



## Lowenstein Sandler's Women's Initiative Network Podcast: Real Talk

### Episode 22: How an Associate's Prior Work Experience Can Benefit Their Practice in Big Law

By [Megan Monson](#), [Nicole Fulfree](#), [Rachel Moseson Dikovics](#), [Amanda Cipriano](#), [Pati Candelario](#)

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**Amanda Cipriano:** Welcome to the Lowenstein Sandler Podcast Series: The Women's Initiative Network, Real Talk. I'm Amanda Cipriano, an associate attorney and member of the Women's Initiative Network at Lowenstein Sandler. Before we begin, please take a moment to subscribe to our podcast series at [lowenstein.com/podcasts](https://www.lowenstein.com/podcasts), or find us on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, Google Podcasts, and SoundCloud. Now let's take a listen.

**Amanda Cipriano:** Welcome to the Women's Initiative Network: Real Talk. My name is Amanda Cipriano, and I'm an associate in Lowenstein's White Collar Practice Group.

**Megan Monson:** My name's Megan Monson. I'm a partner in Lowenstein's Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation Practice Group.

**Nicole Fulfree:** I'm Nicole Fulfree, and I'm a partner in Lowenstein's Bankruptcy and Restructuring Department.

**Rachel Dikovics:** I'm Rachel Dikovics. I'm an associate in Lowenstein's White Collar Criminal Defense Practice Group.

**Pati Candelario:** I'm Pati Candelario. I'm an associate of Lowenstein Sandler, and this year I'm the pro bono fellow at the Center for Public Interest.

**Amanda Cipriano:** While many attorneys attend law school right after graduating college, roughly two-thirds of law students take time after college before enrolling in a JD program. And whether that gap is one year or 20, that work experience often provides now-practicing attorneys with a skill set that can't be learned in a classroom. Soft skills like adaptability, communication, time management, and problem-solving are difficult to develop in a classroom alone.

Prior work experience helps build these skills and can make practicing attorneys a better advocate for their clients. In today's episode, we want to talk about ways to leverage the work experience and skills you may have obtained in your pre-law job or career. Whether you worked in a corporate job, a government job, or even a public school system, those experiences can set you apart from your peers and should be used to your advantage. Today, our guests, Pati and Rachel, both had work experiences prior to law

school. And so could you talk about those pre-law careers and explain how you transitioned from those work environments to a law firm environment?

**Rachel Dikovics:** Sure. I'm happy to kick it off. So I was lucky enough right after college to, literally the day after my college graduation to start a job working for the late US Senator Frank Lautenberg. I had interned there during college, and I got lucky enough to have a position open up at exactly the right time and started working right away. So that was a challenge as a first job. It was certainly fast-moving and sometimes high-pressure, but I had a lot of great mentorship. And I had the opportunity as a government employee, and I think anybody who's worked in government as a very young person would probably feel this way too, you get a lot more opportunities being very young in government to have positions of authority than you would in the private sector.

And so I was able to really jump right into the things that I was working on, which included primarily veterans affairs work for constituents in New Jersey as well as some women's issues, which had to do with domestic violence and things like that. But the bulk of my work was with veterans, and also just helping manage the Senator's day-to-day needs.

So I was working with a lot of people who were way more experienced than me. There were some other pretty young people on the staff as well, but most people had significantly more experience than I did. And so I was coming in as the most junior member of the team. And I worked there for about a year and a half. And the Senator unfortunately passed away in 2013. So at that point, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do yet. I was not ready to go to law school at that point. I loved my government job, but I didn't love the pay that came with the government job. And I started looking in the private sector and I found a job with a large real estate firm in New York working with their head of government affairs. So it was still sort of government-oriented, but it was in the private sector.

I worked there for little over two years before I left to go to law school. And the skills that I developed there I think have been incredibly helpful to me in the practice of law and in transitioning after law school back into the corporate world because it was something that I'd already experienced and felt very comfortable in. My job with this real estate firm was in New York. It was very high-pressure. It was extremely fast-moving. My boss at the time had been through, I think six assistants in six months before me.

And so that was a challenge in and of itself, but it gave me an opportunity to rise to the challenge and I worked for him for over two years. And it taught me lessons that I couldn't summarize in enough time for it to fit in this episode, but a lot of soft skills and also a lot of personality management skills, which I think are actually extremely important, especially as a junior associate.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And Pati, can you talk a little bit about your pre-law career?

