

Anders Rosen: I feel like I hear this meeting is being recorded. Way too often. Now in my headphones piped in Hello everybody this is Anders Timothy Rosen and your host of the MBA Manage-A-Bull Podcast from the UB School of Management where extraordinary is our ordinary.

Today I am joined for a conversation about leadership. Leadership and integrity leadership and dealing and coping with things and just all the leadership stuff that you could ever want to hear about. I'm joined by three amazing women from the UB School of Management. Two of whom are colleagues of mine in the second year of the MBA program. And of course, we also have the Assistant Dean Erin O'Brien joining along with us. But, you know, before we get into that, let me just actually do proper introductions of the folks on the podcast today. So first we have she's the president of the GMA that's the student governing body for all UB MBAs and she's also spending time as a teaching assistant for the first year marketing class with me. That would be Chuck Lindsay. And if she's not, you know, busy enough with those things. She's also working at City in their balance sheets substantiation section, try to say that five times fast. It's Nil Patel, how are you managing?

Nil Patel: Hi I'm I've been managing I think semesters. I'm pretty active with all the added activities that I put on my plate. But I think it's more fun this way. And now I'm really good at scheduling.

Anders Rosen: That is a good skill.

Anders Rosen: For a leader to have that is something that I've had to learn a lot in this program too. Joining as well as the second year MBA student. She is the student assistant for the leader core program, which I'm sure we'll hear more about during this conversation.

She's an MBA ambassador who works in the international students services office. I worked with her a bit this summer on a telemedicine project, um, you know, she's doing everything to its Lizzie Lepertine. Lizzie, how you managing?

Elizabeth Lepertine: I'm also managing fairly well. I would say I think the semester itself is kind of calmed down a little bit, which certainly helps that answer and but like now I just took on a lot more of the semester. So I have now become an expert in time management or so I like to tell myself.

Anders Rosen: Well, well, you know, who tells us to just take on everything and take a bite off more than we can chew. It's the third guest on our podcast. She told each one of us when we first started in the MBA program do it all. You can do it. It's just a couple of years. So I'm just you're you're forewarned here Erin O'Brien that we're doing that.

Anders Rosen: Yeah, that's right. This is Assistant Dean Aaron O'Brian, she was a former MBA student as well. And now gets to lead the program's chief as chief enrollment and marketing officer. She's also in the PhD program. Again, I can't say like all these folks are doing so much. Erin O'Brien, welcome. How are you managing?

Erin O'Brien: Managing pretty well. Thank you very much. I will say that my UB MBA was good training ground for taking on all this stuff in my career. It is a challenge to be both an assistant dean and a PhD student at the same time. So, you know, pile it on, bring it.

Anders Rosen: Well, absolutely. And, you know, Speak, speak about bringing it as a leader, I think I'd love to actually start with the first question to you, you know, Dean O'Brien. Really, which is just how do you define leadership?

Erin O'Brien: I think there are several elements to leadership that I espouse personally and professionally and and i think one of those. And I know we're going to talk about it is integrity.

And as a leader. I think you have to have a high level of personal integrity because I lead from the front. And I think good leaders lead from the front. You can't lead from the back. You have to be out there with your people instead of allowing them to take it all on themselves. And I think that, you know, defining leadership is the ability to set the strategic vision for your team and to understand who you are and what your position is relative to whatever your market is and then to develop those strategic vision in order to be able to further whatever that position is in whatever definition it is so whether it's you know it's your company, your firm your task and responsibility within that company or firm or whether it's just your own personal goals. And looking to what the future is is the leaders job, you should be way out in front and figuring out how to get there and then effectively distributing that mission to your team.

Anders Rosen: You know, it's funny, there's this image that I always see in my mind when it comes to leadership which you pretty much just drew upon and it's, you know, the example of, you know, there's one person sitting at the back, telling people, here's what you do go forward and do that. And then there's, you know, the reverse image of the person actually standing in front going come with me. Yeah, you know, join along I have this vision. I'm, you know, align with me this way. And yeah, it just speaks perfectly to what I see as well. When I think of leadership.

