wouldn't normally go to you got to be intentional and conscious about it but, man, you really grow as a human and I look back and say had I not -- and I almost didn't take that job. I think I would have missed the opportunity for so much personal growth that allowed me to really become a better version of myself.

Laura:

Chyna, Shannon?

Shannon:

I agree with that. I think we've done all these studies at my company and people love change or people hate change and I'm a person that loves change. I embrace change quickly and I'm usually the one saying hey can we change this to try and make it better.

So, in my career that's been great and pushed me forward as a leader and I've had great success of getting people to follow me, but I'm also like a quick change. Like I just want we got this good idea, let's make it happen. And so, in my career there's been times where I need to slow down -- because not everyone loves change like I do, and want to move that quickly. So, just make sure that you're really being conscious of who your audience is, who can move quickly through those changes with



you, who you may need to slow down for a little bit because they're not as ready to change and make those changes or those innovations. I think is very helpful as a leader. So just make sure that you're really paying attention to your full audience, your full team and saying, okay, are we moving at a correct pace that we can get everyone moved over but that we're not actually leaving anybody behind?

Chyna:

Yeah, to echo what everyone has said, I think stepping outside of your comfort zone and really adding to your own echo chamber because we get really comfortable in our expertise, and we're becoming hyper experts on everything. And you specialize in this one thing, and you confine yourself to this very narrow pathway. And it could be something as simple as what Kendra said is reading self-help books and different tools and resources on leadership development. But that's still focused on you. And you're still developing the same person that you already were. Listening to podcasts on a variety of different things to be able to have different conversations with people because you never know where those pathways are going to lead you. And rather than investing yourself, I think another really powerful tool for innovation is start investing in other people. Begin mentoring the young person where you work, and then you get to learn from that new energy, those new eyes and different opportunities that are out there and you get to see that for yourself and how you can apply that for your life.

Jason:

Contrary to popular belief, you are not good at everything. And I think the self-awareness of recognizing where your weaknesses are and teaming up with people and having just the humility to be able to call and say I really don't know this stuff but I know you do. And quite frankly you'll find out this again a theme that comes back, it builds soft relationships because it turns out we like to be asked our opinions. So, you actually sort of solve two problems at once when you do that. Because you're drawing on other people's expertise that conveys to them you respect them, you trust them, you think they're valuable, and quite frankly it's recognizing your own limitations that you don't know everything. I do that all the time.

Kendra:

In terms of what you can control. You can control yourself. You can control your attitude, how you respond to things, how adept you are. You can control your level of curiosity. If something is changing or innovating around you, are you going to be resistant to it or are you going to be curious about it? Are you going to try to grow your skills?

And when it comes to receiving negative feedback, whenever I talk to managers, they're like well don't you think that the millennials have to do this and why is it always us and I'm like it's not. It's a two-way



street. Millennials needs to be coachable. We have to understand that we don't know everything and that if our boss is giving us constructive feedback in a constructive manner, that we are open to receiving that and we're receiving it in a respectful way and processing it and trying to see, and that's you empowering yourself as a leader. If you want to be better, you want to know ways that you can be better. When I didn't reprimand it before at work, it's like I had to start being more self-reflective and saying what that stung a little bit, but in reality, how can I get better if I didn't know? How can I fix it if no one said it to me? And if they said it to me in a respectful way, its' like okay I need to take that and apply it and be better next time. So, you can control yourself. Being coachable and being curious and being willing to change as the innovation happens.

Shannon:

I would also say when you can't change something, move on. So, there's so many times in our companies and my past that I've seen a change come. Banking changes daily. They government regulations change daily so we have a lot of change in our industry. There's a lot of people that really want to hang onto that past, and if it's something that has changed and we can't change it back, move forward. So, don't hang in the past. It doesn't do anybody any good to dwell on it, to complain about it nonstop. Just move forward. Let it go.

Chyna:

Yeah and I think that also understanding that innovation is not an individual sport. Innovation happens through collaboration. I think we get that confused with inventions, right. Because -- okay I'll take it back to my history nerd days. Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. That was an invention. He didn't revolutionize the cotton industry by himself through that one invention. It takes collaboration with other people. There is so many people, especially in places like St. Louis, where the startup community is fantastic. Or the nonprofit industry is bustling and we're all sort of doing the same things but when you collaborate you can actually make impactful innovation happen.

Narrator:

Certainly. Management poses plenty of challenges. And to become an outstanding leader you need to be ready to conquer any challenge that comes your way. Leveraging smart advice, tools and resources. Like those we learned about in today's discussion are great ways to set yourself up for success. Helping you achieve your goals is something Regions Bank understands.

Regions Next Step is a financial education program offering advice, tools and guidance to help you accomplish your goals at every stage of your life. No matter your goals Regions will help you with each step you want to take.



Laura:

Tell us about one of your failures and how did you grow from it.

