

# BD\_Podcast\_with\_music\_at\_beg\_and\_end\_and\_intro\_ACHEdit (1)

Tue, Jul 11, 2023 3:11PM 42:08

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

work, day, organization, talking, people, victim mentality, career pathing, conversation, weaknesses, challenge, set, life, company, hard, choice, minutes, opportunity, stay, book, give

## SPEAKERS

Brendon Davis, Mark Agostinelli

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**M** Mark Agostinelli 00:06

Hello everyone back to Beers and Careers here. As always, the podcast is sponsored by the Davis Companies real relationships, powerful partnerships, exceptional opportunities. Today's guest is Brendan Davis, president of the Davis Companies. Brendan is again, he's a colleague but a buddy friends a bunch of time together.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 00:30

Just got kids about the same age as my kids are pretty similar place in our careers and our personal lives. So definitely someone I like to hang out with and, but also bounce ideas off. So we talked a lot of different things. Some a, you know, a found from his favorite book being The Giving dri to how he's working on his listening skills to become a better leader. And then he also hits a very important topic that affects a lot of people, but I think he can speak to very well, which is working with family members. So without further ado, here's my time at Brandon Davis. Hope you enjoy it, Brendan, thank you for being the inaugural guest of beers and careers. Give it a name right? Cheers not off to a hot start. Brennan's beer of choice, drink of choice really was Guinness.

**B** Brendon Davis 01:22

Today it was today it was coming off a long weekend of fireball. And

**M** Mark Agostinelli 01:28

Kant kind of kind of forced your hand that that was the only thing in the fridge kind of forced your hand. So that one's on mute. So, Brendan, I really, you know, excited to have you here. I think I've learned a ton from you over the years as it pertains to leadership. I think we This podcast was invented out of a thought of talking about people's career pathing, which is a real hot topic for you these days in our organization. So the timing, I think could not be more perfect. To talk about some of the challenges about wrangling career pathing and a \$50 million dollar size organization with almost 100 people and and as we kind of move to our next venture internally, but let's, let's start with some easier questions just to just to get this warmed up here. So I know we're drinking Guinness today but honestly, what's what's your favorite drink?

**B** Brendon Davis 02:24

favorite beer of choice recently? It's been been like the coffee borders a big coffee guy Devon noticed Yes, cold brew is coarsely running through my veins. So anything that I can add a little caffeine to really cause you know, yeah,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 02:38

Mark Agostinelli 02:30

I need more we might need to have a doctor on the podcast and see if you can drink that much coffee.

Brendon Davis 02:43

Yeah 120 ounces of cold brew day might be much

Mark Agostinelli 02:47

wild. Um, so first job was your first job.

Brendon Davis 02:52

First job was Well, we started stacking boxes for Davis at an early age of probably eat or but I would say my first real job was during the summers I was scooping ice cream at an ice cream spot up in New Brand New Hampshire. Okay, and then the second really the full like ice cream. I wouldn't really consider a really a really

Mark Agostinelli 03:21

high. There's a lot to learn on a busy

Brendon Davis 03:24

night. Great forums forums. I can I can imagine. But it was actually the first I think it was after the summer of ice cream. The next summer I worked for a cut shop. So they were building large prefab trusses for big buildings. Yep. So I was the grunt that they would fire through a couple 1000 pieces of lumber that would cut it and I would have to catch it, stack it. Wrap it and then like basically do a steel cord around it and cut it in like five minutes and I was an assembly line worker just catching lumber and having big blades and saws how long running around I was probably

Mark Agostinelli 04:09

13 phenomenal phenomenal all

Brendon Davis 04:12

these guys were lifers and like just a lot of wisdom coming out of the crew stay probably smoked five packs in my recipe. Maybe there were some drinking on the job by me. Yeah,

Mark Agostinelli 04:22

I hope at 13 Probably not. I love that interview question. When I when we interview people here I always asked what was your first job because it is generally cemented in people's brains like what they did and they're usually like that. They're usually some level of like physicality involved sweating to go everyone's going home and taking naps after work. It was vivid. Yeah, some

Brendon Davis 04:48

resident it was hard work and it was a

Mark Agostinelli 04:52

couple more to warm you up to these days. I was gonna ask you your favorite book, but you can't answer Start with Why.

