

Up To Speed Live

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>> Diana: Hello and welcome to up to speed live.

It is an epic show because it is an epic day.

We are kicking off this month in such a special way.

And on a personal note for me, Diana Alvear, having only been here less than a year, one of the most standout things to me when I started was how many women leaders we had.

So many women to look up to, to seek out for mentorship, to be guided by their journeys.

It truly is a special thing here at Verizon, the way that we have such strong women leaders, and today we are so blessed to be joined by so many of them including my awesome cohost, Krista Bourne.

So together we are going to be getting to know our women members a little better.

That's Tami Erwin, Christy Pambianchi and Rima Qureshi.

What inspired them, what lessons they've learned.

It's really going to be a great conversation and why now more than ever women's leadership truly matters at Verizon.

First we're going to start with a group close to Krista's heart and mine as well.

I'd like to officially welcome Krista Bourne to the show, wearing suffragette white which was the first thing I noticed when she joined our live call.

And Krista, I want to talk to you a little bit about why dress for success is so important to you.

So welcome.

Happy women's history month.

And just talk to us a little bit about why this cause is so important to you.

>> Krista: Yeah.

Thank you, Diana.

And it is a special day and a very special cause.

It's a special cause to me not just because I'm a woman.

That's obvious, right?

But what I really love about dress for success is that it's a holistic approach.

We can't just solve how we look through our attire.

We have to make sure that we are equipped with skills and independence with the

ability to navigate in spaces as women as strong as we need to be, each moment along our journey.

That's what dress for success really enables women to do and what we know, and Joi who we're going to talk to in a moment, the CEO of dress for success, is very clear about this.

When you help a woman, you help families.

You help children.

You help society.

And so I'm very, very honored to be a part of dress for success, and I'm incredibly grateful to be a part of Verizon who really does understand the value and the role that we all play, but in this particular case, this particular month, we are talking about the role that women play.

So with that, I want to bring in Joi Gordon who, as I said, is the CEO of dress for success.

And this in so many ways is her life's work.

She's put so much of herself into this program and into the solutions that they provide.

And this month we kick off a your hour, her power campaign.

So welcome to the program, Joi.

It's nice to have you with us this morning, or this afternoon, depending on where you're tuning in.

>> Joi: Absolutely.

Thank you for inviting me.

What a special way to kick off women's history month.

Thank you so much for being part of the your hour, her power campaign.

And thank you for lending me, Tami, Rima and Christy to really celebrate today.

So as we kick off women's history month, we really couldn't have kicked off the month with three better, more fabulous women than those at Verizon.

And I know you have an enormous amount of women leading at Verizon.

We talk to many companies, and there was only, like, one woman in the C-suite at some of the companies we met with.

Yet Verizon has found a way to make sure that women are at the top.

And so that's why having Verizon kick off women's history month with us is just a wonderful opportunity for us and for Verizon.

So it's your hour, her power.

It's about us recognizing women who are not women who made history but women who were breaking down glass ceilings and who are making history today.

So this is it.

It's Tami, it's Krista, it's Rima, you, Krista, Diana, a bunch of you at Verizon who are making history.

And what we want today is that while you're thinking about the women who are leading, think about the women who are at home.

Think about the women who are not working right now.

Think about the she session that's going on and the limited opportunities for women in the workplace and how we've been pulled out of the workplace to not only take care of our young children but our parents and others.

We want dress for success to be on the front line when women get back to work.

And so it's your opportunity in the your hour, her power campaign to donate one hour of your pay today.

And if you donate one hour of your pay, I promise you that hour will help another woman on her way.

And that's as simple as it gets.

We're not asking for large gifts.

We're asking for you to give whatever you can give from your heart.

And women's history month.

And on behalf of honestly the women of Verizon, all the women at Verizon who are making their way and allowing other women a path and a light.

So give one hour of your pay today.

We're going to make it easy.

You go to yourhourherpower.org.

And there's a beautiful calculator on there if you don't know what your hourly rate is, which many of us don't, that will tell you what your hourly rate is.

If you work 40 hours a week.

