

WOCAndAllies_EP88

Elaine Lou Cartas: Hey, legacy leaders. So before I begin a little background about me and my professional experience. So at 22, I became a director at a political campaign managing five people. And yes, I was young, not only was I young, I was also Usually the only woman, only a woman of color, only person of color in the decision making table.

Basically, I was the minority and thankfully I had an amazing ally as a boss. And when you start a career out of college, you often want to mimic your bosses and mentors who you respect. And I often noticed at meetings he would assertively say, I disagree, and this is why. And because he did it, because I respected him, I started saying that.

Often, when I was at a meeting, I would say, I disagree, this is why. I did not get the same response he did. Instead, jaws dropped. And here's the reality I realized. I'm not a white man. And I was a young 22 year old Asian woman who probably looked like a teenager at that time because Asian don't reason.

And there's this unconscious bias of Asian women being quiet, not speaking up. And I had to learn that I was hired as a director, not to just do things like a dictator to a follower, but I was hired Because of my skillset, my ability to manage a team and to hold my boss and the company worked for accountable.

It's what I remind my clients, whether they are leaders and executives at a fortune 500 company, or whether they're a small business owner, that's what I remind them. And in my early twenties, it was really tough to navigate. I would ask my parents for advice and them being. Filipino immigrants, they were just saying, Hey, listen to what your boss has to say, put your head down and do the work.

And I realized that was different in this country, in this culture. Thankfully, in my young twenties, I hired my own career coach who was wonderful, but couldn't relate to my personal experience being a first gen Filipino immigrant. Now it wasn't her fault. It was just different experiences. And I will share though, hiring my coach.

At a young age helped me increase my salary change. Change career successfully to get my first six figures. And I hired a coach before it became what it is today, before it became popular. Because I was just really tired of trying to figure things out on my own. And maybe you relate to what I have to say, but as a, Filipino, Frisian immigrant, and maybe for you, if you grew up in a traditional household, whether you're a woman of color, woman, we were taught to respect our elders, which often meant doing what they say and not questioning it.

But when you grow up in this American country and you want to move up, you don't move up by just what others say. It's learning to speak up. assertively. And when I graduated from my Master's of Leadership and Management in 2017 so I can work towards being an executive director for a non profit, I quickly realized I no longer wanted to do that.

I realized that despite mentors wanting me to and grateful for their support, it wasn't what I wanted. No, I am not blaming my mentors. I'm really grateful that they sought my best interest. I just had to learn how to honor my voice. Thank goodness for therapy, by the way, specifically EMDR therapy. And I also have to be honest.

I was suffering from people pleasing and that's when I realized I wanted to become a career coach for women of color and allies because of my own experience and how I was able to successfully navigate through my career. Yes, I got the raise. Yes, I was able to change careers, but I also got fired. I've also quit.

I've also ended a job without a savings. Even Before I became a coach, I was realizing a lot of my family members and friends always came to me asking for feedback, insight, and advice. So here's what I want to share to my fellow women, of color and allies. You can both respect and honor the household and culture you grew up in while also thriving in a different culture with their sets of values.

You can do both. It's fascinating because this past month. My clients who are both leaders and executives of fortune 500 companies and small business owners who are leading teams and obviously working directly with a dot boss, or maybe they're a small business owner leading a team. They're asking me, Hey, Elaine, how do I manage up?

How do I manage my team? How do I handle all of this office politics? So I got a tip for all three of them, and you're going to want to take notes. If you are driving, just listen to this. Watch the replay. listen to the replay again later on and take notes. So first thing managing, I'm sorry to say your boss isn't thinking about you all the time.

Even if they are the most incredible bonds, they also have other responsibilities. They're also probably managing other people on top of that they have a personal life. So when they throw you a new task or project. And you and your team simply don't have the capacity to do Don't be scared to share that you don't have capacity.

So here's a script I actually coached one of my clients through. I understand you want me to work on ABC project, by the way, whenever I say ABC, insert what it is for yourself. So let's go back. I understand you want me to work on ABC project. While at the same time, me and my team are focused on ABC that is taking a lot of time.

So let's discuss what project we would have to delay or delete. Or if this is really important, what resources can we have, like other people that can support us? Also, another thing, not just reactive to a situation I want to give you advice on, is have something called a Bradsheet. I've mentioned this a couple of times if you listen to my podcast.

Make a list of everything you've done successfully in your job. Now, this can be a messy Google doc. I actually recommend a messy Google doc because for my recovering perfectionist, cause that's who I tend to attract whether clients are in this podcast, including myself, a messy Google doc, add numbers of maybe how many people you've managed, Try it how you've increased sales or even decreased costs, or maybe you've saved time.

This stock should be continuously updated after each win in your career. And when reviews. Update, like when reviews happen, update that messy Google doc to a nice one and present it to your boss. On another note, be sure to update your LinkedIn consistently, like one to two years with these updates from this messy Google doc.

And if you want another podcast episode to check out on boundaries and managing your boss, check out podcast episode 47, scripts and strategies for boundaries and negotiations for WOC leaders. And at driving, wait, I'm going to forget that it will be in the show notes. All right, the second thing, managing your team, right?

A cadence where you meet with your direct report, whether it's once a month, bi weekly, or once a week, see what you have the capacity to do. A tip is to have them create an agenda for that meeting with top projects or priorities statuses on each of them, what they need input from you, and also making sure that there's action items that are going to be done by specific dates.

And action items could include whether gathering information, making a decision, meeting with certain people, so that you know what's going on. The other day I was actually talking to two clients the same day separately in different sessions. One, and both of them are in my mastermind. One of them is a director for a Fortune 500 company and she was sharing a challenge of how she's constantly thinking about solving her team members problems.

