

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 23

*Every Successful Female
Executive Has A Superhero
As Her Business Partner*

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

Episode 23

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### Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

Hello, beautiful. I'd like to start this episode with a quote from Thomas W. White, former president of GTE Telops, now known as Verizon:

**“The assistant's role is and will always be a vital position in any organization, and I admire and respect the job they do. My assistant has spoiled me rotten, and frankly, I like it that way! There is rarely a stone unturned. You can't imagine the comfort that affords me and allows me to focus totally on the business issues at hand. She focuses on the details; I focus on the business issues.”**

I wonder if you've ever had an executive assistant like that. I haven't had one for a long period of time, I did happen to have one and I was very fortunate to have one for the short period that I did. But I have been this type of executive assistant to several executives, so I know exactly what that looks and feels like on both sides of the coin.

As a female executive with a ton of responsibilities both in and outside of the office, wouldn't it be nice to have an EA that spoils you? One that stays four steps ahead of you and intuitively anticipates your needs before realizing you have them? Being able to read the needs of an executive is not an easy thing to do, especially for the executive assistants that do not have years of experience supporting C-suite executives or entrepreneurs under their belt. Fortunately for me, having corporate management experience, metaphysical training, a coaching business for over 20 years, and military leadership skills while having started my corporate career in the file room, I have been gifted with a unique set of skills that have led to my success.

Having these skills also puts me in a unique position to help female, and a few smart male executives, identify how their personal and professional worlds intersect and who they need by their side supporting them along the way. I do not see the role I play with my clients as that of a matchmaker but more of a way to help them identify the right person with uncanny superpowers that will liberate their minds from work when they are with their loved ones and maximize their time while they're in the office.

*How can you possibly navigate your home work and love lives with confidence and calm if you don't have the right person as your executive assistant or better yet, your business partner?*

First, let's take a look at what this looks like in real life. If you've listened to the last couple of episodes, then you've probably already heard the story I shared about my time as the executive assistant to the SVP of sales at a consumer packaged goods research firm. If so, this is going to sound familiar to you: Before applying for the EA role for this SVP I had previously held positions of Senior Business Operations Manager for Allstate and an operations manager at a small consulting firm. I was promoted to this Operations Manager position from the executive

