

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:40:02

GUEST

That's a really big first step. Is that a helmet of giving people time? Not just your own personal time, but their time to actually help move that agenda forward. For all of those businesses in our industry. It's not just about getting people into your business. It's about retaining people out there in the business. So once you get people in making sure that they're more equitable, opportunities that are given to them to grow, to flourish, to network, to meet people and to have exposure to the right people as well alongside their peers so that they retain the more they are retained in that business.

00:00:40:02 - 00:00:53:02

GUEST

And then you have this pool to then be, you know, we have a more diverse leadership as well.

00:00:53:04 - 00:01:19:23

HOST

Welcome to the People Property Place podcast. Today we're joined by Nneka Ejindu senior asset manager. Most recently employed at the Sal. Investment Management at the South Neck is responsible for the proactive asset management and asset transformation of business space. Primary office and industrial assets in London and the South East of England, as well as driving results across various portfolios that she managed.

00:01:20:00 - 00:01:29:15

HOST

She is passionate about diversity, equity and inclusion and it gives me great pleasure to welcome her to the podcast today. Nneka, thanks so much for joining me.

00:01:29:18 - 00:01:31:01

GUEST

Thank you for having me, Matt.

00:01:31:04 - 00:01:44:13

HOST

Not at all. Well, I know you've listened to a couple of these podcasts before. I think you know, a place I always like to start the conversation is how, you got into real estate and why you wanted to get into real estate as well.

00:01:44:15 - 00:02:05:19

GUEST

Okay. Great question. I knew nothing about property whatsoever. And I was actually thinking about this question last night randomly. And I've always had a love of buildings, and I was what I was thinking about last night was, where did that come from? I think it came from going to a school that was a and a really stunning, beautiful building.

00:02:05:19 - 00:02:24:01

GUEST

It was an old palace. The Duke of San boasted that where my school was, and I was always fascinated by what it looked like, the portions of it. And so on. And I'd always looked at buildings. And then when my mum worked in a shopping center, I was fascinated by the layout and why things looked the way they did.

00:02:24:03 - 00:02:51:15

GUEST

And then when I got to my A-levels and, I had maths, chemistry and further maths and geography, I wasn't quite sure what I could do with them, knowing that I wasn't going to be a scientist. I then started looking into what can I do with maths and geography that is vocational and stumbled upon surveying.

And, you know, no one else in my school whatsoever was even considering it or had thought about it.

00:02:51:15 - 00:03:10:09

GUEST

And no one else in my family even knew what it was. It's not a traditional career for their child of West African parents, that's for sure. But I investigated it and then decided that was what I was going to do. And ended up applying for Cambridge and wedding and went to wedding investing.

00:03:10:15 - 00:03:19:05

HOST

So tell me about yourself. At school, we what kind of child were you and kind of what were your, I guess, what are your giftings growing?

00:03:19:07 - 00:03:43:14

GUEST

I was a relatively academic child, but also really sporty child. I love sports, I did anything and everything I could do. I, I was the there was a running joke at my secondary school that I was a one woman athletics team. So certain Saturdays I would do the 100, the 200, the 400, the relay, the long jump and the high jump and you knock it all like that.

00:03:43:14 - 00:03:57:14

GUEST

Bad. But so chuffed that I had kind of done all of that. So I, I love sport. And you know, I was really into maths. I was a bit cheeky and I used to like writing stories as well, but I kind of fell out of that a little bit.

00:03:57:14 - 00:04:17:14

HOST

So it's a very, very competitive. But also, yeah, intellectually gifted and, you know, passion for maths and science. And was that the expectation from a young age, from your parents in terms of kind of pursuing more of, yeah, scientific or a different kind of career or reach?

00:04:17:19 - 00:04:43:01

GUEST

Yeah. I think a lot of West African and I can speak specifically about Nigerian because that's my heritage. I'm a, you know, from the type of Nigerian person, or of Nigerian origin. And, parents, your, their currency is their child's intelligence and academia. That's currency more than having financial wealth to some extent. So my mum would brag about every great pick up.

00:04:43:01 - 00:05:02:04

GUEST

You know, when she met her friends, it was about what school you went to, what university meant to, and my mum, you know, single parent bringing up four kids. So I really kind of pushed all of us to do extra curricular work outside school. So that primary school, all four kids either got scholarships or best ways to private schools.

00:05:02:04 - 00:05:21:08

GUEST

And, you know, I was lucky enough to get into one of the best schools in the country at the time. And that school was very competitive. So I had a competitive nature beforehand and that growth. But you kind of realized you understood your own things. You know, when you're the most intelligent kid in your primary school, it's amazing.

00:05:21:08 - 00:05:27:10

GUEST

You get to school. Everyone's intelligent. You understand more what your particular gifts and strengths

are.

00:05:27:12 - 00:05:37:24

HOST

So you went to the school and, you realize that the lots of other very gifted children as well. Yeah. And it was kind of the school. It was that school. Was it that you went to that private school?

00:05:38:01 - 00:05:58:18

GUEST

I'll name check the school. It was called North London Collegiate School for Girls and Elks, and it was a really academic school, I think for at least 20 years until they moved to the baccalaureate. They were in the top five, top 1 or 2 of A-level and GCSE results. Yeah, in the country, despite being just a girls school.

00:05:58:20 - 00:06:21:17

GUEST

And you know, they were, you know, really, really pushed and everyone in the school was very academic. But you, you quickly realized where you thought you were great at something. I did maths and further maths. Now you realize that some people just have photographic memories and you know, they'll be in the lesson for ten minutes, read the board, know everything that's going on and can make it back and understand it.

00:06:21:17 - 00:06:32:24

GUEST

And other people approach things in different ways. So yeah, it gave you a good understanding of the sort of the varieties of people that there are and the different levels of intelligence. Yeah.

00:06:33:01 - 00:06:51:24

HOST

And that's a, that's where I kind of real estate or you kind of beautiful buildings kind of came onto the radar. You mentioned kind of brought up a single mother. Your she didn't have an understanding and appreciation of real estate. Did you have any friends at school whose parents were in real estate or any contacts?

00:06:51:24 - 00:07:09:24

GUEST

No. I mean, it was quite funny because I remember when there were, I'm curious, as we had some amazing people come into our school who were connected to people. We had famous scientists. We had I remember Jonathan Ross came in at one point that people were connected to all these people and media or science or politics or law.

00:07:10:01 - 00:07:29:06

GUEST

And I remember connecting my friends with my mum, and they'd gone to my mum in court, prosecuting people as a, as a barrister, but no one had a connection for me in property because no one did that as their main career aside, maybe as an aside, but not as their main career. So I didn't have any of those connections or ins.

00:07:29:07 - 00:07:46:19

GUEST

It was just something I was really curious about and thought. I know that I'm not going to be the standard sort of Nigerian doctor, lawyer, engineer, dentist, something that I will follow in my mum's sort of footsteps into law. But it was just something I really wanted to do.

00:07:46:21 - 00:07:50:22

HOST

And at that school, there are a lot of other kids of of accepting a West African origin or not.

