

**PNC Women in Business Webcast Transcript**

**PNC Presents Q&A with Ellen Latham  
Creator and Co-Founder, Orangetheory Fitness**

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Arlyn Kalinski: Good morning. I am Arlyn Kalinski, head of language services at PNC. I am delighted to welcome you to this Women in Business Week webcast featuring keynote speaker Ellen Latham, creator, and cofounder of Orangetheory Fitness. PNC is committed to bringing you ideas and insights to help you s entrepreneurs and business leaders, and Ellen has a lot of experience and wisdom to share with you today.

Ellen, thank you for joining us.

Ellen Latham: Thank you so much. I'm so thrilled to be a part of this event.

Arlyn Kalinski: So before you started Orangetheory Fitness, you managed a high-end fitness spa, not to mention served as a TV fitness expert and wrote and edited fitness columns. What prompted you to start your own business?

Ellen Latham: Well, Arlyn, I was in my early 40s and I had finally achieved my dream job. I was managing a high-end fitness spa in Miami, Florida. And one day, my boss called me into his office and he sat me down and he looked up at me. And he said, "Ellen, we have to let you go today."

Maybe similar to what some women have been faced with over the last months with COVID.

I was devastated. I didn't know what I was going to do. My father was a Phys-Ed teacher and football coach at my local high school growing up in Niagara Falls, New York. And my father very much lived by the sports psychology theory called momentum shifting.

Now, you can momentum shift up positively or you can momentum shift down negatively. So momentum shifting up is focusing on what you have, what you do well, and momentum shifting down would be obsessing over what you don't have.

Ah, what a wonderful message.

So when I lost that job, my father reminded me of this theory. I often say he didn't parent my brothers and sister and myself; he coached us through life with this theory. And I focused on what I had.

I was very good at group fitness. I was an exercise physiologist. So I designed a program of group training based on the science of what's called EPOC, Excess Post-exercise Oxygen Consumption. And basically all that means, all those fancy words, is you create an oxygen debt in the human body and then it has to be repaid 24 hours after. And that's what stimulates the metabolism. That's what makes it a great metabolic workout.

So this momentum shift-up theory was profound for me at that time, a very scary time, a time that I didn't know what the future would hold. I often jokingly say that it was kind of my GPS to keep me on-track, to keep me on a good track during the storm.

Arlyn Kalinski: Ellen, how would you apply momentum shifting to now, a time when people may feel lost or challenged by what's happening in the world?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. Excellent question. It's of the utmost importance that we are all in a momentum-shifting-up mindset. And again, momentum shifting up is focusing on what you have, not what you don't have. So when you're sitting in your day, and you're listening to the news and you're hearing all this bad news, and there's a lot of things going on right now in the world that aren't real positive, it's of essence that you get this up here, right.

Because you see, when you change your thoughts, you change your perspective on things. So it's the utmost importance, or else you're struggling day-to-day.

And you hear this with people and they're struggling to move forward, and I hear this with people. So I just really encourage all to take a second, think about how you're thinking, and understand that you control the remote up there and you can change the channel and shift it to a momentum-shift mindset.

Arlyn Kalinski: Thank you for that. Ellen, you -- you mentioned your father was one mentor. Can you talk about the role of mentors in your life and why you think mentorship is so important?

Ellen Latham: It's absolutely important, mentorship. And yes, he was my first mentor. I started working in the lifestyle fitness world, and I ended up having some wonderful mentors.

Listen. I'm a physiologist. I know the fitness industry. The business was new to me so thank you, Mike and Tim, who are great business mentors toward me, with me, during those periods that I worked in those sectors. And what I found makes up a great mentor, is someone who supports yet challenges.

I wanted to really be creative in the fitness industry, and why I think I did so well at that time under those mentors is because they allowed me to spread my wings. They allowed me to get out there and try things. And they were there. There was a great trust relationship. You want that with someone who's mentoring you. They believed in me. I felt that from them. And they built self-confidence. What I find as I'm mentoring women these days, is that their self-confidence isn't quite there as they'd like it to be.

So I try to help them and build that self confidence. How do I do it? By really recognizing and bringing to their attention small accomplishments. Because you see, these small accomplishments build to the big win, which I have found to be the case with Orange Dairy Fitness and building those small accomplishments.

