



The first Executive Women's Summit gathering in 2020 took place on Tue, March 10. It was a huge success (despite the coronavirus chaos) and attendees provided overwhelmingly positive feedback on the interactive topic discussion: "*Secrets of Successful Women*". See the valuable learning lessons provided by our amazing panelists in the event recap below.

March 10, 2020 Panelists:

- Kristin Russell, President of Global Services | Arrow Electronics
- Dessa Bokides, Board Member | COO / CFO
- Monica Williams, President | TIED Leadership Roundtable (Diversity/ Inclusion Leader)
- Natasha Gandhi, Division President | Richmond American Homes
- Facilitated by Kristen Kenton, President | Executive Women's Summit & Kenton Talent Management

What we Learned:

1. **Take care of yourself first.** You can't be a next-level leader (or human) if you have nothing left to give.
2. **Embrace the power of relationships** (and networking). Recognize your stakeholders and proactively support their success. Take the time to build and nurture important relationships that will serve you throughout your career and life. You never know who will be willing/ able to help you down the line.
3. **Be your authentic self.** Although it's important to understand that your image/ brand matters (and you should recognize the "boundaries" and cultural norms within your industry/ function), it is even *more* important to take risks and share your innate gifts with the people around you.
4. **Look in the mirror first.** Some of us can't help but to blame others for our shortcomings or misfortunes. However, *you* are the only one you can change (so start there).
5. **Performance, Image and Exposure (PIE)** are all important components of success. However, exposure (knowing how to self-advocate or better yet, preparing others to advocate for you) is critical. Trust me, someone else is doing this and it is being recognized.
6. **Create and follow a vision.** Having a clear plan/ vision makes all the little decisions along the way a lot easier. A vision serves as a proverbial rope that guides you across a fast-moving stream. Don't just jump in because you don't know where you will end up.
7. **Passion is important. However, finding passion in the work you *currently* do is also critical.** Some of us are paralyzed by the belief we only have one purpose. Searching for the things you are passionate about within every job you have (such as making a difference, creating a legacy, developing people through leadership, being recognized for excellence, etc.) will lead to fulfillment. Passion creates opportunities that lead to purposeful work.
8. **Don't underestimate the power of hard work.** Going the extra mile, giving more than you thought you could give, being persistent, and having a fierce commitment to excellence are all vital to success.
9. **Have character. Be impeccable with your word (do what you say you will do).** Don't over-promise and under-deliver. People won't respect or trust you. We used to have faith in handshake-agreements. Value and honor your commitments, no matter how small.
10. **Know when to say "NO".** It is harder to honor 50 commitments than it is to honor 10. Conversely, it is better to do 10 things extremely well, than to do 50 things poorly. Understanding how and where to invest your time is critical. Statistics show that women tend to struggle with this more than men. We invest our time in things that are not aligned with our vision, our priorities, our passions or our purpose (perhaps to be *nice* or to avoid conflict). We end up feeling guilty no matter what we are doing.
11. **Don't listen to the haters (this includes your own internal voice).** Throughout your career, plenty of people will tell you it's not possible, you are not qualified, your goals are unrealistic, you are not good enough. More often, we do this to ourselves. *Don't listen!* You will fail at 100% of the things you don't even *try*.