

Dow Jones Private Equity Analyst

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KEY PEOPLE

A Private Word With Pamela Hendrickson

As the chief operating officer at Riverside Co., Pam Hendrickson heads one of the New York-based buyout shop's largest divisions, overseeing functions that span strategic sourcing, finance and fund accounting, and investor relations, as well as marketing and communications. Before joining Riverside in 2006, Hendrickson spent 22 years at J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., including 13 years with its private bank.

Q: What personal quality has helped you the most in your career?

A: My ability to read people and to keep a cool head. I started my career at Chemical Bank and lived through five of the biggest bank mergers in history. A mentor once told me to strive to take the emotion out of things, because it will make me far more successful. It doesn't mean you have to be cold, but when you get emotional your brain usually shuts off, so keeping a cool head - particularly in a male-dominated industry - is a huge benefit.

Q: If there's one thing that you could change about this industry, what would it be?

A: That's easy - less arrogance, more women!!

Q: What is one thing that people might be surprised to know about you?

A: I love to cook and my friends say that I am really good at it. Sometimes when I am cooking my daughter and I pretend we're doing a show on the Food Network. We entertain a lot, and I am usually my own caterer!

Q: What is one of the most influential books that you've read and why?

A: Good to Great by Jim Collins. The chapter "First Who, Then What" has probably been the greatest influence on my management ability. The book's articulation of the importance of getting the right people on the bus first and then figuring out where you are going second was an "a-ha" moment for me. When you hire great people (like my fabulous team at Riverside) then they will come up with terrific new ideas about where the bus should go and

together they will get it there in a way that was better than anything you could have pre-planned.

Q: What personal faults do you have the least tolerance for in others?

A: Whining! My assistant has worked with me for 16 years, and I've heard her warning people, "Now don't just go in there and whine. Make sure you have a suggestion about how to solve your problem." That is great advice!

Q: What is your proudest accomplishment?

A: Playing tennis respectably. I was born cross-eyed and in order to fix that a surgeon had to cut the extraocular muscles in my eyes - so I don't see double but I have terrible eye-hand coordination. One of my early tennis instructors used to say that teaching me was the most frustrating experience of his whole life; he would throw me 100 balls, and I would miss every single one of them. I just kept at it, and I actually ended up being good enough to teach tennis during high school summers.

Q: Name one of the most valued traditions (or rituals) that you have established either at your firm or in your family.

A: Ice cream breaks! When I was in college, my dad ran a conference featuring an ice cream break. The reviews of his conference were fantastic, but that ice cream break got called out as a really special feature. So now Riverside conferences regularly have an ice cream break that features dark chocolate just to make sure it's a little healthier!

Pamela Hendrickson

Joined Riverside in 2006

-Spent 22 Years With J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.

-Earned an M.B.A in finance and marketing from Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

-Speaks conversational French

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