**B** Brendon Davis 05:04

Your favorite? Yeah, well, honestly, I think my favorite one that I'll switch it up on it. What was your favorite kids book growing up that had a long lasting impression? Mine was The Giving Tree. Yes,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 05:15

Shel Silverstein No, no. Sure the author because it shows Yeah,

**B** Brendon Davis 05:19

okay. Yeah. The Giving Tree. Okay, giving sure it was

**M** Mark Agostinelli 05:23

probably why it was so impactful.

**B** Brendon Davis 05:25

I think at the time, I didn't really get the, like, the theme of the book and like the life lessons that it was learning, right. But as I grew up and still remember the book, I would go back to it. And would, it would open up a whole new perspective based on the theme of the book. And, and, and, you know, at first, it was just about this boy and a tree and how much the tree was just totally, just completely giving to every phase and aspect of his life. And just to say, looking back at it now, yes, it probably means a whole lot more now than it did then. But

**M** Mark Agostinelli 06:06

yeah, that's insightful statement as a guy has known you for 10 years. I did not know that. Yeah. Do you watch what about right now he renewing right now?

**B** Brendon Davis 06:15

Right now we're reading principle of US allies. And that is pretty impactful, just because it's got a heavy making your life. So you're not living in a victim mentality or below the line. And I think that there's probably a pretty big shift in our organization. Yeah, with the book and some of the other things that we're doing right now. Even in a fight of myself in my own personal life. I'm just I'm taking. I'm taking the credit.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 06:45

Yeah. Do you find so in full disclosure, I'm also reading that book right now. Because we're doing it as an organization, the odds principle, wisdom of Oz, do you find you struggle? It's almost like it's easier to apply in these four walls where everyone is speaking that lexicon. And I think at times when you leave these four walls, and go back into the day of which we have here and victim mentality can be fairly common among our social fabric as a culture in America, do you? Do you have trouble kind of like not getting frustrated with it?

**B** Brendon Davis 07:24

I found myself probably more frustrated with the outside world. Yeah, going that way. Because you want to sit down and go, that victim, victim, victim victim, right? It's, you know, not everyone's read the book,

M

Mark Agostinelli 07:37

how are you dealing with that? How do you How are you dealing with that? And exploiting and I asked him replace, like, I think, the same way. It's like, I can't when I'm reading the book, I'm thinking about things that are happening in the office. And then I'm, but more vividly, I'm thinking about all the examples outside of the office, that some I don't have a whole lot of influence over.

B

Brendon Davis 07:59

I feel like the tolerance is shorter. Yes. Because if I'm, if you're truly trying to, if you have a fairly small, finite time, doing what we're doing right now, right, I find myself in the outside, less tolerant. Right. And just, you know, probably saying something where I would, I would typically not say, so just let it go.

M

Mark Agostinelli 08:24

Pretty obvious. Right. So taking more action for it.

B

Brendon Davis 08:27

Yep. Yeah, I would say take more action. And, and, and living with the result good or bad.

M

Mark Agostinelli 08:32

Right. Right. Wow. All right. Well,

B

Brendon Davis 08:36

it's like a bank that, you know, it's, there's nothing that they're asking you to do that isn't good for you. Right? Feel like if you hold that mentality, right? Even in the outside world, if you're if you're giving them if you're shooting straight, there's nothing that you're that you're saying that isn't good for the person? Yes. Yeah. I feel like mentality for themselves.

M

Mark Agostinelli 08:54

And for people who haven't read the book. I think the premise of the book is basically that you are responsible for all the problems that you see in front of you. Like you have the power to change them. So I think it's it's interesting how much that book relates to The Giving Tree. Man, I got deep on this rapid fire question. I had like softballs left up. But can I end with this one because I love this favorite curse word. Move. I think I dropped that blouse. Fuck is one of the best words. It really it's an adjective. It's a noun. It's a person a place in a thing at time. It's

B

Brendon Davis 09:35

dead. People all jacked up with it. Yes. People really angry with

M

Mark Agostinelli 09:39

it. It's very universal. It's unbelievable. It's really it's really a challenge when you have a four and a two year old by the way.