Now, a good mentor, I believe, is very honest, very direct, does not give you false promises. That's not going to be someone who is going to allow you to really move forward. It's going to be someone who's going to be a real honest, help you perhaps set priorities and timelines and really create that kind of energy between the two.

So I was very lucky and feel very fortunate that I did have those mentors. I try to use those lessons as I am trying to create great mentorship with individuals, women who I work with today.

- Arlyn Kalinski: So as a mentor, what do you do to help women improve their self-confidence?
- Ellen Latham: Well, I think it's important as a mentor to allow a woman to really get out there and try things. Because typically, they're a little fearful so it's to encourage them to push the boundaries, go out there and then to constantly recognize small accomplishments, small achievements. Because those small achievements end up building up for the eventual big win.
- Arlyn Kalinski: So people often comment that they not only love Orangetheory for the workout, but also the community. Ellen, can you talk about why culture is so important to your business, and what you've done to create it?
- Ellen Latham: Yeah, Arlyn. It is so important to any brand and any business that you spend a good portion of time on this area of culture. See, I believe that vision starts on paper but culture happens on the ground with your people. So it's very important that you just don't have a business that you've got all these vision statements all over the place, on the wall, on paper, but it never transfers to what's happening on the ground with your brand, with your business.
- Now, I was fortunate that I aligned my purpose of Orangetheory, of creating more life, more energy, a great metabolic workout for people. I aligned that with my partners so that we had a clear message as a brand. We sent that message to our franchisees. They sent it to their staff, their coaches, that then went to their members.
- See, I call it a culture of conversation. There's a lot of conversation of who you want to be. Now, for us, we don't think of ourselves as a fitness company. We think of ourselves as a more life brand. What does that mean?
- It means that we're interested in giving people more life through our product, through our physiology. Giving them more energy, day-to-day. Maybe adding a few years on at the end. We're very clear.
- What I found in group fitness that frustrated me, it was usually designed for the very fit people. Remember back the old aerobic days? Everyone ran to the front line. They ran to the front line because they were good at it. They were confident. But I never forgot those women that ran to the back line in my classes, who didn't feel as confident and secure.
- So I made a workout that was for all levels, walkers, joggers, runners. I got rid of the word, "modifications." It makes people feel less set. And we offer options in our workout.
- So it was crucial to Orangetheory culture, and I tend to believe it's going to be for any business.
- Arlyn Kalinski: You talked about building the right culture. But what happens when the culture is unhealthy?
- Ellen Latham: Yeah. You know, how I really find you build culture is through words, actions, and attitude. So what I mean by that is, you know, the words that you start describing what your brand is, how we want that workout to be described and how we want those coaches

to coach it. That creates an action which then creates an attitude, and an attitude can be contagious like a yawn.

So with the Orangetheory fitness workout, it was very important that the words that we used were very hopeful and encouraging to people. Because then that created an action of, oh, wow, this workout is for anyone -- a deconditioned person, someone who's overweight, someone who's older. And then that created an attitude. So the attitude of Orangetheory Fitness is, oh, this is a workout for everyone.

I could be a 67-year-old pacemaker patient who's walking on the treadmill next to my 20-year-old niece who's sprinting on the treadmill, and we're all taking the same class. This is why it's very important that words, actions, and attitude are thought of in every brand.

Now, that could work to the positive, of course, as it has for us. But it also can work to the negative. If a brand doesn't really pay attention to the words that people are using to describe their brand -- this is where you really need to really pay attention and listen to how people are describing your company or your brand. Because then certain, like I said, actions will be taken. And then unfortunately it could become contagious. An attitude is created -- oh, that company, they don't care about you. Oh, that company, they put out a very cheap product. You see what happens. Words affect actions which affect an attitude. Can be to the good -- thank goodness that's what happened with Orangetheory -- or it could be to the bad.

Arlyn Kalinski: Can you talk about why skill sets matter?

Ellen Latham: Absolutely. So, great question. You know, I do a lot of metaphors with exercise, so you'll have to stay with me on this one. So think about muscle. When you want to create a more fit muscle, you start with basic exercises. And then you want it to be an outstanding muscle, you're going to go and you're going to give it more complex exercises, more challenges. Well, it's the same with your skill set. We don't stop after we graduate from college or school, or we get a certification. We don't stop then.

