

WICHITA BUSINESS JOURNAL

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10 MINUTES WITH ...

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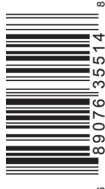


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10 MINUTES WITH...

Finding her calling

HEIDI PEREZ USES SPORTS MANAGEMENT BACKGROUND TO DRIVE MAHANNEY ROOFING



KELLEN JENKINS / WBJ

Heidi Perez knows the sports, insurance and roofing businesses.

Heidi Perez never imagined she would carry a hard hat and safety glasses in her vehicle.

But she's become quite fond of working in a construction-related field.

Perez is early in her second year as the chief operating officer at Mahaney Roofing Co. The company has 90 employees and three divisions: roofing, sheet metal fabrication and service.

As COO, Perez is in charge of efficiencies, strategy execution, people and culture implementation. Perez moved into the roofing business after 10 years in the insurance industry, as an agent and later as an agency manager for Farm Bureau Financial Services.

Perez has a background in sports management and spent much of 2001 as an intern for the Texas Rangers baseball team.

From there, she went to Butler Community College where she spent a year as athletic academic director.

In 2003, she married former Wichita State University basketball player Jason Perez, who now operates the Next Level Hoops Academy in Bel Aire.

Heidi Perez enjoys reading leadership books – something she admits has become an obsession –

HEIDI PEREZ

TITLE: Chief operating officer, Mahaney Roofing Co.

AGE: 38.

EDUCATION: Associate of arts from Butler Community College; bachelor of arts from Wichita State University; master's in sport administration from WSU.

EXPERIENCE: Internship with the Texas Rangers in corporate sales, 2001; athletic academic director/special needs coordinator, Butler Community College, 2002-2003; lived in Europe in 2003; moved to San Antonio in 2004 before moving back to Wichita in 2007; agent, Farm Bureau Financial Services, 2007-2011; agency manager, Farm Bureau, 2011-2014; COO, Mahaney Roofing, 2014-present.

FAMILY: Husband, Jason; children, Bryson, 10, Brenna, 7.

travel and running.

What prompted you to move from the insurance industry to where you are now? I've known the owner here and his wife for close to 10 years. I was privy to walking beside them as they purchased the business and developed it. When my husband decided to start the basketball facility, I was working a lot of nights and weekends at my previous job.

How did your previous experience help you with the transition? No matter where you are, whether it's roofing or insurance, the challenges are pretty similar. Typically, it's a people or a process issue if you run into something of a challenge. It's critical to have solid processes and systems in place and the right people on the bus. If you have a breakdown, you can go back and figure out whether it's the people or the process.

What's your leadership style? The leader is always the leader, setting a good example and demonstrating the behaviors you want. We've been working here a lot on the 'Strengths Finder' by Tom Rath. It is putting

people in their strengths. Having people work on their strengths, rather than focusing on their deficiencies, building a team that we say can move at the speed of trust. If we have candid and transparent conversations and work ethic, if anything comes up we can quickly address it, communicate about it and not worry about whether I can trust that person to execute what we are going to execute.

What role have mentors played in your career? Critical. I had a couple people early on in my career at Farm Bureau who saw talent in me. They modeled the behaviors I respected and taught me to extend grace to people. I'm a really driven personality and sometimes have a low tolerance for anything that stands in my way. So they taught me to extend grace and give people chances and really invest in people. When you do that, you build loyalty and trust and can move a lot quicker.

How do you mentor other women in business or others in general? Servant leadership is probably the biggest quality I try to instill in anyone I work with. I have a desire to help people grow and develop. Believing in people, giving them opportunities and a lot of training for professional development.

If you weren't doing this, what would be your dream job? I never would have thought roofing would be a dream job, but with this team we have and the vision of where we are going, I honestly could say this is probably my dream job. I am able to work really hard, work with great people, be in a leadership role and still have that balance with my family, which is another thing I really appreciate here.

Talk about your degree in sport management. I think it translates really well across the board. What I learned at WSU in sport management is you have to be multifaceted. Management was a key thing there. You have to understand people, processes and systems. ... Even though it sounds crazy, I use that here.

You run. Do you race competitively? Absolutely not. It's my outlet, quiet time. I also have some really good friends who I run with.

– Josh Heck