

## S3E1: Is Leadership for Me with Moira Shaughnessy

Speaker Name	Text
Dr. Shari Dade	You are now listening to The Audacity to Fail podcast, a podcast about myths stepping into success. Get ready to dive into conversations and real stories from leaders as they share. How failure activates a growth mindset is an important part of learning and motivation for improvement. I'm your host, Dr. Shari Dade, psychologist with the National Center for Organizational Development.
Dr. Shari Dade	Thank you for tuning in. Let's get started.
Announcer	Support for this leadership podcast comes from the National Center for Organization Development. NCOD aims to increase the long term growth and performance of the Department of Veterans Affairs by collaboratively working with the leaders throughout the VA to improve organizational outcomes by supporting the development of an engaged workforce. For additional information on our services, click the link in the show notes.
Dr. Shari Dade	Welcome to Season three, everyone. We are so thrilled to continue bringing amazing leadership content to you and we hope you are just as excited to continue learning from each other through these conversations In the first few episodes of the season, we will focus on the journey to leadership and the missteps that may happen as you make steps towards leading.
Dr. Shari Dade	So I thought it would be fitting to begin at the beginning of every leadership story and start with the question is leadership for me? For many, the question of leading others or serving as a leader doesn't always end in a resounding yes. Many struggle with knowing if the path of leadership is right for them. I've certainly been there.
Dr. Shari Dade	So today's episode is here to speak directly to that uncertainty. I am so pleased to be able to welcome Moira Shaughnessy. She is a program manager and trainer in the Veterans Benefits Administration Leadership Development Directorate of Human Capital Services. She also manages a national level leadership development program called Lead to Prepare. She has 10 to 12 employees for first line leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	I also consider Moira a thought curator and podcaster in her own right, as she has been the host of the VA Distinguished Speaker series from its inception. Moira also has her own coaching and consulting service that is focused on inspiring leaders and being in service to those who lead. She can be found on LinkedIn for more information. Get ready to join us as we explore the journey of myth Stepping into Success.

Dr. Shari Dade	This is the Audacity to Fail Podcast. Episode 21 is leadership for Me. Moira, welcome, Welcome. How are you?
Moira Shaughnessy	Fantastic. What a pleasure and an honor to be here with you today. Shari Talking about just one of my very favorite topics to talk about. So thanks for having me here.
Dr. Shari Dade	I am delighted. I am so excited and really looking forward to this episode. And I'll say purely from a selfish place, which I know isn't always the best way to approach a podcast episode. But I am selfishly excited because I know you and I have had some very insightful conversations about this topic, especially when I first met you as my executive coach, and I was really at that threshold of struggling with this question myself.
Dr. Shari Dade	So I really think this is going to be a very important conversation for those who may also be sitting with this question. If it's leadership for me. And so I'm excited to bring some of this dialog to our listeners.
Moira Shaughnessy	I am too. I have to tell you that in my leadership development program, I work with such amazingly talented people who are often in their late thirties, forties. They've gone a long time and they are now just for the first time considering leadership. They're so talented, they'd be amazing leaders. And I and I kind of ask them like, Wow, at this point, why leadership now?
Moira Shaughnessy	Why not earlier? And they say, No one's ever really talked to me about leadership. I just never saw myself as a leader. And that's just so frustrating to hear. And so I'm kind of on a mission to get people to think about leadership earlier on in their career and also on a mission to get leaders to talk to their people about leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah, I think that is a worthy mission. Before we jump into talking about like what that looks like and how you're doing that or how we could all be doing that, let's first pause and look at what we mean by leadership. I know I've thrown that term around quite a bit. We throw that around on this show quite a bit, but I'd like to start the conversation by slowing down and taking a closer look into that term because words mean something and words definitely set the tone for where we are.
Dr. Shari Dade	And so I'm wondering if you can frame how you define leadership as we'll talk about it today.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah. So when we talk about leadership and VA in the very simplest of terms, we mean one who uses their influence to inspire others and to give them the resources they need to meet a common goal. And my leadership development program, we talk a lot about servant leadership, which is this belief that if we serve our employees first, if we believe in them, get them excited about a