Anders Rosen: Lizzie, you know, Dean O'Brien brought up leadership and integrity and you work as a student assistant of the LeaderCore program. And that's one of the main tenets of the program is integrity. Can you talk a little bit about, you know, the, I guess the combination of leadership and integrity?

Elizabeth Lepertine: So they're really inseparable actually integrity overlaps with all areas and competencies that make up good leadership and it's defined as the quality of being honest and having strong moral, moral principles and this involves how you interact with others and how you interact with yourself.

So tying into LeaderCore. It's the center of the leader, the LeaderCore Venn diagram and it overlaps motivation people in thinking and two of these competencies are internal, for the most part, and how you treat yourself how you honor your own intentions, how you honor what's supposed to be done and honor yourself but then also the third one with people is how you interact with people treating people with respect communicating effectively with them.

Considering outside factors that you may not be aware of that are influencing the current climate, such as different realms of understanding and global diversity so integrity is really the overarching umbrella of leadership, it ties in all of the behavioral competencies and behavioral traits and core competencies and that's how LeaderCore started.

Anders Rosen: What really drew you to, to, I guess, take, take, not just a role in LeaderCore, but actually be, you know, a student ambassador to the program. In a sense, as you know, assisting with Professor Jamie Falzarano. Oh, and really being even more engaged in learning about leadership. What drew you to that?

Elizabeth Lepertine: I am always a big proponent of professional development and personal development. I don't know if any of the three of you have already familiar with the concept of a bullet journal. But I've been doing that for a few years now. And that's actually what kind of led me to the MBA program as it is.

I use my bullet journal for my own personal development and it's a way of being brutally honest with myself and like checking in on my goals and habits and behaviors that I want to change or get better at

Elizabeth Lepertine: So I was kind of already doing a lot of the the work of LeaderCore before I started the MBA program, but in a personal sense and LeaderCore ties it into the professional side of: honing in on these professional competencies that that companies are looking for that leaders should aspire should aspire to involve in themselves. And so for me, as soon as I heard about LeaderCore before the program for the MBA program even started, I knew it was going to be something I was going to be involved in. So being a student assistant is kind of cool in the sense that I get to talk about this and talk about how people should be developing themselves and have the platform to do it. And I get to help the program move forward.

Anders Rosen: That's awesome. That's awesome.

Nil, you know you, as the President of the Graduate Management Association, in many ways, you know, You are leading the students in this really just challenging time my trying to help align us towards just, you know, opportunities to system network opportunities to see each other opportunities to have a little fun as well. But what is it like being a leader of an up student body this semester?

Nil Patel: So yeah, I had the opportunity of working with GMA last year when we weren't going through this. So it's been a huge change. It's a big learning curve for me especially. I knew that I wanted to create this atmosphere so that students can because they can connect with each other. The first year and second years I knew that was going to be hard because, you know, WE DON'T EVEN HAVE WE DIDN'T HAVE IN PERSON activities at all. So I wanted to figure out how through GMA we can keep up with those regulations for COVID, but still have the students have fun, meet, de stress with, you know, schoolwork without having to deal with schoolwork. So it's definitely been very hard very challenging. But I think the biggest thing was just to go in with my goal. I knew that I wanted the students to have as much

fun that I had last year. So that's really the component that the main component of creating every event and leading my team and helping students.

Anders Rosen: You know, a side note on events that Nil has helped put together, last night there was a drive in movie I had a date night for the drive in movie was quite nice actually. Just like getting out of the house a little bit. We watched STEP BROTHERS for anybody, any listeners out there were fans. I can't quote literally anything from the movie, or else you know this is a family podcast.

But yeah, I think it is, it's a challenging time to be able to leave because we are all kind of coping with so many different crises with so many different challenges and they just keep piling on you know 2020 hashtag right? You know, Dean O'Brien, what have you kind of seen as a leader at the school how students have effectively been able to kind of manage and ultimately you know persevere through this challenging time?

Erin O'Brien: Oh boy. You know, we live in this topsy turvy world right now in in terms of school and in speaking both about admitted students who have yet to start the program as well as incoming students who are starting their, their MBA or another one of our degrees and then rising students who have been in the program and now have to shift into something different. You know everything. And then you have faculty and staff who are trying to keep the ship, not only afloat. But like moving in the right direction.