## Episode 23

~~~~~

Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

assistant position within the first year of being hired, so I was no stranger to what his needs would be. Because of my background, I knew the right questions to ask to identify how he could do his job with confidence and calm, reduce his stress levels, and give him more time back with his family. I listened to his needs and then shared how I could fulfill them if given the opportunity.

HR called and offered me the job at my asking salary before making it to the train to head home.

Even though my title was that of executive assistant, I was much more than that. *I was his business partner.* He didn't call me that, but he did have me hand over all of the administrative work to his other assistant and I focused on more project management and strategic priority work.

We made a great team, and everyone knew that I was empowered to stand in for him when he traveled. Having held management positions before and being the CEO of my own company, I knew the value of focusing on the bigger picture while someone else focused on the minutiae. We functioned as business partners, he enjoyed an additional 10 hours per week to spend with his family, was comfortable enough to relinquish control of his calendar, and knew that together the other admin and I would take care of all of his needs when traveling domestically and abroad.

I didn't wear a cape to the office, but he thought I did. We were business partners and functioned as a well oiled machine. This is a type of executive admin you need so that you too can free yourself to focus on what's most important.

Have you ever found yourself in this position before: You set out to hire an EA. Each time you are presented with a candidate that looks good on paper, seems pleasant enough and is eager to please, there's just something about her that doesn't make the cut with you or your team.

What can you do about this? Maybe you were without an assistant for so long that you hired the first person that seemed like a good fit, you cracked under the pressure of having no support, hired her, and then found out that while she was an execution expert, she was not an independent thinker and cannot make a move without you, costing you time, money, sleep and maybe even clients and deals along the way. Maybe she was with you for several months now but was so afraid of making a mistake she continuously checked in with you slowing down your progress, and in some instances, pulling you back into the weeds.

How do you keep this from happening over and over again?

Here's your second tip: You treat the search for your next EA the same way you would for your next relationship **by taking a good look at yourself first.**

Episode 23

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### Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

When working with clients to either help them identify the right person in their next personal relationship, improve the relationship they are already in, or decide whether to end their current relationship, we take time to get clear on who they are, what they *really* want, and then identify the personality traits of the person that will provide them with the right quality of life and love that they see for themselves. We look at their relationship experiences from the past, understanding the difference between what they thought they wanted and what they needed. We take time to work through any unresolved pain, acknowledge her role, heal her heart, stop her from operating from a place of desperation, and use the right tools to move her forward to attract the next relationship from a place of clarity and wholeness.

When I begin working with a woman that has decided that she is open to dating and or the possibility of a relationship, I find that she often doesn't dig deep enough. She doesn't ask herself the right questions to get to the core of her needs mentally, emotionally or financially. She can give me adjectives to describe what she thinks she wants, but when I asked her to identify that trait personified, she's at a loss.

#### Here is a real life example:

A former client of mine stated that she wanted an honest man. When I asked her to define honest, at first, she felt a bit insulted. Then she got a little irritated, but eventually stated that she wanted a man that would tell her the truth.

Sounds simple, right? *Not exactly.*

I said, "Okay, that's the start. So if you asked what he had for breakfast, and he told you eggs and bacon, and you know, he had eggs and bacon, that would be sufficient for you?" She responded with no, that's not what I meant. So I asked her to give me an example. She said, "If I can tell that something is wrong, and I asked him what's wrong? I don't want him to tell me nothing, I want him to tell me what's wrong." I said, "Okay, now we can work with this. You stated that you wanted an honest man, but what I heard you say was that you want a man who is 1. in touch with his feelings, 2. willing to openly communicate his feelings, and 3. willing to openly communicate his feelings to you." She said, "Yes, that is exactly what I want!" I then responded with, "What you said you want it and what you really want are two different things. Not being crystal clear will cause you to attract the wrong person, and in some cases give mixed signals. The goal is not to have to ask a man upfront if he is honest, but to know how to inherently read him to identify if what you need comes naturally to him."

And when creating your profile on a dating site, if you are clear on what you want in a mate, and how to articulate it in your dating profile, you can weed out the undesirables and attract the individuals that resonate with what you're saying. Placing "I want someone honest" in your

## Episode 23

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Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

profile versus “I want a man that is able and willing to openly communicate his feelings to *me*” will yield completely different results.

There is so much more to dive into with this one exercise, so if you're interested in learning more, be sure to take my free video course, Can He Handle Your Grind? Doing the exercises correctly, will take you more than one sitting to complete the course if your goal is long lasting transformation. So I would also advise you to **bookmark the training page so that you can return to it over and over again**. You can find the link to this course in the show notes.

My third tip for you is: let's take a look at how this same process applies to attracting the right executive assistant, or in your case, the right business partner. The connection between a C-suite executive and her assistant is akin to a personal while being professional relationship. A business partnership, if you're fortunate. You want to make sure that you have a clearer picture of your tangible and intangible needs as the person you hire will wear many hats: your right hand, your coach, your confidant, your friend, your ambassador, your delegate, and all of the other titles this person will hold while working for you.

This may sound a little woo-woo but is one of the best ways to succeed in your selection. To attract the right EA you must:

- Dig deeper into your wants, needs and desires for the ideal working relationship
- Write the job description interview questions and scenarios the same way you would treat your dating profile
- You must be honest about who you are, your personality quirks, mood swings, struggles, weaknesses, insecurities, fears and how you need your assistant to support you through all of it. If you're not willing to be honest with yourself, you can't expect an assistant to be able to support you authentically.