	vision, a mission, if we trust them, if we give them autonomy, if we develop them with the faith that they will be able to meet the needs of our customers and our programs, they're going to be able to do that in spades.
Moira Shaughnessy	So in servant leadership, we invest in our employees with the belief that they will then serve a greater mission. And that is a philosophy of leadership that is near and dear to my heart. So I want to say that first, but I also want to say that I think for most of us, our definition of leadership is too narrow.
Moira Shaughnessy	I believe each of us is a leader. We are all the CEOs of our lives, right? Like we design, develop and implement all aspects of our lives. And too often we focus on how our limitations rather than the ability we had to create what we want. And that ultimately as a leader.
Dr. Shari Dade	No, I absolutely love the way that you describe leadership in slowing down to talk about the nuances, about what leadership is. And I think oftentimes the narrow gaze that we take when we think about leadership is really related to an organizational chart, right? So if we think about it like this is the make up in the structure of our organization, it can really narrow the way that we think about leadership and who is a leader and I think it's so important to slow down and to think about the expansiveness of that word, because I know for myself this is where I was making a really huge misstep, which led to me having conversations with you.
Dr. Shari Dade	But it was really in the narrowing and the limiting of how I defined leadership and what that meant and who could be in that space and who and what needed to exist in order to be in that space. And so for so long, I didn't call myself a leader or even perceive myself to be a leader because I had a very different definition which limited how I approached leading and any leadership opportunities that I took on.
Dr. Shari Dade	But I am excited to talk about it in this way because I know through our talks and coaching, I started to realize that because I didn't think of leadership as this expansive, multifaceted term, I was really limiting myself. And so I appreciate that idea of saying that a leader is anyone who is here to inspire and to to move the mission forward.
Moira Shaughnessy	To create, to change, to build, whether that's something for ourselves at work, at home. I mean, in the minute we start thinking of ourselves as leaders, it's it's amazing the impact that that empowering perspective can have on our ability to create something new for ourselves and others.
Dr. Shari Dade	Certainly. So when you think about those who come to you and they say, Oof, I don't know, I never thought about being a leader. I don't see myself as a leader very much like myself. When we first met. What are some limiting beliefs that may keep people from taking that leap into leadership?

Moira Shaughnessy	Some of the limiting beliefs are around these images of perfection that we all have. We believe if we are going to be leaders, we have to get everything right. It has to be perfect. We have to know how to do everything. And right off the bat, we should know how to do it right. And that often gets in our way of stepping into our leadership and willing to be messy.
Moira Shaughnessy	At first, leadership is pretty messy business for a while. None of us go into it knowing exactly what we're doing, and it's this belief that we should exact know exactly what we're doing that stops people from stepping into leadership. Another limiting belief is that, you know, we should be like the leaders we have known previously in our lives.
Dr. Shari Dade	Those great leaders before.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah, And often the first leaders we were exposed to with our were our parents, right. The early authority figures in our life. And we think, wow, if we're not like them, then we're not leaders. We take with us, you know, these beliefs about our own authority, our own leadership that we learned from being young. And that can also stop us from unwillingness to to go into leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	I know that idea around perfectionism and needing to get it right, needing to get it right the first time is basically the antithesis of this podcast. Right. And the reason why it's so important to hear leaders talk about missteps, to hear leaders talk about failures is to hopefully pull down some of those beliefs around. I have to get this right.
Dr. Shari Dade	I have to know everything. I have to be a technical expert in my field of study or in whatever I am leading at the moment. And it's not realistic. Like you said, leadership is a journey that I think this podcast and what you're saying really speaks to that journey and the ups and downs, the ebbs and flows, the oh my gosh, I got it right the first time and oh my gosh, I didn't get it right the 50th time, you know?
Dr. Shari Dade	And so it really speaks towards that. And knowing that it's it's more of an I use the word journey very specifically because it is more of the journey as opposed to this destination. I have obtained this position, so now I am the leader. But more of a mindset shift and a learning process.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah, and I, I just want to say that for some that mindset shift is going to be more of a challenge for others for example, there are assessments we give people. There's something called the desk assessment, there's something called a Holguin assessment. And one of the things that measures is how important is it to someone to get all the details right and to be perfect right