00:07:51:01 - 00:08:08:08

GUEST

Know, so my school, abandoned my school was a third Jewish. And actually I grew up, around an amazing Israeli family. To the extent I spoke Hebrew, up to the age of about 12.

00:08:08:09 - 00:08:11:18

HOST

I languages as well. I had that into the locker.

00:08:11:20 - 00:08:32:14

GUEST

I don't speak any more. I know the alphabet. Say anything I remember, and, my, my older sister was the first one to go into school. She was the only person then that person in our entire school at the time. I was the only black girl in my year. And my younger sister, who was three years younger than me, was one of three.

00:08:32:16 - 00:08:36:20

GUEST

So very, very much in their in the minority for so.

00:08:37:01 - 00:09:02:02

HOST

And so when you kind of came to kind of leave school. Yeah. Had you done some further research in terms of what a career in real estate would look like? And I know we kind of spoke a little bit of Mike in terms of disappointing you. Yeah. Maybe the expectation of what you should have gone to do. Can you just tell me a little bit about how you maybe gripped up real estate and kind of thought, actually, that's a that's a career or, or an area that I'm focused on.

00:09:02:07 - 00:09:24:19

GUEST

I think what's interesting is because I wanted to do something that was sort of connected to things that I learned in geography, and to sort of use the analytical side of my brain for maths. I didn't do that much research in school because I was like, it's going to be interesting. I'll learn something. And as a minimum, my mum was very, very specific and vocal on the fact that I had to do a vocational degree.

00:09:24:21 - 00:09:45:02

GUEST

So you couldn't just do maths or geography or something. She really was very keen on that and sat, you know, give you a better path to a career in the future. Even if you decided to change your mind at some point. So I thought, I'll learn something. And, you know, if I looked at the the components of it was low economics, you know, finance, it's like, this is great.

00:09:45:02 - 00:10:01:20

GUEST

I'm going to learn something. I'm gonna be interesting. I learn about buildings, building structure. So I was like, as a minimum, I live now at something and it push me in one direction. Maybe I want to do something more finance related otherwise. So I didn't do that months of each year. I was just apart from into the degrees I was going to do.

00:10:01:22 - 00:10:05:17

GUEST

And I thought I kind of wing it from from there.

00:10:05:19 - 00:10:14:21

HOST

So you applied for Cambridge, you private cars. You applied for quite a few, but you landed at Redding and you did your kind of land management. How was that as an experience?

00:10:14:23 - 00:10:38:07

GUEST

It was brilliant. I mean, being a sporty kid, the way that, sort of halls of residence were sort of allocated and the whole I was, it was full of lots of sporty people. So I made lots of friends who played sport, whether it be netball, lacrosse, cricket, rugby. And I played lacrosse at school and also at university, and I did ascetics at school, at university.

00:10:38:07 - 00:10:55:05

GUEST

So, you know, it was amazing how many sports people as a percentage were in the land management degree. So I could propose to people that were my whole, but also in my classes. So it was a great sort of insight way to sort of get my group of friends.

00:10:55:07 - 00:11:11:19

HOST

So yeah, I think, historically universities have got very gifted, gifted individuals, certainly from sporting perspective, and they kind of stick them on the land or the property degree. You know, it's kind of yeah, you could you can do the property course. Because, yeah, you might not be as academically gifted for the other courses that we have.

00:11:11:21 - 00:11:29:00

HOST

But yeah, that's, yeah, definitely interesting that that was a good, good range of people. When you, when you qualified, I'm assuming you had a bit more of an, an understanding of the, the kind of the real estate space. But it still fascinates me. Still when I talk to people when they do qualify, there's still so much learning to go through in the different routes.

00:11:29:00 - 00:11:31:23

HOST

How how did what was your kind of mindset at the time?

00:11:32:00 - 00:11:57:01

GUEST

I mean, you know, I realized in my first year I was very much too focused on just getting cash in. I came from a single parent family with four kids, and I was doing work at Spence, my mum at the Prime Location service. I did that for a year and a bit, and then it got to my second year and I thought, you really have to get work experience and if you have any chance of getting a job, so you need to focus not on the money you're getting, but on the experience of getting to sort of prepare your career.

00:11:57:01 - 00:12:18:24

GUEST

So I did work experience at Helion Baker, at King's Sturge and very, very briefly at Savills. Which kind of gave me an indication, well, in some instances an indication of what I want to do. Another sense, not much, because I think I got I won't name the place, but one of our black athletes, we were given nothing to do.

00:12:18:24 - 00:12:39:00

GUEST

So we were there for TV, reading magazines, which was not Eastville. But you got to see the hubbub and

I asked people what they were doing and so on, but I didn't really get stuck in and that another place, you know, I was working in the investment team, and I got stuck in traffic. I think I was writing the reports, I was going out inspections with them.

00:12:39:06 - 00:12:50:04

GUEST

I was like, I really enjoyed this. So it gave me a good sense of, you know, let me use that sort of analytical side of my brain. And I'm really going to enjoy this whichever path I go down.

00:12:50:06 - 00:12:53:03

HOST

And so when you qualified, you landed at Pindar from Benjamin.

00:12:53:07 - 00:12:56:14

GUEST

Sorry. And I qualified. I landed at,

00:12:56:16 - 00:13:01:03

HOST

Oh, sorry. Left university. So, yeah, when you left university, that was your first job.

00:13:01:03 - 00:13:26:01

GUEST

Was it my first jobs at Chesterton when I left the city? Doing the graduate rotation. And amusingly enough, I remember that I really stuck out for good or bad. So I would be spoken to you on a regular basis by the board, because I was the only black graduate. And I found out subsequently that I was the only black qualified surveyor employed by the company globally, which I thought was.

00:13:26:02 - 00:13:44:21

GUEST

So I ended test thing. I was in a lot of marketing material, put it that way. But it was just it was an interesting experience. I'd worked in various teams. I met some great people that kind of steered me into realizing what I liked and didn't or like less about.

00:13:44:23 - 00:13:50:08

HOST

And that exceeded the graduate rotation. Yeah. And you got qualified. Which seats did you sit in?

00:13:50:10 - 00:14:01:09

GUEST

I started in LNT, then I did Valuation Office Agency in Midtown and then Property Asset Management when it actually was property and asset management as opposed to.

00:14:01:11 - 00:14:03:16

HOST

Just property management badged as asset manager.

00:14:03:16 - 00:14:04:17

GUEST

Yes.

00:14:04:19 - 00:14:12:10

HOST

Makes sense. And so I'm assuming yeah I work you know for reference to the kind of listeners what time what date was that. Well yeah.

00:14:12:12 - 00:14:19:00

GUEST

Gosh that's going to really age me Matt. Thank you. That was 95 okay.

00:14:19:02 - 00:14:23:05

HOST

And so how long did you stay with Justin's for then?