**Pati Candelario:** Sure. Although I wasn't in the private sector, I relate to a lot of what you said, Rachel, especially being in a high-pressure, fast-paced environment.

So before I joined the legal profession, I was a high school teacher and I did that for five years. I started teaching through Teach For America, which allows you to kind of teach with an emergency certification if you're not licensed to become a teacher at a high-needs school.

So I majored in college in political science and marketing. I had not taught, although I grew up in the school system. My brother's a elementary school teacher. My mom is a paraprofessional and has done that for 22 years at an elementary school in Harlem, in New York City. So it was comfortable. It felt like the right fit. On days off from school, I would spend it in my mom's classroom, or I would shadow my brother when I was in college. So it felt like a natural fit. But I always knew I wanted to go to law school. So I figured I would do Teach For America for the two-year commitment, and then I would take the steps that I needed to go to law school.

So fast-forward a bit in my time and I actually really enjoyed teaching and I was learning so much and my career growth is accelerating and I can say nothing but positive things about the mentorship I received at that time. It taught me about actual coaching and feedback. Of course, as a teacher, I was responsible for giving my students actionable feedback that could be demonstrated in the next assignments that they would turn into me. But also as a teacher, especially one who, again, didn't go to school for teaching, I had a lot to learn and I relied on older teachers and coaches to help me do that.

So transitioning into a law firm environment, I brought a lot of those same skills. And I think as a junior attorney especially, how you respond to feedback and how you react and put it into practice is really determinative of your growth and can really help set you apart. But it's a lesson that I learned from teaching. I think law school students sometimes have not experienced that in a professional setting. And when you're in a school setting, you're so focused on grades and what that says about you, whereas when you're in a professional setting, you're working more towards a common goal.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And in both of your prior jobs, what is something that you learned that you find yourself using every day in your legal career?

**Rachel Dikovics:** So probably more than I would've expected when I became a lawyer, especially as a junior attorney, when you're working with large groups of people, whether it's internal or external as well, it often falls on the junior person to do a lot of calendar management and coordination and figure out when people are available for phone calls and meetings and all kinds of things. And if you haven't had to do that before, it can probably be a real challenge. That was something that I definitely knew how to do from both of my former jobs, which has helped me many times keep things running smoothly when I'm dealing with both internal schedules that are really challenging as well as dealing with clients and other external constituents whose schedules need to be accommodated to try to find things that work for everybody.

Junior attorneys normally don't really have assistants who are doing that kind of work for them. It's normally on the attorney to be able to figure that stuff

out, especially when you're the most junior person on a team. So that's certainly something that I use frequently. And I'll talk a little bit more later about specific skills that I developed that I feel like are less just everyday things and more things that have been able to help me be really successful as an attorney.

**Pati Candelario:**

I have three things I think that are major takeaways that I use often in practice. The first is breaking down information. It's an art. I worked with a lot of special needs students and per their personalized education plan, I actually had to break down information into steps. And that was one of the affirmative things I had to do to make sure that they were understanding instructions. It's not that different from, well, let me preface it with this. Even though those instructions are particular for kids with special needs, every single student in my classroom benefited from me breaking down information in that way.

So transitioning now into the legal career, those same skills of breaking down information, whether you are communicating with another junior attorney or explaining an issue to a partner, breaking down information into several steps makes it a lot easier to communicate and for the audience to follow what you're saying and be able to give you feedback on where you may be lacking information or where things are unclear.

Second, I'll say time management. So I taught at a high-needs school and classrooms were packed. So I would have about 35 high schoolers in my little classroom at any given period. I taught eight periods a day, so I taught Spanish 1, Spanish 4, Spanish 5, and an SAT prep class. So I had a lot of different courses that I had to prepare for on a daily basis. In total, I would see around 220 students per day, get assignments from them, turn them back.

So it required a lot of time management to actually plan engaging lessons for my students. But then it also required a lot of organizational skills and keeping everything on track, keeping assignments on track. It's very difficult when you have 35 students doing one assignment and everyone's turning it into you on different days when there was already a due date. So it also kind of ingrained in me, it's really annoying when there is a due date and people are handing it to you whenever they feel like it. And that's also something that went along with law school. I was never late on an assignment because I knew how annoying and burdensome that would be for the professor.

