

Mark Agostinelli 00:00:20 Work ethic wise Amanda Finnerty is someone who today runs technology at a local construction company, but her journey has been anything but on that path since college, so or since growing up. She tells her story of humble beginnings, where work ethic was certainly ingrained from her family dynamic and pretty focused on education, but really started to figure out what she was good at. What I love about her story is there's some serious lessons to look to glean in, in terms of why your boss matters and the importance of it, as well as she's her natural curiosity and love for improving the process of making things better earlier. Early in her career, it was sales and marketing. And then as she's kind of moved on, she's taken on more and more and has landed in this role. But awesome story about her journey. A perfect example of beers and careers as someone who loves what they do. But if you ask them when they were 20, what they'd be doing, I don't think she would have answered this way.

Mark Agostinelli 00:01:22 So check it out. Let us know what you think. Amanda Finnerty, thank you for coming on. Beers and careers. Cheers. Cheers. This is our 9 a.m. edition of Beers and Careers on the coldest New England Friday we have. So thanks for coming on.

Amanda Finnerty 00:01:34 Oh, happy to be here. Thank you.

Mark Agostinelli 00:01:36 Absolutely. So I met Amanda through one of my colleagues and who's like, you got to have a man down and talk to her. So I'm very excited to talk to you today, Mr. Terry Buggs. Good guy.

Amanda Finnerty 00:01:48 Very good.

Mark Agostinelli 00:01:48 Guy. we have a quick rapid fire questions just to let the, just let the audience know you a little better. what was your first job? First paying job? Doesn't have to be a W-2.

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:02 First paying job. I worked at the Cambridge School of Weston Kitchen. Okay. for my mom. So she was a chef there. And on school vacations, I would work before I was allowed to, and then later became a paying job as well.

Mark Agostinelli 00:02:19 Okay, so, like, helping her prepare meals? Yes. Awesome. Very cool. Very cool. And, do you have a favorite book?

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:27 A favorite book? Oh, God, I do.

Mark Agostinelli 00:02:29 But you can read.

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:30 I think.

Mark Agostinelli 00:02:30 Of one. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:32 Oh, I can't think of one right now. I used to read constantly. People used to tease me that my nose was always in a book. And I started reading again this summer. Okay. Which I had stopped doing, and I can't think of one to.

Mark Agostinelli 00:02:46 Do you read mainly for pleasure or for? For pleasure? Yeah. Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:49 I'm not one to read up on. You know, there's I have all these books on my shelf about, you know, career. Yeah, it's it's not how I. How I learn.

Mark Agostinelli 00:02:57 Yes. Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:02:58 Okay, I do, I like nonfiction, I like fiction, I like mystery, suspense. Awesome. Little dark. And I like some fantasy, too. There was this author, Robert Jordan.

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:09 I used to read his books and they were like a thousand pages each.

Mark Agostinelli 00:03:12 Oh, wow.

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:13 Okay, I don't know where that came from, but I loved them.

Mark Agostinelli 00:03:15 You got into it, you got into it.

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:16 They were like Lord of the rings type books. Oh, I've read all of those.

Mark Agostinelli 00:03:20 Yes, yes. Tolkien's great. Yeah, those are great books. do you have a favorite curse word?

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:27 yes, I use the F word. It's the in my in my vocabulary.

Mark Agostinelli 00:03:31 Yes, exactly. I, well, as you, if you've listened to any episodes, you'll know that seems to be the perennial favorite curse word on the show. and are you a quote person? Any favorite quotes?

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:45 I do you know who I love is Doctor Seuss? Yeah, I love his quotes. Be who you are. Wait.

Multiple Speakers 00:03:55 Be who you are or are you?

Amanda Finnerty 00:03:57 Basically, it means all you can be is yourself. And. And I just can't think of the quote off the top of my head.

Amanda Finnerty 00:04:04 But I love his quotes. I never realized it as an adult, but I look back and one of them caught my eye one day and I just read all those quotes and I'm like, wow, he really had a guide to life. And yeah, and we just thought he was a cool kid.

Mark Agostinelli 00:04:17 Children's author. Yeah. Children's book author. Yeah. You're right, that's interesting. And now you make me want to go back and look at them, because I know they're amazing.

Amanda Finnerty 00:04:24 And he's from Massachusetts.

Mark Agostinelli 00:04:26 Oh, that's that's right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:04:28 Yeah. There's a museum in western Massachusetts. I think it's okay. It's New England, if not Massachusetts.

Mark Agostinelli 00:04:34 Doctor. Seuss. Yeah. Who would have thunk it? when we were talking a little bit before we started recording, about, like, your journey, and I want to get into that, but was there a moment, in your career thus far where it stopped being a job that you went to work for and started becoming a career. Like, is there like, any moment?

Amanda Finnerty 00:04:59 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:05:00 You know, it definitely did because it it hasn't been a job for me in a long time. And actually, I don't think I ever approached work as a job. It's always been a career. I was always trying to find my way. And so no matter what I was doing, I was trying to do my best and trying to improve on things. So even when I worked in the kitchen back for my mom, I would find different ways of doing things. And, and then I got into the medical field, which is that's just a whole different thing. Her chance I worked at Brigham and Women's Hospital as a receptionist, and, I found that a little bit boring. So I would ask the administrative pool if there was typing I could do, and then I had to run down the hall to the clinic, and I would help with patients. And within eight months, I was promoted to a clinical coordinator. So okay, I think that's how I've always approached work.

Mark Agostinelli 00:05:54 It's. Yeah.

Mark Agostinelli 00:05:55 It's just. Where do you think that comes from?

Amanda Finnerty 00:05:57 from my parents.

Mark Agostinelli 00:05:58 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:05:58 We, We grew up. We were. My parents were young, and my mom married my stepfather when I was six. And we were we moved to a trailer park in Maine. Okay. And so that's a very different lifestyle. And they were just trying to figure things out. I mean, they were my mom had me when she was 20. So, she was just finding whatever work she could. She hadn't figured out her career path either, which was actually interesting. I never thought of that. Maybe I got a lot of that from her. But my dad, my dad used to do everything. He worked in construction later on in life, but we had moved up there to work so he could work on the paper mills.

Mark Agostinelli 00:06:38 Okay. Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:06:39 And, so I just learned, like, you just keep reinventing yourself. I think for my parents, they always worked hard. We didn't have a lot of money when I was young.

Amanda Finnerty 00:06:50 And then he got laid off from the paper mill and we moved to Wayland, Massachusetts, which is a very, yeah, ritzy town.

Mark Agostinelli 00:06:58 It's a ritzy town.

Amanda Finnerty 00:06:59 Yeah, but my parents wanted me to live to go to the schools. And so they knew that it was a good school system. They couldn't pay for me to go to private school. They wanted me to have the best education that they could. So we rented from this incredibly wealthy family, and we were renting. And so I was a little out of place.

Mark Agostinelli 00:07:17 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:07:17 You know, my mom made my clothes, but I found my way. Made, you know, did well. Yeah. And, But. Yeah. And then, you know, after a few years, they started to get their lives together and bought a house in Wayland. Oh, okay. And my mom got in a job as a head chef at a private, high school in Weston. So the Cambridge school of Weston. And my dad was working for a GC, and, he worked actually for a bunch of subcontractors.

Amanda Finnerty 00:07:48 And then he worked for himself for many years.

Mark Agostinelli 00:07:52 Well, I'm here, and work ethic was an important work ethic.

Amanda Finnerty 00:07:54 And actually I think it brings back to him. I lied about my first job. My first job was my dad bought a truck full of kindling wood and some twine, and he dumped it in our garage. And I had a spool of twine in the kindling wood. And I had to make bundles, and he would take them and sell them to the local hardware store. Yes. And so, you know, that was and he said he used to just laugh because I'd be out there and my fingers would be bleeding. And he was like, well, this kid, this kid is a hard worker.