I know no one at Verizon works 40 hours a week.

So we're definitely underestimating what your hourly is.

But it's your opportunity to give back this month.

And that's the only way women move forward is if somebody else pulls them along.

And that's what our women at dress for success means.

We need you to pull her along.

>> Diana: That's excellent, Joi.

And listen, I love the idea of pulling people along, paying it forward, doing this as a community and something as simple as your hour her power allows us to find how we can contribute.

We encourage you to learn more about the campaign, how you can get involved, and we'll come back and visit this one more time before we close out today's broadcast.

Now what I'd like to do while you think about your hour, her power, I'd like to just take a moment and, you know, talk with Diana a little bit about how exciting this next segment's going to be, because this is where we get to really learn about the power that's right here within Verizon.

Diana, are you really ready for this?

Are you excited?

>> Diana: I don't know if I am.

I'm going to nerd out and tell the whole world that I woke up and got giddy but also nervous because we've been planning this episode for so long.

One of the things I think we need to appreciate or at least I appreciate is the collective wisdom of our women leaders.

You go on a journey, when you get to that spot where women leaders are at, including you, Krista, it takes a lot of hard work, mistakes, learning from them, mentors, all of it, and that's what we're going to talk about right now.

We never get to do this on "up to speed live" like this so I'm excited to have Krista, Rima and Tami to talk about their journeys.

Krista, back to you.

>> Krista: All right.

Let's do it.

Ladies, again, we are so honored to be able to even have this kind of access in our company as Joi said.

Some companies are lucky to have one.

We have three of you with us today.

And when we were talking ahead of today's broadcast, I thought it was really important to make sure that we take a look back.

How did it start for some of you?

I think it's incredible what you've all accomplished.

We can celebrate that, and we should.

But for others to be able to really see themselves in your career journey, if you wouldn't mind, we're going to go a little bit back before we move forward.

And we're going to start with Tami.

So I think we have a slide to share, a nice image here that's going to take us back.

And Tami, maybe you can tell us a little bit about, you know, what your first job was with us, and does it have anything to do with this picture?

>> Tami: Can you look at the size of that phone, by the way?

That's how it all started.

Yeah.

I started my career as a customer service rep almost 35 years ago.

And when I did, I thought, I'll do this for a couple of years, and when I grow up, I'll decide what I really want to do.

And then I'll go do it.

And that phone is really symbolic for me because I was at the company for probably six weeks before I ever saw or touched a phone.

And when I finally got to use it, it was one of the great big bricks.

It was scratchy.

You could barely hear somebody on the other line.

But it was so cool.

And for me along the way, it has always been about the passion of doing the right thing for our customers, meeting their changing needs of requirements, and doing the right thing for each other along the way.

And this was actually taken when we were recognized by USA Today for a quality award.

When quality was a big deal.

So it takes you back a few years.

And I think that picture ran on the front of the USA Today probably 25 or 30 years ago.

>> Krista: Wow!

Look at that.

And there's so much to think about when you just kind of reflect on where we were, where we're going, and all that we learned in the middle.

And what I love that you just mentioned, Tami, is it's about doing the right thing and just understanding how we can find ourselves in that action, which can be tough at times.

So when we're building out our career journeys, maybe just thinking about what is the right thing for me, for the business, for the opportunity, and then go climb.

Go after it.

So that's great.

Okay.

Let's take another step here, and let's move on to Christy.

And Christy, I think we have an image for you as well.

And this one -- okay.

Look at you!

All right.

[Laughter]

So Christy, what we'd like to understand about your career, because you've come to us through a different path altogether.

So how did you decide to go into human services, human resources, and make it a profession?

>> Christy: Thanks so much.

Great to be here with this amazing panel of women.

Just honored.

That picture is from the year 2000, and I had just had my son, Phinnaeus, and was newly starting working as the head of human resources for the communications part of courting incorporated.

So that's an oldie but a goody.

You know, human resources isn't one of those professions if you went to kindergarten and grade school classes, kids would say, I want to be in human resources.

They didn't of didn't know what it was.