And the last lesson I learned that I used in my prior career that I use today, again, is the feedback and the power of feedback. And not only, again, being able to receive feedback and acting on it, but also giving other people feedback that they can actually act on. So for example, if you're a junior attorney and you're doing some peer reviewing of documents, it doesn't help to make a comment bubble and say, "Super unclear. Rephrase the sentence." It's better if you want to give actionable feedback to identify why it's unclear. For example, "I'm not sure if this rule applies only in New Jersey or if the United States Supreme Court also abides by this rule. Can you check on that and distinguish whether other jurisdictions are following the same rule?" And I think if your outcome and result-oriented that is going to

get the junior attorney where they need to be faster than, "This is unclear. Fix it."

**Amanda Cipriano:** I think you both touched on a lot of good points that I myself found overwhelming starting in my career. And I will refer to myself in this episode as a K through JD because I went from kindergarten to law school. And things such as scheduling, I always found overwhelming. And I've heard a lot of other juniors talk about their concerns with time management. So based off of that, are there certain soft skills that you see K through JDs might lack because of their lack of a prior work experience before joining law school?

**Rachel Dikovics:** I don't think it's anything that you can't learn. I think it's just people who have done it before come in with a leg up a little bit. But if you've worked for a few years between college or law school, you're also coming in older than the other people who are in your year for the most part, which I think helps in terms of stress management initially and being able to look at things objectively. I think just the older you get and the more work experience you have, it's easier to stay calm in stressful situations. Whereas if this is your first time in a corporate job, I think a lot of junior attorneys have a reaction of if something goes wrong, they feel like they're getting fired and they can't recover. And if you've had stressful situations at work previously, you can understand a little better that most things can be worked out.

And so I think it's helpful from a psychological and emotional perspective to have had more kind of serious work experience before coming into a law firm setting where, especially in a large law firm, things are moving quickly, it's very high-pressure, people have very high expectations, and there are real consequences if things go wrong. So if you've been in situations like that before, it's probably a lot less stressful than if you never have.

That being said, I think that K through JDs can be just as good at all of these things as people who had work experience before. One of the good things about going straight through from college to law school is that you're sort of a blank slate when you start at a firm, and you can learn exactly what the people there expect of you and you can form your skills to suit the specific job that you're in.

**Megan Monson:** I know a soft skill that I tend to see some K through JDs struggle with can be just learning how to interact with clients. Now, if you haven't had prior work experience, you may have had summer jobs or other experience that you can leverage if you were in a client service-based industry. But oftentimes just learning how to communicate with clients, learning how to communicate, to Pati's point, things in an ascertainable and understandable way can be challenging. And that's kind of a skill that you would learn and evolve based on work experiences.

**Nicole Fulfree:** I was going to make a similar point to you, Megan. Liked you and Amanda, I'm also a K through JD'er. And one distinction I see between myself as a junior attorney and people like Pati and Rachel that I see coming up the ranks is that I feel like you kind of have this innate sense of higher confidence than at least I did at that stage in my career. I think it's kind of well-known that law firms from a managerial perspective operate a little bit differently from a

lot of other industries. And when you become a lawyer, there's no managerial training. It's just become a manager as you rise up as an attorney and get a little bit more senior.

And so I think it can be difficult as a junior attorney to exercise that level of confidence with your managers and say, "I have too much on my plate. I can't take this on right now." And it's something that I've seen, at least Rachel and Pati do in practice, that I don't think I was able to do at that stage in my career.

**Pati Candelario:** One of the soft skills that I think K through JD associates can work on is getting things done really well instead of just getting things done. And I think maybe because of age, but maybe because of lack of work experience, sometimes I've seen that more junior associates or younger associates have kind of a checklist, which is good. It's good to organize yourself, but they're not exactly taking the care needed to complete those things and they're kind of just checking things off. And in this profession from beginning to end, from interactions with clients to interactions with other associates or to partners, there are certain things that you should be keeping in mind with how you present yourself. So it's great that you're getting things done, but now it's time to elevate and get things done really well or exceptionally.

And again, like Rachel said, these are all skills that you build. I've been called out on it before by professors or by other teachers. One professor that I had in particular, I followed for her, and she had a decorum of rules that you had to abide by when communicating with her. And one of them was you never begin any email saying hey. You can say hello. You can say hi. It's better if you say dear to this person. But you never begin an email with hey because it sounds really informal.

And I've seen that happen sometimes in different legal settings. Even when I worked at the court, I would hear people write like, "Hey, judge," or "Hey, justice" and submit an assignment or something like that. So it's something small, but it's something I think that if you're aware of you can work on. And it's something that's a minor adjustment, but that could really impact how others see you as a professional.