B

Brendon Davis 09:45

Yeah, no, that's, they know the word. Yeah,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 09:48

I do. And they my family also knows that only dad and mom could say those are the rules. When you're 18 you can say it too. We'll see how long that lasts. So I think for you This is a kind of a really interesting question, but I've always been wanting to ask folks. How old are you now? 36. So 36 Back when you were 36 Excuse me, you're 36 When you were 16 years old. Did you have any ideas what you'd be doing? Honestly?

**B** Brendon Davis 10:18

No, no, I thought for sure I'd be in sales doing some sort of selling of something. Wow, I

**M** Mark Agostinelli 10:23

thought you're gonna go pro basketball on me. No. So by 16, you've already been humbled that much athletic way. Oh, definitely. Yeah, that makes sense. I mean, to actually 16 You knew that there were men that were men

**B** Brendon Davis 10:37

we playing basketball alerts Academy and being a minority on that team. Yeah. Set my set my sights that I would not be joining

**M** Mark Agostinelli 10:44

never. Yeah. Shortest guy by what? Like a flood? Yeah. 16. insane. Insane. When when people are going to the pros. Yeah, that's a that's a that's a big thing. 360

**B** Brendon Davis 10:56

dunks in warm up practice. Yeah. I can't

**M** Mark Agostinelli 11:01

imagine being the other team. Do you have any lessons from Lawrence College days that you look back to and lean on either when the shits hitting the fan, or when you just look for strength from from a moral standpoint, or from a leadership standpoint, from those days? Because those are such formative years? For people? I feel like,

**B** Brendon Davis 11:25

I honestly think that there's probably more that I've, that I've learned now not to do. Yeah, probably more than more than anything from those years. You know, I think that a lot of over the past, I would say five years, that has allowed me to be more successful than I was, during that time, had to do with like self awareness now. And you always are born with a certain set of skills that can get you through life. Yeah. But being able to be really self aware and using those the right way, and making sure that you're not that you're not, you're not skipping in the areas that you should really kind of dig deep and focus in to get you to where you need to be. And I think college is probably a pretty good example, at least for me, candidly, is, you know, looking back, you know, I wish I had spent a lot more time energy and effort, you know, and some of the core fundamental business skills and some of the, because a lot of the stuff that I've, I think had a longer learning curve with is all that stuff that I've learned on the job, because my honestly probably didn't spend enough time focused and, and learning when I had the opportunity to so you know, I feel like I feel like that's that would have that would have helped me get there sooner. But I don't think even at the time. I don't think I was self aware enough to be able to see that as a priority. Over drinking, right, and playing

M

Mark Agostinelli 13:03

Club Med and social, right. Well, I think that's a challenge for so many people. Sure. I don't think that's kind of what I kind of meant about the culture dictates that D, what changed for you like what, what was I want to become more self aware? It's a path, don't you think? It's and it's not easy? Yeah.

B

Brendon Davis 13:22

I think it had to do with we, we started with, early in, like leadership or management. We started going to round tables where we were surrounded by other people. And I think that there was a group robbing lend was your names, but the group, clearly a clear version was the name of the company and these facilitated roundtables with CEOs and kind of senior executives in companies around the area. And at first, I think we went in, I went in there, and, you know, people would talk about things they had going on their problems or things in business that, you know, and immediately, my mind would go to a solution, versus like listening and learning and, you know, just kind of being present in their situation to learn what they did. And I think that was the start of what allowed my brain to actually slow down and listen a lot more to the situation and learn from some of that stuff versus coming to like a solution or trying to problem solve right away. Whereas I think right now, I think that there's time to problem solve, but I'm noticing an organization, especially with the amount of growth and changes and everything like that, it's the people that truly sit and listen, and, you know, put them put themselves in someone else's shoes and are really kind of self aware of how they're operating and how the group's operating and the different dynamics of that those people tend to make probably the most accurate and best decisions for the organization.

