

# The Corporate Bartender Podcast: Career by Choice—or Default?

Listen in as Anne Mounts explores how people—and organizations—can create more intentional career paths on The Corporate Bartender Podcast.



## What happens when the career decision you made at 22 isn't the career decision you'd make today?

Acera Partners' Anne Mounts recently joined The Corporate Bartender Podcast for a conversation about purpose, career choices, and a deceptively simple question:

### *Why do we do what we do?*

For many of us, the career path we started down at 22 wasn't the result of an understanding of our strengths and passions. It was more likely the first good job we could get out of college or a logical extension of the degree we chose at 18. But how well did we really know ourselves then? Were we aware of our strengths and interests, much less all the ways they could translate into a career?

At that stage, our view of the world of work was largely shaped by the careers we had been exposed to, or those we were told we *should* pursue. There were countless opportunities we didn't know existed, while entire career fields that are commonplace today had yet to emerge.

We make consequential career decisions remarkably early in our lives. Yet many traditional career structures reinforce those early choices, channeling people into increasingly narrow, linear paths based on where they started rather than where their strengths, interests, and potential could take them.

The result is that decisions made early in our careers can influence our paths for the next 20, 30, or even 40 years. Yet over that time, both people and the world of work evolve. We develop new strengths, discover new interests, and build capabilities we may not have anticipated, while new roles and opportunities emerge that may not have existed, or even been imaginable, when we first entered the workforce.

### Creating Room for Careers to Evolve

Individuals have an important role to play in that evolution. We need to think intentionally about where we want to go, what energizes us, where our strengths can create value, and what we want to contribute.

Organizations have an equally important role in facilitating greater alignment between a person's strengths and the career paths open to them within the organization. Asking employees to "own their careers" has limited meaning if people can't see where they can go, understand the capabilities they need to get there, or explore opportunities beyond their current function.

Organizations that create [transparent, flexible career pathways](#) can do more than support employee growth. They can uncover capabilities already within their workforce, increase internal mobility, and build the talent agility required as business needs continue to change.

**Individuals shape their careers. Organizations create the pathways that expand what's possible.**

In this episode of "The Corporate Bartender Podcast," Anne and the hosts, Eric and Lori Spencer, explore what it means to build a career around who we are becoming, not simply the decisions we made at the beginning.

Listen to the conversation here, and consider this question:

*Are we creating our career by choice, or allowing our career to evolve by default?*

[How To Align WHAT We Do with What We WANT To Do with Anne Mounts - The Corporate Bartender Podcast on Spotify](#)



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