

# INSPIRE

## On Leadership

Spring 2022

### Leading Through Relationships

When thinking about my leadership journey, my immediate thought is on the power and influence that relationships have had throughout my career. Along the way, I have had the fortune of encountering many people who opened doors, provided a listening ear, and gave advice during challenging times. Each person holds a special place in my heart because they provided me the opportunity to learn, grow, and excel.

I have made it a practice to emulate those actions by sharing advice, being patient and understanding, and ensuring others feel the same level of support and advocacy that was afforded to me. We know that without relationships, our individual and collective success is impossible.

To build relationships, we must start with a foundation based on trust. As a leader, I focus on establishing a culture of trust by communicating the big picture, sharing information openly, and asking for feedback.

Once a foundation of trust is established, it is important to empower others to speak up and encourage diverse thinking. To do this, create a psychologically safe environment where failure is accepted, and ideas are celebrated. Also, I find it helpful to ask my colleagues and partners to assist me in uncovering my blind spots and helping to fill in my knowledge gaps.

Transversely, I make a point of understanding each person, who they are, what motivates them, and treat them with the "platinum rule." This means treating them how they want to be treated. When I have a true understanding of that person, our work is genuine, meaningful, and produces the best outcomes. My goal is foster relationships where both parties can thrive and reach their full potential.

Maya Angelou said, "when we unite in purpose, we are greater than the sum of our parts." I believe that when we develop trusting, open relationships, that we can accomplish anything.

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