M

Mark Agostinelli 14:57

There was a lot there. So that was awesome. He has a lot because I think so what you're, what you're saying was more your can I? Do I have the liberty to assume that when you say listen, you're also talking about asking more clarifying questions yet, right and trying to like, understand the root of a problem as opposed to the symptoms of one. Sure. Yeah. That's who So was that a clear vision Alliance? thing was that yeah, so those

B

Brendon Davis 15:25

stepping stones from there, I joined an organization called YPO. And its purpose CEOs that meet monthly and they truly talk about, you know, where they're at, you know, how their businesses going family, you know, good, bad everything. So a lot of there, you're talking about, you know, kind of the deepest and darkest, you know, kind of worst situations all the way up to the highest and best pinnacles of your career. So, I think that there's being able to go through an organization where, you know, from a business roundtable standpoint, and then jump into YPO, that's not only business, but also personal, right, it brought me it added not only to the better self awareness on the business front, but also personally for myself. So I feel like I've been able to understand what my strengths and weaknesses are, and also be open to it to checking your ego at the door, I think that's another big thing. It's hard to be self aware, when, when you have an ego at play. You know, and I think that there's different people have different variances on how strong their ego is, and I certainly over I still have an ego and, and but being able to need one, being able to temper that and understand what you know, where other people see you at. We recently did a 360 evals for our executive team and myself with with folks that I work with, on a daily and like a lot of that feedback was really positive. But if you if you got an ego at the door, you probably aren't, you're not truly listening to what that feedback is and how to work on that for the better. So yeah, I think that that going back to your step two, how that has helped me throughout my career. I think it started with roundtables to get me talking about prime design thinking, right? And then into more, you know, self self work through and reflection reflections. Yeah, so what

M

Mark Agostinelli 17:24

the 360s are great. I'm a fan of those as well, those tend to, in my experience, come once a year, maybe once a quarter, what strategies do you employ, to have that in real time, like, so that you don't lose that, because I mean, I feel like myself, I fall into the victim of like, I lose that touch at times, it's like, you gotta get grounded again,

B

Brendon Davis 17:49

you just mean in terms of how your stay in, like, you're working in the right

**M** Mark Agostinelli 17:54

areas to get strengths or weaknesses, right. Like that kind of stuff.

**B** Brendon Davis 17:57

So I've actually, I think, for 2018, I started this started with a new executive coach last year, it was working with the organization, and self discipline, and you know, kind of prepping yourself in the areas. If you look at your day, there's things that give you energy, and there's things that take away energy from you. So being able to kind of set up your data, understand what those are, and you really focus in on the areas that give you energy and make sure that you're, you know, that that you're not taking care of the things that don't, but you're setting up mechanisms or programs to be able to take care of those aspects of your life so that you, you can spend less time in that area, right and yourself more energy to do, you know, kind of future looking or goal oriented things. So a lot of what I talked to Nick, my executive coach about and in YPO, there's a lot of folks that operate this way, just just from meeting people and asking them what how they handle it. But, you know, daily reminders of checklists and things that that you can think about and do to make sure that you're staying on task to to, to kind of the best version of you. And yeah, so you're working on the things that you that you really suck at. Yeah. Okay, and you're in, you're pouring gasoline on the things that really fired up.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 19:16

So what we're like, can you give us an example it sounds like checklists, and to do lists were a big change for you, but anything else? That's kind of been a big change in how you physically execute that.

**B** Brendon Davis 19:28

Yeah. So I would say that I'm still I'm still I have nowhere to where I need to be. Yeah, close. So you know, I think that spending time each week calendar has always been really struggle for me when, you know, I couldn't sit behind a computer and do the same thing for 40 hours a week. Drive to go crazy. So I think you know, being able to have variety in what you do and focus on but making sure that you're spending different execution time for versus creative time versus relationship building time. So being able to look at your week and go, Okay, you know, Tuesday and Thursday are my creative days. So you're thinking about, you know, future status stuff, or if there's kind of creative juices that you got to put towards, you know, new career pathing or, you know, you're talking about your core values and beliefs, and, and what's going to be the next, you know, kind of next theme that you're going to go into, that's a different muscle in your brain that you need to kind of stay focused on. It would be, it would be like in a sales desk, you know, calling financial services companies, and then five minutes later, you know, checking voicemails, and then five minutes later jump into another thing. And, you know, healthcare, you're all over the place, you know how much you're really going to be able to dial in on your, on your one hour of calling to a specific sector for a specific reason. to specific customers, right? Yeah, you're just you're, you're sharper. Where

**M** Mark Agostinelli 20:57

do you find? You said, self discipline being one of those ways that you're helping to get there. Right. Anything you noticed that's been working for you to stay more disciplined?

**B** Brendon Davis 21:12

I think having it in the schedule, having the scale and having to

**M** Mark Agostinelli 21:15

become a schedule guy. Yeah.