00:14:23:07 - 00:14:49:10

GUEST

I stayed with them for about just shy of ten years. I ended up working in the property and asset management team for a client, called Botanic, as well as in their name change to residential asset management, and then Ignis. And then they were sort of blended into Standard Life. And now Aberdeen and, you know, initially when I started that team was small sort of group of three fund managers dealing with sector.

00:14:49:10 - 00:15:06:03

GUEST

And I was working with I think the head of the team, but also the retail fund manager, Gary Patterson. He was also my great person to, have a small client at the time. And, you know, I learned a lot. He just kind of gave me a lot of scope to come up with ideas to sort of improve value.

00:15:06:03 - 00:15:31:08

GUEST

And, you know, it was a really good learning curve. And also in that team, I had a really, I think, brilliant boss, one of my most influential, positively influential bosses. I would say, his background was sort of Army background, and even though he could be a little bit of a gruff person, which everyone assumes you kind of want people to be more friendly or nice to you.

00:15:31:08 - 00:15:52:14

GUEST

But what was more important, and I realized this subsequently, is that they kind of have your back, the whole followership mentality. So he always had my back. He was there to sort of push us, support us, help us grow, wasn't the most friendly, but I prefer all of those traits rather than someone being really friendly and then not having a back or pushing you or supporting you, or helping you sort of grow your.

00:15:52:14 - 00:15:56:17

HOST

Career, pushing you to, unlock you and achieve your potential.

00:15:56:17 - 00:15:57:05

GUEST

Exactly.

00:15:57:11 - 00:16:03:10

HOST

Yeah. And it sounds like you're the kind of individual who needed that craves that. Yeah. Actually responds really well to it.

00:16:03:12 - 00:16:28:08

GUEST

Yeah. And definitely. And I would say that, you know, having done work experience in investment, I was really keen to do that, having sort of had a investment in finance focus in my degree. And then I didn't have any contacts or connections in investment in any way, shape or form. And, you know, I was told by a

number of different people my business that and other businesses that I didn't fit because I didn't have any of those contacts.

00:16:28:08 - 00:16:51:21

GUEST

I couldn't bring anything to the table. And that wasn't an option for me. So people were offering me opportunities. And, you know, I it's one of the things I kind of think I, I wouldn't do again, I definitely lacked people's nose. No. In terms of you can't do this, implement what I did, rather than saying, sod this, I'm going to find a way to do it anyway.

00:16:52:02 - 00:17:04:11

GUEST

I didn't want, you know, the real hard uphill battle like this is way too hard, way harder than it should be and way harder than it is to my peers who have come from meeting. But I will forge my path another another way.

00:17:04:16 - 00:17:07:16

HOST

So you didn't put up too much of a fight. You just kind of. Yeah, Greg.

00:17:07:18 - 00:17:16:12

GUEST

That I definitely regret that. That's one thing I would if I was ever giving him an advice, or if I was going back and speaking to my, I'd say, that's one thing I shouldn't have done.

00:17:16:14 - 00:17:35:03

HOST

Don't take no for an answer. And and actually what? Follow your gut, double down on it and try and push through. Yeah. Regardless, of what you're saying. Oh. Or what someone else is saying to you and why. Yeah. Why do you think, other than the obvious of you weren't connected or you didn't have, you know, a parent or what?

00:17:35:03 - 00:17:44:21

HOST

Have you start another property fund or connection was that really the reason you think at the time? Because you sound incredibly capable across all different areas.

00:17:44:24 - 00:18:16:00

GUEST

I mean, I can't speak about the whole industry, but that was definitely, I think, from my personal experience, more nepotism then. So I, I think of all the people that were seeing in the team or all the people that they brought in, they were kids of clients or senior people in the property industry or already connected to another investment agent or an agent or someone that sort of gave them an additional bit of clout.

00:18:16:01 - 00:18:31:17

GUEST

You know, it's, you know, to have an analogy. I was watching, maybe I shouldn't say this, but I was watching some random reality TV, a music show, and they were saying that we're looking for the next big star. But you have to come with your own social media, your desk that they had already done already. And it's kind of that mentality.

00:18:31:17 - 00:18:41:08

GUEST

We want you to bring something already rather than us molding it. You have to have something so you



can hit the ground running. And not having had any connection to the industry, I didn't have any of that.

00:18:41:10 - 00:18:59:13

HOST

Yeah, be a known entity and I guess try and be fair and as quickly as possible, or at least on unlock, relationships. Yeah. So if you had the time again, you kind of told yourself not to listen to that, that voice or other people's voices. What what did you do? And what did you go on to do after that period?

00:18:59:15 - 00:19:26:16

GUEST

So I, I realized that agency, even though I really enjoyed aspects of it, wasn't for me, that I did really enjoy it. And then I was working in property asset management, and I realized that the asset management and the deal negotiation side of things was what really excited me. And I was more interested in the development opportunities and negotiating deals than we've used, but kind of coordinating that.

00:19:26:16 - 00:19:49:00

GUEST

So, you know, and I, have done sort of careers, but as I and people say, what's an asset manager? I sort of describe it as a Jacqueline of all trades, because you do a little bit of everything, you do a bit of, you know, agency planning, development, LNT rating, property management. There's a aspect of all of that, that whole spectrum in your job.

00:19:49:00 - 00:20:00:17

GUEST

And as someone that went into industry and all of this is really intriguing, there's always a narrow so you can get into to be in a job that sort of touches on a lot of those areas is actually ultimately a perfect fit for me, I think.

00:20:00:21 - 00:20:08:24

HOST

So you took that experience from the advisory side and wanted to apply that on the on the client side. Yeah. Who who did you move to and what was the name of the company that you moved to?

00:20:09:05 - 00:20:32:04

GUEST

So I when I was at chats and my client sort of moved across to at Australia last whilst at the NPR, and I was there for a while until, you know, the client's team started getting bigger. You know, that was just in the I should go up to Glasgow and I didn't really want to go up as a single block on my own move to a city that I didn't really know.

00:20:32:04 - 00:20:52:21

GUEST

And maybe, you know, that was a little bit I didn't challenge myself enough, but I didn't, you know, I was very used to being supported by my family, my friends and having that sort of network around you. And I wouldn't have had that. So in the end, I moved to a small property company hoping to find Benjamin.

00:20:52:23 - 00:21:05:20

GUEST

And that sort of gave me my sort of first proper foray into asset clients like asset management properly sort of monikers as opposed to property and asset management advisory. Yeah. That's I.

00:21:05:22 - 00:21:19:10

HOST

I guess the difference is advisor clients on some initiatives drive value and they could take it or leave it. And then the other side of the fence is actually curating and making the decisions and taking the advice.

But actually the buck stops with you in terms of what the plan and.

00:21:19:15 - 00:21:20:13

GUEST

Exactly follow.

00:21:20:13 - 00:21:21:21

HOST

Through is going to look like.

00:21:21:23 - 00:21:50:12

GUEST

Exactly. So I work for a small company and Benjamin dealing with new office developments across the country. In partnership with, some developers, some of them were originally housing developers. And it was really interesting because the team, no one else in the team came from policy background. Apart from my first boss, who departed relatively soon after I joined.