- You must identify whether you want a person that can work independently, push back when something doesn't make sense, act on your behalf, be a stand in for you with your clients in important meetings, or if you want an execution expert who doesn't need to have critical thinking skills because you will tell them precisely what to do at all times.

Now don't get me wrong. There is nothing wrong with giving step by step instructions. If you like that level of control, just make sure that the person you hire is the type of person that thrives on it.

Not being clear on your management or work style can cause you to hire an inexperienced person who will not perform up to your level of expectation or hire an experienced person who will leave you because of your management or work style.

Either way you lose, so it's best to spend time getting to know what you need before you embark upon your search.

Episode 23

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### Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

The right business partner will embody the superpowers to propel you and your business forward. The exceptional EA knows the skill she brings to the table. If she's not going to move your business forward, she will lead and do so for someone else. *So do not sleep on a good thing.* Not knowing how to utilize her would be a tragedy. Trust me, she will leave if she doesn't feel like she can truly make a difference by supporting you.

This is why Barbara Corcoran, Richard Branson, Tony Robbins, even Donald Trump and other people in business hold on to their assistants that wear invisible capes for years. I believe Richard Branson had the same assistant for over 30 years before she retired. When you find the right business partner that will grow with you, stand up to you, and be in the trenches with you, **you don't let them go.**

I'll add a link to the video clip of Barbara explaining how important the role of her EA is and how she'd be lost without her in the show notes as well.

You also want to identify how you want this person to interact with you, act on your behalf, manage your day to day activities and other responsibilities. You want to create behavioral interview questions and example scenarios that will help you determine how much a candidate can handle working independently, can represent you to your company, as well as your most important clients, you want to know if they were truthful in the experiences they listed on their resume, or if they copied them from an online job description just to make themselves sound good, and whether or not they can think critically on their feet, and whatever else you deem necessary to support you in your role.

The fourth thing I'd like to point out is, now that you have identified all of the things I've previously mentioned, you will need to consider the following. What questions will you have the team ask, and I'm referring to your HR team if you're having an HR team, or if you're having a recruiting firm look for this person for you? What scenarios will you create for the team?

My suggestion is that you *create these scenarios and these questions yourself.* You can at least start by giving them draft questions to consider. They can tweak them and add a little bit more or add an additional question or two, but you know what you want. So you are the best person to put these questions together and the scenarios together for them.

You also want to let them know what you're looking for in the responses from the candidate. Each question should be created so that you're looking to get a certain response. If your HR team or your hiring team knows what that response is, then they will be better suited to select the right person to bring before you.

How will your team score each candidate before bringing them to you? So you guys need to figure that out, you need to understand, you know, is there a scoring section for each question,

## Episode 23

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Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

and if they reach a certain number, then these are the candidate candidates that you're going to consider.

Once the candidate gets to you, you need to have your own questions for her. You need to have your own scenarios for her. You will know exactly what you're looking for in her responses. You need to have already determined how much of yourself you're willing to share with her. I think it's only fair that you give her a true indication of the type of person that she will be working for.

I'll give you an example: When I do my EA searches, I've done the last few through Indeed, and Indeed gives you the option to set up a telephone interview first. I don't do the telephone interview, I go directly to a video interview. I want her to see who she may be working for, for her to get a feel for my energy by looking at me, and me, I want to do the same with her. I don't want to waste time on the phone interview. You can tell a lot about a person's body language, and doing the video interview for me really helps.

I also want to just give them the reality of what they're going to be dealing with. You can ask, Meghan, if you want, exactly what I told her! My goal was to dump everything in her lap that we had to do. When I interviewed Meghan, Meghan got to see exactly and hear exactly what she was going to be walking into so that she can make an informed decision as to whether or not she wanted to work for me.

I suspect that this is the best way to do it. Meghan knew what she was walking into, and that way there were no surprises. So I would suggest that you do the same thing. Right? Give the honest truth about what the state of your affairs are. If your previous EA walked away and left things in a mess, make sure you tell that. If you haven't had an EA or you've been doing things yourself and things are everywhere, make sure you are honest about it. You don't want a person to walk in blindsided, get there for two months, get frustrated, and then leave. If they know what's coming, or they have an idea of what's coming before they accept the position, then they'll be in a much better position to work with you and to be willing to take on the challenge.

I realized that the questions I rattled off here in this episode may seem easy, but trust me, they are not. If you'd like to understand the vast undertaking in store for you to attract the right executive assistant, try taking the video training that I created for a personal relationship and alter it a little bit to identify the relationship or the business partnership that you want to have with your executive assistant.

One thing to be sure of is that *there is no perfect description that can cover everything*, but having a clear idea of what you want in your personal and professional relationships will help you get closer to attracting the right business partner for you. Clarity upfront will reduce the number of times you will have to start over with a hiring, dating firing breakup process.

Episode 23

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### Every Successful Female Executive Has A Superhero As Her Business Partner

If you approach hiring your next executive assistant, as you were attracting your ideal mate, you're less likely to repeat the hiring process. After releasing my last assistant to move on to a position more suited for her, I decided to take the rest of the year to get clear on what I want and take my time to hire my next executive assistant just like I'm instructing you to do.

Once you have taken the free course or recognize that you and your hiring managers can use support in this area, I'd be happy to support you. Just **head on over to the website and send me an email through the contact page.**

*See you in the next episode!*