

Speaker 1 ([00:03](#)):

Welcome to the Vandennack Weaver legal visionaries podcast brought to you by interactive legal. Here's your host, Mary Vandennack

Speaker 2 ([00:12](#)):

Welcome to today's episode of Vandennack Weaver, legal visionaries, a weekly podcast discussing updated legal news, evolving methods of providing legal service and law practice issues. My name is Mary Vandennack founder and managing partner at Vandennack Weaver, LLC. I'll be your host. As we talk to experts from around the country about closely held business tax trusts and estates, legal technology, law firm, leadership and wellbeing. Before we start today's episode, I want to thank our sponsors. Here's a word from one of our sponsors, interactive legal.

Speaker 3 ([00:52](#)):

There's always a resistance to change, particularly with attorneys, attorneys like to look back at what's worked in the past, and that makes a lot of sense. But when you realize that with a good automated drafting system, you can do a better job here. Clients deliver documents on a more timely fashion in a more consistent, in a more costly manner. If you're not a subscriber to interactive legal, I urge you to go to interactive legal.com and click on requested demo. And you'll be contacted about having a demonstration of interactive legal for you, which can be done right over the internet. Don't have to leave your office. No sales person will call. We can arrange it at a time and convenient for you. So please go to interactive legal.com and click on request a demo.

Speaker 2 ([01:42](#)):

The right reflection is an executive coaching firm, specializing in helping leaders achieve their highest potential by developing both their inner and outer game of leadership. Sometimes people do not think of themselves as leaders because they aren't in a traditional leadership role, but most people are leaders in one sense or another. And leadership is challenging these days. If you would like to improve your skills, check out the right reflection.com today today's episode is on lawyers as leaders. My guest is Pam Hernandez, the founder and CEO of the Right Reflection, a coaching firms, specializing in helping leaders achieve their highest potential Pam's focus is on developing what she refers to as both the inner game and the outer game of leadership. And I just also want to mention that Pam's been in leadership positions really. And so firsthand kind of knows her stuff, having been through it before she founded the Right Reflection.

Speaker 2 ([02:39](#)):

And I always think that says a lot in terms of, Hey, I've actually done this and I've know what it's like, so she can share for real experience as well. But thanks for joining us today, Pam, thank you. It's great to be here. So, Pam as, you know, I asked you to speak on this topic and a couple of others that we've done podcast together on because I've been working on my personal brand. And part of my personal brand is just an absolute passion about wellness is so important to me. And I think for professionals, it's such a challenge. We had one conversation about culture and billable hours, and I know that I was in a culture where I just thought I was going to die, trying to keep the pace and didn't know my way out of it a year focuses on helping leaders.

Speaker 2 ([03:21](#)):

And one of the things that I really like that you talk about is that everybody in every position has leadership in some sense, right? And I think people overlook that and I was taught that I was a race horse trainer before I became a lawyer. And I remember being told, you know, that hot Walker who just walks horses around the barn all day. He like knows everything about everything, right. And that's, to me really important to recognize that whatever our role is that we are in a position. So, you know, can you explain a little bit about, you know, the whole concept of leadership?

Speaker 4 ([03:57](#)):

Yeah. A lot of people feel that they are not leaders because they don't have a title like supervisor manager, VP, et cetera. But that's because they have a very narrow definition of leadership. I like the definition that leadership is creating outcomes that matter. And as a lawyer, you guys are all about that. I mean, you have, you're creating results for your clients, for your firms, for yourself and, all leaders in a big way. And really leadership is all about being good with people.

Speaker 2 ([04:37](#)):

Everybody in the firm is a leader. So let's just say we have a new class of associates come in to a law firm and there's five associates. And so they're all coming in at the same level. Is there a way in which they are leaders to each other?

