

Women of The C-Suite: “Have fresh flowers in your office, just to bring it back to reality” With Renae Scott



Have fresh flowers in your office: Just bringing it back to reality. We are all here to bring some happiness and joy to our lives and those around us. Even in the heat of business stress...sunflowers in a vase ground you in what is important.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Renae Scott. Renae is an experienced strategic Chief Marketing Officer for major restaurant brands from casual dine to fast casual chains. She has served in senior leadership positions at Carl's Jr., Togo's Sandwiches and Roundtable Pizza. I now provides CMO services to growing brands in the restaurant and consumer space including PizzaRev. The job descriptors include, lead branding, advertising, media, retail space design, social and digital, product development, pricing and profitability management. Renae lives in Northern California with her family, including three dogs and 12 chickens. She enjoys surfing and hiking whenever time allows.

Thank you so much for doing this with us!

Can you tell us a story about what brought you to this specific career path?

I got my first job the day I turned 16 at a local ice cream parlor waiting tables and was hooked. I have been in the restaurant business ever since working my way through college as a waitress and spending 3 years on Maui as a cocktail waitress in the only disco on the island! I returned to San Francisco and got a job as an admin at Grey Advertising and from there started my career in marketing—focusing on the restaurant industry early on to leverage my experience.

Can you share a story about the funniest mistake you made when you were first starting? Can you tell us what lesson you learned from that?

When I was first learning the business side of restaurant work I was a young field marketing rep for Carl's Jr. . Our biggest franchisee had a restaurant opening and was giving me his first week sales, "that's great!" I said before he snapped "That is 50% of the projection — what are you doing now to drive sales!". I learned to never fake it. It's the fastest way to lose credibility. Always better to confess what you don't know and ask questions. Most business people will help you if you want to learn.

What advice would you give to other female leaders about the best way to manage a large team?



Do not be afraid to embrace your strengths. Be who you are because that is how you got to the place you are today. Throughout my career I have been called many things. The most recent names have been "pushy" and "directive." I take that feedback and look at myself and my team and reflect when necessary. I understand that constructive feedback makes us stronger, but feedback that is gender-biased and focused on personality traits that are underappreciated can take you off track. Assimilate the feedback and

take what serves you. Continue to be the successful person you are and build strong teams and strong brands.

None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?

When I was a field marketing manager at Carl's Jr., I was given the assignment to open new markets in Colorado. I was teamed up with a franchise operations manager and she and I learned and grew together, sharing findings across disciplines that normally do not

work closely together. She was a mentor and colleague and was promoted through the organization and each year would turn and offer me a hand up. I want to emphasize that sometimes mentors can be in the office next door or they can be colleagues in other disciplines; they don't always have to be leaders in your own department.

What are your “5 Leadership Lessons I Learned From My Experience” and why. (Please share a story or example for each.)

1. Engage in cross functional learning: Invite yourself to meetings where you will see cross functional work and learn more about the holistic business you are in.
2. Build strong teams: Strong teams don't look like you! They are built of people with different strengths. It's hard to embrace those differences but it will make a better team if you do.
3. Lean In: I still hear the words of Sheryl Sandberg every day. Even women leaders have to push through the hesitance to leaning in. We get push back and meet barriers every day. Leaning in takes strength and courage. But it is the only way to get an equal seat at the table.
4. Know your sh#t: There is no substitute for having your ducks in a row and bringing it home. If you consistently know the details, the numbers and what the key business drivers are, you build the credibility you need to make bold moves.
5. Have fresh flowers in your office: Just bringing it back to reality. We are all here to bring some happiness and joy to our lives and those around us. Even in the heat of business stress...sunflowers in a vase ground you in what is important.
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You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. :-)

I have struggled with knowing what my greater purpose is but have come to realize...it has been in front of me all along. I have touched the lives of my teams and especially the women I work with. Once I realized that...it gives me joy to know I can help women see how they can achieve amazing things in business and life at the same time. I raised two amazing kids while working my way up to the executive leadership level. My daughter is now a teacher and my son is a senior at Cal Berkeley. It was sometimes messy and often not perfect at all...but it was happy and real and good.

Can you please give us your favorite “Life Lesson Quote”? Can you share how that was relevant to you in your life?

My quote is this “I'm sure we will figure it out.” My teams will laugh at this. But it captures how I feel about challenges. I want to brainstorm and address it. I don't want to hear the reasons why things wont work. I know as a team we WILL figure it out!

Thank you so much for these inspiring insights!