	from the start there there are those out there who are more prone to needing that perfection right from the start.
Moira Shaughnessy	Now, what folks in my program often have to go through is recognizing that they have that tendency and giving some themselves a break and saying, wow, this is just part of my leadership journey. Letting go of this perfection, this need for perfection is part of my journey. It's an important part for some of us. It's a very important part of our leadership journey is letting go of perfection, forgiving ourselves for not being perfect.
Moira Shaughnessy	And if we make a mess saying That's okay, picking up after your impact. If we do make a mess as leaders, all leaders do, picking up after that impact and moving forward for sure. For some, there's just there's that strong inner critic that gets in there. Yeah.
Dr. Shari Dade	Tell me a little bit, what role does the inner critic play in whether people seek out leadership or seek to develop as leaders?
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah, first of all, that inner critic is very common. I had no idea. So, yeah, there's something called the Hogan assessment that measures one of the things that measures is how strong all the churn is within us. For some of us, that inner critic is very loud and it measures how loud that inner critic is. And I've done this assessment.
Moira Shaughnessy	He's at least 124, at least 120 different leaders at this point. I'd say a good 80% have very strong, active, loud inner critics. It's common and we all think we're alone in it like I'm the only. Yeah, it's not so many of us are living with this, and what it stops us from doing is taking chances, letting go when we need to let go.
Moira Shaughnessy	Stepping into leadership to begin with, because there's always kind of like this voice in our head saying, You got to be better, you got to be different. This has to be 100% perfect before you move forward. You don't even have a right to be here because you're not as talented as those around you. Yet, like so many of us have these limiting beliefs, this loud inner critic.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah, and I like that idea of it being very loud, right? Because it's not a really soft like, Oh, now maybe, maybe later. It's usually a definite this is not for you. You are not going to be able to do this. You are not going to be able to show up in the way that the quote unquote leader.
Dr. Shari Dade	Right. The definition that we have for ourselves and in the way that they need to. And I know often times that inner critic starts to really weave itself into how we define our own being and how we're able to take on some of these roles. And so I think it's so important to be able to think about for yourself, is this me?

Dr. Shari Dade	Is this I believe, or is this my inner critic saying, hey, no, you're you're not going to be able to do that? And is that factual?
Moira Shaughnessy	Exactly. And some people call it inner critics. Some people call it imposter syndrome. The important thing to note is that this is just one part of us. It's a one of the voices in our head that was was created long ago. And so often people misinterpret that voice as some kind of big truth with a capital T or some kind of big wisdom.
Moira Shaughnessy	That's not wisdom. It's just an old part of you that's still active and loud. It's not big truth. We don't need to listen to it. We don't it doesn't need to have such a strong impact in our lives. And what I always say is, you know, in terms of the inner critic, you wrote a book and some grapes and go put it in the corner like, Yes, I hear you.
Moira Shaughnessy	I hear you. Thank you very much for your opinion. Noted. I say this to myself internally all the time. Noted. Thank you. And then I've refocus my thoughts on something that's much more empowering than you should have been. Better. You should have been different. You should know it's loud. It's constant. It's never going away. I'll cut to the chase.
Moira Shaughnessy	It's a part of us. We just don't need to, like, put all our thoughts on it. You know, with anything. We direct our attention on, we give it energy and power. We don't want to give energy and power to our inner critic. And it's that inner critic that can prevent us from taking more challenging roles, from moving into leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	Certainly. I know for me, a big part of my inner critic and we've talked about this is I'm not extroverted enough to be a leader when we think about kind of the stories we tell ourselves, like, Oh, no, I'm not extroverted enough, or I don't like to be in the front or those types of things. I think it's so important to pull back and to say, Where is this coming from and how do I like to approach leadership?
Dr. Shari Dade	Because a leader doesn't have to be the one in the front, right? A leader doesn't have to be the one who is constantly, you know, the first at the gate. And so I think being able to take a little bit of time and to think through that could be really helpful for those who may be sitting with that question of, is leadership something that I should dive into?
Moira Shaughnessy	I love that you're bringing this up, and I hear this from people all the time when I when, you know, finally and later on in life, they're starting to come around to leadership. And they thought, well, I thought leaders were those dominant, driven, alpha type personalities love being the center of attention and in the front of the room.