00:21:50:14 - 00:22:32:24

GUEST

And they didn't really have a healthy respect for people in the property industry, which surprised me, but they were all hedge fund bankers. One of them was an astrophysicist in terms of what he'd studied, and they didn't consider property people to be that bright or intelligent. Which kind of came through and was interesting, but ironically enough, was the reason I think the company folded in the end because there was a undressed innovation of the people that they were dealing with when they dealt with their JV partnerships and how those agreements were drafted, which meant that when the, the financial crisis happened, they came a copy.

00:22:33:00 - 00:22:36:24

GUEST

And I think that and was due to underestimating property people.

00:22:37:03 - 00:22:54:24

HOST

So it was a kind of a property company they set up. But the individuals behind it were not property folk. They, they were, they said bankers or hedge fund people and I guess financiers or financial engineers trying to engineer a return out of real estate rather than people having a real fundamental understanding of property. And the drivers.

00:22:55:01 - 00:23:16:22

GUEST

Definitely. And they I mean, I think they were an investment company originally and they I think investors, retail mom and pop, you know, money into things like film projects and other interesting, quirky things and then forayed from that into real estate and then real estate people and myself to sort of move that forward.

00:23:17:03 - 00:23:37:20

HOST

So and you touched on an interesting time global financial crash kind of. Yeah. It's very well documented what happened across the industry. And, certainly wouldn't have been the only business that had a difficult time. You you left and you landed. LaSalle, how did that come around? And, you know, having been in the industry for a little period at this stage, did you have mentors?

00:23:37:20 - 00:23:48:15

HOST

Had you seen, people from kind of African origin come into the industry as well? And how and why did

you decide to kind of choose to go to LaSalle?

00:23:48:17 - 00:24:11:14

GUEST

Okay. Quite a few things. So the, the choice was initially not a choice in that the company followed it because it was the GFC and, you know, we came a cropper when we had assets of identical sizes with our JV partner who was supposed to sell them and we were supposed to lease them. And then JSE happened and that game got ripped up and thrown in the bin.

00:24:11:14 - 00:24:41:07

GUEST

And we couldn't compete with them because they had the large amount of assets over state. So ultimately it folded, even though we tried for, you know, 18 months to try and, you know, run up that down, escalated regular meetings with the banks and so on. But that's what happened. And I think I was unemployed for two months. But I use my contacts then and some people that I'd worked with previously, Addison and Justin as well, just to sort of give me some advice and make some suggestions.

00:24:41:07 - 00:24:53:16

GUEST

And an opportunity, came up at LaSalle to work in offices, but ultimately mainly industrial and it's a lot opportunity I took to then sort of go from a small prop code to a proper institution.

00:24:53:18 - 00:25:02:23

HOST

Yeah, I guess it must be a a big change and a mindset shift. Going from a smaller, smaller business to a big fund management shop.

00:25:03:00 - 00:25:27:15

GUEST

Huge. You know, going from working with a for a company for three years where it starts off with seven people, ended up with about 20 to then being on a floor of, you know, 50 to 60 odd people and another floor of more people. It was definitely, a mindset shift for sure. So understanding how things work, politics, how business is structured, you know, what you need to do to move your career forward.

00:25:27:15 - 00:25:33:05

GUEST

All of that kind of stuff was a real steep learning curve, for sure.

00:25:33:07 - 00:25:42:05

HOST

Did you? This one, one of the questions was, did you have any sort of mentors at this time advising you on which route to take?

00:25:42:07 - 00:26:28:07

GUEST

No, I didn't actually, I didn't because I moved through some property and asset management, as it were, to a small broker and didn't sort of create any relationships. There. Anyone was mentoring me? I didn't really know many people in this space to sort of guide me or direct me. So I again, I kind of forged my own path, and that's something which I if I was giving someone advice, I would say, you know, find a mentor or sponsor as early as possible, in your career, because they can definitely help you avoid pitfalls or, you know, give you tips in terms of easier ways to go about things or open doors for you.

00:26:28:07 - 00:26:37:09

GUEST

And I didn't have that. I didn't really appreciate the the weight and the benefit of that in order for me to

seek it out.

00:26:37:11 - 00:27:05:17

HOST

At this time, I'm really keen to kind of dive into this whole experience as well. Were there more people from African origin entering the industry or was kind of property? Was there a diversity push across the board? Was it spoken about? Or was it still did you still feel, yeah, isolated and in a kind of, nepotistic, pale male style, environment.

00:27:05:19 - 00:27:30:17

GUEST

I noticed a shift in that there were definitely more women, and more people of color, but not necessarily black people. There were definitely more Asian people in my business. But I think I was the only person of color for a while in my team until we merged with another business. And I didn't see many other black professionals.

00:27:30:17 - 00:27:54:24

GUEST

I saw, but about people in the business, whether they be administration staff or otherwise, but not a black qualified surveyor. So people in the industry generally, yes, but no surveyors. Until I think I would, I think I went to my first event, it might have been the first IRS conference, and I sort of found myself in that little huddle with about 4 or 5 people.

00:27:54:24 - 00:28:22:16

GUEST

There was a, couple of agents, and then a couple of occupy as of sort of Asian and Black origin. And we were all kind of in this little huddle, about 5 or 6 of us going for 400 people, and there's just few of us in the room. So it's something you kind of know. So that kind of gives you a camaraderie, because you kind of know that you stand out for good and or for bad in a room.

00:28:22:18 - 00:28:42:04

HOST

You landed at the South. Talk to me about you. Expect you obviously an asset manager. You clearly kind of found your sweet spot in terms of your career. What do you enjoy doing? Like the variety of it you said you started off in offices. Can you just give me a bit of an overview of that time, and then maybe that transition to business space, which is obviously a term is kind of hasn't been used for a few years.

00:28:42:06 - 00:28:52:06

HOST

I guess because of the different niches within real estate, but also kind of more recently you've been focusing on the industrial justice space. But yeah, just initially, can you just talk to me about what that that early piece looked like?

00:28:52:08 - 00:29:13:18

GUEST

Yeah. I mean, when I joined the business, because I come in from a job for the past three years that had been very much office focused, my understanding that I was going to have more of an office leaning and then when I saw my portfolio, it was 50% industrial and I was like, what is this? Because my first job for the first few years of my career was all retail focused.

00:29:13:20 - 00:29:52:15

GUEST

So I went from retail to offices and then a sector that I knew very little about or understood about until about, and what I found really exciting or interesting was it was really considered a poor relation. So we say, to retail and, you know, central London offices and so on. And I remember at the beginning having

an insane amount of availability on assets, having a crazy level of tenant turnover, and just having a really low rental base, even in Greater London.

00:29:52:17 - 00:30:16:24

GUEST

But sort of knowing that there was scope to improve that. And then watching the evolution of the industrial market and being part of that and seeing my assets where I pushed and doubled rents over a period of time and where, you know, from a scarcity point of view, people were calling you up on a regular basis to get on your estate, let alone you having 50% of your estate, you know, with availability.