Mark Agostinelli 00:08:24 Yes. Oh, well, now I understand your grit. Now I understand your grit because I, you won't know listening to this podcast, but it is probably the coldest New England morning we've had all year. I think it was like 7 or 8 degrees and, at 8 a.m. and, I came in to no heat up where we record the podcast studio.

Mark Agostinelli 00:08:42 And I was like, Amanda, you want to leave your jacket on? She's like, no, I'll be fine. So there's that's where that grit comes from. That's right. That makes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:08:49 You.

Mark Agostinelli 00:08:49 Get through it. That makes a lot of sense. So, I'd love to hear maybe if you can give us. We'll unpack it, but give us, like, the overview. So you graduated from Wayland High and then college into maybe the first couple stops along your career because you've been at Commodore for a while now.

Amanda Finnerty 00:09:05 Yeah, yeah. So I went to UMass Boston, and I actually worked full time when I was at school. Okay. And in the summers I actually worked two jobs. So I was typically working two full time jobs. Okay. because I was always just trying to get ahead and, you know, that work ethic and it, it did start young for me, but I went to UMass, I studied business, I didn't really know what I wanted to do, but I knew that I had a, a business.

Amanda Finnerty 00:09:38 I was I was good at business. And actually, it started from a teacher I had my senior year in high school who was small business management, and it was the first class that I took that I was like, wow, I get this, I like it, I know how to do things. And he just really. He wrote my recommendation to college. Okay. Because actually up until that point, I was debating if I was even going to go, okay. My mom was a chef. I thought about going to culinary school. I never, for the life of me thought I would get into construction. Never. Okay. It was, you know, I had worked in restaurants, so, I mean, I've worked since I was able to work. Yes. And so I worked at, you know, I worked at a supermarket. I worked at mostly restaurants, though. I worked at a the villa in Wayland, and I worked at a couple of pizza places. And, and then I was like, you know, I was in college.

Amanda Finnerty 00:10:33 I didn't really know if I went. It wasn't my thing. It's not how I learn. and so and I was always working full time so it was hard, I needed money.

Mark Agostinelli 00:10:42 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:10:43 Or do I stay in school and it. I got a job at Brigham and Women's Hospital when I was 19 years old. Okay. And I did that.

Mark Agostinelli 00:10:53 So while you're at UMass.

Amanda Finnerty 00:10:54 While I was at UMass and trying to. And actually, I might have dropped out by that point because I did I didn't I didn't finish UMass. I have I have like three years, three and a half years of credits. So it's nothing for me to get my degree. But it's just it wasn't my thing. So I got I was so I was trying to find my career path. I got a job at Brigham and Women's because I wanted to have benefits and a real salary job, and it was just as a receptionist, and I didn't find that to be enough. So I was trying to find a way of, you know, is this a career path? How do I grow myself from this entry, entry level position in medical to further up? And so I started thinking about nursing and I worked there and within eight months I got promoted to a clinic coordinator.

Amanda Finnerty 00:11:49 So one of the doctors in my office was opening a new facility and asked me to be the clinic coordinator. So I actually got to set up and I didn't. So I was 20. I got to set up his practice, not his practice. But how was the office going to run? You know, setting up, you know, just the paperwork that we were going to use.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:13 The processes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:14 The processes. And I didn't even know I was doing it. There was a, you know, a nurse, a dietician and a few doctors and, and I just, you know, I managed all the patients and I had experience from the first job. And so I just rolled with that. And I did that for several years. Okay. And then I ended up taking another job again. I continued in medical. I took a job at Mount Auburn Hospital working for a doctor, and then I moved to California. Okay, so.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:42 What would precipitated that move?

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:44 I married someone in the Navy.

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:45 Okay. And so he was stationed out in, San Diego. Yes. And so we moved out there.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:52 Coronado?

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:53 Yes.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:53 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:53 Yep.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:54 Beautiful.

Amanda Finnerty 00:12:54 It is beautiful. It was a beautiful place to live.

Mark Agostinelli 00:12:57 And a lot of Boston people in San Diego. It's amazing.

Amanda Finnerty 00:13:00 Like, you could actually go to a bar and watch, New England game, a pass game or a Red Sox game because there were so many people from New England out there. Yeah. Even when his high school buddy was on the same, in stationed at the same base, different ship.

Mark Agostinelli 00:13:17 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:13:17 So. Wow. Yeah.

Mark Agostinelli 00:13:19 So you did a stint out in California?

Amanda Finnerty 00:13:20 I did, I was out there for a year and a half, and the logical thing for me to do was to work in medical. So I worked for a gastroenterologist, and I was a medical assistant.

Mark Agostinelli 00:13:31 So, yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:13:32 There were four doctors, four medical assistants. I did, you know, the I still did the phone calls and I dealt with the insurance companies, but he also taught me to do like EKGs and processed blood work.

Amanda Finnerty 00:13:46 I didn't draw blood work, so I was like, yes, I'm going to be a nurse. And then I got back to when I came back to Massachusetts, before I came back. I was talking to my best friend and she was like, you don't get paid enough. You need to come work at my company, which was a workers comp insurance company. Okay. And so, she was a corporate, you know, some sort of a corporate manager at that company. She was a higher up, and there was a corporate office on one floor and a regional office on the other floor. And her boss was one of the her bosses was the president of the region. And she said, you need to be his executive assistant. So I was moving back. She set up an interview for Thursday. We left on the road on Sunday from California and drove straight through. Yes, Basically so that I could make that interview on Thursday. So we saw nothing on that trip. Nothing.

Mark Agostinelli 00:14:44 Yes.

Mark Agostinelli 00:14:45 Yes. Just drive.

Amanda Finnerty 00:14:46 Just keep going. And I had that interview on Thursday. And the funny thing about it is I was I could oh, I'm old enough that I could type, I could work on computers, but I worked with medical software and I also I even knew, like, certain programs. but it was still dos.

Mark Agostinelli 00:15:07 Yeah, right. It was. Still does.

Amanda Finnerty 00:15:08 Right. So I used WordPerfect and I had never used windows. And she said, and I'm not I cannot tell a lie like I mean perfectly incapable of telling lies. And my friend is always, you know, put a little fluff on things. And she said, just put no, put down that, you know, Microsoft Word in Excel, I'll teach you. Don't worry about it

in PowerPoint. Yes. And so I had my interview. I my I could tell he loved me. That went well flying colors I was. I knew I had the job and then HR came and said, okay, come with me now we're going to do your computer test.

Amanda Finnerty 00:15:44 And and I failed.

Mark Agostinelli 00:15:47 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:15:47 I did not. How to know how to do file open safe. Oh yes. I had never done that because it was all, you know.

Mark Agostinelli 00:15:54 Dos dos.

Amanda Finnerty 00:15:55 Prompts. So, fortunately, because I was so embarrassed, I was mortified. And I tell people that story all the time because here I am, director of technology.

Mark Agostinelli 00:16:04 Yeah, exactly, exactly. It's like today.

Amanda Finnerty 00:16:08 I, I, the the president liked me enough, and he said, it's all right. Just we'll send her for training and she'll be she'll be fine. I love everything else about her. And so I took that job they sent me for training, and I soon became the IT liaison for the floor. And I just I picked it up right away, and I had no idea.

Mark Agostinelli 00:16:29 Wow.

Amanda Finnerty 00:16:30 so that's how I got into.

Mark Agostinelli 00:16:33 Like, it.

Amanda Finnerty 00:16:34 A little bit, and it wasn't even it. But, you know, I guess a similar path is I worked for the president.

Amanda Finnerty 00:16:41 I had plenty to do for him, but he had eight managers that worked for him, and every month they had to submit reports to him. And they were always late and it was my job to chase them down. So what I started doing is I would go to each manager and say, what do you do to do your report? I'll do it for you. And I learned how to do every single one of their reports, and I would do them so that my boss was always prepared because he had to present to corporate. Right. And so I became very popular.

