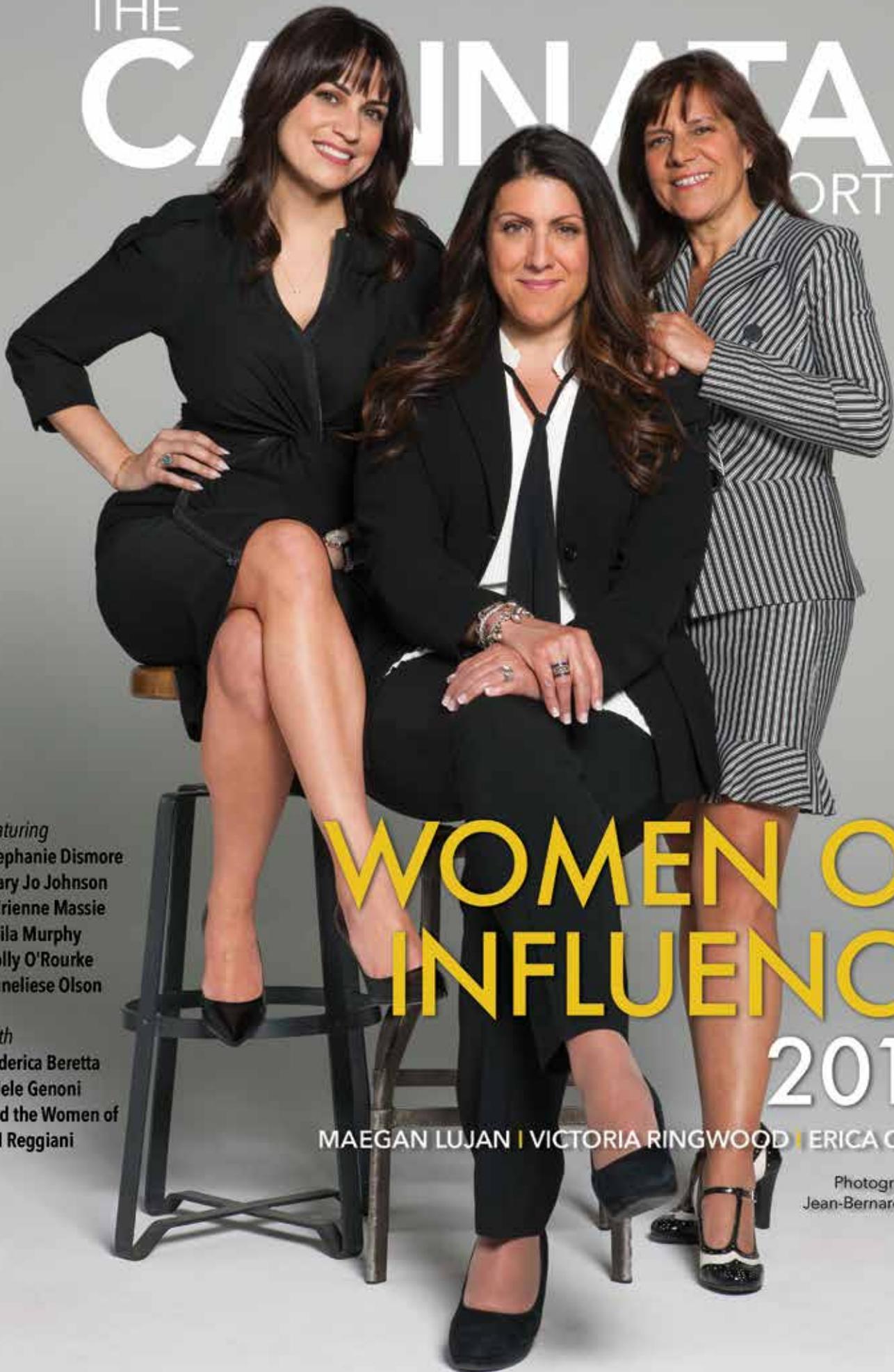


THE CANNATA REPORT



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WOMEN OF INFLUENCE 2019

MAEGAN LUJAN | VICTORIA RINGWOOD | ERICA CALISE

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WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