Speaker 4 ([04:51](#)):

Oh sure. Because, uh, leadership is all about people and effective leaders lead by example, they empower others. They, you know, help people with the vision. So it's not about, but they don't have a supervisory role. And that's where people get confused because people are leaders without necessarily positional power. What they have is influence and oftentimes leaders don't look at the fact that it's not just positional power, it's influential power, personal power, and everyone will be a better employee, be more productive, be more engaged if they are developing their personal power

Speaker 2 ([05:42](#)):

And isn't leadership in that sense, even how you conduct yourself outside of the workplace, let's say I'm at the grocery store and there's a screaming kid and it's annoying me. Option one. I can yell at the parent and say, can't you like control obnoxious child, right. That might be one or the other might be, I might try and just partly do something to distract the child or be positive and understanding. I mean, isn't it true that wherever I am, I can exhibit leadership qualities.

Speaker 4 ([06:12](#)):

Exactly. And, I do leadership development programs that are like nine months long. And at the end of it, often my participants are so surprised that the work that we've done together has had such an impact on their personal life, in addition to their professional life.

Speaker 2 ([06:32](#)):

Yeah. One of the things that I like, and it was an article, and I really appreciate, I asked you to kind of step in and the final hour I was editor in chief at one point for law practice magazine and knowing your background in leadership. And you'd just done some work for us. I needed an article for the leadership common. And one of the concepts that you included in that article, and I'll acknowledge, I've done a lot of reading on leadership. I've done a lot of trainings and leadership into a lot of leadership conferences

and had not really heard this distinction made between the inner and outer game of leadership. And I thought it was pretty significant. So, can you explain what that means?

Speaker 4 ([07:10](#)):

Sure and partially I developed my leadership development programs based on my fresh with all the leadership courses I took throughout my career because they focused on the outer game and it's the outer game are things that I would call the technical skills, practices, strategies. Unfortunately, people think that, okay, if I go to this class and learn the 10 steps to conflict that I'm going to then be good at conflict, that's the outer game. The thing is, is if you don't deal with the mindset of why do I hate conflict? then those 10 steps are not going to help you at all.

Speaker 2 ([07:57](#)):

And so what about, you know, delegation? Yes.

Speaker 4 ([08:01](#)):

That's one of my favorite. It's amazing. The two things that executives or leaders of any type hate the most or feel they're the worst at is giving feedback and delegating. So, I'll oftentimes go through this step. So, you can Google online the 10 steps to delegation, the five steps to this, et cetera, but not to speak out of school, but I know you have a little difficulty, sometimes delegating some things. So, let's, walk through an example

Speaker 2 ([08:36](#)):

I'm happy to, and I have to say it's one thing over the years that I think has improved a lot for me. Right. But delegation can be really challenging. So it's like, you really care about the outcome to the client and you think, Hey, I'm the best one to do this. And so you start by like, okay, well, I have too much on my plate on a regular basis. And so you have a lot of, you know, one of the excuses for not delegating, it's just too busy to think about it even. Or what I would do sometimes is I might just say, well, I'll just delegate this little piece of the project and not really give somebody full responsibility for it. Right. And I'd say the, the, one of the other things is that I, you know, I do have a sense, and I think this is really common for lawyers.

Speaker 2 ([09:17](#)):

And if you talk to a couple of other lawyers in my office, they'll say, well, it's easier just to do this myself. Or a lot of times, I think I'm the one who's best equipped to do it. And I can tell you that I had a client one time say to me, go, you know, you are really good at what you do. And here's the thing. If you actually delegate my entire project to John, John will probably do it differently, but Mary differently doesn't mean bad. Maybe it'll actually be better than the way you were going to do it. So that's, you know, those are the kinds of things that have actually helped me to delegate, but it's, it's a big issue to think is like, okay, time, it's easier to do it myself. It takes more time sometimes to delegate it to somebody. And then, you know, I would tell you that at one point in my career, I was definitely the micromanager who, okay, what about this? What about this? And those are some of the things that I think make it really hard to delegate. I think law is a tough area to delegate in.