**Megan Monson:** And one other thing I want to add is just because you're coming into a law firm job and you haven't had this type of experience, doesn't mean, to the points I think Rachel and Pati both made, you can't get these skills and work on them. And so it's really just being able to recognize what skills you need in general to be a successful junior attorney and having a mentor, somebody you can talk to about finding opportunities to work on those, whether it's time management, whether it's if you're trying to organize meetings, taking on more of a role to do that more frequently so you get more practice and you're more comfortable with doing so.

**Amanda Cipriano:** Rachel, could you talk a little bit about how working as an executive assistant has made the transition to a law career easier for you?

**Rachel Dikovics:** Yeah, so there are a couple things I'd add to skills I mentioned before, the first of which is the concept of managing up. I remember when I was a more

junior attorney specifically, I saw this in some of my reviews as a positive, and it's the idea that you can manage the day-to-day of a case or a matter and keep the partner or whoever you're reporting to informed about what's going on without them having to get into the nitty-gritty details of the everyday interactions.

So I think that's something that as an executive assistant that's really your responsibility is to make your executive's life easier and take the details out of things so that they don't have to worry about the details. And I think that's something that definitely translates.

Another thing that I found really important, sometimes in the sense of figuring out who the right people are to reach out to at other people's offices is the ability to identify gatekeepers for other people that you're working with, particularly for external people. Sometimes our clients can be hard to contact and hard to schedule. And if you can figure out who the people are who assist them and who manage their calendars and who has their ear, those people are good to make friends with. And I think that that's something that I really learned in those roles. You often can't access the person that you want to access without going through somebody else. So understanding who that person is and making sure that you're on a friendly basis with them can be really critical.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And let's be real, the first at least year of being a law firm associate is definitely very similar to being an executive assistant. So makes a lot of sense.

**Rachel Dikovics:** 1000%

**Amanda Cipriano:** And Pati, can you talk a little bit about how your career as a teacher has helped you become a better communicator and advocate for your clients?

**Pati Candelario:** Yeah. I'll start it off with a story from one of my students. As a person, I'm not very confrontational and I'm probably overly polite. I've always had this issue my entire life. But when I told my students in my last year of teaching that I was leaving to go to law school, one of my freshman goes, they used to call me Miss Candy, by the way, because my last name is Candelario, so she's like, "Miss Candy, I'm sorry, but I would never hire you as my lawyer because you're too nice." And then I went back because the way that teenagers say things really cut at you. So I went back and I'm like, "Am I too nice to do this job? What's going to happen to me? I'm going to be eaten alive."

And the legal field is known to be a bit cutthroat. But then I go back, and I reflected on my five years of teaching, I was like, "Nothing is more cutthroat than this." Nothing, because teenagers are evil little people. I'm not judging them for who they were at that time of their lives, and I'm friends with a bunch of my students, but man, they made me develop some really thick skin.

So that's the first thing that I think teaching helped me with is to stop being so sensitive about certain things and to just be outcome-oriented. Okay, you may have given me an attitude, you may have been rude, but what do I need to do to move forward and to help push you to where we need to be and

where we need to get despite all of the attitude and all of the emotions that come along with it?

The second thing that I brought with me from teaching is talking to people in a way that they respond. If you know you're working with someone who is painfully shy, don't call them out in meetings and have them explain things that maybe that they didn't know that they would have to explain, and they would've preferred to review. If you're speaking to a partner who is very literal, speak in accurate and precise language because that person may not appreciate the nuances to what you're saying or any type of vagueness the same way that someone else may be willing to kind of discern what you're saying. So know who you're talking to and tailor you're speaking to how they like it.

And obviously, in real time, if you're having a natural conversation, you may not have the time to do that, but doing it and practice enough in writing will eventually become a habit and become the way that you speak and the way that you know how to interact with certain people. And that's, again, it's emotional intelligence, which is like any other intelligence, something that you can build and grow, but you have to want to do that and you have to remind yourself to be aware of others and how others may perceive what you're saying to them.

And finally, I think the most important thing I got from teaching was a growth mindset. Especially as a junior associate in litigation, you may be pulled into a bankruptcy matter, you can get pulled into a business litigation matter. There are so many different things. And if you're panicked about all the things that you don't know, you will be panicked for the rest of your life because there is no way that you're going to know all of these things. A judge, a justice doesn't know these things. They rely on their clerks, they rely on attorneys to educate and inform them. And if you think of it that way, then I think you can relieve some of the stress.

