DiscoverE Persist Series, Episode 5|2021: Reimagining Success with Amy Winchester

Amy Winchester is a senior chemical engineer at CBCL, a leading multidisciplinary engineering and environmental consulting firm in Atlantic Canada. Amy is the firm’s first female Director on the Board and is heavily involved in diversity and professional development initiatives. But she’s also a mom of three and has learned all the many ways we can define and redefine what success looks like.

1. What do You want from a career perspective? Company President? Plant Manager? Group Manager? Technical expert? Valued contributor?
2. She speaks about not wanting a big title, not wanting to be successful – do you think that’s true? How do you feel about hearing that?
3. What does success mean to you?
4. A changing perspective as time goes by. How many times has your perspective on success changed over the course of your career? Was there anything that influenced a change in perspective?
5. What’s your opinion of our maternity/paternity (“mat-leave”) policy? Could it be better [insert link to your company’s policy]? Her bosses took the news very well, as they had kids too. Did anyone have a negative reaction or a less understanding employer?
6. Do you think we design for this time away from work, as an organization? She worked part-time for years! That was important to her success – to balance career and family. Can anyone work part-time at Duke? Has anyone tried to work part-time?
7. She speaks to changing the gender profile and changing what success looks like for you such that you are creating your own path. Have you done anything to create your own path in our industry?
8. Even though she didn’t get on the board the first time, she took it as a “win” because at least she tried. And others saw that so perhaps it empowered them to reach for that stretch assignment/job. What are your thoughts on this? Would you like to share an example of a similar experience you’ve had?
9. She speaks to being persistent and patient while not being too pushy, so your voice becomes noise. If you're too quiet, then nothing happens. Is it easy to find this balance? Do you agree with her comment about opportunities not always looking like what you’d expect?
10. She lists out some behaviors she is drawn to. Which ones jump out at you personally?
    1. Good communicators > they reply to emails
    2. Honesty – they don’t tell you what you want to hear, they tell the truth
    3. Being someone’s cheerleader > always give credit where credit is due
    4. successful people show up and do their best
    5. vulnerability in leader’s goes a long way – increases respect.

<https://discovere.org/engage/persist-series/reimagining-success/>