



**Education:** BS, Marketing and Mathematics, Boston College

**Company Name:** New York Life

**Industry:** Financial Services

**Company CEO:** Craig DeSanto

**Company Headquarters Location:** New York, NY

**Number of Employees:** 11,700

**Words you live by:** "Leaders should strive for authenticity over perfection." – Sheryl Sandberg

**Personal Philosophy:** Asking all the questions is the key to solving problems

**What book are you reading?** *It Ends With Us* by Colleen Hoover

**What was your first job?** Actuarial analyst at Mercer Consulting

**Favorite charity:** American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

**Interests:** Traveling with family, days on the beach, pilates, and the New York Yankees

**Family:** Husband (John), two sons (Brayden, 5, and Chase, 7), and our cat (Calleigh)

## Own It: Leading Others by Being Your Authentic Self

As I reflect on my journey as a leader, I find that there are three pillars that have contributed to my growth and shaped my identity, both at the office and at home.

### 1. Owning Who You Are

To be inspiring leaders, we need to have more than just self-awareness: we need to embrace who we are.

Working remotely during the pandemic, the roles of leader and mom overlapped in ways that were very new to many women. Whereas in the past, having one of my sons on camera in my home office would have been stressful, eventually it became normal for him to fall asleep in my arms while I conducted business meetings on Zoom.

Today, I am comfortable with the many roles that I play in life. The patience and empathy required to be a strong mother directly informs my leadership style and showing up to work every day with authenticity inspires trust and respect from my team.

### 2. The Power of Mentors

Being outgoing by nature, I have formed relationships with many people at New York Life, but I've been especially grateful to have impactful mentors throughout my career. Oftentimes these mentors were previous managers or people I built deep connections with over time, but they all contributed to my development by pushing me to get outside of my comfort zone. Whether that meant taking a role I wasn't convinced at first was the right move or not being afraid to speak my mind, these people have been instrumental to my success, and they continually provide the courage to seek continuous growth and development by opening myself to new experiences.

### 3. Strong Relationships are the Foundation of Inspiring Leadership

At the heart of my leadership philosophy lies the firm belief that strong relationships are the cornerstone of effective leadership. Over the years, my colleagues and I have worked and grown together both personally and professionally. We share pictures of our families, pets, and vacations, and we collaborate and celebrate success together.

Building deep personal bonds in turn creates an atmosphere of trust, empowerment, and mutual support. When your team feels like they belong and you do good work together, your collective wins reinforce your presence as a leader.

While my experiences as a leader and as a woman may differ from others, we have much we can learn from each other. By sharing our experiences and listening to each other, we can inspire positive change for our teams and enrich our own journeys as we strive to own who we are, personally and professionally.