00:30:16:24 - 00:30:30:15

GUEST

So that was really awesome to be part of that and to watch it being, you know, that poor relation, the poor cousin to being someone that was on the, you know, the same level almost as the other sectors.

00:30:30:17 - 00:30:52:19

HOST

Someone listening to this who, might have been property or is earlier in their career in property and kind of working out a lot of different attributes to me. Can you just talk a little bit about, how the saw as a business, as an institution is set up and the different funds and the different, the different roles that you had or responsibilities.

00:30:52:20 - 00:30:58:07

HOST

Okay. Because there's quite a lot of jargon from open ended funds to closed ended funds too. Yeah.

00:30:58:09 - 00:31:21:09

GUEST

Yeah. I mean, different, institutions are set up differently. So some people are set up on a fund by fund basis. Other people are set up on a sector basis, and that actually may be the nature of their fund being hundred percent sector focused. And I understand that when I joined the business, it had recently shifted from being you in a funds team.

00:31:21:09 - 00:31:44:20

GUEST

And you do you work across whatever sectors are within that funding to being a sector and sort of geographical focus, with the aim of us being more specialized and knowing our markets even better, which, you know, people say it's swings and roundabouts, which is which is better. But I think that kind of really worked for our business because you really got to I really got to get my parts.

00:31:44:20 - 00:32:01:24

GUEST

I got to know my agents. I got to understand what was happening in those markets. And even the, you know, the bits you didn't know, you kind of extrapolate back to where you knew some of that you could. And so it was a really good way to sort of understand the sector and to all the sectors. I was dealing with office and just to and to understand those markets.

00:32:02:01 - 00:32:25:13

GUEST

And, you know, our business, was mainly at the time, pension fund business. So there was something quite, gratifying about knowing that every bit of performance you got was going into, you know, a coal miner's pension. I found that really gratifying. For some people, it may not make a difference to me. So, like, I can see there's a real purpose, to it.

00:32:25:15 - 00:32:27:10

GUEST

And the funds were closed. Ended.

00:32:27:12 - 00:32:29:02

HOST

Which meant what.

00:32:29:04 - 00:32:41:23

GUEST

It meant that the fund had a definitive end date. And obviously there were less issues of inflows and outflows, when people required commissions and pulling money in and out of those funds, if it's open, and.

00:32:42:00 - 00:32:53:24

HOST

I guess you have you can execute your business plan. You kind of know know what the plan is going to be, any kind of liability match the, the pension fund, or the pensioners. Yeah. Pensions. Right.

00:32:54:00 - 00:33:18:16

GUEST

Yeah. The requirements, you know, when, more cash was needed that disposal needed to happen and you would look across your portfolio and work out, you know, which was the lesser performing or which ones you wanted to keep or which ones you were focused on getting higher income from. So yeah, it was really sort of interesting and informative and sort of eye opening experience for me when I hadn't had any dealings with that whatsoever beforehand.

00:33:18:18 - 00:33:34:15

HOST

So you touched on the fact you have some retail experience then that moved into offices and then industrial logistics, and you've kind of seen the transformation of that. Did you always want to go down the industrial logistics route, or did you kind of just fall upon it and across it and that kind of just workload just increased?

00:33:34:17 - 00:33:36:14

HOST

As the market picked up?

00:33:36:16 - 00:34:00:18

GUEST

I definitely fell into it because, you know, at that time and I was joining the business, if you asked anyone, which were they? Exciting and sexy, for want of a word, sectors industrial isn't the one that would have come up forward. Been mentioned when one you wanted to be an investment irrespective of sector. You wanted to be in retail elements of an office and then industrial was kind of the the like I said earlier, the poor relation.

00:34:00:18 - 00:34:20:02

GUEST

So I fell into it in that the, the team that was hiring at the time was business space focused and all I did have a portion of my assets were offices. A good majority of them were industrial. So for me it was like I said something really new learning you, you know, the types of occupiers would be in that space.

00:34:20:03 - 00:34:27:19

GUEST

And sort of understanding those micro locations and the micro market. So yeah, it was a real learning curve.

00:34:27:21 - 00:34:34:09

HOST

Talk to me about your kind of progression. How did your role change your tenure with the business increased as well.

00:34:34:11 - 00:34:56:01

GUEST

So I think, you know, you start off with a number of assets and you're focused on, I think, the basics. You're focused on the rent collection, your focus on what your property managers are doing. You're focused on your estate story. So if you're using your least expertise, and that is the sort of foundation, the basic foundation of asset management.

00:34:56:01 - 00:35:16:21

GUEST

And then it's when you can extrapolate that into something more interesting. So looking at sort of asset reallocation, perhaps in terms of changing from one sector to another, looking at planning regularization so that you can improve the rents in your assets, looking at improving your tenant mix or changing or tenant mix to move things around, looking at redeveloping your assets.

00:35:17:02 - 00:35:41:13

GUEST

So all of those things come into play more when you have the basics and the foundations sort of in your back pocket, as it were. But also, I guess that depends about your on your background. So people that come into asset management come from various different places. People come from valuation, they come from agency, they come from property management, and they all approach it slightly differently.

00:35:41:15 - 00:35:48:02

HOST

Did you have any responsibility for team or man management? Did that sort of factor into your role as well?

00:35:48:04 - 00:36:23:04

GUEST

An element of it in that, even though we all had our own patches and our teams are relatively small, you know, you had a massive external team that you were coordinating. So, you know, if you have, you know, at one point, I think I had the largest number of tenants, you know, in our team. So you're coordinating all of these panels, developers, your JV partners, your lawyers, your property managers, your rating surveyors, and making sure that all of the working towards the same goal, which is improving or maximizing value on the asset.

00:36:23:06 - 00:36:50:15

HOST

Outside of your your day job. I know you sit on lots of panels, you drive lots of initiatives. Yeah, things from, skills workshop, 10,000 black interns. You kind of letting the curation, with into university as well as the DNI operating committee. Can you just talk to me a little bit about your, your interest and, some of these things that you've kind of been a part of and have driven.

00:36:50:17 - 00:37:25:12

GUEST

Okay. So FDI is something I'm passionate about, and I guess every moment of every day is die moment for me in terms of how people meet or interact with me. So that's something I'm sort of aware of in a daily basis. And I think as I saw businesses starting to actually set up diversity, boards or diversity task force and seeing that initially a lot of them were purely gender focused, and I was like, well, what about all of the other areas of diversity?

00:37:25:12 - 00:37:57:08

GUEST

So that kind of really spurred me to question, you know, why are we just focusing on gender? You know, what are we doing in terms of the other areas of ethnicity or race or sexuality or neurodiversity or disability? What are we doing in all of those areas? And that kind of sort of pushed me to, you know, sit on or asked to sit on, a working group that sat underneath the board at our business to try and deal with or to tackle other areas to see how our business was approaching those other areas.

00:37:57:10 - 00:38:19:07

GUEST

And it also brought, you know, into my space, brought my attention to what our sort of sister business channel was doing. And obviously being significantly larger than we are, they had more scale ability to have groups in all these different areas. So their gender balance group, their race for change group as well. So I joined the race for change group.