Speaker 4 ([10:11](#)):

Yes it is. And any area that requires, a large body of knowledge, and sometimes there are licensure and regulatory things that will limit your delegation too. But what I would say to you, because if you came to

me and said, I'd really like to get better at delegating Pam, and you already answered my first question, I would say, well, what are you doing that gets in the way of, delegating? And you told me some of these now, sometimes though people will say, tell me what their thoughts are. And those are great, but I want to translate those into behaviors. Okay. So you feel someone can't do it as well as you. If I were following you around with a video camera, how would I know that? Do you roll your eyes? Do you just give over instructions? And so I really want to get a list of behaviors that pretty much you have generated that these are the things that are getting in my way.

Speaker 4 ([11:19](#)):

Now, a lot of people, this is where the leadership training comes in. Well, then they'll say, okay, do this, do this, do this, do this. And change never happens. So where I would start is I would say, okay, Mary, I want you to imagine that you delegate that whole project. You were talking about that and that comes back and it's not the way you would do it. You really think it's probably not as good as what you do it, and you took the time to do it. What are some of the uncomfortable feelings that come up to you?

Speaker 2 ([12:08](#)):

Well, one of those for me would be, I have a strong sense of responsibility to my clients, and I want things that are done right for them. Right. So I'd feel like this is not going to be acceptable to them. This is going to make them think that I can't hire good people. This is going to make them question my credibility. Those are the type of feelings that would come up.

Speaker 4 ([12:34](#)):

Right. And what's, and those are important for you. And those are worries for you. So, then I would work with you a little bit and, I would say, so you're also committed. You're committed to getting better at delegating, but you're also committed to making sure everything is right for your client. You're also committed to making sure things are done. Right. And you say, yeah. And so then it's really a situation where we have one foot on the gas pedal and one foot on the brake. I want to get better at delegating, but I'm also committed and I'm not, and this part's usually unconscious, but I'm also committed to making sure everything's done right. And to make sure that, X, Y, and Z, cause then we can take it one step further and so then I say, okay, if you're committed to making sure you do everything right for your client, you must be assuming, and I would say this, and then you could correct me. You must be assuming you're the only one that can do it right. For your client. That's possible. Okay and again, I'm not saying to say, it's not, but no, that's, that's possible. Then I help the client generate, some things. I also must assume that I don't have time to show somebody, how to do it.

Speaker 2 ([14:11](#)):

That happens because I have to do everything myself. So the pile on my desk is really big and I'm really far behind. And so I just have to keep plowing through the project project after project, after project. Cause I'm the right person to do these. And if I take the time to delegate, then I'm going to get even further behind. I'm going to have more clients mad at me.

Speaker 4 ([14:30](#)):

So, what we have just done is create something that's called an immunity map and it is showing why you are immune, not consciously, but immune to effectively delegating. So in a coaching relationship, we would probably do this in our second or third appointment, but then we would work on and it doesn't happen right away to start poking holes in your assumptions. So, let's look at the assumption that,

Speaker 2 ([15:01](#)):

Can I ask a question because I just want to make clear for the listeners because I haven't read your recent article, the inner versus the outer game. So, is it the assumptions when we're dealing with the assumptions that we're dealing with yet the inner game and that's where you make change to make the longer-term change?

Speaker 4 ([15:19](#)):

Exactly. Thank you for clarifying that because basically the inner game is your mindset.

Speaker 2 ([15:23](#)):

Okay. And so when we're doing like just that inner, oh yeah. The inner games mindset. So, the outer game, what you're saying, I just, I just want to kind of reemphasize this point is a lot of the leadership trainings for, here to improve your delegation. What you need to do is just give away the whole project, but that's not addressing the fact that I'm getting a stomachache thinking about whether this is going to be right and done the way I need it to be done.

