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From the Tampa Bay Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/tampabay/news/2017/07/13/after-a-career-in-banking-karen-dee-finds-new-life.html>

Executive Files

After a career in banking, Karen Dee finds new life in executive coaching (Video)

🔒 SUBSCRIBER CONTENT: Jul 13, 2017, 7:00pm EDT Updated: Jul 14, 2017, 4:15pm EDT

Why Karen is a big deal: Accendo is a leadership development company and Karen is a certified executive coach. She works with clients in high performance team building, leadership development, negotiating, public speaking and seminars for high potential women and minorities. As a former senior banker and chief executive with more than 30 years' experience driving profitable business growth, she has a strong financial and operational background. Her career included time at [Wells Fargo](#) (1983-1986, 1989-2006), [SunTrust](#) (1986-1989), and Fifth Third Bank (2006-14). As Fifth Third Bank regional president, she had responsibility for \$17.4 billion in assets and more than 3,200 employees. With team input, she says she assesses a corporate culture, identifies obstacles and creates a path for change while building trust throughout transition. After retiring from the banking world in 2014, she pursued executive coaching and became certified in the Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder Centered Coaching methodology. She and a co-founder [Cari Coats](#) launched Accendo last year.



NOLA LALEYE
Karen Dee

What are some common themes your clients are asking for? There are many different themes and leadership attributes that people want to take to the next level, some of which some people are really good at and they want to double down on that leverage. One of our specialties is we work with leaders who are going into new roles. We call it transitional leadership coaching. Forty percent of leaders who go into new roles fail within the first 18 months so we have designed a very specific program for leaders who get promoted within their same company or come from outside the company and move into new areas. It's a very disciplined targeted process. So I am seeing a lot of that. Another subspecialty we get called on a lot — in Florida, there's a lot of small, medium and large-sized family enterprises. We have a specialty called next-gen succession coaching where we go in and work with the next layer of family, the up-and-coming family members who will ultimately take the reins for these family enterprises. We have a very disciplined, multiyear process to make sure they are experiencing different things and that they have the leadership attributes when the family needs it.

How much can people learn from awful managers? I think you always learn from good leaders and from bad leaders. You become what your experiences are. In my career, I've learned from the best of leaders and I have also seen some leaders who quite frankly weren't as good as I thought they would be. I think you learn from them also. You learn what not to do. You learn the differences. I believe that's all part of the equation and all part of the sharing as a coach, prompting people to say, "Here's what I have seen to do and some things you might think about not to do."

We all have so much coming at us. What's your take on staying focused? I think the key is really to make sure you know what you want to stay focused on. Then it's the 80-20 rule. How can I take the least amount of time and energy to do — in a powerful way — what I set out to do? It's also about getting the clutter out of your mind. We talk a lot about balance and renewal and the importance for executives to have that time and activity, either daily or weekly so they can get refreshed so they can be the best they want to be.

Closer look

Title, company: Co-founder and managing partner at Accendo Leadership Advisory Group

Downtime: Plays the flute

Musical tastes: She's a country fan, likes [Tim McGraw](#)

Grew up: On Long Island in Smithtown, New York

First paid job: McDonald's

Education: BBA from Stetson University on a Fulbright Scholarship, academic all-American. A high school and college athlete, she attended on a basketball scholarship.

Downtime: Avid tennis player, cyclist and boater

Areas of expertise include: Building trust and team commitment, emotional intelligence, confidence and executive presence, leading a multigenerational workforce.

Movies she can watch over and over: "Love Story," "Officer and a Gentleman." She loves romantic, low-stress comedies.

Family: Two grown daughters and two young grandsons, married to her husband, Tom, for 33 years. He has the culinary touch in the family. "He makes a seafood bouillabaisse like nobody else can."

Alexis Muellner

Editor

Tampa Bay Business Journal