And with that being said, just like in the classroom, there are measures to assess your mastery of a certain subject and with the appropriate supports and scaffolds from the people around you and through you seeking help, you can try to bridge those gaps. But I will say, especially as a junior attorney, you should try to make the initial effort to find the answers yourself and before you ask a question, even if the partner is open, I'm not saying you can't workshop an idea, but you should come with a general understanding of what you're lacking and what you need direction in.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And transitioning a little bit, how do you use your prior work experiences to your advantage in building your network, your legal network?

**Rachel Dikovics:** So I think it depends a little bit on what your prior career was. I note that I didn't mention my longtime job at a horse stable as one of my prior work experiences, but despite being one of my very favorites. But I think building your network as an attorney means figuring out who you know who may be able or who may be interested in what you can provide at some point. And I know for me, the clients that I have been able to bring into the firm have all



been a result of the time that I spent in government and that kind of broader network.

So I think you never know when people from an earlier part of your life or a separate part of your career are going to need legal help. People need lawyers all the time. And also in terms of just building and maintaining your network, I think that keeping in touch with people from your prior career experiences is really important because they're going to help you meet more people. I feel like I came into the legal world with a much larger network than most people do because I'd already had some experience and exposure to the political world of New Jersey. I have a lot more familiarity with a lot of the players there than most people right out of law school, which has been really helpful to me. So I think you want to leverage the network that you develop in a pre-law career as much as you can once you're a practicing attorney.

**Pati Candelario:**

I think that professors in law school also appreciate students who have had prior careers, and I think that's one excellent way to build your network. As I mentioned before, I fellowed for a professor at Rutgers Law School during my last year of law school. And one of the things that she told me that she really appreciated about me was that I was a professional in the sense that I had done things before, and she didn't have to explain common courtesies to me too much. So it allowed me to build a strong relationship with various professors for that reason. And they just knew I was dependable and reliable because, maybe fairly or unfairly because of my prior profession.

I will also say that even though I taught at a small high school in Southern Delaware, perhaps it was because of the Teach For America network, but you'd be surprised at how many people are related to education in some way. So many of my Teach For America colleagues have gone on to go to law school and enter the legal profession, or just do something completely different, or they stay in education and are powerful advocates for their communities and for their students. So I still keep in touch with them. Some of my former students are actually in my network. A few of them are now teachers and I've been able to connect them with different schools and different opportunities for mentorships. Some of them are in law school now, which is pretty cool.

So you never know where you'll interact with people. But I will say, and this is something that stuck with me when I clerked for Justice Pierre-Louis, when she was getting sworn in, everyone said that she was the nicest person that they ever met, that she was always polite, that she always addressed people by Mr. or Ms. no matter how many times they told her not to. And I'm not saying that that's the proper course to go, but it was this resounding energy about how nice she was.

So one, to bring it back, that was very encouraging for me because I'm like, "Oh my gosh, nice people. They can make it in this field." And two, it just goes to show that people remember who you are, even sometimes more so than the work that you submit. Maybe you submit a really good brief that you worked on, but your communication with everyone on the team was horrible. You probably won't have a great reputation. But if you're really nice and producing good work, that's just the icing on the cake and that's how you

really set yourself apart and get into these really cool positions like being a justice on the New Jersey Supreme Court.

**Rachel Dikovics:** I totally agree. And I want to just add to what Pati's saying about how your interactions with people are so important. And I think having some earlier work experience can teach you that most career fields are really pretty small. I know the New Jersey legal community is a small world. Everybody knows everybody eventually. And the impression that you leave on people is critical. And especially as a junior attorney, really junior, especially a first-year attorney, for example, it is so much more important for you to be polite, kind, responsive, interested in improving your work than it is for you to come in with perfect skills. Nobody comes in with a perfect skillset. Your work as a first-year is not going to be that great when you look back on it as a third or fourth-year.

But if people can tell that you are a professional, that you're there to learn, that you're responsive, that they can rely on you, those skills are way more important than coming in with substantive expertise.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And is there anything you had to change about your work style when transitioning careers?

**Rachel Dikovics:** Yeah, so there's one thing that I wanted to talk about on this question, which is I think we've talked in other episodes before about the tendency for women attorneys to get, I don't want to say stuck with, but assigned more administrative tasks on various cases. And I think women can also tend to kind of volunteer for those tasks. And I think that if you have had previous work experience that makes you particularly suited to those tasks and really good at them and you feel like you're good at these things to the point that you might as well just do it yourself because you're going to get it done faster than other people and better, women need to really be careful about that, about putting themselves in these day-to-day managerial positions without being involved in strategy decisions and things like that. You don't want to kind of pigeonhole yourself as a middle manager.