Mark Agostinelli 00:17:10 Yes. Indispensable. Indispensable.

Amanda Finnerty 00:17:12 Dispensable to management.

Mark Agostinelli 00:17:14 Interesting.

Amanda Finnerty 00:17:15 And yeah. So it was just and I, you know, it's kind of a theme in my career path is I, you know, just doing the basics. You know, a lot of people are like, oh yeah, do 9 to 5 and go, you know, go home. And I always wanted to do more. I wanted to get ahead.

Amanda Finnerty 00:17:33 I knew that college was not going to be my path. So how do I make a name for myself? And that's that's what I did. So my boss decided to move to Philly.

Mark Agostinelli 00:17:44 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:17:45 And they hired this real jerk. Now, I already had great relationships with everyone. I was doing great. And and I hate to say they hired a jerk, but they did. And I had a nickname for him that I won't say.

Mark Agostinelli 00:17:58 Okay, perfect. You can let it rip if you want, but I called it.

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:03 Well, I did, I called them Dean the dink.

Mark Agostinelli 00:18:05 That's awesome.

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:06 And he, And, I just I didn't respect him. And I realized that's an important thing to me.

Mark Agostinelli 00:18:14 I he what was it about him, though, that was so hard to respect?

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:19 he would say, he'd go around and he'd say, yeah, let's get fired up. But there was no nothing in his eyes.

Mark Agostinelli 00:18:29 It was a genuine.

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:30 It was genuine. And I was like, yeah I'm about as real as you get, buddy.

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:34 So yeah, like. And I was like, that's just so fake. Yes. he also he, he would have one on one meetings with people and fall asleep. And I was like, dude, whoa. And and I had like, a direct line of sight into his office. And my, my best friend worked there.

Mark Agostinelli 00:18:54 And.

Amanda Finnerty 00:18:55 She was one of the people having one on ones. And I'm like, did he? And so I just yeah. So I tried I did my job, but I, and I carried on doing what I was doing with the other managers and then oh it's this is such a well I'll say it anyways. So at this point I got, I got I was I ended up getting divorced because my, my first husband didn't like that I worked, I would stay till 530, be like where's my dinner? And I was like, yeah buddy, I'm trying to you, you got a job and quit it after a week. So I'm going to carry on and take care of myself.

Amanda Finnerty 00:19:31 Right. And if you want to come along with me. Fine. But I'm not. I'm not, I'm not. I need to take care of me. And you're clearly not capable of doing that. Right. so we were on the outs. Yes. And he was getting frustrated with me, and I, And we had split up, and then I had a little flirtation with someone at work. And so we were starting to date, and he was in a not in a, There was no conflict or interest or anything like that. And he was a claims adjuster, and there was actually a with a claims adjuster, there was an account manager that ran the overall account, and his account was the Archdiocese of Boston. So big account.

Mark Agostinelli 00:20:16 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:20:16 And the account manager got sick with cancer. So she was out for a while, and he volunteered to take on her responsibilities because it was the biggest account. Yes. And when he did that, he volunteered. They were all excited. This is great.

Amanda Finnerty 00:20:33 Thank you for doing this. And it meant like another 20 hours a week and and there and he's like, okay, what do I get for an increase. And they said, well nothing. You have to prove yourself first. And you said, well you know what? I politely decline.

Mark Agostinelli 00:20:47 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:20:47 And I'm just going to keep doing what I was doing. So that made my boss mad. And and now I kept myself completely out of it. I have ethics are very important to me. Yes. And, you know, even if I had relationships with my best friend, you know, my best friend worked there. You don't share company, right? information. You don't talk about those things. You know, there's there's a line. Yes. And so even though I was dating him, you know, when that happened, I was just like, okay, that's your business, not mine, right? but my boss took it another way. Like, he was known that we were dating.

Amanda Finnerty 00:21:23 And so I came in one morning, he sent me, and he had sent me an email at 5 a.m. on a Friday and said, and I still have the email.

Mark Agostinelli 00:21:31 Wow.

Amanda Finnerty 00:21:32 Because it's a reminder to me. And he was like, I'd like you to change the locks on, put locks on all my desk drawers and put change the lock on my door and like all these things and I'm like, are you questioning my ethics? So I took that email and I went right to HR, and I was like, this is unacceptable. I'm leaving. And HR said, oh my God, please don't. We will move you to corporate. We will do what we need to do to keep you. We love you here. We know this is not you. This is him. And, and I was like, I'm sorry, I, I can't have someone questioning my ethics. So I called the headhunter. I met with him on Monday. I had a job interview on Tuesday, and then on Wednesday I interviewed with Bar and Bar, which was my first construction company.

Amanda Finnerty 00:22:25 So they had six people in, so they had the president of the Boston office came into the recruiting agency. So it was weird. I could hear the other interviews. I bet he was just in a room. And he had he had like a line of people coming in. there were six, I think. And I got an offer that night.

Mark Agostinelli 00:22:45 And what was that job for?

Amanda Finnerty 00:22:47 that was for office manager and executive assistant to the president of the Boston office, so I.

Mark Agostinelli 00:22:54 So you're still not in technology yet? No, no. That's why no, except.

Amanda Finnerty 00:22:58 For I was the IT liaison.

Mark Agostinelli 00:23:00 At.

Amanda Finnerty 00:23:00 The insurance company. but I, so I got the job. I went in Thursday and gave my notice. And because I had access to confidential information, they let me leave on Friday. So I started on Monday.

Mark Agostinelli 00:23:15 Unbelievable.

Amanda Finnerty 00:23:15 So I was that was very rewarding when when someone, you know, questioned my ethics and I was like, you know, I, you can tell me I'm doing something wrong because everyone can use constructive criticism.

Mark Agostinelli 00:23:29 Correct.

Amanda Finnerty 00:23:29 But if you question my ethics and I know my ethics, and that is something that is so important to me.

Mark Agostinelli 00:23:35 Well, there's a dissonance between yeah, the company obviously.

Amanda Finnerty 00:23:39 Yeah. We we cannot work together if you don't trust me and you're in this role and my role is to support you.

Mark Agostinelli 00:23:45 Yes. Then it's it's wild because it's another example of people leaving bad bosses. Yeah. Not companies. Right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:23:52 I love the company. I mean, we had a blast. I mean, it was a young company. We had a softball team. We practiced because we wanted to hang out two nights a week. And that's pretty I mean, it was so fun. We had so many friends and.

Mark Agostinelli 00:24:08 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:24:09 I was I just couldn't work for that guy.

Mark Agostinelli 00:24:11 And so this is your foray into construction?

Amanda Finnerty 00:24:14 Yeah. Yeah. So that was my first construction job. So I started that job. So it was Boston office. It was downtown. Right. downtown crossing.

Mark Agostinelli 00:24:25 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:24:26 and it was, the bar and bar had five offices, so the main office was in New York, so this was a remote.

Amanda Finnerty 00:24:33 But David Bar, who was one the cousin to the president, was running the Boston office and the bars were still part of the family. And I love David Bar. He was just a great, great man. And, they also had a, executive vice president, Brian Healy, who I assume he he's probably one of the best bosses I've ever had in my life. He's just he was so incredible. And actually, he he didn't have a degree either. Okay. Which was interesting. He had, like, an associates from Wentworth. Okay. but I took that position. Didn't really know what it was. It was office manager, executive assistant. And I'm like, yeah, I can I'll figure it out. And the office manager had left, but there was some sort of an administrative assistant working there. And so I met her my first day, and apparently she was thinking that she was going to get the job, so she quit.

Mark Agostinelli 00:25:33 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:25:33 The my first.

Mark Agostinelli 00:25:35 Day. Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:25:36 And so day two, I'm on my own figuring everything out. So it was we were doing about 50 million. Yeah.

Mark Agostinelli 00:25:44 Great start. Great. Just a class. No start.