2019: CONNECTING WITH SUCCESS

Forging Meaningful and Strategic Connections Powers the Careers of These Three Dynamic Leaders

By Sharon Tosto Esker

As businesses increasingly try to differentiate themselves in a noisy marketplace, establishing meaningful connections to create a diverse and inclusive workforce has become an imperative business initiative for those companies looking to attract and retain employees. Today's employee has evolved from working as a cog within a corporate machine to expecting more from their employers, prioritizing a company's acceptance of who they are as a person, as well as the role they are playing in the broader marketplace, over what they are making, selling, or buying.



This year's Women Influencers—Sharp's Erica Calise, Toshiba's Maegan Lujan, and Konica Minolta's Victoria Ringwood—deeply understand the power of forging meaningful connections. As leaders within their respective companies, each of our Women Influencers have cultivated their business relationships by listening closely to the needs of their customers and team members, deftly navigating technology and demographic shifts—especially as companies manage a wider spectrum of workers and customers across all ages from the millennial generation to baby boomers—to deliver success within their respective companies.

“Community, diversity, inclusion, social responsibility have all become a workplace challenge to overcome,” said Lujan, director of solutions and services at Toshiba America Business Solutions (TABS). “It's the acceptance from inside your chosen family, and it's that embracement you feel as you transition from a work-life balance to a work-life blend.”

As technology has enabled the ability to work from anywhere at any time, employees are shifting away from what had been known as a work-life balance, where there was a balance in time allocated to work and personal time, to that work-life blend Lujan is talking about. A blend is that integration of work with personal time, which means employees require work environments that support the whole employee.

“From our perspective, connectivity is a byproduct of technology and it leads to that inclusive experience,” said Lujan. “Communication, diversity in your communication, is important because people have very different appetites attached to that. So you have to be concise in how you communicate and communicate in diverse ways to hit the biggest impact.”

Lujan firmly believes in the importance of embracing diversity and inclusion from the top down, and she espouses Toshiba's efforts to create a sense of true belonging

across all its employees through its mentoring and sponsorship programs, as well as its diversity mandate that specifies its focus on establishing a corporate culture that enables its diverse workforce to actively contribute to the business.

“Everything from the words that we choose in the job posting that unlock the AI to screen or block candidates, to the voices used in the creation of the tech, it needs to yield holistic results,” said Lujan, who spoke of the inherent bias technology has created against women, as most of today's tech has been designed by men. “The point is to have all voices heard, not just men or women. What our HR team did was begin working with third-party organizations to pre-screen all of our job postings and what we were outwardly advertising to a community. We wanted to be sure we did the work internally, that we had the appropriate framework to support having an inclusive environment and that we were using technology to bring everybody's voices to market, not just male or female.”

Developing a connection to bring new talent onboard is pivotal, but that connection becomes even more important once that new employee arrives at the company's doors for work.

“Whenever we bring on a new sales rep, I sit down with them to review the org charts and territory maps, but I don't even really talk about what my group does,” said Calise, director of government and major account marketing at Sharp. “I talk more about how Sharp works and how to navigate the process, how they can be successful in the organization. I also talk to them about what Sharp is trying to accomplish. To develop an employee into an advocate for a company means so much.”

As a 28-year veteran at Sharp, Calise serves as a valuable resource not only to the company, but also to its employees. Every company struggles with attracting and retaining talent, but having a tenured, trusted employee who excels at commu-

nicating, and understands the history of the business and its strategic goals is an asset that cannot be underestimated.

“Putting free candy in the middle of a room isn't going to make a person want to spend more time there,” said Calise. “It's developing a relationship with that person, spending time with that person, explaining things, and really bringing them in under your wing to a certain extent. We talk about making business sticky, but I think you also have to make your employees sticky. You want them to continue to come back and feel like they're part of the process. If you bring them in and cultivate them, and also appreciate them for what they're doing while they're there, you'll ultimately have success.”

As senior vice president of human resources at Konica Minolta, Ringwood also believes the most important component of connecting with employees is getting to know them.