I didn't until I went to college.

I was studying the history of work, actually.

I was in somewhat of a business, in a law program studying labor relations and realized how much people spend most of their life at work.

And I reflect on my own family life and the kind of jobs that my family members had.

And over the course of history, if you look, the kind of work people do in their life often shapes everything they have access to, and it really drives their likelihood of social mobility, the quality of life, the life they can provide for their families.

So for me this became a really important problem to work on, which is helping companies and organizations find the talent they need to achieve their mission, but also helping citizens, employees, workers find jobs that they really love where they can be their best.

And sort of this optimization problem of people finding work that they're great at and companies finding talent that are committed and passionate about their purpose.

So that's what led me to pursuing a human resource profession, and I had the opportunity to do that from the bottoms up.

I started at Pepsi 32 years ago doing field labor and employee relations out at distribution centers.

I did that for ten years through a series of assignments at Pepsi.

I joined courting and the assignment I mentioned.

And I spent 20 years there.

And just inside of two years ago, I had the amazing opportunity to join the V Team and help lead the human resource.

Function so that we have the workforce and the talent for the Verizon 2.0 journey that

we're on.

And it's amazing to be on the team with so many of you.

>> Krista: That's great, Christy.

And just a couple things I pull out of what you shared.

You talk about work and the fact that it can shape the access that we have in life.

And that is so relative to what we're talking about for dress for success.

That's exactly why their program is so much bigger than just the outfit, but it's the total solution because work can change our access.

And you also mentioned assignments, which is something I believe in.

I tend not to look at any one job as a job but rather it's an assignment.

Something that I can give and something that I can learn from it.

And so when you think about the assignments of our career, I think that there's more for us to learn in every one thing that we do, and there's always an impact for us to leave behind.

So I think those are very key points to your journey that people can take away.

Okay.

So now we move on to Rima.

And Rima, you also came to us from a different career path.

Oh, look at that flashback.

There we go, Rima.

So tell us a little bit about how did you decide to get into the space of telecom?

You know, we certainly have benefited from your strategic mindset, but how did you choose the industry of telecom?

>> Rima: Thanks, Krista.

So let's maybe step back.

I joined telecom after I had already started my career in I.T.

So I was actually an I.T. consultant, a programmer, for six years before I got into telecom.

And the reason to get into telecom was it was the latest and greatest thing.

I.T. was kind of passe, and it was time to move on to the next thing.

So I came in, similar to what Tami said, when you had those great big phones.

And basically you needed a car to be able to carry the phone because the phones were so huge.

You just had them in their car.

And then, of course, there were the original bricks.

So it was just fascinating to be able to have something that isn't tethered to wires, that you could just be walking around and call somebody literally on the other side of the world.

And, you know, that I found fascinating.

And joining Ericsson and being part of a global company where you were able to really work with people literally all over the globe was what was fascinating to me.

And, you know, 25 years later, it was time to try something else, and that's when I decided to join the V Team.

And became head of strategy in 2017.

If I may, I wanted to give a little bit of background on my picture because it might be a little different than what you would expect.

And I purposely chose this picture to give you a little bit of context.

I had just -- this is about 20 years ago.

I had recently been appointed head of Ericsson's technical assistance center, one of four in the world.

So follow the sun, global support for all of our operators globally including Verizon.

This was the end of the day.

And what you don't see in the picture -- and actually, it's been photoshopped a little bit.

She had grabbed ahold of my tie, which is on my blouse, and my daughter, who was about a year old and teething, had a fever.

And she was kind of pulling it across her face.

And I think that -- the reason I chose that is because that's what being a career woman represents for women.

It is not just who you are at work, but it is all of the sacrifices and all of the things that you need to take care of in your personal life as well and the fact that it was important for me to be able to do all of that and not to have to choose between one or the other.

So it was a busy day at work.

Working in an environment which had been very male to now have someone who was a female responsible for a whole bunch of troubleshooters who are keeping all of our networks up, but then coming home at the end of the day and still having to take care of my daughter, who was (Indiscernible).

That's who we are.

>> Krista: So well said, Rima.