Multiple Speakers 00:25:47 No, no.

Amanda Finnerty 00:25:48 No one to train me, no one to show me anything. And I just had to go and figure everything out. Which it turns out I was just capable of doing. Right. So, what they didn't tell me is the office manager, because this is probably not typical. And but like I said, it was a remote branch. We did 50 million a year. We had two huge projects. We were doing Suffolk Law School and the Mormon Temple in Belmont.

Mark Agostinelli 00:26:14 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:26:14 So two, it was like two of the biggest projects this office had ever had. And so we had a lot going on. We had a lot of new hires and stuff like that. So, I found out that I was in charge of HR. Our fleet of vehicles are all of our insurance policies. Oh, God.

Amanda Finnerty 00:26:33 Literally everything. There was. No, it. So, there was one consultant in the New York office, so when we had to do software upgrades, I would get a disk in the mail and I would go do the upgrades.

Mark Agostinelli 00:26:47 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:26:48 back then, we had two way radios.

Mark Agostinelli 00:26:49 Yes. Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:26:51 My coworker, who was were still friends today. She's actually how I ended up at Commodore Lisa Ulbrich. She had been hired a week before me as a project executive and one day. And so. And we had become friends pretty quickly. I worked with her a lot, and she was just a great person. And, she says, oh, we're going to get next ls. So all of a sudden I'm, I'm rolling out next LS to a whole company, and I don't. I don't even know if I had a cell phone.

Mark Agostinelli 00:27:22 At that, which were like the cell phone of the construction industry. Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:27:26 And,

Mark Agostinelli 00:27:28 They were so popular. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:27:29 I didn't even have a cell phone myself.

Mark Agostinelli 00:27:31 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:27:32 So, I mean, I had when I had first started, I would have to make arrangements to in star install car phones.

Mark Agostinelli 00:27:39 That's right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:27:40 For our executives.

Mark Agostinelli 00:27:41 That's right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:27:42 so I, you know, I did that. And then one of the things that I did as an executive assistant is David Barr would write the proposals and he would, you know, literally on a piece of paper and hand them to me to type up. And then I was responsible for binding them and assembling them. And they had like these, bins along the wall of all their project profiles. So they would get them pre-printed and they would have stacks of them. So I would just have to pull the projects that they wanted to include. Yep. And, but Brian Healy was, you know, changing things. He was the new, younger president. He was like, well, I want to change the description of this job to target it after the project that we're pursuing. And I was like, well, you can't.

Amanda Finnerty 00:28:31 It's pre-printed. So I started I just, I think I had part of my office suite was Microsoft Publisher.

Mark Agostinelli 00:28:39 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:28:40 So I figured out how to make the project profiles in-house, and I brought that all on. So he was like, whoa, you're good at this. So, you know, I just would design them. And I started doing all of them because he always wanted to modify them. And, and it was funny at first because, you know, these would get printed on white paper and the other ones had like this grayish harder stock paper. So it would have a combination of both in both proposals. So it was then my mission. I'm like, they are all getting converted, right? And it was funny because the New York office, they caught on to this and they were like, oh, Amanda. Well later on they were like, Amanda, can you come down here and show our people how to do this? And can you.

Multiple Speakers 00:29:20 Do this for the whole.

Amanda Finnerty 00:29:21 Company? So basically I, the other piece of that is with.

Multiple Speakers 00:29:26 The proposals.

Amanda Finnerty 00:29:27 They would have like an RFP and it would say, you know, provide the list of five, five year list of your active or recent projects, and then it would have another project list that was, you know, slightly different. And when they would have me do these proposals, mind you, I'm printing and copying and binding them. They would have like this, you know, half inch or a quarter inch list in there, three different times, slightly different. And I was like, have you heard of an exhibit?

Mark Agostinelli 00:29:58 Right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:29:58 Like, nobody wants to get a two inch proposal. No. All they care about is how you're going to build their project. Right? So I started just speaking up and saying, can we do this better? And, you know, it was like David was old school. So I'd go to Brian. I'd be like, do you like this idea. And, and then actually, sadly, I think three months after I started, David, retired from the company.

Mark Agostinelli 00:30:26 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:30:26 There were, And so he left the firm, and so now Brian was in charge. And so then it was like.

Mark Agostinelli 00:30:33 Go for it. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:30:34 Change the law. He's like, build it out. Do what you do. And so I got to the point with the proposals where I would get the RFP and I would put everything together. I would draft it till it was about 90%. And then I would say make assignments and I'd say, all right, project executive, what's your project approach? I need the schedule. I need the estimate. This is what I would need. I would outline it. And they came to trust me very quickly because I would just I would run with it. And, and they were also, you know, we were busy drumming up business, so they were on the road. So like Lisa, I think she became she came to love me because I couldn't I didn't know anything about construction. You know, when I started there. So I couldn't add anything to the writing.

Amanda Finnerty 00:31:19 So she would call me on the phone and she would tell me about it, and then I would just wordsmith it into. You know, she was a great writer, but, you know, she would literally be driving back from a, you know, a walk through at a job in Williamstown and, and I but I needed that.

Mark Agostinelli 00:31:35 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:31:35 Project approach. And so I'd say just call me and dictate it to me and I'll, I'll make it work.

Mark Agostinelli 00:31:41 That's too funny. Yeah. That's too funny. And so it sounds like Brian was an excellent guy to work for. But I'm interested because like, when I hear when we were talking earlier and now, like your responsibilities of your current job, like how did you end up leaving com. How did you end up getting the Commodore from here. Okay. And when does the tech when does like the tech piece become the vast majority of your job?

Amanda Finnerty 00:32:07 Yeah. Well that took well I guess at Commodore.

Mark Agostinelli 00:32:10 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:32:11 But so.

Multiple Speakers 00:32:11 At Bar.

Amanda Finnerty 00:32:12 Bar, we had Timberline, which is now sage 300, for counting. And, I don't even oh, we used expedition.

Mark Agostinelli 00:32:22 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:32:22 And, we decided to start switching to Prolog, and I was just involved with that, so it was funny. At bar and bar, we had no procedures, so everyone did everything different. And it was something that I observed. And I had a very systematic way of doing proposals and of doing marketing. I mean, I grew, I would do all of our, marketing materials to like brochures and info packets and stuff like that. I just brought all of that design in-house and really revamped how we did things. But, you know, prior to me really going in, just becoming director of marketing and no longer office managers one day, Brian said, you know, you have way too much responsibility. Let's break down your job. And so we on the whiteboard, he drew out the six position, said he thought I needed to support me because I was basically filling six roles.

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:15 And at this point at the time I left, we got up to 150 million.

Mark Agostinelli 00:33:20 So we're also.

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:20 Getting a lot of work getting more employees. So we hired an office manager. I hired a proposal, manager, who's now their director of marketing. I think he's still there.

Mark Agostinelli 00:33:32 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:33 And I hired an IT guy. So the funny thing is, I.

Mark Agostinelli 00:33:36 IT guy reporting to you. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:38 Okay, so, we were big enough that we needed it. Support for our servers and stuff like that. And it was I. It was me to that point because I was the only one who knew anything. And so.

Mark Agostinelli 00:33:50 But self-taught. Yeah, right. Yes. Wow. So did you get recruited out of there?

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:56 No. I, actually, Brian left.

Mark Agostinelli 00:33:59 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:33:59 So, the the president.

Mark Agostinelli 00:34:02 That makes sense.

Amanda Finnerty 00:34:03 Goes this goes back to, you know, who you work for versus where you work. I did that time at bar and bar. I work was still a come at Commodore.

Amanda Finnerty 00:34:13 There's several people that worked with me back at Bar and bar.

Mark Agostinelli 00:34:16 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:34:16 And, back at bar, back then at Bar and Bar, it was the best place to work. I never thought I would leave in my entire life.