“Insuring that their managers are trained to lead is the bottom line,” said Ringwood. “If dealers are going to choose one area to invest in, I would say invest in your leader training. They are the ones your employees will connect with most often, and they are the ones who will champion your company culture. Invest in training leaders how to lead and coach talent.”

In looking to attract talent, Ringwood says that women remain an untapped area in our technology-focused industry. With some of the macroeconomic trends—low unemployment rates, a reduction in migration, and the need for re-training and re-skilling workers—the opportunity to build a more inclusive and diverse work environment is ripe.

“If leaders—and when I say leaders, I mean male leaders because they really do run the majority of these businesses—could tap into, embrace, and put as much focus on driving an inclusive, diverse workplace, chances are that many of the talent gaps and innovation challenges will work themselves out by the introduction



“The opportunity to meet with decision-makers allows me to learn more about the challenges government is facing today. And for me, the ability to provide a solution and help solve some of the challenges we see in government today is extremely rewarding—to know that I'm helping them save money, improve processes, provide solutions for right-sizing within an organization.”

Calise

of new faces and new thoughts,” said Ringwood.

And we, at The Cannata Report, couldn’t agree more.

Erica Calise

Director, Government and Major Account Marketing, Sharp Electronics

Erica Calise, director of government and major account marketing, has always been interested in the inner workings of the U.S. government and politics. After studying political science and economics at Brown University, she went to work for financial firm Merrill Lynch on the government fixed-income trading floor. As a liaison between Merrill’s U.S. and Japan trading desks, she recapped global market activity and expectations, helping prime traders for what was on the investment horizon.

This global awareness, combined with her interest in the U.S. government, prepared Calise well as she stepped into her entry-level position as a government marketing manager at Sharp nearly three decades ago.

“This continuation of my interest in government, politics, and the impact that can be made on people by the government appealed to me,” said Calise. “I left Merrill Lynch with the intention of going to law school at Berkeley, but an opportunity at Sharp became available and my career plans took a turn.”

Throughout her Sharp career, Calise has deftly navigated evolving technology, changing government administrations, and shifting budgets. She now oversees a team that manages pricing, bid-and-response initiatives, contract marketing, and contract management for all of Sharp’s government and major account clients. Most of her team’s focus is squarely on

responding to statewide or national account opportunities, and if and when Sharp is awarded a contract, the efforts to service those relationships.

As one of Sharp’s most important accounts, Calise has spent years cultivating, developing, and maintaining the Sharp relationship with Sourcewell (formerly NJPA), which nationally solicits contract purchasing solutions for government, education, and non-profit entities across the U.S. Over 20 years ago, Sharp won this contract and it was valued at approximately \$1 million, and today, it is a multimillion dollar relationship.

“We value the relationship, and I believe Sourcewell values what Sharp provides,” said Calise, who also emphasized Sharp’s commitment and hard work as keys to this longstanding, strong legacy relationship.

However, two years ago, Sourcewell shifted from a Sharp-only contract for its copier sources and opened the opportunity to other vendors, which initially felt like a blow to Calise and her team.

“They wanted to provide their members other options from these new added vendors,” said Calise. “We could have accepted this, but it was a wakeup call and it made us work harder. We now have to earn the business, and we know that the products and services we provide to our dealers and branches are exceptional, and we continue to maintain a positive relationship with Sourcewell.”

Often, in bidding for a contract, Calise has only a short amount of face time to make an impression with contract and procurement managers across various states, which is the case with NASPO (National Association of State-Procurement Officials), a non-profit organization that assists states in procurement. Once a year, NASPO Valuepoint holds a conference for key decision-makers, and vendors are given a mere 15 minutes to make their pitch.

“The opportunity to meet with deci-

sion-makers allows me to learn more about the challenges government is facing today,” said Calise. “And for me, the ability to provide a solution and help solve some of the challenges we see in government today is extremely rewarding—to know that I’m helping them save money, improve processes, provide solutions for right-sizing within an organization. There’s a feel-good quality to this position, and it’s what I like the best.”