And so you think about all of this. And looking back to last spring, March 16 was the day that we all came back from spring break in a completely virtual world. We went from literally we flipped an entire university of 30,000 plus students and almost 10,000 staff overnight into an online delivery and I would say for the spring semester, you know, Fall or Spring 20 semester. everybody did a good job. Right, we all pitched in it was hard for everybody. It wasn't perfect for anybody but everybody did a really good job. But cut to fall 20 and now this has become our new normal.

And so I think if I can point to one thing one quality or one competency that everybody had to address or embrace its adaptability. And that goes back to our leadership topic. Right. We are adaptable to market conditions and the universe saw fit to throw us everything in one year. Literally everything. And so when I think about how we've coped and how we've adapted for our future students. What Are they adapting to uncertainty and decision making their, their goals and dreams are being crushed right now because they can't get to school. For our international students embassies and consulates are closed. We have a US presidential election impacting our students.

You know, and that's just, you know, that's not even COVID. COVID has completely disrupted our traditional learning pathways for incoming students, you're so excited to start your MBA program right or whatever program you're starting. You're super excited. You want to meet new friends, you want to jump in on Nil's social stuff, you want to jump in on Lizzie's LeaderCore stuff. You know it's super fun. It's really exciting and you're about to launch this next great adventure in your life, but oh wait, stop. You can't do anything in person. You got to do it all online and oh my god, how are you going to do that? And then for a rising students or current students who are rising through their programs, you know, there's the terror

of, oh my god, I'm in this sheltered place but then I have to leave this sheltered place and go back out into the real world. And how's that all going to work?

So I think you know coping has been adapting and I've seen amazing things happen with our students and our faculty and our staff in the School of Management. The faculty embraced the challenge of online delivery, the students have embraced the challenge of online delivery. I actually think that, I think our programs are going to come out incredibly strong because we had great faculty and students in the non covert world. We did a really good job in the in person world. And then we threw all of this online craziness into the mix. And it really challenged everybody to level up to the same level of success or greater than we were before and do it in a completely different Mode of Delivery. And so the modality challenges have only I think in a lot of ways they've improved our MBA program. They've improved our students in terms of their ability to face any challenge. I mean seriously, let me ask, I'll ask a question of everybody else do you feel after this year that there is any challenge you can't address at the moment, nothing, there's nothing you can throw at me right now that I can't solve? I mean, we've been through the worst of it literally so I think that you know the word of the day is adaptability.

Anders Rosen: So, and there's a portion of that that's, you know, almost yourself being a leader right you being able to lead yourself through challenging times you being able to kind of just, you know, adapt self manage. But of course you know having someone that you can look to can help who can help align who can help collaborate and communicate because communication is one of those big challenges I find in this environment where, you know, is everybody on the same page. We're all doing the same thing, having somebody who facilitates that in a leader can be very important. You know, Lizzie, in your knowledge of the LeaderCore program. What are some of the other kind of really important qualities that effective managers and leaders can really take away from this time and really reflect upon and learn and really get better at?

Elizabeth Lepertine: As far as qualities are you looking for specific like LeaderCore qualities, because I can go into that as well.

Anders Rosen: You could, you know, actually. I don't mind. Either way, if they're ones that you're like, You know what, this could be added to LeaderCore. This is one that I've seen you know outside of the program as well like it really, what have you seen that have been really important qualities for effective leaders.

Elizabeth Lepertine: So, especially in with with the uncertainty with an ever changing environment and there's no answers. Everything stressful. Everything's chaotic and aside from the, the traditional qualities of being, you know, organized and well spoken and being able to self manage I think good leadership also entails a certain amount of vulnerability. Good leaders are the ones who have to make the tough choices. They're the ones who have to have the tough conversations. And they have to be the one to face the adversity of these decisions and you're not going to be able to please everybody.

But I think they're strengthen that vulnerability and effective managers and leaders can handle this with grace and communicate it well for their teams and in a respectable manner as well and almost be the beacon of light in uncertain times So I think on top of all the LeaderCore competencies of again global diversity and inclusion and education self management. I think vulnerability is a remarkable attribute of effective leaders, especially in 2020.