Mark Agostinelli 00:34:26 Yeah. I mean, the way you talk about it, like, I can just see your face lighting up, talking about the bar and bar part of your journey, and it's like I'm just sitting there being like, how did she end up leaving here? Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:34:36 Well, and sadly, the, Donald Barr, who I liked. Yeah, I still like he's a good guy. who was the president decided to move to Massachusetts and he came into the office and, he just butted head with Brian.

Mark Agostinelli 00:34:53 Oh, okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:34:54 And and I really. Yeah. So Brian left, and then he was butting. He there was kind of like the old bar and bar was 75 years old. Right. So there was the old school employees and there were the newer employees, and they they kind of never really melded well.

Amanda Finnerty 00:35:10 because, you know, there was the Brian side and the David side and so that never and I got lumped in with the Brian side, which was appropriate. Right. But I was also I got along with everybody. Right. but yeah, Donald was just kind of going after me like, oh, you can't do that. You report to me now, not Brian. And I'm like, you know, screw you up. I've worked here for five years for Brian. Like, you don't just step in and you don't get my respect, right? Because you're the president. You get it because you earn it. Sorry. I don't care who you are. And so anyways, Brian left, and I left shortly after that. I was like, I can't, I don't. It was combative. You know, he would he would argue with me about things and I'm like I and say like it's my name on the door. And I'm like, I don't give a shit.

Mark Agostinelli 00:36:00 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:01 I'm not gonna.

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:02 Yeah, we have made improvements here and I'm not going back in time.

Mark Agostinelli 00:36:06 Right? And you're proud of what you had to accomplish? Yeah, exactly. That's why. So then. So from there, do you go to Commodore?

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:12 Nope. I, I found an I don't even know how I found this job. I found a job. I was like, I thought it was ideal for me, and it was actually a really good stint for me. But I found a job four miles from my house. So it was in Milford, mass. Which is where I live. And it was a job for a small firm that doing business development and marketing.

Mark Agostinelli 00:36:34 Okay. so you were on this kind of marketing sales?

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:37 Yeah, I thought that was my path for sure.

Mark Agostinelli 00:36:39 Interesting.

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:42 And it was only, I think 10 or 14 employees, including the field employees. They had a very specialized niche. and which actually made the BD very hard.

Mark Agostinelli 00:36:55 Yes. Okay. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:36:57 Because they were very much a niche, you know, very specialized construction company, you know, not as diverse as Commodore or Bar and Bar.

Amanda Finnerty 00:37:07 And so I redid a bunch of their marketing things and their it's interesting, their CFO did all the it and they actually did like tape backups back then. And yeah, they were using Timberline and they were using Prolog. So we had just implemented Prolog at common at a bar and bar. And so I had had a lot of experience with that. And but I wasn't touching it except for there was one executive assistant. And when she went on vacation, I learned how to do her job. So I would do the change orders and do everything because nothing could stop while she was away. And it was like I said, it was very small. And, so what I loved about it is I got to use a lot of my skills that I had. Yeah. what I didn't love is the beedi consisted of a lot of cold calling. Yes, like a lot. Yes, and.

Mark Agostinelli 00:38:08 Very familiar with that.

Amanda Finnerty 00:38:09 I hated it. Yeah. And I actually got work. I got quite a decent amount of work, so I was good at BD, but I.

Mark Agostinelli 00:38:19 Did not enjoy sustainable.

Amanda Finnerty 00:38:20 No, I was like, I don't want to do this. And it was, you know, granted, I had started to get, you know, repeat clients and but there was also, you know, you know, there was some.

Mark Agostinelli 00:38:33 Yeah. It just wasn't.

Amanda Finnerty 00:38:34 Discrepancy to about like, what my percentage was and.

Mark Agostinelli 00:38:37 You.

Amanda Finnerty 00:38:38 Know, versus and I was like, you know, I this is not I like a, I guess I, I like more of a consistent. salary. Yeah I didn't I just don't roll that way. I get that but also the VP of operations, he quickly picked on, picked up on that. I'm very meticulous about what I do and I, I don't cut corners And so he started pulling me in to do certain things. So he, you know, when he showed me, I mean, some of it was stupid, like I. Wouldn't have something to do because it was such a small office and he'd be like.

Amanda Finnerty 00:39:13 Update this record set of drawings and this is the paper kind. Back in the day and and I had never touched drawings. I knew nothing about operations really at that point. And so, you know, I learned that from him. And then we had they did a lot of, cGMP facilities. So there was a whole validation process. And, so he would have me put together the validation packages in the final packages for like the O&M.

Mark Agostinelli 00:39:41 For.

Amanda Finnerty 00:39:42 The client, which is very different in the life science world.

Mark Agostinelli 00:39:45 Way different.

Amanda Finnerty 00:39:45 But he only trusted they had a submittal manager, but he only trusted me, okay. Because he knew that I was just meticulous and I, you know, and it was kind of a all hands on deck operation. Anyways, back then, if you had a bid, you know, we were getting rolls of drawings and sending them out and submittals. You had to make eight copies and mail them to a bunch.

Mark Agostinelli 00:40:07 You gave me a flashback of my father bringing home the rolls.

Mark Agostinelli 00:40:10 Yeah. Drawings. Yeah, I know, dad. It's been a while since I thought of those. And the smell of the.

Amanda Finnerty 00:40:17 Oh my God.

Mark Agostinelli 00:40:17 What was that? The blue ink. What was that smell? Oh, yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:40:21 The ammonia.

Mark Agostinelli 00:40:22 Ammonia? But as a kid. Oh, yeah. You loved it. I thought it was so cool. Well, I was like, you got this machine that prints huge paper and smells weird. Yeah, like I used to love going to my dad's office. Like, this was a vellum, too. Yes. Yeah, vellum was.

Amanda Finnerty 00:40:35 The, Yeah, I remember even a Commodore getting a light box.

Mark Agostinelli 00:40:41 Yes, he used the vellum. Yes. Be proud. So? So, wait, so how do you get to Commodore? So it's been a lot of your career?

Amanda Finnerty 00:40:48 Yeah. So, I mean, I was only at that job for, I think, a year and a half, and, And I liked it, I

didn't I, I actually the people there were great, too.

Amanda Finnerty 00:40:59 but I was at a cookout and with some friends, and I was talking to this guy, and he worked for shaman, and he was great. And he was, you know, he was we were just talking shop because at that point, I knew I mean, there was a point where I was going to. I told my boss, I'm like, I don't know that he made me go to like an AGC event. And everyone was talking to me and all their construction acronyms. And I came back and I was like, I, I, I'm lost. I don't want to be doing this anymore. And he was like, Amanda, you're smarter than all of them. He's like, they're probably making shit up. And I was like, he was like, you just keep doing it, you'll be fine. And I ended up being like, leading the leading a lot in that group.

Mark Agostinelli 00:41:45 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:41:46 and, and actually, when I was at, the other company, I was a on the membership committee for ISB.

Mark Agostinelli 00:41:54 Okay. Yes. Oh, yeah. All right. Yeah, I know.

Amanda Finnerty 00:41:56 They did the golf tournament and stuff like that because I, you know, I'm just. That's how I.

Mark Agostinelli 00:42:01 Roll.

Amanda Finnerty 00:42:01 Yeah. And I had done all the events at Commodore. I mean at Bar and bar back in the day too. So I did like our holiday parties in our summer.

Mark Agostinelli 00:42:09 So you're like, you're like all sales and marketing this part of this job? Yes. You know.

Amanda Finnerty 00:42:13 Still. But still, like, get out. Like, understand the technical stuff?

Mark Agostinelli 00:42:18 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:42:19 so, I was at a cookout this, this project executive who ran the Rhode Island office, and my buddy guy just left. He was all bummed out. I'm like, oh, that's a bummer. I'm like, here's my card. If I think of anyone, I'll let you know. And he was like, director of business development and marketing. Do you want a job?