That is exactly who we are.

I call that being a corporate mom.

There are classroom moms.

There are team moms for the basketball team and such.

And then there are corporate moms, and I was also one of those.

My favorite story is to tell people that, you know, when my son played basketball and you have the spaghetti pasta dinner with the whole team, I'd go, like, no, you can't have that at our house, but I can contribute.

You want the pasta?

You want the dishes?

You want the sauce?

But they can't come over.

I can't do dinner for everybody.

And I had to explain that's the corporate mom, you know, moment that we had to come to, you know, an understanding about.

But it all worked out fine.

He's a happy, grown young man today, and he had all the pasta parties he needed.

So all good.

Okay.

So what I really take away from all three ladies -- and I just want to make sure I kind of put this into context -- so whether you start from the beginning of a journey like a beginning of an industry, as Tami did in customer service, doing the right thing, or you take note and you observe what's happening in the life around you, your lived experience like Christy did that took her to a place of human services and learning more

about what she can do in that space, or you take one point in your experience and you pivot into a new opportunity like Rima did when she went from I.T. to telecom because she was fascinated by what she saw happening.

There are so many ways to find your purpose, and there are so many paths for you to go create.

The key -- the key to everyone watching is to take action.

You have to take a step.

You have to believe in what you can do and know why you want to do it and move forward with passion.

So I love the story that we just talked about.

And I have just a couple more questions because we have a little more time.

So I want to go back to you, Christy, and I want to just ask you, what's your best advice for women looking to move their way up and around through a corporate career?

Because it's not always up.

Sometimes you've got to move around.

So what's your best advice?

>> Christy: Krista, I love that question.

I'm going to give the audience three things to remember.

And so they are know what you want.

Be self-aware.

And build a support network.

And so this is from 30 years-plus of being a woman and helping coach and advise a lot of women along the way.

The first know what you want, I think it really is worth taking the time to self-reflect, learn about all the opportunities in the company you're in or if you're somebody looking to make that pivot, really understand what else is out there.

And often I think women feel that it's not their place to say what they would like or what their aspirations are for their career.

And they interview a lot of coaching and mentoring conversations, or they talk with leaders and organizations.

But absent knowing what is it that they want, the people they're interacting with don't often know how to help them.

So I think everybody should know, we've got a lot of resources.

Know what you want.

Take the time to figure that out.

And it's completely acceptable if not encouraged to know what that is.

Second, be self-aware.

I think one of the things that's really important and is a breakthrough characteristic of most leaders is they really understand themselves.

What are their motivators?

What are their traits?

Where do they shine?

What are their strengths?

And what are the things they either aren't that good at or what are opportunities for their continued development and maybe what situations bring out the worst in them so that they can avoid them and build teams around them that augment themselves.

And third, build a network.

And I think your example of the corporate mom and the team mom and the school mom are just such great examples of that.

I think a lot of times women think we have to do it all ourselves, be supermom, super leader, super worker, super community member, fill in the blank, super spouse, wife, sister.

And then at the end of the day, we're literally physically, emotionally and mentally drained to the point that there's a lot of burnout.

So I just would just strongly encourage women to build a network around them, whether that's peers and coaches to help them get career advice and insight, or whether that's people to rely to help manage the personal aspects of their lives which I think have been well highlighted here and more.

Know what you want, be self-aware, build a network.

>> Krista: One, two, three.

Can't get easier than that.

Self-reflection, that's hard work to answer those questions, but those are easy ones to remember.

So Rima, on the same topic, Christy talked about mentoring circles and programs designed to build networks.

Maybe give us your thought on if you had a mentor, maybe why that mentor stood out to you or even how you went about identifying a mentor.

>> Rima: Thanks, Krista.

A great question.

And first of all, I definitely truly believe in the importance of mentorship.

I've had some great mentors.

I do still have a mentor.

And I am mentoring because I think it's an important way for us to be giving back, and it's a great opportunity for us to learn.

So I was assigned a mentor when I joined Ericsson very early on in my career.

And what I found very interesting about this mentor, first of all, she was not at Ericsson.

