

Chapter 19

Interview with Lulite Ejigu, Compliance Vice President at Citi

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1. Where did you grow up? Do you think that it has any impact on your life's work?

I grew up in Plano, TX. Yes I do think that it has impact life at work as I grew up around of entrepreneurs and well educated individuals.

2. Where did you go to school? Why there?

I went to Texas Tech for undergrad and Texas A&M for my MBA. I went there because I originally wanted to be in physical therapy and Texas Tech was a great place to study for that particular field.

3. What did you do after your first degree (if second degree, where was that done, what did you do after that?) How did you get into your first major area?

I decided to work full time as well as pursue my Executive MBA at Texas A&M. I believed that this approach would assist me with continuing to advance my career as well as giving me the tools to keep up with the competition. I entered the financial industry and didn't think this would continue to be my advancing career, but I have found great positions that have allowed me to leverage my strengths and passions for business.

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4. Have you had any particularly significant mentors in your career?

I actually never had a mentor to assist me in my advancement through college or my career. I have leveraged those around me that I see great skills and character and try to follow their lead.

5. How has your career evolved?

My career has went from being a collector on the phone assisting customers with workouts to save their home to a global compliance advisor that advises the business on how they should either re-engineer their processes or begin new ones. This has all taken in place in less than 5 years. I would say it has evolved quite a bit, but I think it is a direct reflection of my passion to learn and perfect my craft.

6. Looking back, what do you feel is your biggest contribution?

My biggest contribution is becoming an expert at all I do. That has evolved into a great strength of developing a strategy and operational steps to executing that strategy.

7. What do the next 10 years hold for you?

I have no idea what the next 10 years has for me, but I hope to own my very own consulting company.

8. How has your view of leadership evolved over the years?

I used to think that being a leader could be leading in executing on tasks. Now I see leadership in being transformational and not transactional in nature so that it is the perfect combination of business expertise and a thorough understanding of organizational psychology.

9. What problems or hurdles do you perceive in your area of work? How do you overcome/ combat those problems/hurdles?

I have a large variety of hurdles in my area as my sole job is to protect my firm from risk. I overcome these hurdles by being well prepared for each level of risk by first assessing my risk areas, and then finding solutions to minimize the risk.

10. How has the structure of the profession affected your career?

Structure is always a big factor on how anyone's career advances. The structure of my profession has caused me to change companies quite a few times in order to get the opportunity and challenges I needed for advancement.

11. What characteristics do you think are important for a good servant leader?

A good servant leader has to first never be boastful and be bigger than any task. My previous boss was a very high executive with a lot of power, but she would come in and assist the department admin on Saturdays to fill mail packages. That is a true example of a good servant leader as this builds trust amongst employees and builds a stronger performance within the department.

12. Is there anything in your career you would have done differently? Any regrets?

No I don't have anything in my career I would do differently. No regrets.

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