Mark Agostinelli 00:42:38 Yeah. No way.

Amanda Finnerty 00:42:40 And I was like, Well, I wasn't thinking about leaving because I also have a thing about, you know, commitment.

Amanda Finnerty 00:42:47 Like, I, you know, I didn't love what I were, what I was doing, but I had only given it a year and a half. Right. And so I feel like, you know, on your resume you want to at least two years on there. Otherwise, you know, because that's the first thing I look at.

Mark Agostinelli 00:43:00 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:01 so I, and I was like, hi. And I'm like, we can certainly talk, I guess. And he was like, it would be out of the Rhode Island office. You'd be working for me. And I'm like, oh, okay. Yeah. You know, because I didn't really want to go back to.

Mark Agostinelli 00:43:16 Boston either.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:17 Because.

Mark Agostinelli 00:43:17 I.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:18 Worked in the city. But, you know, I'd also lived in Natick Center, so I took the train. Right. I didn't live in Natick Center anymore.

Mark Agostinelli 00:43:24 Right. It's a little harder.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:26 A little harder. And, so I called my friend Lisa, who had started the week before me at Bar and Bar.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:35 She left, I think, after me, but she left shortly after. Same. Same reasons, you know, because she was also one of the new crew. And so it became very difficult. Not that, you know, not not that everyone wasn't.

Mark Agostinelli 00:43:49 Still.

Amanda Finnerty 00:43:50 In bar, but it was just a different environment. And, so I said, what do you think of me working at. She was at Commodore at that point, but she had worked at. She had gone from bar and bar to Shawmut.

Mark Agostinelli 00:44:02 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:44:02 And she said, what do you think about. I said, what do you think about me working at chum? And she said, you do great there. You do great anywhere. And, and she said, I suggest you have dinner with this person, which I did. We had a four hour dinner. and they brought me in for a full day of interviews. And basically, I had the job. I had it. Yeah. And but she had said, you know, why don't you meet with Commodore to.

Amanda Finnerty 00:44:29 I think they could really use you. So Commodore was three years old at that point. They were growing like crazy, and their office manager was leaving. Had already told them she was leaving. Like in six months, they were planning on moving. I had moved bar and bar from Boston to Framingham. I just coordinated the whole move. so there was that. And then I knew computers, so I was in charge of it.

Mark Agostinelli 00:44:56 Yeah. That's right. Yeah. Yeah. That's right. So that skill really translated to going to a Commodore. That's small. Yeah. Needs hands on. Needs all hands.

Amanda Finnerty 00:45:04 Well, it wasn't it wasn't a thing. Except for the fact that I had implemented Prolog and they were getting ready to implement sage.

Mark Agostinelli 00:45:12 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:45:13 Okay. And so there. And Lisa's like I she'll figure it out. Don't worry about it. And, so, I met with Commodore and they said we'd love to have you here. And I, I, you know, so I was at a yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:45:28 The crux. And also Brian had gone on to another company and he was trying to get me in over there, but he was dealing he wasn't the top dog and was dealing with politics and. Well, it turns out the fact that HR was on my resume, the HR person didn't want me there.

Mark Agostinelli 00:45:43 Okay, there you go.

Amanda Finnerty 00:45:45 Which all worked out because that company went out of business. Yes.

Mark Agostinelli 00:45:49 and you've been a Commodore for how long?

Amanda Finnerty 00:45:51 20 years. 20. 21 years. I just turned.

Mark Agostinelli 00:45:56 21. All right, there you go. Long time. There you go. That's awesome. That is awesome. But how? I guess, like, it's funny because you, you know, you started by saying I'm old enough to know DOS and floppy

updates. Like, I'm interested to hear someone with your perspective tell me, like, all right, now you're you're. As I understand, you're in charge of technology. Yes. Right. Yes. How do you go about, like, the biggest buzzword that we've got in 2025, 2026, which is the AI implementation and integrating that into the business.

Mark Agostinelli 00:46:32 Like, can you share your thoughts on that and how you kind of have approached that endeavor because you've got a solid like understanding, right? It's not like there's a lot of people implementing AI that didn't deal with that kind of stuff.

Amanda Finnerty 00:46:47 Well, I mean, I would say we're getting ready to implement AI because there's progress.

Mark Agostinelli 00:46:52 Most people are.

Amanda Finnerty 00:46:53 Yeah, there's I mean, I'm just learning everything that I can. so I mean just to back that up a little bit. So I got the Commodore.

Mark Agostinelli 00:47:02 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:47:02 And the, my first day they had me in a room with all the leadership and they were, they drafted the table of contents for the procedures manual and said here, here's the table of contents, here's who you need to go to, write the procedures manual and do training every week.

Mark Agostinelli 00:47:21 Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:47:22 So and I loved that because I was like at bar and bar I'd seen, you know, this big company, you know, we had grown to 150 million and everyone that did things differently.

Amanda Finnerty 00:47:33 It was really hard to wrangle people and get consistent information. And somehow I was always doing report writing. So that's that. That plays into this. so it was that an implement? Sage. So I had to learn how to implement a software and really learn the back end of a software, which I had started to do and my prior experience. But so that really got me on the path with technology. And then I took over it. Okay, so we had an IT consultant. it he really it was just a solo, you know, a small IT practice. But we were growing like crazy and adding a bunch of things. And I became in charge of it because, the consultant was reporting to the CFO, and she didn't really understand the technology, the the heart. At this point, it's really hardware, not even so much technology as well as I did. So she was very comfortable that I could dig in and figure it out. Okay. So it was really about like I was just digging in and figuring out because no one knew it back then, except for very small amount of people.

Amanda Finnerty 00:48:40 So and then Pro Corps came along. I implemented Pro Core and I've now become like a poker expert, and I implement all of our software. Okay. That Commodore?

Mark Agostinelli 00:48:50 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:48:51 So as far as AI goes, I, you know, the other thing that I do is I do all the power BI reporting. So Pro Core has a tool called Pro Core Analytics where basically you buy the connection to their data. And it comes with 120 pre-built reports, you know, power BI dashboards for you to use. And as the onboarding, they taught me how to customize those reports for Commodore. And I just took to that. I was like, oh, because I've always done report writing. I've always had systems where we need reports a certain way. So I've learned and I've created more Excel reports than I care to think about. And and I've always recognized that you want to have a database where you're entering your information, and then you can pull it out any way that you want to. Right. I did that back in the marketing days, and I do that today.

Amanda Finnerty 00:49:48 So I got that report and I got this tool from Pro Corp, and I picked right up on creating these reports and power BI. I was able to learn a pretty quickly and really get some great results out of there. So I didn't know it, but it was actually. So data became even more of my focus. So because I had this report, these reports where if you entered the the first thing that you see in a power BI report.

Mark Agostinelli 00:50:17 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:50:18 Is what people are doing or and not and not doing wrong what they're not entering.

Mark Agostinelli 00:50:23 Correctly data.

Amanda Finnerty 00:50:24 Yeah. So you find the bad data. So I was able to look at that, meet with teams, get that data corrected and explain to them why this field is important. Right. And also adjust pro corps to make certain fields required. So we could get the data that we wanted and not just Pro Core because I pull them Pro core data I pulled in sage data. I had it all combined in one report with the help of my little my.

Amanda Finnerty 00:50:48 Yeah, not not little my. There was a they have Pro core has some support services. So I would get a certain to a certain point and I'd be like well this is over my head. But I could explain it to him like, this is what I need. Help me build it. And then he would make it in a way that I could, I could copy, I can it, I could mimic it to create new measures and custom and, you know, new reports the way I wanted. So data became very important to me. And I, you know, I wasn't really thinking about AI because there's, a lot of what I do is I get, you know, Amanda, this is something new that we want to do. Figure it.

Mark Agostinelli 00:51:29 Out. Yeah. Okay.