00:38:19:07 - 00:38:49:14

GUEST

I became, I guess an affiliate committee member because I was in a different business. But sister business and being one of the most senior people of color that had anything to do with that, I was able to sort of help all of the people in that business help them alongside, I think at a certain point in their head of diversity, equity and inclusion, drive that committee forward and help support all of the people that were actually the main co-chairs of that committee.

00:38:49:16 - 00:38:57:02

HOST

What what year would you say that people started waking up and taking this seriously?

00:38:57:04 - 00:39:46:14

GUEST

I would say when it came to gender, I remember 2016, 2017, it it started to become more of a thing. And then I think 2018 or 2019 or so was when more things started happening from my perspective with, let's say race or different or ethnicity led working groups. In those areas of diversity and things, again, took a little bit more of an uptick post 2020 and the whole George Floyd situation, which really had a huge impact, and maybe not in a way that people can fully understand or comprehend on every person of color, you know, particularly if they're living in a country that is, they're a minority.

00:39:46:16 - 00:40:14:01

GUEST

It really was like a shock to the system because it made you kind of think, you know, that could happen to anyone at any point in time. So yeah, it definitely had a big impact on me and changed the way that I wanted to have impact. And I mean, just it made me kind of focused, thinking I need to do as much as I possibly can to shift the perspective of our industry to change the pipeline.

00:40:14:03 - 00:40:38:17

GUEST

To put myself out there, even when I'm uncomfortable putting myself out there sometimes so that people have someone they can speak to and ask about it and, you know, suffice to say, I then joined the Industrial Society women and just to properly committee and have helped them organize three conferences. The last one was last week and it was brilliant.

00:40:38:19 - 00:41:03:01

GUEST

A big, congratulations to my fellow committee members for helping organize that. And then also, you know, working on Black History Month events for my company and also with which I'll, working with



charity. So I wanted to focusing on pipeline. I came into contact with a charity called Into University. Put my business, LaSalle, in contact with them in the Me.

00:41:03:01 - 00:41:34:22

GUEST

Work with them with on business and focus days and on the internship program, which is a program called Big Bright City, Big Future. And brought in some interns. And these kids met, more disadvantaged backgrounds in helping them, you know, get a perspective of understanding of all the opportunities that are out there for them. And, recently I've worked with them, brought them into connection with the IRS, who have now brought them in as a charity partner for the next year, which is amazing.

00:41:34:24 - 00:42:00:06

GUEST

And then more recently, I'm insisting on the Association of Real Estate Funds RFD Task Force. So, yeah, I'm, you know, I wanted to do I wanted to do things. I wanted to leave this industry all my time when I finished working and build, I've had a real impact to change things. And so that nobody has the experiences, plural, that I had when I was sort of beginning in the industry.

00:42:00:11 - 00:42:19:02

HOST

Amazing. Outside of the obvious, who's been driving this? Is it. Is it investors? Is companies? Is it kind of employees? Is it, you're looking at a better state for for the pipeline and the, the kind of the good of our industry and people coming through who's been fundamentally behind this?

00:42:19:04 - 00:42:49:17

GUEST

I mean, I think that's a really good question that, I think it's driven by two small sections of our industry. It's driven by the young people coming in who want to see change and want a business that is making change, and it's driven by the board level. So people are board level in the main, understand the benefits of diversity of thought and diversity of perspective, throughout their business.

00:42:49:17 - 00:43:18:06

GUEST

So they are helping and sponsoring and in some instances mentoring and working alongside these working groups to try and push this agenda forward. But they are between them as probably 20% of any business or the industry, and it's the other 80% that the young people have to work their way through, and that the board members have to persuade to want to make change or be impactful in that change, or to even care about that change.

00:43:18:06 - 00:43:46:21

GUEST

And that's a difficult bit. And the term I coined was the frozen middle. And ultimately, I initially I was so keen for people to care because I understand empathy makes a big difference in how people deal with things and how they react to things. But at the end of the day, I'm more concerned now. Maybe that was a bit naive before, more concerned now that people want to make change, even if they see that it's financially beneficial to them.

00:43:46:23 - 00:43:56:02

GUEST

So I'm more concerned they want to start making they changed rather than their reasons behind the change. So I really I'm keen to see changes happen or continue to happen.

00:43:56:07 - 00:43:59:18

HOST

So you skeptical of the reason why they want to change it?

00:43:59:21 - 00:44:27:03

GUEST

Yeah, I kind of skipped it because I can't expect everyone to care about the subject as much as I do, and that was a lesson that I learned that not everyone can be passionate about something that doesn't affect everyone. You know, I can't expect someone who grew up and doesn't have any friends of color, doesn't socialize with them, doesn't understand, or doesn't have a disabled person, their family, or someone that's neurodiverse or have any friends that that understand that or to care about it.

00:44:27:09 - 00:44:49:14

GUEST

People generally care more about gender topics because everyone has a mother, a sister, a daughter, you know, a niece or a cousin or something. But that isn't the case when it comes to all these other areas of diversity. So getting people to care can potentially be a bit of an uphill battle. But making them understand why it's important is different from this sort of empathy and the caring side of things.

00:44:49:14 - 00:44:54:15

GUEST

So I'm I want both. But I'm I'll happily accept one.

00:44:54:17 - 00:45:08:06

HOST

So that frozen middle that you kind of talk about that each said someone listening to you who does care does want to see change and want to be part of it. But what can that frozen middle do? Or what steps can we practically take to, to help?

00:45:08:08 - 00:45:29:07

GUEST

I think one of the things that people, that come into our industry from different backgrounds need a lot of them, like I said, don't have any connections. They stumble upon it or someone recommends it to them is to open up doorways for them, to offer them your time from, a mentorship point of view or more importantly, sponsorship.

00:45:29:09 - 00:46:00:12

GUEST

Because mentorships, great mentorships, having someone that can, you know, give you advice. Yeah, but a sponsor is someone that, you know, puts his neck on the line and puts you forward for opportunities. And I think that is equally as important as mentorship. So having someone open those doors for you, someone that gives you those connections and helps you network, you don't necessarily have those opportunities in front of used to you at least puts you on an equitable path, with your peers, basically.

00:46:00:14 - 00:46:20:02

GUEST

And then staying with those people and, you know, making sure that if there's a member of your team that you don't understand out of your way to try and understand them, because maybe if you did, then you would put opportunities in front of them like you do the people that you feel more comfortable with and a lot of that that happens is not, overt and it's not conscious.

00:46:20:02 - 00:46:22:14

GUEST

It's subconscious.

00:46:22:16 - 00:46:31:17

HOST

What does, what does success look like within this space? Because.

00:46:31:19 - 00:46:48:15

HOST

It's a sensitive topic. It's one that, you know, people have challenges bringing up, partly because they don't know how to bring it up. There's a desire to bring it up. And they want to kind of combat about what is what is success look like, and what would you like to see?