And I think that if you have experiences that allow you to excel in those roles, it can be challenging to use that experience to provide value without always being the person who has to do those things.

So I think once you're not the most junior person on a team, for example, you shouldn't be the one volunteering to send out calendar invites. That should be a measure of seniority, not who's best at scheduling. So I think it's important to keep things like that in mind when you're transitioning skill sets. You don't want to keep yourself kind of in the previous role that you had.

**Pati Candelario:** I think for me, I've had to become a bit more informal. As a teacher, I was very energetic and casual to an extent with my students, but obviously I'm not, and I'm not saying that this is the measure of a lawyer, but I'm not using any profane language. I'm not dropping an F-bomb if I hit myself on the corner of my desk or something like that because I'm working with kids. And when I was working at the court, similarly, it's a very formal environment.

So I think one of the things is I needed to learn how to relax a little bit. Especially firm life, it's a bit more relaxed. It's not that everyone's cursing every other second, but if you hear a curse word, it's not the end of the world. But I remember when I was clerking and it was, now looking back at it it's so silly, but I might have said the S-word. I'm still in teacher mode calling it the S-word and the F-word. But I might have said that like a whisper. And I remember going home stressing about it. I was like, "Oh my gosh, did I just ruin justice's legacy? Why am I using these kinds of words in chambers?" I was really distraught about it.

But in the law firm life, it's a bit more relaxed. And I thought it would be more stuffy and uptight, but it's not. So it's kind of let me after five years of teaching and then four years of law school and working for a judge and professors to kind of loosen up and just truly be my F-bomb-dropping self every once in a while.

**Amanda Cipriano:** And the last thing I want to ask you both is what advice would you give to women who are joining the law as a second career?

**Rachel Dikovics:** That's a good question. I think that women joining the law as a second career may not need a lot of advice to be honest. I think that you can pretty quickly find your way in the legal world, especially if you have career experience already for all the reasons that we talked about. I think you come into it with a little bit of a leg up if you've had prior experiences. So I would say leverage what you can from your initial career. Try to keep in touch with people. Keep the skills that are helpful to you and let go of the skills that are not going to serve you in a legal career.

I think one of the other things I would add to my previous answer about how women can kind of be pigeonholed into more administrative roles is if you come from a job like the one I had, being an assistant, you have to train yourself to not be overly deferential to people in your first kind of year or two. And I think it's helpful to the extent that as a junior attorney, you're looking at partners as your client, but you also don't want to be too deferential to people. You need to consider yourself an able opponent to opposing counsel. And I think sometimes that can be a little bit harder if you've had career experience before and somebody is significantly older and more experienced than you, you tend to sort of be deferential to them as a matter of just respect, some of the things that Pati was talking about in terms of just how you interact with people.

So I think my basic advice would be keep what's going to be helpful, let go of things that might hold you back.

**Pati Candelario:** I ditto everything that Rachel said. I will add again that emotional intelligence matters and that's something that you naturally bring in with you. As you move from profession to profession, you're able to evaluate what things are serious, what things can wait. You know how to communicate. You know what people you can joke around with and not. So those skills are valuable. And don't sell yourself short by thinking that those skills are not what firms are looking for. Because sure, every firm wants strong writers and

researchers, but they also want a culture of people who can sit down and have lunch together and it not be awkward.

So these are the things that you should really keep in mind, the relationships that you're developing, the people that you decide to interact with all matter. And as a second career person, if some habits are bad, leave them in the past, like Rachel said, but don't remove all of the things because you think they're isolated into that career. A lot of those things are transferrable and they're valued.

**Amanda Cipriano:** Well, thank you both for taking time to speak with us about your prior law experiences and giving some tips and tricks for how to carry those throughout your law career. This has been another episode of the Women's Initiative Network: Real Talk, and we'll see you next time.

**Amanda Cipriano:** Thank you for listening to today's episode. Please subscribe to our podcast series at [lowenstein.com/podcasts](https://lowenstein.com/podcasts) or find us on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, Google Podcasts, and SoundCloud. Lowenstein Sandler podcast series is presented by Lowenstein Sandler and cannot be copied or rebroadcast without consent. The information provided is intended for a general audience. It is not legal advice or substitute for the advice of counsel. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. The content reflects the personal views and opinions of the participants. No attorney client relationship is being created by this podcast and all rights are reserved.