**B** Brendon Davis 21:17  
So you know, having what do you use? Outlook?

**M** Mark Agostinelli 21:21  
Yeah, straight up on your computer.

**B** Brendon Davis 21:24  
If it's not an outlook, then it doesn't exist. Yeah.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 21:27  
I told my wife that Tish Not a fan, I'm not sure how that would go over. She's like, we have this birthday party Saturday. I'm like, my calendar doesn't know that.

**B** Brendon Davis 21:37  
But you get become a slave to it. Yeah. And I do think there's a there's one of the things that I would love to be able to start doing. At some point, at some point, I don't know about in the first half of the year. But I found that through some of the folks that that are incredible CEOs, they do a lot of meditation at least once a day just to set themselves up to be to dial in and focus and hit what I'm trying to accomplish that that. And they have a really good, organized kind of project management tool in their tool belt.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 22:13  
Well, I think was interesting, as you talked about, you've noticed a theme behind successful business leaders all having patients, active listening. And they're not just do not just firing away, and then you brought up meditation. So I think those there's got to be some level relationship on my own personal journey. Meditation is high on my to do list as well, or whatever that meant. And that means just taking time to breathe or sending yourself is a I always wonder those people have children under five, but because God, there's not a lot of what time are you waking up for that and going to the gym and trying to get it all done? It's like, that's a that's a challenge. That's a challenge. I just started journaling in the last two weeks, spread crazy different,

**B** Brendon Davis 23:08  
how many times a day or journal,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 23:10  
I have a notebook that basically I bought on Amazon, some notebook that actually is called a next level planner. So shout out on Amazon to next level planners. And I got Tyler One, two. And it literally you plan your whole schedule up in the morning and ask you did you move Did you breathe? Did you meditate Did you work out. And then it tells you to write down things you're grateful for. And then an affirmation and then you plan your day. And it's got priority to do list. And it's gonna end of the day kind of reflection thing. And so I gotta admit, on Saturday and Sunday, that no book was nowhere to be found. But, but during the week, it's been really good, too. And I found that even the I probably spend no more than eight minutes in the morning, filling it out. And probably five to 10 minutes at the end of the day doing it. So I'm not getting a tremendous amount of time. But I found like, the nighttime helps me sleep, because I know what I have to do the next day because I've already planned the day. And in the morning, I find I don't, I don't I



don't tend to be the most patient person. So I'm working on that. But I found that at least I at least I'm a little calmer. Entering to the day because I've reminded myself like look slow down. You're on a gigantic rock hurtling through the solar system, you're gonna be fine kind of thing, like the gratefulness thing is a is a real kick in the teeth.

**B** Brendon Davis 24:30

So that's so funny. So we, we just had this discussion in a roundtable and I would say that probably 75% of the people sitting around the table every morning, wrote down acts of gratitude, right, or people that they were grateful, or whatever that is, and just reminded themselves of that.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 24:48

Isn't that Wow. Have you done it? Have you tried it? No. It's weird. It's weird because you are, you've probably thought about it. Sure. But then to pin it to paper you're like what Am I doing? Right and I just wanted like, I'm grateful for my family. And there was either really couple tough days last week at work that were hard conversations with people in our organization. And, and I wrote down I'm, I'm grateful to have the opportunity to help people on their journey, just like your mind frame just totally changes in an instant. So yeah, it's a we'll see, catch catch up with me in six months, I'm still doing. Let's see, see if that's happening. You mentioned career pathing, which I think one time when Andrea, our VP of Marketing and the person that kind of poured gasoline on Mark's fire to start a podcast, because podcasting has become a huge part of my life, for some of the stuff that we're talking about self awareness, journaling, gratitude, all that kind of stuff. Where was I going with that? What Andrea and I were spitballing I think we talked about how people's career pathing certainly sitting in a staffing seat. We talked to people all the time that you couldn't believe the job they're doing today is what they if you'd ask them 10 years ago, like I had no idea what I'm gonna do that like it wasn't a linear career path. I you know, looked like a, an absolute mess at times, but I failed forward kind of thing. So how do you you're tasked in our organization with career pathing talent acquisition, that HR bucket, which is huge. And there's a lot of pressure when you've got the growth goals that we've got. How do you capture that? How do you allow for that? Excuse me, chaos. So there's a level of chaos and the level of unpredictability that comes with people, right, like the people are not robots. So how do you kind of capture that to still inspire people that the next steps are always available, but at the same time that like, they don't need to be pigeonholed into only one with skinning the cat, lack of a better term.