Jason:

One of my biggest failures was trying to be right at the expense of being influential, and I learned that the hard way. So, this was early in my public service career. I had inherited this audit from the prior administration who was a Republican. I was a Democrat. I felt like the lawyer in me is like you fight for what's right and not worry about party politics. So, I vigorously defended the prior administration on this audit issue and to the point where it became me and the then state auditor started to have, like just, we were going to war, because I'm like, you are so unethical. You're a Democrat. I'm -- but like it didn't matter to me. I just -- she was very unethical and I did not believe what she and her staff was doing was right. So, I kind of died on the hill on ethics. Well, it turns out I was too young to realize this and to naïve in politics, but the state auditor has like a barrel of ink and they have the ability to call press conferences and so she did and it was talking about I was so mean and so brash and all this stuff. Well, when you're in your 20's and you're in like every newspaper in the state getting bashed by a statewide elected official, I wanted to curl up in a fetal position and die. So, it was like the worst thing in my life. But I learned that I got through it, dusted off. But the lesson was it's okay not to prove every point, and sometimes it's okay not to fight a fight and sort of move on. And you can be right in your head and you can be right in your heart, but you don't have to prove it to the world.

Kendra:

So, I will say for me I don't like calling failures because lessons but the time that came to mind for me is when I was started early in my entrepreneurship career, maybe about three years ago. I knew I wanted to be in the kind of like empowerment space, and I went in saying I know I want to be a public speaker.

But then I started talking to all these different coaches and things, and they were like oh public speakers they don't really make any money. I don't really know any public speakers that do anything. Like you should be a coach. You should be a life coach. And so I spent all this money and all this stuff to become a very specific kind of life coach, and I did everything they said and I was going hard down this path and it just was not working. Like I was just meeting just like a ton of resistance, and it was just a really hard struggle that was not succeeding. Like the niche didn't fit and it was just it was bad. And the realization was that wasn't the path for me. Like I had said what the path was. I wanted to be a public speaker and I let other people influence me.

And so, the lesson in that for me was to get to know myself and stand strong in what I want and because when you don't know what you want, people will gladly put you into their agenda. They will gladly put you in to what fits for them or what they think is for you and you will find yourself frustrated and upset. So, the lesson for me was just to know myself, stay true to myself.



Shannon:

I would say that early in my career I wanted everyone I worked with and all my employees to be just as gung-ho as I am. And that's not going to be the case. So there's going to be some people that are in a job and that's all they want to do for the rest of their lives. And they don't want to grow and innovate and work more and I was getting frustrated with those people. But that's their path. So, I think really getting to know your employees, getting to know your staff and your workforce that you work with, and you've got to let them take their own journey and be there for what you can for them. But sometimes it's going to be different than what your values are. So, just really letting everyone grow kind of in their own way.

Chyna:

One of the biggest failures I think -- well they're never really failures unless you don't learn from them is being very adept at identifying what's wrong, what's problematic, what could be improved upon but not having the solution for it. So never speak out of turn and say hey we need to fix this unless you have a solution. I think is one of the biggest challenges I think that folks have on their first getting started.

Laura:

But someone says that we often hear that millennials are entitled. Why do you think that is and what can we do to manage and overcome that?

Kendra:

One of the things whenever I say I deal with millennials that's like the first thing like oh my God they are so entitled. And when I've had conversations with managers and we delve in I'm like okay so you have a millennial who is entitled. Let's talk about why you think they're entitled. Oftentimes and I'm not saying there aren't any entitled millennials. But more often than not, what I found is it is a misunderstanding of their intentions. Maybe they're communicating their desires wrong or maybe the leader or boss isn't taking the time to understand their intentions behind what they're doing and it's coming off as entitled. And that's why I always empower leaders to take that time and ask the follow up questions.

So if you are a millennial as far as trying to combat that is working on your communication and working on am I coming off entitled? How is this being received? And making sure if you feel like your intent isn't being understood, explain it. Have no problem saying I asked you about that because this is how I feel or this is the feedback that I'm getting or I need your feedback on this. Explain your intentions if you feel like you're getting labeled as entitled or whatever the case may be. They say a lot of things about us. But whatever it is make sure you're communicating your intentions and trying to





combat that with giving them that insight into who you are and why you're looking for what you're looking for.

Shannon:

I would say a big part of it like you said is just communication. So make sure that you're really communicating the why behind whatever you're asking for, whatever you're wanting to do. So, if you're wanting that raise, have the documentation to back it up to say these are the steps and the things that I've done to deserve that raise. But really make sure you're working on the why behind it, and then as a manager having that communication to say don't just automatically say oh all millennials are entitled. Make sure that you're giving everyone the benefit of the doubt.

Chyna:

I think on both sides shifting the focus from what to how is important. So, instead of a millennial saying I want to make this amount of money, it's how do I get there and really discussing what that pathway looks like for folks on both ends and what do you need to accomplish in order to get to that destination.

Jason:

My theory is, and I don't know whether I'm right, that it emanates from just the inner generational difference in the way work is done. So, many of the people saying it are probably a little bit older and matured in what I would call the production line economy, which is someone is at the top, someone is at the bottom, everyone is telling everybody below them what to do. Well that's just not the way work is done. That's not the knowledge economy. That's not the innovation economy. Like you have to have a point of view. You are collaborating. You're trying to create new, and the way work is done in the 21st Century is less production line. And so I think that people that climb the ladder or they were like "I waited my turn and I got my gold watch and I'm finally at the top" aren't used to people below having an opinion because they weren't supposed to because that's how the way work was done when they were the same age.

Narrator:

And that concludes part two of a special three-part podcast recorded live in St. Louis and presented by Real Talk with Regions Bank. If you missed part one, check it out to find out how our panelists learned how to use passion to work in today's business environment, what finding empowerment means to them and the importance of mentorship. Look for part three where we'll learn about how they make time for networking and career growth in a busy world and what they look for in a leader.



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