00:46:48:17 - 00:47:25:11

GUEST

I think the first step and, a big hurdle, is everyone just getting comfortable with discussing the topic, asking awkward questions, and there being for forums for them to do so, and people being less sensitive about being asked those questions. I think one of the difficulties is when we're talking about any area of diversity, the people at a sort of junior level that are pushing it forward are all those people in those areas of diversity that have that sort of trying to overcome those hurdles themselves and also trying to do their job.

00:47:25:11 - 00:47:54:03

GUEST

So they're basically doing to jobs at the same time. So making sure those people are supported is a really big thing. And not all businesses do. They see that. They don't understand at that time. It's actually beneficial to their business and making their business more diverse to end up making their business more profitable. But they don't give those people the time to spend on those things and realize that actually enhances their business and should be allocated as such if they're being appraised or dealt with or otherwise.

00:47:54:03 - 00:48:16:07

GUEST

So I'd say that that's a really big first step, is that that element of giving people time, not just your own personal time, but their time to actually help move that agenda forward for all of those businesses in our industry. And when I was talking about forums, you can't move something forward if you're not able to talk about it and yet have goals.

00:48:16:09 - 00:48:42:24

GUEST

So, you know, I'm not one that it's necessarily comfortable with quotas, but you need to have a target. There is no business that is growing that hasn't set themselves financial targets for doing so. If they want to improve any other areas, why they wouldn't set targets doesn't sort of make sense to me. And then for instance, creating forums where people feel comfortable talking about uncomfortable things.

00:48:43:01 - 00:49:11:05

GUEST

Angela did a great, thing. They had a, quarterly, event called Let's Talk About Race, where 1 or 2 people would talk about a specific subject matter. They talk about, you know, what happened, with Black Lives Matter and Bristol. Bristol talks about that. What happened? Your experiences as someone who's mixed race. So all these different topics were sort of brought up.

00:49:11:07 - 00:49:41:10

GUEST

And in it, everyone that comes it's not it's not videoed, it's not recorded. And that people are encouraged to ask any question, no matter how awkward or how silly the question, something that you wouldn't feel comfortable walking up to your colleague who sits next to you and saying, oh, I was reading this thing in the news and, you know, I just wondered what your perspective is on it because I think this and that can kind of change the way someone thinks about it, but they are so uncomfortable in even broaching it just in case they offend someone.

00:49:41:10 - 00:49:41:20

GUEST

So how do.

00:49:41:20 - 00:49:42:21

HOST

They get the terminology.

00:49:42:21 - 00:49:45:05

GUEST

Wrong? Exactly. Yeah. Well, sales.

00:49:45:06 - 00:49:49:20

HOST

People, in terms of saying it because of the fear of the repercussions of how it could be perceived.

00:49:49:21 - 00:50:09:24

GUEST

Or hugely so. For example, how you describe somebody, you know, I, you know, I would prefer to be described as a British African than someone black because my skin color is brown. I'm not actually black, but everyone, that's my personal preference. But the person next door to me with the same skin color may have a completely different preference.

00:50:09:24 - 00:50:38:21

GUEST

So how does somebody know when they're approaching me? And then they go, oh, let me touch other person. The person is completely offended. So I think it's just trying to understand that whilst there are sensitivities as someone of color, you have to be more open to trying to provide explanation and direct people to resources and things where they can find out more, but also be open once people practice resources to them coming back and asking you questions.

00:50:38:23 - 00:51:01:17

GUEST

And then also people being open to asking those questions and then adapting themselves, following those questions being asked. And I mean, a really useful conduit for that, has been reverse mentoring. And that's one of the things that I kind of helped set up and worked on with the channel. Race for Change network was a reverse mentoring program, and they did it internally but also externally.

00:51:01:17 - 00:51:24:03

GUEST

And I was lucky enough to work with, Bill Hughes, Jim. And we had some amazing conversations. And, you know, he very kindly said the other day that it was yeah, he found having that or hearing my different perspective really beneficial on topics. And we would let you talk about anything and everything to see where our different perspectives came from.

00:51:24:03 - 00:51:42:12

GUEST

After sort of having gotten to understand where we both came from. So I think that's really useful because then you also create empathy, somebody that knows and cares about someone. And then whenever something comes up, you contextualize it with the person or the thing that you know and it means more to you.

00:51:42:18 - 00:51:55:23

HOST

I had Chloe Prince on the podcast, quite a few months ago, so I think she was involved with reverse

mentorship and setting that up with someone who doesn't know what reverse mentorship is or is hearing it for the first time. Can you just expand on that further and simplistic terms?

00:51:55:23 - 00:52:21:17

GUEST

Yes. So I think simplistically, mentorship is when someone more junior in a business, works alongside or, or has meetings with someone who's seen you in the business and you get to talk about your career experiences and ask for advice and tips on how to move things forward. Reverse mentorship is kind of opposite from that, where someone more senior is the mentee and the more junior person is the mentor.

00:52:21:17 - 00:52:50:23

GUEST

And that person normally comes from, a diverse areas, whether it be race or LGBTQ or neurodiversity or from a gender perspective. And then that relationship, that same relationship, that when a relationship is formed. But you're talking about a lot of subject matter that pertains to that particular of diversity and talking about issues and ways to move things forward and your backgrounds and so on.

00:52:50:23 - 00:52:59:02

GUEST

So it gives someone context. I think context and perspective is always great. The more you have, the better.

00:52:59:04 - 00:53:26:15

HOST

You spoke earlier about, quotas and financial quotas, but also quotas in terms of representation. What does success look like within that quota space? Because it's quite easy just to look at it from a mathematical perspective. And what are you benchmarking it against? Is it UK populace in terms of the Office of National Statistics and how that's broken down into different groups, is that the benchmark for what success looks like?

00:53:26:17 - 00:54:00:14

GUEST

Yeah. I mean, I think what I said was I don't necessarily believe in quotas, but I believe in targets. Like there is nothing that a business, professional or successful business. But do that. If that doesn't involve them setting a financial or a target for them to achieve or aspire to. So for me, what that would look like in a, in a business, I think a lot of people use this definition is looking like your clients looking like the population, looking like your customers, your pensioners.

00:54:00:16 - 00:54:25:15

GUEST

You know, if you are whatever the businesses or pensioners will be from every walk of life. So why shouldn't the people in your business have some mimicking of that similar spread of diversity, whether it be age or gender or race or sexuality or your diversity or disability?

00:54:25:17 - 00:54:56:12

HOST

We could cover so much ground within this particular topic, and I know the people listening here will be listening to this and go, yeah, it's certainly inspired. By what you've done, but also want to take positive action to, to help, whether that is, in the form of allyship or what have you. Where, where would you point people if they're listening to this and they want to be proactive or intentional about an area of diversity or, of the market where where would you point them in and what advice would you give them to?

00:54:56:14 - 00:55:00:19

HOST

To. Yeah, follow or lead in, in this particular area?