**B** Brendon Davis 26:49

So two things, I think you need to give people choice and you need to give people a stage. So okay, you got to give people the choice to be able to see what is potential for their opportunity, right. And you got to give them a stage to perform to get there. Okay, so

**M** Mark Agostinelli 27:06

choice is almost vision.

**B** Brendon Davis 27:07

Yeah. So being able to look out end choice, in one company choice could also be leaving the company. Yes. Right. Right. It doesn't have to be here. But my choices are. And I think that the more I think the the Richard Branson quote, just as been sticking with me for probably the past,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 27:28

this is good. I skipped favorite quote on the rapid fire. So this is perfect timing

**B** Brendon Davis 27:32

is, you know, train people so that they can leave. Yeah, freedom so well, that they stay Yes. And that's probably not the exact quote, but the mentality behind it. I think that if you're able to give people choices, of what's in total

the exact quote, but the mentality behind it. I think that if you're able to give people choices, or what's in total alignment with the company and its growth, and it gives people the ability to learn new roles and responsibilities within the job set. And then there's other things on the, on the cultural part of the company that people get involved with, right, that are other things, whether it be you know, philanthropic, give back to the community, whether it be you know, performance management and kind of help training and development or, you know, there's different areas of the company that people can get involve with, it's outside of their job scope, but specific to the job scope, give people the path, that's that they can see for themselves that lines up with, where they want to go, what they want to do, and make sure that you have great training programs to get them there. And be really clear about what the expectations are so that they have to apply the hard work. Not that they're, you know, sitting there going, well, you know, why? I've been here for 10 years. So I deserve a promotion right into this role. Right. Whereas,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 28:50

how do you handle that? Because that is that is kind of coincides nicely with the point you made 1015 minutes ago of the victim mentality? Right? Like, yeah, like those people do not believe that they're in control of the world around

**B** Brendon Davis 29:06

that's a result of the organization. Yeah. Not not setting expectation, and, and having a crucial conversation with them about their strengths and weaknesses, you're getting effectively the transparent, like, if you're not transparent with the person that they have weakness, right, and you just keep on, you know, not talking about that. And they continue on a path right to management, and they're not good managers, right? They've been here and you just haven't had the conversation, right? You know, victim mentality would would, would be going well, that's just perfect. So leaders thought, I'm gonna take full credit, I didn't have a conversation, right? And if you did have that conversation, hopefully you'd be guiding them in a way that would be able to put them into their greatest strengths. And if they, they don't have what it takes to be in that role, or they themselves feel like the path to where they want to go isn't with the company, then To set them free, because at the end of the day, they're holding up a seed of someone that could be right on that career path and doing it well. And if you don't have it internally, then why would you? Why would you keep them here? That's all I gotta tell you to hurt you longer.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 30:16

Right? Right. Right. So it's trickled down. Because you're basically saying that not everyone's equal.

**B** Brendon Davis 30:21

Yes. Well, everyone is. Everyone is different. Yes. And have a different set of strengths and weaknesses. Yes, you gotta, you gotta put the puzzle pieces together to see how you can get as many good people into the areas that you need. Right. And he you need killer soldiers and frontline people you need, you know, killer generals that are the bill beltex in the world, you know, organizing the back troops and, and

**M** Mark Agostinelli 30:45

that's a hard that's a hard that's a hard. Do you find so we're millennials? Are you a millennial? Yeah. Barely? Yes. I just I do find that I find. In our demographic, though, that's a hard pill to swallow. Because we are the product of everyone gets a trophy. Like we were that first generation for sure. And everyone loves to talk about millennials. And yeah, I mean, we can get into that another day. I think a lot of it's a bunch of BS, because that's how all 20 year olds act, but I would prefer for years, but the, the, I always think to my life, I think if there weren't those moments, where your dad sat you down, or like I had the opportunity, where doesn't, it's like, you're not as good as it was beautiful. Like, if you want to be better, you're gonna have to work harder, you have to see objectively that you're not good, and then figure out what you're going to do about it. But I don't. But I find all too often, that the first time they're having that conversation is in the workplace. Do you find that?