We keep building this skill set with more complex information. And you start becoming quite an expert at what you're doing.

See, I find in many businesses and many individuals over the years that I've worked, people start to fall asleep, you know what I mean by that? They don't stay awake in their industry. They don't stay energized and passionate. You see, I still have passion for my industry. And why I have that is because I kept building on my skill set. I kept my sword sharp. So when you have to go into battle, like COVID, like what's going on now, you've got a sharp sword to be able to cut through whatever's going on, and hopefully do very, very well.

Arlyn Kalinski: Thanks, Ellen. So you mentioned always building your skill set, always continuing to build and learn. So what is the value of being an expert in your industry?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. Look, you want to be the best you can be out there. You want to be where people say your name. That's what happened to me, with my partners with Orangetheory. It was brought to the attention of one of my partners this workout I had and who -- who I was in the industry. Now, my partners were looking at a lot for franchises. They were looking at different concepts. But they came in, had a conversation with me, sat down, did their due diligence, and thought, wow -- we've got an exercise physiologist, she specializes in group training, she's created this unique workout, this unique fitness category that would

be brand new in the fitness market. So all of that time and effort putting into building my skillset created me as quite an expert in what I do. And they gained great interest in that. And they might not have looked at me and been that interested I hadn't been, if I hadn't had this skill set and been who I was.

Arlyn Kalinski: As we talk about the effects of COVID-19 in your business, what lessons did you learn from this COVID crisis?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. I think that you know, the old save for a rainy day, I think this is more -- you know, for our franchisees as a company, that you need to -- you never know, right? You never know what's going to happen. So you want to make sure you're running your company, you know, you're very aware of what's going in all aspects of your company financially, growth-wise, flexibility-wise. And luckily, that's exactly what we did and many of our franchisees did, which have made it definitely painful that we've had to close doors and close business, especially how well we were doing as a business. We were just listed -- I got the email today -- as number four, as one of the top franchisees for 2020. You know, and that's quite exciting.

A lot of that is what we did before COVID. So kind of an important lesson for all businesses and brands to do is to make sure you're being very aware in case of a rainy day, or a storm like COVID.

Arlyn Kalinski: That makes total sense. So -- so Ellen, the pandemic has certainly impacted a lot of businesses including Orangetheory. Can you talk about the effects of COVID-19 on your organization and how you've gotten through it?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. Absolutely. Listen, COVID has been quite paralyzing and painful for many brands and businesses, but boy, the fitness industry has definitely been hit.

Listen. We had to learn how to bob and weave. We had to get out there and go, okay, this is what's happening now, and as more time was taking place we got on the bandwagon with virtual.

What we're very fortunate about in our brand of Orangetheory -- and this is what every brand really has to pay attention to -- is look to the future. So my partners are just phenomenal business partners, and looking to the future. So we already had a whole tech department. We were very much aware of technology with our heart rate monitoring program that we do at Orangetheory. We didn't quite have the virtual footprint so we had to put that together. And so that did create quite a scurry, and -- in taking place. But we have done it and we created OT Fit at Home. We created Orangetheory Outdoors. As studios have been opening up we've created 30-minute workouts, 45-minute classes, where typically they would be 60.

You have to be flexible. You have to assess what's going on. I do believe -- and you need to stay aligned with your purpose of what your company is, and ours was metabolic training. And then we got out there and tried to really build trust with our members. See, that's very important for the consumer. They want to trust you before they feel comfortable coming back.

We talk a lot about being patient. We, of course, had to be patient, as a franchiser and the franchisees out there. We're encouraging our members, be patient. Don't worry. Come back when you're comfortable. You see, it's so important that you get the message to

your customer, to our members, of what we want to do for them, not what we want to get from them.

And that message was of the utmost importance, and that's something that we focused on.