Amanda Finnerty 00:51:31 And so in that, that figuring it out means finding the right resources which have been there 20 years. I know who to talk to right. External or internal. Find the right resources and figure this out and start making sense of it.

Amanda Finnerty 00:51:46 And, and basically innovating. You know, I came from, I guess, the reason why maybe I took to all of this technology stuff is I came from interoffice memos and not having cell phones and every enhancement that we've had in technology along the way, I've just grabbed on to because here I am, someone who's trying to get people to use tools that don't work great. So for me, it's about how do I make their lives better. So. And I have two audiences, right? I have our operations staff who are trying to build things, and their job is to build.

Mark Agostinelli 00:52:26 Right. And the secondary.

Amanda Finnerty 00:52:28 That's, you know, the.

Mark Agostinelli 00:52:29 Buildings.

Amanda Finnerty 00:52:30 And the.

Mark Agostinelli 00:52:30 Stuff.

Amanda Finnerty 00:52:31 That we need is secondary. So how do I make that as easy as possible for them and then for the leadership? They want to know how we're doing. We're growing. You have to measure that. How can you see that? So what's the what's the happy medium? And so that's always been my focus.

Amanda Finnerty 00:52:47 Like understanding both sides of the equation and being able to actually you know we made we normalized data for our people with these reports. So it's not something that just the executive look at. It's a tool that we use to show our teams how they're doing and.

Mark Agostinelli 00:53:05 And how to find it, so to speak. It's not all. It's not a difficult report to read.

Amanda Finnerty 00:53:11 Exactly right. And we and it also, you know, when I show them a report and you make them comfortable with it, it also they start to think of the opportunities that are there like, oh, what could we do with this data? And people started reaching out to me and say, hey, Amanda, how do I how do I do this certain task and Pro Core

so that you can make me a dashboard?

Mark Agostinelli 00:53:37 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:53:37 And so it really changed how we were doing things. So.

Mark Agostinelli 00:53:40 But it also sounds like you get a tremendous amount of fulfillment. I do from helping people get there. I do, yeah, I do like to quarterback it, see the field and go, all right, well, how can I make this serve people the best?

Amanda Finnerty 00:53:51 Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:53:52 And I love seeing people like, get it. So I, I respect that a builder is building. Yeah. And you know a superintendent, the last thing they care about is, entering the, you know, putting something into a software unless, you know, unless they're tech savvy. But there are certain supers, like, they can build a high rise that most supers can't, but they can barely open their phone.

Mark Agostinelli 00:54:16 Right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:54:17 So how do you teach that person? And so, you know, you have to really pay attention to how they're learning. You know, make it easy for them. You have to show them how it makes their life better. You know, how it makes things easier for them. And then you get those little wins and then they'll come back for more. And, you know, that's been my approach with all of that. So now you know we're faced with the challenge of AI. What? I didn't know when I started on all this data because I wasn't thinking like AI was out there, and it was still very as much a mystery to me right, as anyone else.

Amanda Finnerty 00:54:51 You know, like, oh, AI does things and we've been using AI forever and we don't even know.

Mark Agostinelli 00:54:55 It, right?

Amanda Finnerty 00:54:56 And, you know, of course, I'm of the generation that we're a little afraid of, you know, what is it? Space.

Mark Agostinelli 00:55:04 I thought. Yeah, I thought you were going to say RoboCop or Terminator. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I agree.

Amanda Finnerty 00:55:08 I was trying to think of the name.

Mark Agostinelli 00:55:09 I agree, the I think, I think if you're not afraid of that, regardless of what generation you're in, you're wrong. Yes. I mean, there's negative aspects to it.

Amanda Finnerty 00:55:17 It's like,

Mark Agostinelli 00:55:19 Yeah, this could go off the rails quickly.

Amanda Finnerty 00:55:21 It could. I mean, you look at, I mean, just the data out of just, you know, AWS is down and it's like, have we all thought about that a little bit? I mean, there's there's there's concerns. It's like it's great. Our whole environment's in the cloud. It's great until the, you know.

Mark Agostinelli 00:55:40 The cloud goes down. Yeah.

Amanda Finnerty 00:55:42 You know, and that has happened. And luckily, I mean, there's also great things about it. We had a we actually moved our whole we moved off of on premise service.

Mark Agostinelli 00:55:51 Yes.

Amanda Finnerty 00:55:51 Servers. I really pushed for this and I was so I was like, oh, here's my win. And it's it costs a little bit more. But when I did a full cost assessment, it really wasn't that much more. And so I was able to get because when I first presented the number to my boss, it was like, absolutely not. That's ridiculous. And I'm like, well, you know.

Mark Agostinelli 00:56:11 You're going to save here, here.

Amanda Finnerty 00:56:12 You're going to save here, here, here. Not to mention this was right after Covid. Our servers needed to be upgraded. Yeah. And I was like, you cannot rely on getting chips right? Right now. Right. Like, if if this server dies, we're at the mercy of getting.

Mark Agostinelli 00:56:30 A.

Amanda Finnerty 00:56:30 New physical server, and that's a problem.

Amanda Finnerty 00:56:33 Yes. but. anyway, so we did move to the cloud. That was a big undertaking. And, I don't know. Within a year, our office park. So a whole street, the whole office park lost power for five days. We lost no productivity. We drove to a Starbucks connected to internet. We were live everything.

Mark Agostinelli 00:56:54 That's phenomenal. So you know it does have its benefits. It has its does have its benefits.

Amanda Finnerty 00:56:58 But then you know Amazon went down like a month ago. And it was like it was just like well just sit here twiddling our thought.

Mark Agostinelli 00:57:04 Yes. What are we gonna do today? I know it's it's a weird it's a really weird dynamic with that. But what I love about your story is, you've I will say you've reinforced one thing I do, which is when I interview people, I ask them not in interview, in the podcast, since interview for our own business. I always like to hear what people's first job was. Yeah. Because I think that work ethic is one of those things that gets ingrained when you're young.

Mark Agostinelli 00:57:29 Yeah. Like, I don't.

Amanda Finnerty 00:57:30 Even just hearing the age of when someone starts working.

Mark Agostinelli 00:57:33 Exactly. Exactly. Or the or the and the factors that they are working towards. Right. Like your dad being like get in the garage. Yeah. And go and go bundle this kindling. Right. Like that's that's a great story. What. But I guess from your perspective because you've seen a lot of companies. I mean, a bunch of it in construction, but you've seen quite a breath. Like, what advice would you have for people who are getting out of high school, maybe getting out of college looking for a job, like, because you're now leading technology, but that was not where you started, which was the whole inspiration for this podcast, was that you meet people who love what they're doing. You're clearly passionate about the what you're doing and the stakeholders you're serving. But like, do you have advice for for folks that you'd want to share?

Amanda Finnerty 00:58:16 Yeah. I mean, yeah, you know, it's it's almost for their parents.

Amanda Finnerty 00:58:21 Like and I don't think parents do this today like your childhood. You know, you don't necessarily know what you want to do. And the path that you're on, isn't necessarily the right one, but try it. It's actually. It goes along with innovation, which is what you know. I don't wait till something's perfect to try it out. You know, we get it to a certain place, you try it, you test it, and you make adjustments, and then you move forward. So that's the same with a career. You know, you can. You know, I started down one path, realized, you know, it wasn't the right one for me. But there were pieces of it that I liked and I pivot that it didn't pivoted that into my next opportunity and so on and

so on. And I also reached for the stars, like, you know, I, I hate to say like, never say no, because now it's something I really need to start doing a better job at.

Mark Agostinelli 00:59:15 Right, right.

Amanda Finnerty 00:59:15 but when when I would be presented with challenges, I wasn't. You know, to me, it's like you may always want to be a little bit afraid.

Mark Agostinelli 00:59:24 Yeah. it's an opportunity, not a problem.