Most recently, Calise and her team won the NASPO contract with the lead state of Colorado to sell copiers and production equipment to its numerous state and local government offices, Sharp can now approach every state within the U.S. to add them to this contract. With this single win, Sharp has gained entry to dozens of government offices across the nation.

For Calise and her team, the work doesn’t stop once a contract is inked. Her team works diligently to develop website content, catalogs, marketing collateral, trade-show pieces, and anything and everything related to servicing this contract. When the Sharp government team wins big contracts like NASPO, it also opens the door for Sharp’s dealers.

“Within any state that has adopted NASPO, Sharp dealers have the opportunity to approach any type of government entity that could buy off this contract,” said Calise. “That ranges from school districts, to fire houses, to police stations, and other state and local government entities.”

Calise firmly recognizes the importance of Sharp’s dealers. The company relies on its local dealers to become the face of the contract and company for these government relationships.

“In many instances, the states would prefer that the direct contact be made by local entities,” she said. “With our dealer and direct network, Sharp is in a unique position when we respond to these large contracts. We can easily say we can provide equipment across the country—coast-to-coast, as well as Alas-



“If you’re being consultative in your approach, you’re selling an outcome. If we can attach a business process and deliver a compelling outcome to our customer, we’re going to pull through the appropriate hardware, software, and services that drive the bottom-line results.”

Lujan

ka, Hawaii, and Guam. Wherever your customers are, we can provide service.”

About 18 months ago, Sharp rolled out a national interterritorial program in coordination with the Sharp Dealer Council that enables its nearly 400 dealers and its 15 major direct branches to pursue accounts with multiple locations that extend beyond their own authorized territories. The program features a website that allows dealers to connect with other dealers who have agreed to the terms of the program, providing service and installation for these major accounts. In addition, there is a rating component whereby after dealers work with one another, they can rate each other, much like leaving a Yelp or TripAdvisor review.

“It’s a mechanism for bringing dealers together so they can expand their opportunity and reach, while still knowing they have the same great service and mutually agreed-upon rates throughout the country,” said Calise. “This program provides a service to our dealers to ease the challenge of finding other dealers to service and maintain equipment for them with accepted rates. It also gives Sharp the ability to expand our reach with major account customers. There are instances where dealers may not have gone after this business in the past because they didn’t feel like they have the support mechanism, but now, we’ve created one.”

For Calise, nurturing relationships and providing top-notch service not only to Sharp’s clients and dealers, but also to the Sharp organization and its employees are vital components to her success. Being among the most tenured members of the Sharp team, she is essentially the “Encyclopedia Britannica” or “Google” of knowledge about the company, its people, and its technological evolution. In short, Calise knows the right people and the most effective ways to get things done across the Sharp organization.

“This role is unique in that we work with nearly every single department within the company,” said Calise, reflecting on

her longstanding tenure with Sharp. “As a result, I have forged relationships with people throughout the company from operations, to product management, to web design, to logistics, to legal—because a bid will impact each of these areas. I get that history of not only knowing the company, but also having a strong understanding of how we’re made up, how we work, and how we get things done. It’s leveraging all of these relationships. Ultimately, what we are trying to accomplish is success for the company. In order to do that, it needs to be truly a collaborative effort of all of these different stakeholders.”

Maegan Lujan

Director of Solutions and Services, Toshiba America Business Solutions

For Maegan Lujan, director of solutions and services at Toshiba America Business Solutions (TABS), her career trajectory has mirrored the technological evolution of the imaging industry. In the early days of her imaging industry career, she worked in the digital conversion arena at Atlanta-based DRS Group, transferring microfilm, microfiche, and paper into digital documents. Her curiosity and commitment subsequently led her to Docufree, where she gained a better understanding of how users manage those digital files, what happens to the content when it’s extracted, and how to go through a workflow enablement process.

“I really fell in love with business process re-engineering and leveraging technology to overlay a business process to make it more efficient,” said Lujan, who was featured as a 2016 Young Influencer in The Cannata Report.