Anders Rosen: Absolutely. I love. I think that's so true. And I'm curious, Nil as well, you know, are there certain qualities and characteristics of leadership that you've that you've seen it become extremely important to really grasp on to to learn and to utilize today, and you know, moving forward.

Nil Patel: Yeah, I would say. I mean, I agree with Lizzie vulnerability is key. But I'm open communication being upfront with everything with everything that's going on. People are they're kind of scared or they're worried they did, they don't know what's going on and being a leader, you have to have answers and you have to let them know even if you don't have an answer, let them know that you don't have the answer. But you're working on it or this is the time frame. And I'm just people don't like surprises, but they don't mind bad news. So as long as you tell them you're upfront with them and you can communicate. It's a, you know, it's, that's all we can do as a leader.

Anders Rosen: How, what are some ways that you have kind of utilized your communication skills to help lead, whether it's through your role at City or your role as the President of the GMA or even another one?

Nil Patel: So with GMA, being president it I am that person that communicates with the people in our in the buffalo community when we are organizing events and then I'm also communicating that information to the student body to my team and the student body. So it's really just being on top of things and making sure that this information is getting across in time and nobody's lost in the practice.

Anders Rosen: I know that as well. I think one of the other concepts that we learned about and I was during. Let's see. The second semester when we had, you know, check in that January before classes started we learned about servant leadership, you know, we had a talk to learn what is it like to be a servant leader. And in that case, you know, servant leadership basically is how are you involved in your community, how are you taking time to illustrate, you know, your values and your morals and your ethics and bringing that to the table as part of leadership right but leadership is certainly you know it is about making decisions, certainly leadership is about aligning and setting a strategy and getting everybody to go that way but leadership is also about demonstrating that you are willing to kind of, you know, go into the trenches, a little bit.

So I think this this one I'm going to like just throw out to the throw out to the group servant leadership, what, how do you define it, and how have you seen and used servant leadership to help kind of, you know, make yourself a better leader or maybe seeing somebody do that?

Nil Patel: Um, I guess I can start. Sorry, guys. I would say you have to know what you're asking somebody to do. So you have to if you're if you're giving them instructions and they don't have an idea

and you don't have an idea and how you know they're supposed to do it, then I don't think that serves well for anybody. If you're asking somebody you're asking your team to accomplish a task, get in there with them first, or try it out first and then say here's, you know, here's what I think. Let me know what you think.

Elizabeth Lepertine: Can I jump in?

Anders Rosen: Oh, please.

Elizabeth Lepertine: So tying that back to our conversation earlier this that all of that is acting with integrity. It's showing that like you're not just telling someone to go and do something you're willing to do it, too. It's talking to talk and walking the walk at the same time and I again, think that integrity envelops the entire package of leadership.

Erin O'Brien: I would I would absolutely agree with you, Lizzie, you know, you can ask anybody who works on my team right now and they know from a leadership perspective that I am willing to jump in with them and I frequently hear on my team. It's like okay convince me convince me why we're doing this and and you have to have the passion and the answer. And if you have the passion and the answer, and you can argue your case successfully. I'm going to jump right in with you. And I think that actually my, if you look across my entire career. The reason I'm sitting here talking to you today is because I had that passion 20 years ago I had that passion for this school. And this program 20 years ago when I was an MBA student and I was on GMA and, you know, I wasn't. We didn't have LeaderCore yet, but I was in the first class for pace, which is you know basically birthed LeaderCore. And so I've, I've lived what you're living and I'm the 20 years later of what's going to happen.

And when you invest in in that servant leadership from the beginning. What happens over the course of 20 years and the dividends that it pays you know I didn't I didn't leave the UB MBA program and immediately jumped into this particular job.

I had you know 15 years somewhere else. But I always for those 15 years, even though I was working somewhere else. I was an active alum with the School of Management. I was a corporate champion I mentored corporate champion teams as a firm. I mentored individual UB MBA students in their career search and I was a career connector. I was on the School of Management alumni board of directors with an active role and you know it was basically a 15 year job audition for my assistant dean job which I've continued to occupy that that space where you know, half of my job is giving back to the school in some way or another. I just do it as a professional now instead of as a volunteer. And so, you know, servant leadership is to me, it's embracing that passion that you have for whatever your community is. I mean, I do a lot of other stuff in the community as well. I'm on a board of trustees for another school, I've coached skiing for years. You know, you do all that kind of stuff because there are things in your career that feeds your bank account. And then there are things in your career that feed your soul. And I think the servant leadership stuff comes from the things that feed your soul. I was just lucky enough to find a job that did both.