Amanda Finnerty 00:59:27 It's. Yeah, I like to me, I will always figure it out. Whatever it takes, I'll figure it out. And it does it. It may mean that I can figure it out on my own. It may mean that I need to reach out to a consultant. But I can find the I can find my path through. So I think people can do that with their careers too. Like, you can start in one thing, you know, and I mean, even just waitressing in a restaurant, but really liking how that company operates and how it treats its people. So maybe you get into management and I.

Mark Agostinelli 01:00:00 Kind of talk to people.

Amanda Finnerty 01:00:01 How to talk to people. I almost went into the restaurant business and my mom was like, be careful, because she ended up going from that school to becoming an doing a, being an executive chef for a financial firm.

Amanda Finnerty 01:00:14 So she just made, like, fancy lunches every day. I mean, she did more than that and it grew into more than that.

Mark Agostinelli 01:00:20 But I know you mean that.

Amanda Finnerty 01:00:21 That's how it started. It was a and she was like, not every job is like mine. Like normally if you're in food service, you're working nights and weekends and holidays. And I was like, oh yeah, I don't want to do that. Yes. So you have to also find out what what makes you happy. Because if you're doing something you enjoy, it's not as much work. And also, I think it's important to. Well, you've heard it in three, three different scenarios for me too. Like who you're working for and people that you're working with and making sure that, you know, it inspires you and some, some way, you know, I and but also, you know, for some people they just want a job. Yeah. That's and that's okay too. It is like, know what your personality of some people a job is a job and a career and or and other people want a career, right? I've always I guess I've always wanted a career, even at the pizza place.

Amanda Finnerty 01:01:17 My boss was going to buy me a store, but then I moved to California. Right. He was going to buy another store and have me run it. He took me to look at it.

Mark Agostinelli 01:01:24 Right. Which would have been fitting for your love of small business in high school? Yeah, that would have been a fitting. Yeah. Way to go, too.

Amanda Finnerty 01:01:31 And it was right down the street from where I lived today. But I never would have ended up where it was.

Mark Agostinelli 01:01:36 Exactly. It's funny how you say that. I also it's funny you bring up the, nights and weekends thing, too, because you do have to consider the external factors like that. Like, what's your lifestyle going to look like? Yeah. Yeah. Because I remember getting out of college. I was really hell bent on getting into sports. Yeah. Like the Bruins or like a lacrosse was becoming professionalized at that point in time. And I was like, oh, this could be a great career. And I met with someone and they're like, just so you know, it's like basically a nights and weekends job.

Mark Agostinelli 01:02:07 And I had always been like, I really want.

Amanda Finnerty 01:02:10 A cushy job, right? But it's not.

Mark Agostinelli 01:02:11 I just want one. Right. And I was like, like, I guess, I guess I was smart enough to realize it at the time. But I was like, I guess I having a family was more important to me than working on the weekends.

Amanda Finnerty 01:02:22 Exactly. You have to just decide on what your priorities are. I literally just met someone who used to be a professional. I think it was NFL football coach. And, and I was like, oh, that must have been so much fun. And he was like, not really. It was a grind.

Mark Agostinelli 01:02:40 It's a gruel.

Amanda Finnerty 01:02:40 He was like, it was seven days a week for six months a year. And I'm like, oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mark Agostinelli 01:02:46 You don't chill, you don't kill. You get on that plane and you watch film.

Amanda Finnerty 01:02:50 And oh, it's a Thanksgiving Day game while you're there. Right. And not only that, you're traveling the whole time.

Mark Agostinelli 01:02:56 Like you're there the night before. Probably. Right.

Amanda Finnerty 01:02:58 I mean, I was thinking at Thanksgiving, I was sitting there, I'm like, God, I waitress so many Thanksgiving. Right.

Mark Agostinelli 01:03:04 Right. You know, it's a it's an interesting part of the job, but I think your story is great about, like, the early years, leveraging the skills you learn along the way. You'd be surprised what's going to help you in the next job because you didn't do it with a thought. I'm sorry you weren't deliberate. It wasn't deliberate is the right word. Thank you. It wasn't deliberate, but, you have to have self-awareness.

Amanda Finnerty 01:03:26 Yeah.

Mark Agostinelli 01:03:27 And going back to.

Amanda Finnerty 01:03:30 Yeah. Like being knowing what you're good at, too. Like. Yeah. And running with that. Yeah. Learning, like. Okay, I'm really good at this and driving a path. And it's funny, you know, a Commodore. I've taken on different things and I've shared other things and said, you know, I need to delegate this.

Amanda Finnerty 01:03:47 I mean, there was a time when I was doing it, helpdesk, I didn't have it right. So I was, you know, in 2008 when, we had a recession and, you know, we there we didn't let many people go. They were very creative. It was cool. On how they kept people on board. They came up with some creative programs. but I took on, like, four people's jobs. So that's the other thing, too. I learned a lot there, you know, because people tease me all the time. They're like, you've done everything. And I'm like, pretty much.

Mark Agostinelli 01:04:16 But to your point, though, like negative market, factors create opportunity. It does. It might not be opportunity for your wallet at that point in time, but certainly for like skill set growth, it is challenges because companies still need to run.

Amanda Finnerty 01:04:31 Yeah. And it's knowledge based. And honestly if there's a downturn and you're able to be adaptable yes like that then.

Mark Agostinelli 01:04:38 We're in a pretty we're in a pretty decent downturn here.

Mark Agostinelli 01:04:40 We're coming out of it in our in our industry over since like probably late 23. And I was reflecting on it because, you know, you get to the end of the year and you start going, how was the year and what am I doing next year? and I and I realized, like, man, did I learn a lot in 23 and 24 and 25 of like how I'm going to handle

things differently the next downturn. Yeah. Which is like, you know, probably going to be beneficial down the road, I'm guessing, because the markets don't always just continue to grow. But, but at the time, yeah, you're just slamming your head against the wall. Yeah. You know, it's like having the presence to be, like, time to dig in.

Amanda Finnerty 01:05:15 So yeah, you get scrappy, you get, you know, you learn efficiencies and you, you know. And now you're you. Actually, sometimes it's an opportunity. You know, actually, during Covid. What? Right.

Amanda Finnerty 01:05:30 Wrong or indifferent? What? What Commodore did not for me. I couldn't have been busier because I was on the Covid task force figuring out how we were going to get our deal with it, you know, get our sites up and running again and meeting all the protocols of the states and working with the state to help develop the protocols. And, not me, but, you know, yeah, our team and me, but me being the tech person, like, okay, Amanda, this is what we, we need to do. How are we going to do this with technology and coming up with those ideas and. and oh what was I going to say. But what they did with our people because they had them still work. They didn't want to let all these people go as they had. They assigned a bunch of seven, I think it was 70 initiatives to work on as teams over zoom and improve our processes. Right. Of things that, you know and that was incredibly helpful.

Mark Agostinelli 01:06:22 Smart.

Amanda Finnerty 01:06:22 Yeah. And they had they made training available. So our, you know, a learning academy was like constantly producing content. So they had they had learning and also wellness. You know, so HR was trying to help with like wellness mental health because it was such a shift being away from people. I mean, that's the and those are things that have carried forward.

Mark Agostinelli 01:06:42 Right since that time.

Amanda Finnerty 01:06:44 Since that time and bought it. You know, your your downtime can be an opportunity to dig in and do things better.

Mark Agostinelli 01:06:51 I agree. I agree. Well, Amanda, this has been a I told you we would we would talk forever. Yes. I told you I'm not good. I'm not. I didn't.

Amanda Finnerty 01:06:58 Even answer you on.

Mark Agostinelli 01:06:59 AI. That's okay. It's all right. It's. You're going to have to come back. You're going to come back. But thank you so much for coming on your careers and wish you the best. And we'll stay in touch here.

Amanda Finnerty 01:07:08 All right. Awesome.

Amanda Finnerty 01:07:09 Thank you.