I never met my mentor.

I only spoke with her on the phone.

And she was about ten years further on in her career and very successful, very no-nonsense.

And what I really enjoyed about that mentorship was the fact that it was no nonsense.

And it was very much to the point.

I remember very clearly having a session with her where I was complaining about something or other in the work environment which I didn't feel was fair and wasn't fair to, say, me or someone starting out versus oh, yeah, I remember, it was, like, the guys all get together, and they socialize and team build after a hockey game.

Well, first of all, I'm not going to play hockey, and I'm missing out on this opportunity, and what should I do about it?

And, you know, her response very clear, no-nonsense, just deal with it.

That's the reality.

You're not going to go and play hockey.

You're not going to go and drink beer.

Find another way to deal with it.

It was what I needed.

I mean, of course, a little bit of sympathy is always important, but I think I also needed a little bit of a push and needed a bit of a reality check, and that really stood out, and that was something that I very much appreciated.

I was mentored by her for about two years.

And I wonder if one day I will get a chance to meet her, but I never did.

>> Krista: That is a really awesome story, Rima.

And listen.

I just love the idea that you recognize that sometimes we just need a push, a little reality check, which couldn't be a better segue for my friend Tami coming up next who has certainly offered me a reality check a time or two in my tenure here, which is always good because you need someone who can give you the honest reflection of the moment you're in, the opportunity you have.

And if you can find that in a mentor, Rima, like you described, I think that's awesome.

So Tami, I'm really interested in all that you have experienced all through Verizon and through your outside Verizon work that you do.

What advice would you give yourself if you were starting over again?

>> Tami: Yeah, wouldn't it be so great if you could start knowing everything you know today and start all over?

There's times when you go, yeah, that would be pretty awesome.

A couple of things, but Joi picked up on something that I think is really wonderful at Verizon and that is that there are so many great men and women at Verizon.

But to have three women in the VLC, I think, is awesome.

But we also have three female board members.

So when you think about how do we collectively at Verizon show up on behalf of continued equality, I just am incredibly proud to be able to not only work with these women but to also know that we've got that kind of commitment at the board level I think is really important.

But, listen.

If I could tell myself four things, and I'm going to give you four very quickly.

Number one, face fear head on.

There are times in all of our lives that we're fearful, that we're afraid of the consequences of something.

Face it head on.

Ask yourself what's the worst thing that could happen?

And what you quickly learn is, it's not as big a deal as you thought it might be, and deal.

And so face fear head on.

Number two, believe in yourself.

If you don't believe in yourself, who is going to believe in yourself?

And I think women tend to lack confidence often.

So it's about making sure you have confidence in yourself, that you believe in yourself.

As Christy said, know what you're great at and know the things that you need to work on so that you can have confidence in your capabilities.

The third one is never, never, never give up.

If you think -- you know, if you fail and you make a mistake, learn from it, but never,

never give up on the goals that you have.

And then the fourth one is a bit of a duo, but it is put your own oxygen mask on first, but bring others on the journey with you.

What do I mean by that?

We as women play a lot of different roles in life.

And if we don't take the time to practice self-care -- I'm not always great at it.

I talk about it more than I'm effectively good at practicing it -- but put your own oxygen mask on so you have the ability to care for others along the way.

Get into a routine early in your career practicing good self-care, whether that's breathing, whether that's exercise, whether that's nutrition, whether it's reading, whether it's having something you love to do.

To Rima's point it may not be hockey and beer with the guys, but what is it for you?

What is that self-care that you can do?

And then bring others on this journey.

2020's been a really hard year for women.

And we've got to accelerate the pace of how we bring others on that journey with us, including our male colleagues.

>> Krista: So well said.

Exactly.

Thank you so much.

We have to bring people on the journey, and that's exactly what we're here talking about doing today.

So Tami, Christy, Rima, really appreciate your advice and contribution.

I want to bring Joi back in quickly.

We're getting close on time.

But Joi, I just want to give you an opportunity to share with us based on the observations and the work you're doing every day, what might be your best advice for effective leadership to our audience?