Arlyn Kalinski: Great. Thanks for sharing that, Ellen. So you've accomplished so much in building Orangetheory. Can you give a sense of what your plans are for the future?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. So, listen. We're going to definitely continue with this virtual footprint. We're definitely going to keep creating our culture and with a little shift. We've got some great things coming up in the future where we understand individuals might want to do some outdoor workouts. They might want to do some virtual, at-home, combined with what we do in our four walls. So we're going to definitely stay in our lane of what we do well, heart rate-based training, metabolic training. But we're going to get out there and we're going to broaden the scope here of what we do. And it's actually quite exciting for us as opposed to stressful for us. And that's important because you see, the only thing you have control over in this world is how you react to things. It's the only thing you have control over, obviously, with what's going on.

So we've decided to react in a positive way, to branch out even further in what we offer, staying very aligned again to what our purpose is.

So you know, I think that this very scary time can offer opportunities out of obstacles. I call them the two O's. I remind our franchisees of the two O's. We feel we have an obstacle here right now. What opportunities can we create from that?

Arlyn Kalinski: Yeah, absolutely. So how about on the professional -- I mean, on the personal level, is retirement in the books?

Ellen Latham: Ah. No. Look. You know, I am one that needs to keep moving, just as I spoke about that -- you know, I need everyone out there to keep moving. And even if you're moving at a slow crawl right now, because what's happened with COVID has kind of halted you, then move at a crawl. But keep moving. And that's what lights my fire. That's what keeps me going. Living my purpose.

You see, our purpose is our contribution in life. My contribution is to service. That's why I got into this industry. I wanted to service people through physical fitness. I love it. It keeps me alive. It keeps me passionate.

Now, I've also got into keynote speaking, which has been very exciting. So I can get out there and inspire and motivate, at a higher level with individuals, at a broader level. Not just in the fitness industry but to women -- I love speaking to women groups and I've been called upon to do that a lot. But not even just women groups. I've been called on with all kinds of groups and industries, and that's exciting for me. Because how I feel, if someone could walk away with a few nuggets to put in their toolbox to help them through the day, to help them through their professional career, through their life as a woman, that excites me.

Arlyn Kalinski: Thanks, Ellen. What can managers, mentors and staffing teams do to encourage, enable, and empower ambitious women?

Ellen Latham: Hmm. Well, I know what was done with me, and I was quite ambitious, is they let me flap my wings. For example, one of those mentors I spoke about, I wanted to bring

spinning to South Florida. It didn't exist. This was going back decades. And I had met the creator of spinning at a convention. It wasn't out there. And I went back to my boss and I told him about this, and they me buy eight bikes. And it took off in Florida from me bringing spinning to South Florida.

That was a manager who let me flap my wings, let me kind of go intuitively that I felt there was something to that. The other thing is, compliment people a lot. I love complimenting my staff. I usually start meetings of, how did you feel pulling in the parking lot today? Because if you didn't feel excited and thrilled to fly up that elevator up into our meeting room, I need you to talk to me because I need to listen to what I can do to make that happen.

Be nice. A lot of times, people aren't nice, especially today. Take advantage of people who are working for you and being really nice to them. Those are just a few of the things that are important to me.

Arlyn Kalinski: Mm-hmm. How will COVID impact group exercise programs going forward? What changes or solutions do you propose to bring members back to fitness facilities, especially those smaller studio group businesses?

Ellen Latham: Absolutely. Well, I'm going to get back to, you know, we've got to educate the consumer. We've got to give them good information, and then we build a trust and they can make the call. The good information about what we do in our workout is what I described as an exercise physiologist. We build white blood cells.

When you are in a push in our workout, when you're getting your 12 splat points in your workout, you're building an army of white blood cells. What do white blood cells do? Well, what I know as a physiologist, is they -- if you have a strong army of white blood cells they fight bacteria and virus in your system.

So am I saying we're going to cure COVID? No. Am I saying that we're going to build white blood cells in your system and create a strong army of them? Yes. So it's really building a trust, educating -- you know, we don't want people to be a prisoner to false information out there. And we will not give it. We will just talk about physiologically what we do. We will continue with our virtual footprint. We will be patient, and when you're ready, come back. We will offer in building other streams of our design of workout that you can do outdoors, and so on and so forth. So that's what we'll do.

We'll stay in our lane. We'll stay with facts. You know, we're a science-based workout. I'm a science-based individual. I'm a physiologist. So you know, we're not going to give you false promises. We're going to tell you exactly what we do and we want everyone to make an educated guess on their own of when they feel comfortable coming back. We'll be there.

