



Lowenstein Sandler's Women's Initiative Network Podcast: Real Talk

Episode 38:
"Real Talk" with Valley Hospital's Robin Goldfischer: Learning from Both Successes and Failures
[Megan Monson](#)

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Rachel Dikovics: Welcome to the Lowenstein Sandler Podcast Series: The Women's Initiative Network, Real Talk. I'm Rachel Dikovics, counsel in Lowenstein's White Collar Defense Practice Group, and member of the Women's Initiative Network at Lowenstein Sandler. Before we begin, please take a moment to subscribe to our podcast series at lowenstein.com/podcasts, or find us on iTunes, Spotify, Pandora, or SoundCloud. Now let's take a listen.

Megan Monson: Welcome to the Women's Initiative Network Real Talk. I'm your host, Megan Monson, partner in Lowenstein Sandler's Executive Compensation Employment and Benefits Practice Group. As part of our programming for 2025, we have launched a miniseries on Real talk featuring successful senior women who are leaders both within and outside their organizations. On today's episode of Real Talk, we are extremely fortunate to be joined by Robin Goldfischer, currently senior vice president and general counsel at Valley Health System. We've asked Robin to join us today to share some insight into her career path and to share her wisdom with our listeners. Robin, thank you again for joining us.

Robin Goldfischer: My pleasure.

Megan Monson: As a reminder, these are Robin's personal views and are not attributable to any organization. So let's jump right in. Starting at the beginning, Robin, can you tell us a bit about your career story, including your decision to become a lawyer?

Robin Goldfischer: Sure. Well, from the beginning, I entered college in the late seventies as an education major because I loved children and thought I would enjoy teaching. After my first student teaching experience, I was told I had too much energy and made the students hyper, and I thought long and hard about this feedback and decided to transfer to the business school, and I graduated with a BS in Business Administration. In my junior year in

college, my father, who had taken a great interest in his four daughter's education, suggested that my proclivity to argument would militate in favor of my going to law school. So I mulled over the suggestion for a while and decided that a legal education could benefit me in business, and I applied to law school never thinking I would become a practicing attorney.

So my favorite course in law school was health law. You see, my father was a physician and he had been chief of cardiology and chief of medicine at a local hospital for many years, and he was always bringing home the issues and telling me what was going on. And so it intrigued me and when I took this course in law school, I was hooked and knew that's what I wanted to do with my career. So I graduated law school and I clerked for the Honorable Sylvia Pressler in the Appellate Division, and then went on first to Brach Eichler and then to McCarter practicing in their health law departments. I always knew in my heart that I would want to go in-house one day to a hospital because I love all the issues related to health and hospital law. So at some point I wrote a letter to the CEO of two local hospitals asking if they'd ever considered having in-house council, and both brought me in for an interview and one offered me a job, and the rest is history. I've been at Valley over 27 years.

Megan Monson: And you know Robin, I love that you took the initiative to write the letter to the CEO because that's something I feel like a lot of people may not have the gall to do. And look how your career trajectory just stems from that. It kind of shows take a chance on yourself, then there's nothing you have to lose.

Robin Goldfischer: That's exactly right. And at the time I had set up corporate compliance programs at two hospitals in New Jersey, and that was my selling point. "I know how to do this, you need it. I don't think you have it. Hire me." And it worked.

Megan Monson: I love that. And as you look back, is there anything that you say, "Aha. I wish I really knew that in the early stages of my career"?

Robin Goldfischer: I guess looking back, I wish I had understood that it's okay not to have all the answers. Just be upfront and say, "I don't know the answer to that. Let me look into it and get back to you." Because learning is a continuous process, and even today, 27 years I've been at Valley and over 40 years practicing law, there are still things that I need to look up and learn every day. Because a health law practice in my position encompasses not only health law issues, I do property, I do litigation, environmental work,

benefits work, it runs the gamut. It's a general practice for a particular client.

Megan Monson: And I think that's a really good point you make, because it is a skill to recognize what you don't know and having the confidence to say, "I'll get back to you." Knowing how to find the answer is sometimes half the battle.

Robin Goldfischer: Absolutely.

Megan Monson: You touched on this a little bit in terms of your father's career path trudging you in the direction of health law, coupled with your experience in taking the health law course, and so it's very clear that events and people in our lives can be very impactful on our career journey. In addition to that, are there major influences in your life, either people or experiences, that have been particularly impactful for you as you've gone throughout your career?

