

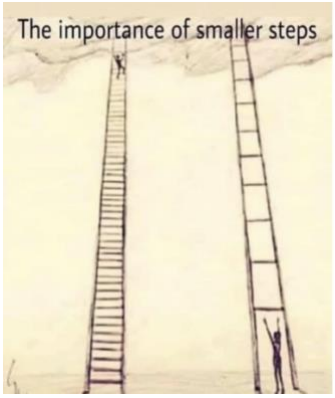
That’s not just a tongue twister, it’s power, and it’s leadership!

It may seem like a small step to ask someone their name and learn how to pronounce it correctly. But it’s a step many of us do not take, maybe for fear of getting it wrong, or maybe because we are distracted, or maybe because we don’t think it’s that big of a deal.

Admiral Hakimzadeh’s story gave me pause to re-think all of these excuses I’ve offered myself over my career and made me wish I could go back and get this right. Some of his stories were all too familiar to me, of the general reaction most had to his name. But from the stories of those who took the time to get it right—from his very first trainer when he was a recruit, to his crew when he was on a carrier… I got chills!

And his reflections on the professional anxiety and the professional advantage of having a stand-out name were parallel stories for me and my anxiety (and advantage) as a woman in a predominantly male career field. The Admiral’s coping mechanisms lifted all of us up.

Here’s a meme he describes in his reflections.



Once again, the audience came through with provocative questions and thoughtful interaction. I hesitated to stop the recording at the after-party because the sharing was so provocative and personal, but when the chat boxes asked me to do so, I did, and sure enough, another participant shared a personal story of the impact on her life when someone took time to encourage her. This is ALL of our stories! Thank you, Admiral Hakimzadeh, for stepping up our respects!

Watch the whole video here.

Lean On, Friends!

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