Arlyn Kalinski: So Ellen, what factors do you consider most often when planning for the future?

Ellen Latham: Wow. I think that you have to be prepared for anything, right? You need to be flexible. I find that if -- you know, people who are kind of inflexible might be struggling a little bit more right now, because you have to be flexible to -- this is the world at large right now. And we have to listen. And we have to do the best we can do.

I am one to very much hang on to something very stable in my life during times of great uncertainty, during times when I feel frightened or you know, unaware of what the future

holds. For me, it's my faith. I hold on to that strong tree trunk, you know, with the deep roots that when the wind's blowing and it's a storm, that I'm not going anywhere because I'm holding on to that strong trunk -- as opposed to a flimsy tree.

That strong trunk, for me, is my faith. My belief that the world is coming back. It will eventually come back. We will be okay. That's how I'm going to choose to believe. But I'm going to stay true to who I am.

I'm going to stay true to what our brand is and what we do physiologically, which is so profound. So profound for people physiologically. So I'm going to stay true to that, and I'm going to be fine.

Arlyn Kalinski: Great. So if you could change one thing through your Orangetheory journey, what would it be?

Ellen Latham: Quite frankly, nothing. You know, I was very fortunate. I've got these great partners who are just three gentlemen who respect me, who I've learned from, who have mentored me in each of our different areas -- because we each have strength in different areas. We have phenomenal franchisees. These are people who believe in wanting to change other human beings' lives.

That's why they got into this business. Many of our franchisees were members before they became franchisees. And they really, truly believed in, I want to make a difference in other human beings' lives. People who work for us, coaches, phenomenal motivators. Really want to work with all levels of people, not just the elite.

And then we've got these million members that are absolutely incredible, all sizes, all fitness levels. I have a ton of emails from many of them who continue to send me emails through COVID -- Ellen, can't wait until we get back to Orange. There's nothing like it. It's changed my life. What would a human being, an individual, want more than that in their lifetime? I don't know. That's an abundance of great things that have been given to me and I'm quite grateful.

Arlyn Kalinski: Ellen, what obstacles did you face at startup? How do you know when your initial business plan was finished and ready to present?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. I mean, we absolutely had obstacles starting out. We actually started franchising and we stopped after about eight months because we didn't have all of our systems in place. You see, to make a very successful business, absolutely franchise, you have to have the right people, the right program, and the right processes. So in order to get the right franchisees -- people -- we had to have the right program and processes together.

Well, the program was the fitness program I designed, so that was in place, that we continued to get better at. But the processes, the systems, weren't as strong as they needed to be for someone across the country to start a business. So we refused to take any more money from someone who wanted to buy a franchise, and we stopped. And we said, you know what, until we have our act totally together, we are not going to take anyone's money to buy a franchise from us because that is not what we should be selling. And I'm so proud of that.

And then when we started back up, we had everything in place and that made it so our franchisees were much more successful.

Arlyn Kalinski: What has been most impactful for you, from a mentor/mentee perspective?

Ellen Latham: Well, the most impactful as a mentor, which I have been, is when you see someone who doesn't need me anymore. I guess it's like when you go to a psychiatrist or whatever and they don't need you anymore because you've done their job and they've got their act together.

So you know, I think for me, it was when I have, you know, some young women that don't feel a lot of self-confidence. And they don't feel that they really deserve to maybe do powerful things in their life professionally. And I like to spend time with them on that deserving factor. And that I call it, "why not me," factor. I often talk to women that I say, if someone would have told me at age 55 I would have started a franchise -- I was a single parent, a woman, those are kind of a lot of things that might be a bit challenging out there.

And all of that occurred because someone was in my ear, making me feel you deserve big things. Why wouldn't you go for it? Why not you, Ellen?

So it's when I have a female -- when I have a female entrepreneur that has all of those things, deserving, why not me, self confidence, and they're ready to go off on their own and check in with me periodically.