And another client who's a small business owner with a team of 20 was going through a similar challenge. And here's what I told both of them. I gave them the advice to empower their team to problem solve. if you're having challenges of how can I empower my team to problem solve, here's a script you can use.

I want you to grow and learn. And one of the skill sets. is problem solving. Knowing that you have this ABC challenge, I want you to think of one or a couple of solutions or scripts to share. And then let's check in one to two days on your suggested solution and figure out what to do moving forward.

By having this conversation, you are actually empowering them to improve on their problem solving. Additionally, you are making sure you aren't creating this codependent relationship with your team members. This allows them to learn how to be a leader, think, and problem solve. I didn't mean to, by the way, trigger you if I said codependence on your team, but I think so often as women, we think, Oh, I need to solve this for every single person, actually empower other people to solve that solution.

And if you want another podcast episode to check out on managing your team, check out episode 43, leading change and managing overwhelm for you and your team with Juliana Wise. And I've added this podcast to the show notes. So the third part, office politics. So mentioned this earlier, I used to work in political campaigns, so I definitely know more than a thing or two about office politics.

So what to do when working in a team. Or understanding stakeholders, whether they're in different departments, different companies. It's going to sound so simple, but a lot of people don't do this. It's similar to creating a project. Create a table. It's something I learned when I was a young director.

And actually, I even updated it now that I've been a certified executive coach. I was reminded of this. Create a spreadsheet. Put every single person you work with directly, whether it's your direct supervisor, your colleagues, direct reports, stakeholders from other departments, or even companies. So that could be one column.

And mind you, what I'm suggesting to put in this spreadsheet, you create your own. The second part is put their assistant or gatekeeper. The third part is How is she, he, or they motivated, whether it's the gatekeeper assistant or the individual. What is their communication style? Maybe specific individuals, it's, you need to be direct, provide them facts.

Other people need to be soft, Hey, it was your son's soccer game. How was it last Sunday? So add that. And then, Also, like a qualitative study, make notes of what behaviors and scripts you notice for each individual works best when communicating with them. And not necessarily you communicating with them, but what you notice with other people.

Oh, Joe was able to talk to this individual this way. So I guess I need to talk to them that way. And also notice behaviors and scripts that don't work for individuals. So I was working with a client who is having this challenge. We're just office politics, into their new role and working with this also new department head.

And there's about confusion between what the roles and responsibilities are as it feels like there's tension, but they have the same goal. And there's just, like I said earlier, confusion, like I thought I'm supposed to do this, or I didn't understand that there's a ramifications. So here's a script you can use if you're in that similar situation.

I know this department. Slash company's goal is to do ABC and we both need to work together to accomplish ABC. So here's what my role is that I understand. And here's what I understand your role to be. I just want to make sure we're on the same page. Do you also understand it that way? Is there anything I am missing or miscommunication?

And here's a tip. That I want to also share with you that I used to do. I don't do it so much now because I, it's like a muscle. I practiced it prior to meetings. I actually had one pagers and even scripts where I practiced before a meeting. I would put, here's my goal and intention for this meeting. This is what I want to say.

For me, what worked was doing a word to word script and practicing it. Maybe for you, it can't be a word to word script. Maybe it's bullet points. But having that intention and preparation prior to conversations, just like we prepare for projects or assignments, it should be the same thing when doing meetings.

Alright, so I have shared the strategies and scripts on how to manage up, work as a team, and deal with office politics. And I just want to let you know, it does take time. It's practicing. It's if you weightlift, because I do, it's practicing before you move to your new PR. Bye. And also finding the right mentors helps me a lot, whether it was great bosses or maybe leaders from other departments or even hiring a coach.

So here's my takeaway that I hope you get from this. What I want to share is that Being a leader is a learned skill. It's not just if you're an extrovert or an introvert, you can be intentional. And guess what? You can create your own leadership style. I used to think, okay, this person's a great leader. I need to mimic how this person is.

That works for that, but that's great. Figure out what works for you. And a hard part for me as a woman of color, A first gen Filipino immigrant was on learning the way I learned how to communicate as reactive and emotional in the household I grew up in and how I can be more intentional and proactive.

Now, are there times whether both professionally or personally, I get annoyed and irritated? Yes, but I would make sure I would wait until I was calm and collective. Oh, that should be like another tip when it comes to managing up, leading a team, dealing with office politics, self regulation. Make sure you.

When you notice you're being triggered or it's a heated argument, breathing like really deep, three seconds in, three seconds out. Also being okay, letting the party know Hey, I could tell it's really tense in this conversation. I want to make sure it's productive. We honor each other's time. Why don't we walk for a bit and let's just recollect in an hour or recollect and have this conversation tomorrow.

I just want to make sure we honor. Each other's time and we know what to do moving forward that piece. I think so often people give me the strategy. Give me the scripts. Actually, hold on. Take a breather. Self regulate. And here's an action item I want to give you before this episode ends. I'm going to warn you.

It's uncomfortable. I actually gave this action item to a client as she's moved into this new leadership role in this big company. Is. Make a list of past conflicts in communication, miscommunication, this can be both personal and professional, and maybe do the recent ones because it's in the top of line, maybe you're going through one right now.

So make a list of all those conflicts. how you handled it during the time, reflecting on what was in your control. And now that time has passed, how you could have communicated differently. And you will notice that as time has passed without being reactive, you can be more objective on how to respond to the other party so that both you and the other person or party can create a great outcome for both of you.

And since you stayed till the end or maybe you cheated and you fast forwarded to the end, I did want to gift you word to word scripts on how to have These challenging conversations with your boss. So you could go to elainelou.com forward slash boss scripts. That's B O S boss, and then scripts, S C R I P T S.

And if you're like, wait, how many S's? It's literally both words combined. And if you're confused, just click on the link in the show notes.