So, you know, there's, you know, looking at the two ends of the spectrum where you guys are and I'm you're 20 years later. You can carry it all the way through and that that passion for whatever it is that you do. You can turn into your career and really bakes the two things together.

Anders Rosen: Can anybody be a leader? This is a question as well. That, I think, you know, I'll kind of throw out to the group. But, uh, I'll preface it with, you know, we talked about these characteristics that you, you may need to be a leader, we've, we've talked through the different types of leadership, a little bit. And what really goes into it. But it's not easy. You know, it's this isn't something that you can just pick up and learn right away, but I wonder, then, does that mean that anybody can do it. And if so, what's the secret sauce. How do we make sure anybody can do it?

I'll go to Lizzie first on this one. Lizzie, I see you thinking

Elizabeth Lepertine: So, my first thought actually on was a Shakespeare quote in response to that. And I don't know if you're aware of, of my undergraduate degrees in English and so there's quote from 12th Night and Shakespeare may have borrowed it from someone else that I'm not very familiar with, but "some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them." And I think that's pretty relevant to the question of, can anyone be a leader. I think it depends. I think that some may think that they don't have the qualities to be a leader. But if it was actually thrust upon them as a Shakespeare says borrowing because words. I think that they would step up. I think a lot more people. I think a lot of people have more in them than they think they do. And 2020 can even be a voucher that did people think that they'd be able to adapt their entire lives and jobs and families and everything else virtually probably not at the beginning of March, but every single person did it and we're still going. It's, it's mid-November, and we're still going and probably will be for the foreseeable future. But I think the qualities of being a leader. People do have. They just might not have to tap into them until they're forced to.

Nil Patel: That's interesting. I'm sorry, Anders.

Anders Rosen: No, no, please speak. Okay.

Nil Patel: It's interesting because when you first asked the question, I was like, no, and you know, not everybody can be a leader, but I think Lizzie convinced me. Um, I think there's a there's just a lot of people at this moment that are and that might be, and I think they're living on the safe side a little when you're a leader, you have to be open. You have to let other people see that you're let everybody see that you're open and I think you can be a leader like Lindsay said you can really leader, if you're playing that position, and you need to be in that position, then you will others just want to be a leader.

Anders Rosen: Well, that gets back to the vulnerability aspect of leadership doesn't it where you have to be willing to kind of let your guard down and show people maybe your true colors a little bit. I tend to mix my metaphors. This folks might know who listened to the podcast. So well, that kind of leads to the question, then, for me, which is how do we ensure that the opportunities are made available for people to

become leaders and you know today, the three of you are women leaders on campus and your leaders on campus, like, and you've, you are working to, you know, lead LeaderCore to lead the students in multiple ways. Whether it's male or Dean O'Brien and you know it's great that those opportunities are there. How do we make even more opportunities? How do we create more equitability for women and leadership to move to the levels where they can be the Presidents of more associations, the deans of more more schools more ambassadors.

Erin O'Brien: That's, that's a really big question and I think as I think about it. I think there are structured and unstructured ways and the structured ways are we need more structured opportunity to include both women and men in the conversation about how to empower women's women leadership and, you know, we can work on that as women. But we need to include men in that conversation because you are partners in our workplace in our lives, etc. And so I think they're structured ways to do that and structured ways, you know, we have all of our all of our programming. We have LeaderCore we have student government. We have things like Blackstone and entrepreneurship and you know all the great ways to foster success generally in people and then each one of those things. And many others have threads that are focused on women, specifically, you know, women in student government women in leadership positions women in entrepreneurship. Women in insert whatever you know word you want there. So I think we have more and more and more structured opportunities and I'm, I'm really thrilled to see the amount of opportunity that we have not just on our campus. But in our community and in society in general, I think there's more, more so than ever. We have opportunity for women to take advantage of that.