Speaker 4 ([15:47](#)):

Exactly. And what you've just described is what we call the difference between a technical challenge and an adaptive challenge. If you could just do that, if you could just do everything, that's in the leadership training, that's a technical answer. And that's great if you can. But if you're one of those people that has some of those assumptions, it's not going to work, you're going to have to go after the inner game of why are you hesitant? And it's taken a lifetime to come up with these assumptions. And for the most part, they're under the surface. So you're not going to change overnight or with one, three hour online course. And that's really where I think I add value is helping people. Just basically I ask questions, but the people find it very helpful because the change then, and I tell people you're not going to change and check the box. And now I'm a delegator, this is a lifetime process. But as you move forward, you're going to start realizing, okay, I'm getting that feeling. Can I kind of close with just one story of how this happened to me?

Speaker 2 ([16:58](#)):

Let me ask you one more, but don't consider closing it. Cause I have a question I want to ask you

Speaker 4 ([17:04](#)):

When I started my career at my former company as a trainer and a writer, and then I got promoted into management and now I had writers working for me and I had developed a reputation for developing training exercises that, the field force really liked and found helpful. I had to delegate that responsibility to a new writer. She wrote something up and I looked at it and it was like, it's just not right. So I took it into my boss who was rather brusque. And I said, read this for me and tell me, is it clear? Is it, or is there just something off with it? And so I went back to my office, he read it, came back, tossed it on my desk and said, it's fine. It's just not the way you would do it. Especially when it's something we've done, we have some pride, we have some ownership and, in my mind, that's the way you do training. So now your question.

Speaker 2 ([18:14](#)):

So I was going to say one of the things that I do, I think that learning the delegation does take a change of the underlying assumptions. And personally, like I'd say I'm a pretty good lawyer, but having some help and support along that way. And people, even clients calling you out saying, wow, you know, I really want that work turned around as much as I like your work. So can you bring in some help? Right. But the other, I know there's lawyers, I think fall into two camps and there's like me who struggled to delegate for a long time has gotten better at it. But I see the flip side, which I call the over delegator who comes in and just throw stuff on somebody's desk and it figures them out how to do that. So what is the, you know, there's inner game on that one.

Speaker 4 ([18:56](#)):

There's a term for that too. That's not delegating that's dumping. And oftentimes when effective delegation is, if you give it to one of your lawyers, it may actually be a growth experience for them because once they can do it, then they can do it forever and they're going to learn something and they're going to get some ownership in it, et cetera. So, a dumping is just, I don't have time for this go set up this conference but yes, they do have an inner game and I'd love to visit with them. Uh, so it could be that their basic issue is sloppiness and so they decide to pay attention to a little bit more detail. So then we'd go through the same process of figuring out, because some things are just a technical challenge. I just don't know how to do that. Give me the book, more things. And the important things are adaptive challenges and those involve getting into mindset. And it's helpful to have someone outside kind of asking you questions because it's hard to see ourselves.

Speaker 2 ([20:08](#)):

So I'm going to ask you a question just off the top, if you said to our listeners today, okay. No matter what your exact job is today, know exactly what your position is. Hey. Even if you're not, don't have a job right now and you're welcome to the grocery store. And so you're thinking about, I want to represent, and let's go with positive leadership wherever I am. What maybe three tips. Okay.

Speaker 4 ([20:35](#)):

One is, I like, a saying, and it's not mine. I read it somewhere a long time ago, says leadership is as much about who you are as what you do. And now most of us focus on the doing, we do not, which is very, very important. And the reason we focus on is that's what we get paid for et cetera. But it's as important who we are. And so one thing I will tell people is, so you're in that grocery store with that screaming kid, that's not yours. Who do you want to be in that moment? Do you want to be an empathetic mother who's been there? Uh, or do you want to be the upset person who's having their day? So sometimes I don't know if that's three tips, but that's something to keep in your mind. Who do I want to be right now? How do I want to show up? And then if you get that straight, what you're going to do really becomes clear.

Speaker 2 ([21:38](#)):

It's going to resolve itself. Yeah. Well, thanks so much for being here today, Pam. I really appreciate it. Thank you. As we get to the end of our show, I want to thank our sponsors, interactive, legal, and the right reflection. That's all for today. Stay tuned for our weekly releases,

Speaker 5 ([22:01](#)):

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