Robin Goldfischer: Absolutely. I mean, there are many, many people and events that have influenced me throughout my career. As I said before, my father had a tremendous influence on who I became. As has my husband, who himself is a practicing lawyer and my best friend and mentor. He's been behind me throughout my career telling me that I can do anything I put my mind to. So he's been a very strong influence. As for life events, I struggled through the death of my mother in an automobile accident, which she was quite young, and family illness, and each event has taught me something. So as they say, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. You learn to be resilient, to pick yourself up, put one foot in front of the other and continue walking. You learn the value of surrounding yourself with people who you love and who love you and support you through difficult times. And you learn the importance of being kind to everyone you meet because everyone is going through something. If everyone took the time to help somebody else, the world would be a much better place.

Megan Monson: Yeah, I couldn't agree more. And it is challenging to navigate all of those type of life experiences while being a strong female professional, but I think those little nuggets and words of wisdom you shared are truly invaluable and can really make a difference. So throughout your career, how have you helped support other female professionals coming up through the ranks?

Robin Goldfischer: Well, I work in healthcare, which is historically predominantly female, and I oversee legal risk and compliance over 14 people, and one member of my department is male. So I spend a lot of time with women. I would say

at Valley there have been a lot of exceptional female mentors at the top of their fields who work exceptionally hard and understand the importance not only of work, but of work-life balance, which you aren't taught in a law firm. I've seen the value of promoting talented women from within our ranks. It wasn't a thing when I was coming up, and it's very important to do.

Megan Monson: Yeah, I think it really is what helps move the needle as more women continue into the legal profession, of women helping women and really just being advocates for strong professionals. If you have a strong member of the team, irrespective of whether they're male or female, just being there, supporting them and really valuing what they bring to the table.

Robin Goldfischer: It's very important. I try to make sure that the people in my department know that time passes quickly and you don't get it back. So in terms of the work-life balance, you have to take the time to work hard and play hard. And I try to stress here in my department that if you have children, don't miss their school events or their games unless something's very important, because work will always be there. And I like to say ages and stages. If you think your children need you when they're young, they need you more when they're older. And when you're with them, you should be present and mindful because time passes in the blink of an eye. I have two children in their thirties, and I just don't know how that happened.

Megan Monson: It's really, I think, important to have somebody that you work for with those type of views because it makes a world of difference working in that type of environment where you can work hard but you're also supported for having the personal aspect of yourself outside of work.

Robin Goldfischer: Absolutely.

Megan Monson: And as a mother of a three-year-old, I completely recognize the ages and stages and needing different things at different stages.

Robin Goldfischer: And I'm telling you, they'll need you more when they get older.

Megan Monson: I'm sure.

Robin Goldfischer: Right now it's easy.

Megan Monson: Yeah. Now they need your help with the basic stuff. They need help with the harder things as they get older.

Robin Goldfischer: That's right.

Megan Monson: So Robin, this discussion has been really fantastic and I appreciate you sharing your perspective on these topics. Do you have any final parting words of wisdom for other strong female professionals out there?

Robin Goldfischer: I would say that the most important thing is to always be prepared, because when you're prepared and you can exude that confidence, and while you won't always win, you learn from your successes and your failures, and sometimes you learn more from your failures because you pick them apart and learn what you would do the next time. Every day on my way home from work, and I've been doing this since I started to practice, I think about my day and I think about what went well and what didn't go well and what I would change so that the things that didn't go well would go better the next time. So I think that self-critical analysis has really helped me deal with all kinds of issues and become a better lawyer, a better mentor, and a better friend to the people I work with.

Megan Monson: Yeah, I love that. I think I'm going to actually kind of implement that into part of my regime in going home, but I think that helps with a lot with the self-reflection and improvement, so that's fantastic.

Robin, thank you again for joining us today. I'm sure our listeners have found your insight and perspective very useful. I know I have. It's always inspiring and thought-provoking hearing from a female of your stature, getting to where you have and how you got there, and so always appreciate sharing the words of wisdom on that topic.

Robin Goldfischer: Thank you.

Megan Monson: Thanks again for joining us for another episode of The Women's Initiative Real Talk. We'll see you next time.

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