

June 2017

TALENT TALKS WITH WXN & BOYDEN

An interview with
Alayne Metrick - President
St. Michael's Hospital Foundation



St. Michael's Hospital Foundation, President, Alayne Metrick, sees passion as a driver in professional success. A strong advocate for mentorship and celebrating team success, Alayne has been at the helm of hospital foundations for over three decades, leading successful campaigns through inspirational engagement. Reflecting on the industry talent gender shift and trends on the horizon, Boyden sat down with Alayne to talk leadership, diversity, team drivers and advice to the next generation of leaders.

BOYDEN: As a leader in fundraising and corporate development, how has your alignment with mission based organizations guided your career?

ALAYNE: You have to really believe in the mission and the good you are doing. You feel the sincere difference with every gift brought in and with every accomplishment that the institution achieves. People are in the hospital field because they want to save and change

lives, and you feel part of that. It's not like there is the organization and then there is you — it's like we are one.

BOYDEN: How does that translate into your leadership style?

ALAYNE: I have two expressions I use: 1) how you do business really matters and 2) nobody has to give us time or money.

You're not in it for a transaction—you're in it for a relationship. So creating an environment where people want to give you time actually determines how you do business.

“Everyone’s job is different, but it takes all of us to get the job done.”

BOYDEN: Your team is a collection of leadership, administration, and clinical leaders and practitioners yet you have had great success in campaign participation across all levels. How do you motivate and inspire?

ALAYNE: Acknowledging everyone’s part in a campaign’s success is important because no one person can do it alone. It’s about creating excitement and bringing people in. When you bring people into the strategy, they’re part of it and they understand the complexity.

Everyone’s job is different, but we’re all fundraisers and it takes all of us to get the job done. As a leader, you are the number one cheerleader. It’s your job to think, give constructive criticism and motivate the team towards a successful outcome.

BOYDEN: What role does mentoring play?

ALAYNE: Everyone has their gifts. It gives you a great sense of pride to see where people go that you have mentored and worked with.

For instance, an individual who worked with me for 17 years recently became the president of a foundation and she is doing a terrific job. I’m grateful that many of the people I have worked with are stellar and that’s what a team is about —they may have strengths that you don’t have and can give you advice. It’s a great sense of accomplishment to see people do the job well.

BOYDEN: What does diversity look like in the healthcare industry?

ALAYNE: What’s interesting now in our profession is that about 80% of the people are women. When I started, about 65% of people in the field were men.

Today, we have more female leaders than men —these are all great things. But that is a creating another challenge—we are now not attracting men who are starting out in their career. I believe it’s because traditionally the salaries were lower unless you were in the top jobs and I think we need to balance that.

BOYDEN: Reflecting on your career, what has been the greatest change compared to when you started out?

ALAYNE: One is how competitive the marketplace has become in terms of talent. There is a whole lot more professionalism in the field as donor expectations have changed and the deliverables are different.

People are jumping around from place to place more than ever and training has fallen to the wayside. There needs to be more of an emphasis on that.

BOYDEN: What advice would you give someone striving to lead?

ALAYNE: Number one, you have to work hard.

You have to be on it. It is your opportunity to go for it and you need to love what you do, but also have some balance in your life. Secondly, seek out people who are out there who can give you advice on how to get there. And, finally, realize it’s not going to be perfect.

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About the series:

Talent Talks with Wxn & Boyden is a feature series highlighting leadership, talent, and diversity discussions with top leaders of today. The series focuses on topics and themes with a purpose to inspire women and our diverse community to lead. Talent Talks also appears on Wxn website.

Women's Executive Network (Wxn) is a leading organization dedicated to advancement and recognition of women in management, executive, professional, and board roles.

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