**B** Brendon Davis 31:49

I think it's a result of people not having, it's like everyone gets a trophy, what's the root of that is they couldn't have a

tough conversation with with redhead at the time to say, hey, you know what, not everyone gets a trophy. And, and there's a there's winners, and there's losers, and you get a chance to do it again next year, whatever it is. So I do think that this is probably just specific to us. I think the millennial population, if you're having tough conversations, and not tough, but like just real, very real conversations with it, and you're setting expectations, right. And you're, you're connecting to the core values and beliefs of the individual, because I'm probably on the same same thought as you and you know, you know, a person that's 55, and a person's is 25. They both have motivations, and they both have goals. And there is a way that you can connect to that person so that there'll be loyalty you and you can probably help along with whatever is their goals in their life at that given point. Right. So really, it's on the, it's on the person to connect to the individual and show them the path and the opportunity career. pathing. Right. Yes. If if set the right expectation, really doesn't matter necessarily what their what their age, skin color, yes, whatever. Whatever their background is coming into it. Yeah,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 33:13

it might not look like it's perfect. Yeah, it might, you might have to fail a whole lot to get to where you want to go. But I also feel like when you share those examples with people that resonates totally, it's way more real than the person who went through it unfettered or unchallenged or it appeared unchallenging.

**B** Brendon Davis 33:29

I think money wise, like if you look at compensation, right? So there's obviously there's, you know, in the tech space, yes, negative unemployment, right, or zero requirement when it comes down to it. And I think that, you know, in that space, it's very easy for folks to go, Okay, I'll just take a 10k bomb somewhere else. And hopefully, that organization has a better, you know, career path, career path or whatever, on the other side of that. And, and I think that, where I see, the, the opportunity in that is, is or what I see the, I guess the flaw in the company who loses that person, they're not necessarily connecting to them at a level that they should be able to train and engage them and retain them to the level that they could, right? Because if you're gonna leave for \$1 value, you know, an extra 10k. Right, my perspective would be that, that they're probably not as engaged into the opportunity at the organization because of the company not setting it up that way. Yes.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 34:32

Or they're not communicating effectively, right? Because it 10k Right, is a large dollar amount at the end of the day, depending on where you fall from a cost standpoint. But at the same time, if you leave making an extra 10k A year was so important, you should be having that conversation with your manager and how they can help you get there. So it shouldn't be like some blind thing that's happening in the background that you're only talking to your spouse about. I mean, I think that's, I'm with you. I think one of those things is if you're losing people to your car Competition is your fault. Sure, right all the way like we I mean, we live it every day here because we don't have an employment contract. So our hand was forced to believe that. But then I think once you get in a management role for a while, you're like, oh, it makes so much sense. Like, if someone wanted to leave here and work at our competitor, that's our fault. Sure. Like we don't we need to own that and figure it out, as opposed to just be like, oh, good returns.

**B** Brendon Davis 35:21

And there's probably certain people that that that are jumpers, because that's the way that they're going to climb the ladder is is jumping every two years. Right? And honestly, that's not someone that I necessarily want to. Yes, exactly,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 35:35

exactly. or invest in. So we're getting close to the end of it. But I wanted to, you're in a unique position in your role, I wanted to pick your brain on a different topic real quick. You Your father started the company in 1985, your brother runs our back office. You're the president of our company, soon to be chief people officer as I like to talk about it. But no, I mean, you've run our our internal people, ta culture, core values, all of that. And the fluidity and consistency between how that operates Gupta group is your responsibility. And I wanted to ask you less about the technical nature of your job and more like, what is it like to work with your family members? Because I think family owned businesses have a stigma at times. And it's your challenge is unique, right? You're the oldest brother, your dad CEO, like

**B** Brendon Davis 36:24  
what does that like? And

**M** Mark Agostinelli 36:27  
is it hard? And how do you deal with it?

**B** Brendon Davis 36:28  
Sure. I think that there was one thing you missed. And that is, my wife also works. I did

**M** Mark Agostinelli 36:33  
miss that. And your mom worked here when I started. Yeah, so that's fair, those are great. Luckily, I've been able to shout out cat kitty cat.

