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Recommended Citation

USU Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, "Former Deloitte CEO Shares Career Advice" (2017). *Jon M. Huntsman School of Business News Collection*. 315.

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Former Deloitte CEO Shares Career Advice

11/16/2017

Jim Quigley's mother was a school teacher; his father, a forest ranger, and he grew up in the tiny town of Kanosh, Utah, with a graduating class of 91 students. Yet from those humble beginnings, Quigley rose to become CEO of Deloitte, the leading professional services company in the world, providing audit, tax, and advisory services to organizations around the world.

Now retired, Quigley visited the Huntsman School on October 6 as part of Focused Friday, a weekly event hosted by the school to provide career and professional development for students.

"My first priority is always the person I'm with," Quigley said in response to a question of how he maintains a balance of being an extremely busy CEO, while maintaining his personable and caring nature. His advice? Always walk the client to the elevator instead of handing them off to your assistant to do the job for you. He stated that you are never too important to not take the time and walk them to the elevator personally.

"It was one of the things most memorable for me," said Utah State student Kaden McKenzie. "His comments about maintaining balance of a multi-dimensional lifestyle versus his work life were very important."

Quigley spoke about growing up in Kanosh, attributing his success to everything from simple responsibilities in his church to playing on his high school football team, and how these experiences prepared him for the life skills required to run a multibillion-dollar firm consulting with more than 175,000 professionals world-wide.

"What they hadn't seen was what a ward clerk for the church does every week," said Quigley jokingly, referring to the many coworkers startled with his impressive skillset at such an early age at Deloitte.

Quigley counseled students to "never have a bad day. Every day, something is going to happen that may not make you happy...your job is to take that and roll with it while remaining true to your standards and integrity." He also noted that early on, his mother had instilled in him the value of serving others, often reminding him that to whom much is given, much is expected.

He made it clear that money was not his only incentive for business, but that the experience of learning and flourishing in the workplace was more valuable while being able to maintain strong family values.

"I loved how down-to-earth he was," said Utah State student Lindsey Clements. "He said he often turned down job offers that paid more because he felt he could learn more at Deloitte. I thought that was very admirable."

With over 30 years at Deloitte, Jim Quigley has experienced every up and down that the professional world offers. Students were able to relate to him as he spoke of being just a boy from Utah, working hard, and trying to make it in the business world.

"I became the CEO of Deloitte as a little boy from Kanosh, Utah, graduating from Millard High School with 91 others, with a bachelor's degree in accounting from Utah State University," said Quigley. "But I was always curious, and I was always learning, and I was willing to stand in the wind. And I ended up in a seat I'm proud of."

[Watch the full interview](#)

Focused Fridays provides programming to build skill sets and explore opportunities for life after school. After considerable conversations between students, faculty, and USU administration, the Huntsman School altered class schedules to a Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday schedule, with Fridays devoted to extracurricular programming to better prepare students to enter the workforce. Events include résumé workshops, industry panels, skill-specific bootcamps, and the signature leadership forum, which brings senior executives to discuss leadership.



Sr. Assoc. Dean Larry Walther interviews Jim Quigley

[Watch videos of past leadership forums.](#)

For more information on how to get involved email: huntsman@usu.edu