Arlyn Kalinski: What did you find different from running an independent fitness versus a franchise operation? They are two different business models. And what did it require you to change into, to be able to launch nationally?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. It's quite different from having my sole studio to then taking something that you need to duplicate, and you might not necessarily be around. You know, my original studio, Ellen's Ultimate Workout, was pretty much about Ellen. I was there controlling the narrative, controlling the words, actions, attitude. So what was so brilliant about what my partners did, is when we opened up our pilot studio they told me, "Oh, by the way, you're not going to be able to go in." No, no, no. You can't go coach classes, you can't go in and you know, try to run the show, talk to the members. You're going to set up the training systems for those working in that studio but this has to be something, business-in-a-box. That's what a great franchise is. It's a business in a box where you open the box and you've got everything you need.

So it couldn't be about Ellen. It couldn't be about me going in and getting people excited and revved up and all of those things that I did in my studio that made that studio quite successful. It had to be that I could teach those things to other people, through words, actions, attitude. And then they would do it in California, in China, in Saudi Arabia. That's where we have studios now.

So that was something that I had to get used to because of course, I wanted to go and create culture in each one of these entities, and as my partners taught me very well, you're not going to be able to do that, Ellen, when we start really ramping up.

And so we started right from the beginning of making sure those processes and the program was understood well.

Arlyn Kalinski: Ellen, what advice would you give to the next generation of female leaders? How can women differentiate themselves in leadership roles?

Ellen Latham: Yeah. Great question. You know, I think that you have to be fearless. You really do. When I created this workout, I had no idea that it was going to work. I went and found a space that was three times the size of my original little studio, three times the rent. I -- I was petrified at that time. Would this work out, pan out? You have to be a little fearless if you're going to, you know, give it a shot out there. So I suggest you be fearless.

And then the second part of that, you have to work harder than anyone else. When people are describing you they should say, oh, you know that Ellen Latham? Boy, has she worked hard through her career. And I have heard that often.

You know, pro players, it isn't necessarily always the one that had the best genetics for that sport that are the most successful. You know who the most successful are in sports? Those who work harder, those who stay after practice, and throw you know, another hour of free shots, okay. Those who, after practice, stay on that field and run laps and continue to run laps. You want to be described as someone who works harder than anyone else.

Arlyn Kalinski: What business classes or concepts are most important when starting a business? How do you lay the initial groundwork specifically for a business that could become a franchise?

Ellen Latham: Well, I think you start with a need. So interestingly enough, I had started a small Pilates program when I got let go from that job and I had a Pilates certification. And I kept hearing from my members that they weren't happy because Pilates is not a metabolic workout with their fat burning aspect of their workout. They loved what Pilates did for their inside muscles, the posture, but it isn't going to do anything for fat burning.

So it's really listening to maybe what there might be a need out there for, so I realized there was a need for great group metabolic workout. When I questioned -- you asked a lot of question, a lot of those members who were doing spinning classes, they were cycling, they were jogging around the park. They still were telling me they're not getting all the results they wanted, because you need more than just that cardio portion. There needs to be muscle overload. There needs to be a power component. There needs to be things that are inside that Orangetheory fitness workout for full-on metabolic charge.

So for me, it was finding a need that was not met yet out there. And many people told me, "Ellen, this is crazy. There's 5 million fitness concepts. It's ridiculous that you want to create this new fitness category off of this metabolic workout that's in your head. Lucky I didn't listen to them. Lucky I went by what I was hearing from the consumer out there, that they were not getting. And then I just gave them exactly what they wanted.

Arlyn Kalinski: Thanks, Ellen. Please address how you manage work/life balance.

Ellen Latham: Life balance, boy, do I need that one. Well, look. I look at us as human beings and three sectors: mind, body, and soul. So you really want to put some effort into each one of those areas. So the mind, that's your stress level. That's building your skill set. That's all of those mental things that keep you thriving.

Soul might be faith, as I spoke to -- to what I hang onto. It's hanging onto that stable force in your life that allows you to get through things emotionally.

And then of course, the body is through exercise and nutrition, and this is what's keeping this vessel that houses my mind and my soul, it's the house for my mind and my soul, okay. It keeps that fit and strong.

So life balance to me is what kind of attention am I giving to each of those three areas. And you have to make time. You can't sit in the space of, "But Ellen, I'm so busy, I don't have time." Well, you'll have time when your body fails you. You'll have time sitting in a bed somewhere. Or you'll have time when you know, you're kind of losing your mind and you're so stressed out that you have to be on medication or a drink or two at night. You'll have time to kind of try to fix things.

