



**Title:** Senior Vice President, Branch Director  
**Education:** BA, Mount Holyoke College  
**Company Name:** RBC Wealth Management-U.S.  
**Industry:** Financial Services  
**Company CEO:** Michael Armstrong  
**Headquarters Location:** Minneapolis, Minnesota  
**Number of Employees:** 5,000  
**Your Location:** Washington, DC  
**Words you live by:** Just do it.  
**Personal Philosophy:** Stay true to yourself.  
**What book are you reading:** *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor  
**What was your first job:** Working on Senator John Glenn's presidential campaign  
**Favorite charity:** National Museum of Women in the Arts, and The Barker Adoption Foundation

**DON'T TRY TO BE ANYONE ELSE'S IDEA OF WHO YOU SHOULD BE. BE TRUE AND AUTHENTIC TO YOURSELF, AND BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE. BY BELIEVING IN YOURSELF, YOU WILL SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCEEDING IN EVERYTHING YOU DO.**

## Believe in Yourself, and Don't Be Afraid to Change Course

In the very early years of my career, I had my sights set on politics. I studied political science in college, and I was excited by the prospect of working on Capitol Hill. But as it turned out, politics wasn't the best fit for me. Instead, I made the switch to the financial services industry, where I've stayed since.

Giving up on politics like that was both humbling and stressful for me. But as I consider advice I might give to young women setting off on their own career path, I think my change in direction serves as a useful learning experience. Here's what I would say are important items for women to keep in mind:

- Don't be afraid to admit you're wrong. I was wrong about politics being the career for me, and if

I hadn't acknowledged it, I may have spent several years of my life trying to force myself into a poor fit.

- Take risks. It was a risk for me to move to a new field, but I felt it needed to be done. I encourage everyone to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves in life, even if they scare you.
- Find a mentor. The support of a mentor or coach makes all the difference in the world. Find a woman in your organization—or, if that isn't possible, outside it—who can act as a sounding board for you, and can help you find opportunities. I've been fortunate to have strong mentors and role models throughout my life,

some of whom helped me through that transition from politics to financial services. Many of these mentors have been women, but some have been men, too. At RBC Wealth Management-U.S., I have received incredible support from my complex and divisional directors, both of whom are men.

- Believe in yourself. This is the most important item of all. Women need to be confident in their skills and confident in who they are. Don't try to be anyone else's idea of who you should be. Be true and authentic to yourself, and be your own advocate. By believing in yourself, you will set yourself up for succeeding in everything you do.