Moira Shaughnessy	That is one particular personality type in in movies, in our culture, we tend to think that is like the archetypal leader, right? That high, dominant, driven type. Yeah. But we all know really powerful leaders who are not that, you know, who are better listeners and who are who want their people to shine, who don't necessarily love being at the front of the room.
Moira Shaughnessy	So yeah, I it's one of the misconceptions of leadership and a limiting belief that we have that you have to be one of those alphas. Well, those hard driven, hard type people to be a great leader. It's it's not true. And I know you've in your career, I'm sure you've seen it. I've seen it in my 24 years of fact.
Moira Shaughnessy	It's so often those leaders who are phenomenal listeners and they want to empower others who are the great ones.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah, you know, that is that often the basis of how we talk about servant leadership, those leaders who are there to be in service of those who follow them and those who they serve.
Moira Shaughnessy	I have to I have to tell you that the very first program I ran, I spend at least an hour with each participant. And during that hour, I would ask them, tell me about the most impactful leader in your life. What made them great? A truly great leader. No one said. No one mentioned someone and said, Oh, it's because they were so smart.
Moira Shaughnessy	It was because they were so driven. It was because they were charge kind of people. Like nobody said that what all these people say. And I asked, Jeez, I've asked it well over 100 people. This at this point, they all said it was someone who believed in me, saw something in me, encouraged me, inspired me, and was a good role model for what I was, the type of person I wanted to be.
Moira Shaughnessy	Now, that is not the hard charging, hard driven now, not that that type of person can't be a great leader, but I just don't want people to say if I am not that I shouldn't be a leader, certainly.
Dr. Shari Dade	And that really goes into some of those characteristics of a bold and a great leader as you've done some of your work. And, you know, I'm very happy that you brought that up of like hearing other people talk about great leaders. What are some of those characteristics of successful or audacious leaders?
Moira Shaughnessy	I love this question. First thing that comes to mind is someone who's willing to be uncomfortable, you know, willing to put up with the fear of not being perfect, willing to put up with the fear of not being not being right, willing to empower others, willing to grow the skills of others, willing to not always be the smartest person in the room, but someone who wants to champion others.

Moira Shaughnessy	And this this requires like a comfort with vulnerability, which we know is the source of courage. You know, it's we're talking about humility, being a good listener, someone who's committed to someone who's really committed to forming good connections, good relationships with people. I won't even say someone who is like a strategic thinker or a visionary, because if you are not that, but you are willing to empower someone, who is that you will be a great leader so you don't have to have all the perfect skills.
Moira Shaughnessy	But a great leader is willing to form those relationships and strengthen those connections with people who are great in areas That leader is not great in. That makes sense. Yeah.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah. The development of others. I love that you mentioned being a champion for others. You're really going out and advocating and pushing others to develop into their own leadership light and how that is a characteristic of a very audacious leader, a leader who is able to be successful in who they lead and how they lead.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah, you just you don't have to know at all, but you do need to empower others who know things you don't yet rate.
Dr. Shari Dade	Right. It takes that onus off of just you as the front and center. The super person who's there to save the day into. I'm going to empower and build up a team of individuals who in their own right, like I said, can lead themselves to where we are trying to go as a unit, as a team. Absolutely. As you think about those leadership skills and those characteristics, who should be developing those leadership skills.
Moira Shaughnessy	You know, I, I talk a lot about ADP's individual development plans. I think we all should have them. Even if your supervisor doesn't ask you, because this is we take care of our health, we take care of our diet, and we should also take care of our own careers without anyone having to tell us to do it. So I think all of us should be doing our ADP's.
Moira Shaughnessy	And one thing I say on my ADP's is I think you should put you should strengthen your technical skills, you should strengthen foundational competencies like written communication, interpersonal skills, that thing. But I say, even if you don't want to be a leader, you should go and strengthen leadership skills. Now, what does that mean at VA? Where at VA, I should say we are very clear about what leadership skills are.
Moira Shaughnessy	You can go on the VA website and look for the VA leadership framework and it lists all of the competencies that we want our leaders to have. And those competencies are great. Even if you don't want to be a leader, we should all