So from a structured perspective, I think we're moving in the right direction from an unstructured perspective. I think we're we're delving into the realm of nuanced conversation and being aware of our language around raising women up into leadership positions and encouraging women to take leadership roles. And I'm hopeful about that conversation. And no matter how you voted in this year's U.S. elections what resulted was the highest number of women walking into Congress ever. And so and that's on top of the previous midterm elections that resulted in the highest number of women walking into federal government ever so we're seeing women rise into higher and higher positions. I think we have a lot of work to do corporately where we're breaking some we're breaking some glass ceilings, but I think we need to break a little bit more and and I'm very encouraged that we can do that. So our conversation and being cognizant of encouraging women to take that opportunity. Moving impediments out of the way for women to take opportunities understanding things like child care and family it not just child care but family care where the sandwich generation right we're, we're going to be caring for parents and children at the same time. And you, it's really hard to balance a career out I'll use myself as an example. You know, I'm I've got a pretty challenging career I've pretty challenging children. I've pretty challenging family. So, you know, try to manage that all at the same time really when you lay it all out on the table and you say, okay, well, here's a leadership opportunity. I become very practical in that conversation and I say, okay, well how am I going to fit that in can I fit that in? Do I even want to fit that in? And sometimes you're like yeah, I'm going to fit in, and other times you know the fit that in somebody else can do that. So I think it's there are both structured and unstructured perspectives on women's leadership and creating those spaces where women can truly lead and it might be leading in small ways or leading in big obvious way you

know, everybody has an opportunity to go back to the previous question everybody leads in their own way everybody leads in their own thing. And so having those opportunities are really important.

Anders Rosen: And then recognizing you know sometimes you have to reframe your mind a little bit. You mentioned that you know there's a place of course for men at the table to have to be part of that conversation to. And one of the things that I think we need to do is just reframe. You know, flip the way we're looking at the world. Every once in a while and say, You know what, maybe I don't have it. All right. Yeah, let me let me change the way I've looked at this. We hear different perspectives, because when you hear those different perspectives there there's going to be a rising tide lifts all those boats as more and more people come to the table as more and more people get the chance to lead. There's more and more just information that you get from that there's more and more perspectives and I think that gives just greater opportunity. I wonder, you know, Lizzie and Nil. Any, anything you'd like to add to that.

Nil Patel: I'm just that. I mean, I agree with Aaron, you have to foster growth and you have to foster the their minds to want to be in these leader position leadership positions because sometimes they don't even know what they're capable of.

Anders Rosen: So what about leaders in your lives who are who are folks that each of you have looked up to in the past as leaders, whether it's, you know, in school. In the community and your family Lizzie, I'll start with you. Who's, who's a leader that you've looked to it in the past that you'd like to emulate.

Elizabeth Lepertine: I've been saying this to anyone who will listen to me since March, but the director of my Office of International Student Services. Is I just want to be her when I grow up basically as a leader. She, she's the director of ISS is also vice provost for international education and she, she's a mom. She's a lot of concerns on her plate, including changes in immigration policy, the changes and things that are happening because of covert changes and things that are happening because of the administration and she cares so deeply about all the international students and alumni and she fights for them. But she also makes a point as a leader to prioritized lobbying over staff including her students, staff, which as a graduate assistant. I'm not there full time. I'm not going to be there past graduation. So for her to make it a priority to care about our well being to it does mean a lot. And I can go into an example story of how she treats us if you'd like.

Anders Rosen: We love stories on the pod.

Elizabeth Lepertine: So she on in March two days after SUNY new be announced. We were going to close. We had a staff meeting to determine what was going to happen if, if the offices were to close because at the time it was only classrooms were going to be distant learning. Offices weren't entirely shut down yet, of course. Little did we know that was two days later, that those are going to be closed as well. So the meeting that morning was entirely, what are we going to do, how are we going to move all these processes remotely. And even for like for students, staff, who don't have the same equipment, who don't have the same responsibilities. So she made a point to to fight for our jobs for her students, staff, which

was also just it felt really great that she cared that much and she made sure to point out that she values, our contribution to the office and she didn't want to lose us in the...

Anders Rosen: Wi Fi issues, man. No.

Elizabeth Lepertine: But she also handled all the uncertainty... Is that mine?