00:55:00:21 - 00:55:31:05

GUEST

I would say if you're starting your in a business or in middle management, I would seek out intentionally seek out rather than wait to be approached by younger people in your business that come from more diverse backgrounds and offer to mentor or sponsor them. If your business isn't of the size, but you can do that and never quite a few charities that offer those converts, I'll mention in the again, they're one that does that, and there are other charities that do similar things.

00:55:31:07 - 00:55:58:14

GUEST

And find people that you can mentor and perhaps give them a perspective of the property industries. They'll want to come into the property industry. I would also say if you're in senior leadership, then definitely be setting targets for, as a minimum, matching the population of where your business is located. And then it's not just about getting people into your business, it's about retaining people whilst they them in your business.

00:55:58:14 - 00:56:25:21

GUEST

So once you get people in and making sure that there are equitable opportunities that are given to them to grow, to flourish, to network, to meet people, to have exposure to the right people as well alongside their peers so that they retain the more they are retained in that business. And then you have this pool to then be, you know, we have a more diverse leadership as well.

00:56:25:23 - 00:56:52:20

HOST

Which has got loads of net net benefits across the board. You left the South, last year. Yeah. Your role and your impact on so many different areas. It's like having 2 or 3 jobs. As you kind of look across, the marketplace, who who are you in awe of and who's doing a really good job within this space?

00:56:52:22 - 00:56:59:05

HOST

And what are you most excited about? In terms of the property industry moving forward?

00:56:59:07 - 00:57:29:08

GUEST

I am really excited about innovation, and particularly in areas of sustainability and also what people are doing when it comes to diversity and sort of changing their gender. So for men, sort of innovation and climate change front of you, you know, the businesses that are involved in, for example, the black and white building using CLT as a way to, you know, reduce embodied carbon and reduce the need for, carbon offsets really is exciting to me.

00:57:29:08 - 00:58:03:04

GUEST

And, you know, one of the things I've spent some time doing, is you listening to various conferences and CPD on CLT and moving that agenda forward, and you know why we're so nervous about it? So, yeah, as well as the black and white building, the roots in the sky project, by fabrics is also something that I find really exciting, shifting that mindset from what actually a green roof is to, you know, actually an urban garden on the roof as opposed to just a green roof.

00:58:03:06 - 00:58:33:01

GUEST

And then from a diversity perspective, you know, you mentioned some of these entities earlier, but, you know, 10,000 black interns, the diversity project and the skills workshop, the founders of those and CS, I find really inspirational because, you know, not only if they had a real impact on, industry and a number of

other industries in bringing more exposure of diverse candidates to those industries and helping their pipeline.

00:58:33:03 - 00:58:56:11

GUEST

But it's also starting to change the way people in our industry think about finding more diverse candidates and transferable skills, bearing in mind it isn't a standard career path for a person of color. From my understanding and from the numbers that we're seeing coming into the industry and and taking the good. So yeah, I'm. Yeah. Aren't those the people that I, I'm inspired by this.

00:58:56:12 - 00:59:12:22

HOST

So as we draw this kind of conversation to to a close, the question I ask everyone on the podcast is if you had 500 million pounds of equity, who are the people? What property, in which place would you look to deploy that capital?

00:59:12:24 - 00:59:45:17

GUEST

Being able to to pick a particular person or number of people is really difficult because I have had the pleasure of either working alongside, working for, working with, or even watching from afar as an amazingly intelligent and talented people in our industry. So I've really struggled to name names, the sector, and the sector would be industrial because it's something like like I said, it's the poor relation and it's one where you really get to prove people wrong.

00:59:45:17 - 00:59:47:23

GUEST

It's actually quite exciting.

00:59:48:00 - 00:59:50:24

HOST

And which, which particular part of the industrial sector?

00:59:51:03 - 01:00:18:18

GUEST

Well, I think at the moment people are doing things that are slightly more negative. So if you look at sort of ultra urban industrial, for example, you know, going back to what was 1920, stop and modernizing it. So people think of it as something new. It's not something new. It's been around for over a hundred years. It's just someone, you know, evolving that and doing that now on sort of slightly more quirky industrial sites.

01:00:18:20 - 01:00:49:13

GUEST

So that kind of thing. But also being more sustainable in design, and more sustainable and social impact features in the industrial as well, sort of mimicking other sectors. And in terms of location, our places, you know, London's where I grew up. It's where I've seen the most performance of my assets over the past decade. So and that's something I'd stick to, albeit, it would be quite exciting.

01:00:49:15 - 01:01:00:07

GUEST

Bearing in mind, you know, the post pandemic sort of near shoring trend to sort of look at sort of industrial property in North Africa so that could be really exciting.

01:01:00:09 - 01:01:29:05

HOST

When you've got 500 million pounds to play with, you'll have you'll have quite a bit of equity to deploy in

different areas. So, rather than pinning you on the spot, some further kind of strategy and, and thinking, I'm sure you could, you could draw something up. Quite interesting. Well, look. Yeah, I've, I've been fascinated by by this story and your conversation and, you know, really humbled to hear about your experiences, but really pleased to hear about the positive change that's happening across the industry.

01:01:29:07 - 01:01:45:00

HOST

I am absolutely sure, because I know I think we said it off mike that you're like, oh, my mother's really disappointed with the kind of the career that I decided to take. I bet she would be more than thrilled with the impact you're having and what you've gone on to achieve. And I've learned an awful lot.

01:01:45:01 - 01:02:04:20

HOST

And I know that the people listening to this will be. And I think, you know, one of the takeaways of the learnings for me is, yeah, being comfortable asking uncomfortable questions. And kind of going into that, with an open mind, and doing it in, in, in kind of an open way, to try and kind of build that understanding that relationship.

01:02:04:20 - 01:02:21:11

HOST

So thank you so much for sharing a little bit about your experience. And, yeah, you can find that on LinkedIn. Yeah. If you want to reach out to her, I think it should be more than delighted to help. And, Yeah. Well, thanks so much coming in, joining us in the podcast studio and sharing a little bit more about your background.

01:02:21:16 - 01:02:28:18

GUEST

Thank you so much for having me. I've enjoyed every moment about this, even though I was very nervous coming into it really. Ethan, thank you so much.

01:02:28:21 - 01:02:51:04

HOST

Well, thanks for so, you know, getting, getting in the podcast and putting yourself out there to to share a little bit more and break down some barriers. So thank you. So much. Thanks for listening to this episode. The People Property Pledge podcast. If you found it insightful, feel free to share it with a friend or colleague. Subscribe. Give us a rating like or comment.

01:02:51:09 - 01:03:16:16

HOST

It helps tremendously. It'd be great to hear from you on LinkedIn. I'm super open minded to recommendations of guests we should get on the podcast or areas of the market we should explore further so do drop me a message. The People Place podcast is powered by Rob for the team recruit experienced talent for investors, owners, developers and operators.

01:03:16:18 - 01:03:32:21

HOST

So if you're considering your career options at the moment or looking to attract top talent to work for you, head over to the website WW dot Rock for.com where you can find a wealth of research to ag search. Have a great day wherever you are and I look forward to catch you next time.