	have these abilities to hold ourselves accountable, to have some influence, to problem solve, to be resilient.
Moira Shaughnessy	These are the types of leadership competencies all of us need to focus on more information, go to the VA leadership development framework and it'll give you that.
Dr. Shari Dade	Will get you there. I really appreciate this thought of we should all be developing those leadership skills because like I said, I think we narrowly say, Well, I'm not a leader because I don't supervise. I don't have director reports or I'm at this space on my organizational chart. And so sometimes it really is that push to say I am a leader in the day to day work that I do.
Dr. Shari Dade	I am, like you said, that CEO of my own life, that CEO of my own career in at times. And that is so important to start developing those leadership skills even if you don't have that formal role of leadership, because what that will allow for you to do is to help you answer that question. Is leadership for me is it's formal leadership for me?
Dr. Shari Dade	Should I go for that position? Should I go for that promotion? Because sometimes the answer is yes, and sometimes the answer is no, not at this time. Not a formal leadership role, but informal leadership in the work that we do each and every day. That's for everyone.
Moira Shaughnessy	Everyone. Absolutely. And some people go into leadership because they think, yes, I'm feeling like I've been doing this job for a long time. It's, you know, I've mastered it. I need to move forward. Maybe I should go into leadership. But the thing is, leadership is kind of a people game. And it does require you, even if even if you feel like you're one of those whose interpersonal skills are not great, it does require someone who wants to work on their people skills.
Moira Shaughnessy	So if you are a person who's like, Oh, leadership sounds good because I can make decisions but don't make, I don't want to deal with anybody. I might want to think twice about leadership, but if you are a person who is passionate about all in our organization, certainly serving veterans to the best of our ability, the truth of the matter is, you know, those who go into leadership, it is a people game.
Moira Shaughnessy	So I do want to say that. But it's what you're passionate about is using your skills to the best of your ability. You don't have to go into leadership to do that. Certainly you can identify what it is you want to create and on your IDPs, put in stretch assignments, start networking with people, figuring out who are doing the jobs that fascinate me.
Moira Shaughnessy	That's spark something in me. It may not be leadership. You don't have to go into leadership to advance your career. You don't have to 100%.