Anders Rosen: You're okay you're back. Can you hear me now?

Anders Rosen: Wi Fi issues are done, you're back on.

Elizabeth Lepertine: Okay, I don't know where I cut off, but she she handled the insane uncertainty with absolute grace there Neal had mentioned earlier about being comfortable with saying I don't know the answer. And she was doing that. People would ask her questions, but it was a very long staff meeting, as you can imagine. Like what happens with this policy. What happens with this process? And she's like, I don't know, let's figure it out together right now. And it was an open conversation and it was vulnerable is transparent. It was she's acting with integrity and even outside of a pandemic. She displays these attributes all the time and allows her staff and students, staff to have their own autonomy. But still, she's a guiding hand or just kind of showing the way giving her direction in life where she has a vision but allows us to have the autonomy to make the professional decisions so really, I want to be her when I grow up as a leader and I've been saying that since March that that one staff meeting I just sat in on the entire time thinking how well she was handling and how great of a leader she is.

Anders Rosen: Fantastic, thank you for that story. It really, it's great to hear about examples of leadership all across campus. Nil, same question to you. Who's the leader, you know that you can think of that you look to.

Nil Patel: My leader is it's a family member, not in the professional world. It's my dad actually and growing up by we didn't. I didn't like the way he dealt with things. But now when I'm looking back on everything. I'm like, no, he was right. And now I'm following the same exact footsteps. But I mean, he had he made the move to come from India, like, come to another country, not even speaking English. So just like taking a leadership saying I want a better life for myself, my family and then have, you know, all of us kids like having us all grow up here to have a better life. So he led our family like in the right direction. And I really admire him for that.

Anders Rosen: Vulnerability

Anders Rosen: Bringing vulnerability. Again, the theme.

Anders Rosen: That's coming up somewhere in the title. I don't know.

Anders Rosen: Dean O'Brien, anybody in particular for you.

Erin O'Brien: Yeah, um, I was very fortunate when I finished my MBA and I went to work for a big huge tech firm that I had the good fortune to land with a woman who was my first boss and then a woman who is my second boss. And both of them. I'd say embody the characteristics and the leadership style that I've taken into my own career. I think first and foremost, both of them dealt with the people who worked for them as individual humans first and employees. Second, and so they're they're empathetic. They're still my friends 20 years later, they are incredible women who paved the way for my generation of women who are working. And so I think in that respect, I value women, women leaders who are my elders, because they walked the fire in order to be able to get to, to where they are so that we could then step on their shoulders and go up another level. So I think, I think they represent like a really important element of society for me. But specifically, the two women that I worked for in the tech firm really showed me how to be an empathetic leader and my management style has always been to act as the umbrella over my team.

My mantra when it comes to management is hire a rock star and get out of their way. Take the leash off them and let them go be great. And, Lizzie, your boss over at International Student Services works that way as well because I admire her too. She does the same thing, you know we hire great people and then move out of their way and let them be go be great and so that started with the two women that I worked for when I graduated after my MBA.

Anders Rosen: You know, I'll give my two cents on this answer too. I think that folks who have listened to the podcast for a long time know from last year I went to Columbia, the country, before coming to the MBA program, a number of years back, and very seminal moment in my life. I loved it down there. But anyway, I got to teach English to students in Medellin and I worked with a co teacher down there. And her name is Christina and Christina is far and away and I've had some great teachers in my life. But she's far and away the best teacher I've, I've ever encountered and what made her such a great leader for her classes, how much she cared about her students. I mean, there are three or 400 students that we had she knew every one of them by name. She knew their parents. She knew you know their life stories, she cared so deeply she embodied servant leadership. If anybody has ever embodied it that I've seen before and just inspired watching her inspired me to try to be a better teacher as well.

Anders Rosen: And I think I've point out a teacher as well because you know for so many of us when we're younger. Those are the folks that we first look at and see, as leaders and in our world, you know, they're the people who they're teaching us. They are inspiring us to go on and do become who we are, and you know that I just think back to Christina and Columbia and I think, thank goodness that I got to work with her that I got to witness what it's like for someone to lead and care so deeply.