**B** Brendon Davis 36:42  
Luckily, I've been able to have the choice of where my office is positioned. So I stay far away. It's

**M** Mark Agostinelli 36:50  
a very real answer. For all of them as possible. I don't know if I bet your wife was like two cubes down. Yeah,

**B** Brendon Davis 36:57  
that was just recent. Yeah. So, ya know, I think that family businesses are, are great. And they're awful, right? So you have a chance to work together. And during the highs and the successes, it's great, because you're doing it with your family. And, you know, hopefully, there's a lot of positivity and learning that come out of that. You know, I'd be lying if times that I said I wanted to quit, because, you know, me and my father's relationship was super toxic, and we were crossing in the wrong way. And I've had incredible times where I feel like we're on top of the world together. And so So I do think that there there is unless you sit down and you have a code of conduct are kind of rules surrounding work, family balance, and what you take home at the end of the day, yeah, you're always going to bring your work home with you. And work and home is always going to come into work with you. Yeah, so I do think I've seen family businesses that do it really well, where they don't talk work outside of work. And, and that probably saves a lot of headache and, and an issues. I just for us, it's not realistic. Yeah, to say how realistic you know, I think that, to be honest with you, I think I spend more time outside of work, you know, when we're when we're hanging out wake surfing on the boat, or, you know, just you know, snowmobiling or doing something fun with family that we end up in some of the most productive work conversations, because you're doing it in a way that's probably you're not, you know, you're you're much more present. And those those cases,

**M** Mark Agostinelli 38:38  
listening probably more clearly. Yeah, just

**B** Brendon Davis 38:41  
since you're, you're, you're not in the four walls that you live in, right, like that the distractions aren't there. So I think during those tough times, those are really grinding, because, you know, when you go home, and and, you know, your, your, you know, it's your tough conversation inside of work just as the exact same tough conversation outside of work. I think that those can be really tough. And you feel like you're you're kind of you don't have an escape, I guess. Yeah,

you know, at the end of the day, so good and bad. Yeah, I think that, that we've had a chance over the past year through an executive coach. And one of the I think the biggest learning experiences that we've come to with, specifically me, my father, our executive team, me and my brother was that we needed someone to translate what we were saying, and a kind of a mediator that could come down and understand that we all might have different languages. But to translate that into kind of one common language has allowed us to see that we're actually saying the same thing. Yeah. And that's made all the difference.

**M** Mark Agostinelli 39:50

Well, I mean, I gotta give it to you. I think you do a you guys do an awesome job. And honestly, I sit on the executive team with your brother and your father. So I see it firsthand, and I know it can be the challenging times but do you have for other people listening that might be in a family business or working with their close friends, I don't think it's I mean, family is different. But I think we all get in a situation we work with our close friends, any advice for those folks on how to thrive and not just survive,

**B** Brendon Davis 40:18

I think setting context to people's roles and responsibilities, and very, very clear guidelines behind that, and then also, understanding people's weaknesses and, and making sure that people are aware of what those are meaning not only the individual, but also the people that surround them and work. So that so that, you know, when someone does something, and, and it's a weakness, or it hurt someone in a way or is really positive, or as a strength. People are recognizing that that's why they're doing it right. So that so that they can put it into that category and make sure that they understand the action behind it. Right, there might be a reason and then surprise, you have transparency towards the conversation about it to go, you know, Mark if you know my strengths and weaknesses. And I'm really trying really really fucking hard yeah. To be able to get better at my weaknesses, you're gonna win when you see me fall, you're going to try to help me pick up because I'm trying to try to be better that space doesn't mean that I'm that I'm there yet. Yeah, right. But you're not going to sit there and go kick me while I'm down right mentality. So I think that that's

**M** Mark Agostinelli 41:32

what if you don't talk about it becomes a resentful thing. Like what he sucks at that. Yeah, it's like, well, I told you I sucked at that. Every time that

**B** Brendon Davis 41:39

happens. There's a brick that gets put down. And every time I'd say anything, there's another brick and eventually you get a wall. Right?

**M** Mark Agostinelli 41:44

It's a good analogy. Well, what that sir, I appreciate your time. We appreciate your time. Thank you. I don't know what's. I can't wait to hear that cup after 40 minutes, but we'll give you a pass you do if you were doing all the talking. Thanks, man. Appreciate it.