Dr. Shari Dade	I think it's such an important conversation to make that distinction between saying everyone is a leader right in their own space and taking formal leadership roles. Right? Because leadership is a people game. It is a service. You do have to be able to say, how do I champion and cheerlead and inspire and serve those who follow me? And I think sometimes we kind of get into the space where we have been in our careers for a while and we're like, The only next step is leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	But I don't really like all that other stuff. I just know, I know my job, I know what I'm supposed to do. I feel like I can explain it very well, but I don't want to be a champion for others, right? I don't do really well at that. And that means that the answer to that question is leadership.
Dr. Shari Dade	Formal leadership, is that for me, the answer may be not at this time or no, I can lead in other capacities without taking that role. And I think that's really important to say, because I don't think that we often have that time to sit with those nuances. Sometimes it is, well, this is the next step and sometimes it's not.
Moira Shaughnessy	So yeah, sometimes it's not. And I, I do want to clarify, if you're out there and you're listening and you're thinking, Geez, you know, I've never had really great interpersonal skills, but I really am drawn to leadership. All you need is the willingness to work on the interpersonal skills that the willingness. I know a lot of truly great leaders and the training we do.
Moira Shaughnessy	They say, I wish I had this earlier on in my career because it would have given me more time to practice this. I have been practicing this and now I have really you know, I consider myself a really talented leader because I've been working on my interpersonal skills for a long time. Didn't start off with them, but I committed to working on them and and I've seen how powerful those leaders are.
Moira Shaughnessy	So you don't have to be born with it, but you do need to have a willingness to work on it.
Dr. Shari Dade	Great distinction. And so, Mara, I know we talked a little bit about that inner critic and the things that can really prevent people from seeking leadership. But when you think about developing leaders, how do you think unconscious bias plays a role in how we choose to develop? Those who want to lead.
Moira Shaughnessy	Definitely plays a role. And I think that's one of the reasons why there are people in their forties just going into leadership for the first time, why no one talked to them about leadership earlier on in their career, because all of us have some form of unconscious bias. I know when I first started here in VA, I used to I ran a program.

Moira Shaughnessy	I traveled with someone who would handle logistics for me. Leaders from offices would come in, they'd look at me. They would look at this gentleman who had gray hair and a tie, and they would go over to him, assuming he was the leader and say, Hi, welcome to our facility. And it happened again and again and again. And it didn't matter if they were women men, it didn't matter what color they were.
Moira Shaughnessy	It's just and I just saw unconscious bias operating again and again. The gray haired man with a tie is the leader. And I know in my own head that's what I grew up with is images of leadership, of people who look like my dad. And so I didn't think about myself as a leader. And, you know, when you look on Google and you Google leaders, often it's a white man in a tie, which is the image that comes up.
Moira Shaughnessy	And I think that has an impact on who gets the leadership conversation early in their career is this person and we were talking a bit about personality styles. You know, we have this bias towards we reward kind of alpha behavior, like the hard driving, hard charging. That's a leader. And those are the people we go and have leadership conversations with.
Moira Shaughnessy	You should really be in leadership because we have that unconscious bias. I think it's it's active and it affects all of us in one way or another. It affects us all. We have to watch it. We have to watch it.
Dr. Shari Dade	We do. And it's really hard because it is very unconscious, right? We call it unconscious bias or a reason we aren't aware when it may be operating, we aren't aware when it may pop up or it may show up. And like you said that early leadership conversation, to have that early in your career and you may be a leader who's like, Yeah, I haven't really had that conversation with many people or I have had that conversation with many people sit and say, Who are those people that you've had that conversation with?
Dr. Shari Dade	Why have you chosen those people and what do those people have in common? What do those people have that are differences in? How can I start to think about how unconscious biases may be lingering somewhere without my knowledge and how I can start to really combat that in who I choose to have those conversations with?
Moira Shaughnessy	This is one thing I hope comes out of this podcast. I hope there are leaders out there who hear this and think, Wow, you know what? I do have some unconscious bias. There is a person on my team and maybe there maybe they're quiet, but they're smart. They're the heart and soul of the team. They know how to connect with people.