So I think with that, what I'd like to do before we wrap up is really just get a sense from everybody here, how we managing it now because I know at the top. We were all as all I was a little tough, but how we manage it now and what what are you going to do to lead moving forward. So let's start with Nil? Nil. How are you managing now and tell me, you know, what's the next step for you.

Nil Patel: And I feel like I'm getting the hang of managing I think at the beginning of it was you know like we were talking about, but it was hard for me to have those hard conversations and they're, they're not for, you know, for good reason. So now I'm learning how to have those hard conversations and how for our organization to move forward. And I think I've been, I think we've been doing really well.

Anders Rosen: Awesome, any, any other events. You want to promote for GMA in the next the next few months.

Nil Patel: Um, no event because of COVID but we will be doing an apparel sale. So everybody anybody who wants School of Management clothing, we will be offering that out soon.

Anders Rosen: Okay, so be on the lookout for apparel sale awesome. Lizzie, same questions to you.

Elizabeth Lepertine: But definitely say after this conversation and feeling empowered humbled too. Going forward, the pillars that I think we kept coming back to in this conversation where vulnerability, integrity and empathy, and feel like those are three thoughts that I myself like kind of had in my head, but now it's more clear after having this conversation because those are the exact qualities in leaders that I admire the best bosses that I've had have like exhibited those qualities and going forward. That is that is the leader that I want to be awesome.

Anders Rosen: Dean O'Brien, how you're managing now?

Erin O'Brien: Sure. Actually, I'm lazy. I love your answer and I think that those qualities define UB MBAs when you all are in the process of deciding to do an MBA and then choosing a program, you know you all come in as rock stars in your own individual spaces and that's how you get into the program and then you have to level up the playing field and you have to figure out how to become successful amongst a bunch of rock stars. And empathy and vulnerability and leadership and integrity are the things that are going to step you up. And I think those are our huge qualities of UB MBAs and I'm grateful that that's our culture in the School of Management is servant leadership and empathy and integrity. I think that's super great.

So how am I managing? I have embraced the chaos completely. What are you going to do fight against it? So I so I think and truly my team. My team. Totally and completely embrace the chaos and we decided, rather than freaking out. We were going to address every situation as it came to us and figure it out and it goes back to my adaptability. And so, embrace the chaos is how we manage and going forward. I think that the chaos taught us a lot of lessons it we were able to jettison fear and move forward confidently, even though we had absolutely no idea what the next step was, and in terms of promoting anything, you know, I would encourage anybody who's listening to this podcast, who has not considered the UB MBA or any one of our other programs to consider it because as you can see a we have some pretty cool students in this program. So your peers, your peers are pretty cool and be you have a lot of support in this MBA program and in our other programs or other academic programs as well because you

get to do cool stuff like this. And I think we're actually a great group of people to become peers with so if you haven't already filled out your application. Do it now.

Anders Rosen: Once more into the breach.

Anders Rosen: Dear friend,

Erin O'Brien: Shakespeare line.

Anders Rosen: And with that, that's a wrap on the MBA Manage-A-Bull podcast episode on leadership, its leadership and integrity leadership and vulnerability leadership and empathy servant leadership, all of the above.

Anders Rosen: Thank you to Lizzie Lepertine, Nil Patel and Dean Erin O'Brien for joining the podcast today. You can learn more about some of the work that both of my second year classmates Lizzy and Nil are doing in the LeaderCore program and the Graduate Management Association by visiting the UB School of Management website mgt.buffalo.edu. The Manage-A-Bull podcast is produced by me Anders T. Rosen, in partnership with the UB School of Management. Special thanks to Dean Paul Tesluk, Assistant Dean Erin O'Brien, Assistant Director of recruitment Aaron Shaw, and Assistant Director of Marketing Harrison Cheung. Fans of the Manage-A-Bull podcast can find us on Stitcher, Apple podcasts, Google, as well as a number of other listening platforms. And don't forget to leave a review of Manage-A-Bull in your favorite podcast app, and to subscribe. Let me know if you're a new subscriber. And I just might give you a shout out on the next podcast because everyone loves a shout out. At least that's what I'm sure Chuck Lindsay would tell us in marketing class.

I'm Anders Timothy Rosen and how am I managing any better. I couldn't stand it.