>> Joi: Well, I just want to first say I'm in awe of the three women we selected to be part of our your hour, her power.

And if you want to hear more from them, please go to yourhourherpower.org website.

You will get a master class from Tami, Rima and Christy.

What they gave you was just a small dose of the kind of medicine we all need to make sure we're standing up straight in the world.

I just want you to know that for many women, what you need is a female community.

What you need is your own board of directors, your own kitchen cabinet, your own group of people who will tell you when you're wrong and cheer you along when you're right.

And so that's what dress for success has been for the 1.2 million women who have walked through our door in over two decades.

And the reality is is that as we're grooming her and supporting her and treating her with the dignity and respect she needs, she goes on to be a better woman, a better leader, a better posterior, -- so we all need our own kitchen cabinet and our own female community, and that's what Verizon has created with these kind of conversations.

It's not just about women's history month.

Women are making history every single day of the year.

And so this is our time to just celebrate.

And so today at dress for success, we celebrate Tami.

We celebrate Rima.

And we celebrate Christy.

And I thank you ladies for leading by example because you can't be something you can't see.

And so the women of Verizon see you.

And when they see you, they know that they can be you or be like you or be a better version of themselves.

And so thank you for letting us honor you at dress for success.

>> Krista: That's awesome.

Thank you so much, Joi.

I'm going to turn it right back over to Diana and we'll do a quick wrap here.

Thank you.

>> Diana: Yeah, I'm just blown away.

I've been taking notes.

I have my Christy advice, Rima advice and Tami advice and Joi advice, but I'm not going to get you get away, Krista because we need Krista advice too.

My question to you on this first day of women's history month is what is your advice to aspiring women professionals?

>> Krista: You know, my favorite thing to offer women is to always know the why to your what.

If you know why you're doing it every day, you'll be guided with regards to what you should do next, and you'll always be true to yourself.

And I think that's really important, especially in a space where we need so many more women.

You have to know why you come in and why you're doing what you do every day.

The why to your what matters.

>> Diana: Thank you so much for that.

And it's obvious why today and this show is important to Krista because she cares deeply about that why, and that includes making sure that she is a role model to the women of Verizon, as do the other three members here of our VLC.

And oh, my goodness, Joi, thank you so much.

I was thinking about how you said you have to see it to be it.

And we have the perfect example of that for women on this show today.

So thank you so much.

And it's just been my honor to be among all of you listening and learning, thinking about all the ways that I can try and make a difference.

It's so important, I wouldn't be anywhere without my mentors and I try and pay it forward to the younger women and any woman, actually.

So if you're watching me right now, feel free to reach out to me on LinkedIn or email and I'll chat with you.

Now, I want to make sure that we end by letting you know how you can do your part.

You just heard about your hour, her power.

But we also have a lot of volunteer opportunities that involve dress for success on our volunteer portal.

Y'all know how to blow it out.
2020, so many volunteer hours.
It made everybody so proud.
We're in March now and we need to step it up and do our part for dress for success and other women's nonprofit opportunities.
So go to your portal and see what you can do.
And also let's pull up the next slide because Waze is such an awesome ERG and they're doing so much this month that we want you to know about.
So of course we have the watch party tomorrow night, Tuesday, March 2nd.
On March 11th there's going to be an elevate your voice event featuring the first woman conductor at the Oscars.
And on the 30th, the men as allies, a conversation featuring executive leaders and allyship so you can, of course, text the community on the web and the volunteer platform for volunteer opportunities throughout the month.
But you can see there's a little something for everybody.
We can all be part of the progress in someone's life.
It is such a validating thing to know that your service can help somebody out.
When I'm down on myself and I'm feeling sad, I think, well, how can I be of service?
And that turns everything around.
Because you have worth.
Use your words to help others and we're going to be okay.
So behalf of all of us at "up to speed," Krista, Rima, Tami and Joi, thank you so much for tuning in today.
It is a really important month.
You all have your part to serve.
I'm Diana Alvear.
Thanks for watching today.
And until next time, you're "Up to Speed."