Moira Shaughnessy	They've got great interpersonal skills, you know, a lot of credibility. These are these are people who should be in leadership. And I just didn't see it because of my unconscious bias. I hope that comes out of this. Somebody has a conversation with an employee that they would not have had unless they heard this.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah. Or unless they took the time to sit and say, let's let's shine a light on things that may be hidden in plain sight. Absolutely.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yes. Yes, exactly.
Dr. Shari Dade	Ma, I'm wondering if after listening to our conversation, someone is now saying, yes, leadership is for me, how could they begin to develop their leadership skills here in the VA?
Moira Shaughnessy	Go back to your ITP, because if any kind of goal that we work on, we can't work on a goal by just thinking about it when we're brushing our teeth in the morning or making dinner at night, like we have to put some structure in formality around meeting our goals. And an IDP is a great structure, a framework, a format that you can use to think about your goals and take small baby steps to making them happen.
Moira Shaughnessy	And if you want to be a leader, this is where you begin. You put it on your IDP and then you ask your, okay, what are the skills that I need to develop? What are the leadership skills I need to develop? What are the you know, what are the technical skills? What are the foundational competencies I need to work on to get me one step further to this goal of leadership and then the activities that you identify to build those skills.
Moira Shaughnessy	I can tell you one thing they should not all be tmc's skill set of courses people fill out. Their IDP is like, Oh, I got so bored halfway I didn't even finish it. Yeah, go ahead and put one or two on there. But that's, you know, that's not what you fill your ID.
Dr. Shari Dade	From one.
Moira Shaughnessy	Avenue. Yes, it's one. Yeah. The majority of it should be stuff you do on the job. You go to your supervisor and say I'm really interested in leadership. First of all, can I get a mentor? Yeah. Is there a leader that you admire? And I would go to them and I would say, Hey, you know what? I really admire these things about you.
Moira Shaughnessy	I want to develop these three things I want to work on. Can I meet with you once or twice a month for an hour to hear about some challenges you have, how you work with them, get your advice on some challenges I'm dealing with.

	Most people will say yes to that just one or 2 hours a month and some people will even say, I'd love to do it.
Moira Shaughnessy	Let's sit down every week. Yeah, you want to say something like 3 to 6 months so people know they have an out because we're all so busy. Yeah, Yeah. But I like that I would always work with your supervisor and say and speak it into being right. Like, this is what I'm after. Yeah. And then I would do stretch assignments.
Moira Shaughnessy	I would identify something that you want to make better at work. Maybe you want to improve a process, You want to form a connection with another office because you're you're working too much in a stovepipe. You know it. Nobody's doing anything about it. Like pick something you want to improve, put it on your IDP, talk to your supervisor about it.
Moira Shaughnessy	Come up with an action plan, do the thing, report out and say, Hey, you know what? I can I do like a brown bag where everybody comes to lunch and I talk about this process that I'd like to improve and my ideas on it, but some structure around it that these are stretch assignments. It's something you can put on your resume.
Moira Shaughnessy	It's something that you know, will give you some visibility. You can say, Hey, I'm working on my leadership. This is a goal of mine. And so you can speak it and then you get to learn new skills without taking yourself away from the team and spending a lot of money on something for three days that may or may not have an impact on you.
Dr. Shari Dade	Those are great options for people to start thinking about. How do I start to approach this intentionally? Right?
Moira Shaughnessy	Was exactly.
Dr. Shari Dade	And with the outcome that you're looking for, I would say for those who are really struggling with that mindset. So maybe you're saying, okay, I've got some of these technical skills down and like being a champion and a cheerleader for others. I like to inspire others, but I'm still sitting with this thought that I don't know if that means I'm a leader.
Dr. Shari Dade	I would encourage from my own personal experience coaching. So having someone sit with you and talk with you about some of those new art since that marriage pointed out some of that inner critic, some of the unconscious biases that we may carry around, who should be a leader, what that looks like, who that should look like, those are the spaces where you really start to dig into your own thoughts around leadership and how that does encourage you or hinder you from doing some of these stretch assignments, taking some of these opportunities that might be out there for you?