So let's do that before we have to fix things. Let's do that now, taking care of our mind, body, and soul. So think about what you do for each one of those areas. I do. I think about them. And I have a little imbalance because I absolutely work out like crazy. I try to be aware of what I eat, but you know, I kind of have a little bit of a sweet tooth so I've got to like do what I've got to do. And I really, again, work on you know, my faith. And I absolutely work on my stress level with a little meditating and some quiet time.

So to me, you've got to find time.

Arlyn Kalinski: What, to you, are the three key attributes for a professional woman to achieve and sustain leadership?

Ellen Latham: Well, number one, you have to listen. You have to be a very good listener, okay. Because I think an employee wants to feel that they are being heard. And it's not just a one-way conversation.

I think that you've got to be someone that is okay with people being better than you in a particular aspect. I personally like to hire people who have what my strengths are not. And so then when we get together and collaborate, then it's wonderful because they have more knowledge or experience in a certain area and then I've got my lane. That's actually what happened with our partnership, and one of the reasons why I think we've been very successful. We each have very strong lanes.

And then the other is, I think that you've got to be good at collaborating. You know, employees want to feel. People who work for you want to feel that you're a collaborator, that you want to hear their thoughts, their suggestions. You give your -- your thoughts. And it's not a dictatorship.

I have found those things to work very, very well.

With a partnership as such we have with the three gentlemen who are my partners and myself, as well as with my team. You know, I really make sure they know I'm listening. You know, I get excited and reward the things that they're more knowledgeable about, maybe than I am. And then I love the collaboration. That's something that we are very keen to in our brand and our corporate office amongst our different departments that we have great interest in collaborating, and at the studio level.

The great success of our studios is the owners collaborate with the individuals who work for them, and work through any challenges they might have. So those things tended to work for me in my company.

Arlyn Kalinski: How are you able to successfully scale your business so quickly while remaining true to your core values?

Ellen Latham: Well, in the franchise world we work in what's called the area rep model, which means that an area is represented by an individual or a team of people who partner up with us as the franchisor. And so we're partners. And then their role is to take that area, so say if it was you know, northern Florida, we're partners with them. And then they develop northern Florida. They find franchisees, they put up so many studios personally themselves. And that model works very well because then it's not just the four of us trying to sell 1300 studios, which is what we have. It's the area reps who are taking an area and then what happens is, they're on, you know, the ground floor. They're there going into the studios, helping the new franchisees, supporting them so there's this great support system. So that model, we call that an AR, area rep model, works very, very well for franchising and worked very, very well for us.

Now, you want to make sure that when you're selecting the area rep, it's the right area rep, right. It's the right team or people who are aligned with your purpose, with -- aligned with your words, actions, attitude. So that's something we definitely put some effort into.

Arlyn Kalinski: So Ellen, do you have any last bits of advice for career success?

Ellen Latham: You know, I think for women out there, all the things we talked about. Keep building your skill set. And you want to make sure that you document it. You schedule it on a calendar, I do, because life gets busy, doesn't it. And you might go, where am I going to have time to take another course, to take another certification, to become more skilled in what I do. So you have to schedule it. It will be worth it because at the end of that year, you'll sit there and you document everything that you've added on that year. And hopefully you're sitting there and quite proud of what you accomplish. If there's not much there, I would take -- no, you're not building your skill set.

So to me, that's vitally important, to keep building your skill set. And then the other thing is, you know they talk about those five people, the most important five people that you hang around. You want to make sure that they're aligned with where you want to go. So if you're looking to make more money, to be better in your -- if you're looking to make more money or to be better in your profession, you want to make sure you're spending time with people who are excellent in the profession that you're in, who are doing very well in the profession that you're in. You might want to spend a little time with them. Pay attention to the circles and the conversations and the time and effort you put into your day-to-day.

So that's what I would suggest.

Arlyn Kalinski: Ellen, we can't thank you enough for sharing your insights today. Congratulations on your tremendous success, and all the best to you going forward.

Ellen Latham: Well, thank you so much. This was such a pleasure. PNC Bank, wonderful, thank you. I find this to be unbelievable that you're offering something like this out there to women, and it was completely my pleasure.

Arlyn Kalinski: Thank you.