Moira Shaughnessy	I so agree. I mean, having a coach or someone who can kind of help you shine the light on those limiting beliefs, get the unreasonable fears out there, come up with an action plan, you know, that identify as the all the steps, the manageable small steps that you can take. Having that accountability partner. Too many people go it alone and then it fails and they think it's something about them.
Moira Shaughnessy	Know, as human beings, we need structure, we need support in our culture. We we, you know, embrace this notion of, you know, this tough individualist. But you know, I study high performers. They never go it alone. They always have support. They always invest in support. I remember when I got myself a coach for the first time, I had these goals I've been working on for four years.
Moira Shaughnessy	Nothing was going on. I had a coach within six months. I reached those those three top goals I had for myself. We go it alone too often and yeah.
Dr. Shari Dade	And yeah. And like you said, we end up failing. And then we say, See, it's something about me credit was great, you know. So hopefully, you know, a lot of what we've talked about today can help people to sidestep some of that. Of course, failure is a part of the journey. Missteps are a part of the journey, but hopefully we're able to help you circumvent some of those missteps with being able to get that support, being able to ask for some of those opportunities that you might need, and sitting and asking yourself that question is leadership for me taking time to really sit with that and not just saying yes or no and running with
Dr. Shari Dade	it, but saying, is it for me? Is it for me at this time, and what can I do to make sure that I am going to be this bold, audacious, inspiring leader that we need and that we, we ourselves have experienced and love? So those are certainly some important points to think about.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah, And I hope I hope after this, you know, someone sits down and too often we have these goals for ourselves. We get overwhelmed by them. We think we can't have them. And then we start thinking things like, Well, I don't have the time, I don't have the money, I don't have the support. Really, what's going on is we feel overwhelmed and we haven't sat down to come up with a plan.
Moira Shaughnessy	So my hope is that people, after hearing this output time on their calendar, sit down with their favorite cup of coffee or whatever, and a notebook, what do I really want? What's stopping me from getting there? At the end of the day, what are three small steps I can take to move forward? What kind of support can I get for myself?

Moira Shaughnessy	You know, because if if we don't do that, what happens is we end up thinking about it on the way into work and and then it's just there's no structure, there's no support around that. We got to do some deep work.
Dr. Shari Dade	A deeper work around it. Yeah.
Moira Shaughnessy	Yeah.
Dr. Shari Dade	So, Moira, this has been an amazing conversation. I just knew it was going to be awesome. I always love taking time to chat with you about just leadership in the development of leaders. The inspiration and the support of leaders, because I think it's something that we certainly need as we are on that journey through leadership. And so I certainly appreciate you for this talk.
Moira Shaughnessy	I appreciate you, too. Always such a pleasure to talk to you, Shari.
Dr. Shari Dade	Thank you. Certainly. Before we head out, I always like to have a game of word association where or we get a picture of what you think about when you hear these words. And so I'm going to say three phrases, and I'd like to get your first thoughts. Okay? Okay. The first word is leadership mindset.
Moira Shaughnessy	Servant leaders, servant leadership being in service to others in a powerful way.
Dr. Shari Dade	Absolutely. The next one is leadership champion.
Moira Shaughnessy	Gosh, I'm trying not to trying not to be too dramatic or needed.
Dr. Shari Dade	I am. I'm here for the drama. I am here for the drama. I'm always here for the drama.
Moira Shaughnessy	She's gosh, this sounds so dramatic, but leadership champions are They're like angels. They're like, yeah, they're they're true servants. Their servants with a capital as they they can be the North Stars, as you say. And so for, for people who have lost faith in themselves.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yeah. I love that's not dramatic. Not dramatic at all. And then lastly, audacity to fail.
Moira Shaughnessy	Absolutely necessary. Empowering the secret to high performance, The secret to growth. The Secret to development, The secret to excitement and adventure.
Dr. Shari Dade	Yes, Yes, absolutely. Thank you so, so much more. I again, like I said, I always enjoy having this time to sit and chat and hopefully, like you said, this inspires

	those who are sitting with that question is leadership me to answer it wholeheartedly and authentically, with intention and with knowledge of what to do. If the answer is yes, and then what to do if the answer is no.
Dr. Shari Dade	Thank you so much and so.
Moira Shaughnessy	Much, Shari.
Dr. Shari Dade	So we've come to the end of another great episode of The Audacity to Fail podcast. Thank you for tuning in to learn how missteps can lead to growth and success. Be sure to check out the key lessons in the show notes for a refresher. To request services from the National Center for Organization Development, check out our Web site also linked in the show notes.
Dr. Shari Dade	Remember, if you missed the target 100 times, you had that failed. Instead, you've simply found 100 strategies that did not work. Be well and continue to go forward until next time. Thank you.