Her next move was developing her sales acumen, which she cultivated at solutions and software developer Drivve, where she served as director of sales, followed

by her role as vice president of business development.

“I developed an understanding of the field, heard the voice of the customer, and what it really took to be in the sales trenches with the sales folks from our dealers, branches, and other OEMs around the world,” said Lujan.

With each role, Lujan developed critical skills that served as stepping stones to the next opportunity. In 2013, she joined the Toshiba team as a strategy manager for solutions and professional services, bringing nearly a decade of experience in the imaging industry to leverage.

Given Lujan’s vendor and dealer-centric background, one of her first tasks at Toshiba was to conduct a gap analysis between what Toshiba had in terms of products and services and what its dealers and end-customers need. Through this process, she created the Toshiba strategic alliance program.

“This program has essentially become the operating framework in how we execute product launches and onboard vendors,” said Lujan. “I’ll relate it back to a very hot topic in our industry today, mergers and acquisitions. Right now, several of the industry’s software partners are ripe to be purchased or spun off in another capacity. What Toshiba does with our alliance program is protect our dealers. We make sure the terms and conditions that we have with our third-party partners support the dealer’s strategy. We become that first line of defense to ensure if that company is purchased, we can support the product purchase with the end customer.”

A prime example is Drivve, where Lujan had previously worked. In December 2018, Levi, Ray & Shoup (LRS) acquired Drivve, one of Toshiba’s strategic partners.

“We maintain business continuity, product access, resources, and the necessary tools,” said Lujan. “The alliance program is that mechanism to give our customers what they need while also maintaining

“By sharing your wins and your culture via social media with the passive workforce—people just checking out your website or checking you out on chat boards—you are not only informing a potential candidate of who you are, what you do, and what differentiates you from other companies, but you also help engage your workforce in that kind of promotional activity.”
Ringwood



balance and holding the third-party vendors accountable with their tech.”

In July 2017, Toshiba elevated her to her current director role, where she is now responsible for the direction, planning, and overall strategy related to Toshiba’s solutions and services portfolio, which includes digital signage. She designs this area’s business plans and assesses the market penetration, determining whether it makes sense for Toshiba to enter specific parts of the market. For example, Lujan evaluates offerings such as managed technology services and industry-disrupting software, as well as digital signage, and determines whether it makes sense for Toshiba’s marketplace and customer base. Once a strategy is identified, Lujan and her team drive the execution of all the marketing programs and plans—whether they are short or long term—to ensure profitability and growth in those product segments. Lujan’s purview also includes working closely with Toshiba’s third-party partners, including DocuWare, PaperCut, and LRS, to help them take their products to market.

In her current role, Lujan is constantly looking to partner with companies that provide what she calls “portfolio accelerators,” which are products and services that augment the current portfolio and offset declines, as well as drive a revenue boost.

“If I go out and find a portfolio accelerator that makes sense, we have the ability to bring that company into our alliance program, whether we choose to partner with them or use their tech in an OEM, white-labelled way,” said Lujan.

Despite dealers’ efforts to adopt more services into their business portfolio, the imaging channel remains very product-centric today, so Lujan’s main focus as a solutions leader is to help customers understand the outcome related to the solutions technology.

“If you’re being consultative in your approach, you’re selling an outcome,” said Lujan. “If we can attach a business

process and deliver a compelling outcome to our customer, we’re going to pull through the appropriate hardware, software, and services that drive the bottom-line results.”

With the strategic alliance program, Lujan says dealers receive the benefit of consistency and accuracy in the content that is received with a level of stability from a foundation perspective.

“If you look at what LRS does versus what DocuWare, PaperCut, or what PSIGEN does, they all have their own programs to go to market,” said Lujan. “Toshiba has standardized that and created a framework and a mechanism where dealers can always have accountability and true consistency in the resources. We create enablement kits, which include marketing, sales and operations elements. We go through the appropriate launch process to ensure dealers understand the products they’re taking on and how to yield a recurring revenue stream that comes from investing in their own product portfolio expansion.”

According to Lujan, one of the most significant challenges in delivering the value of this alliance program to dealers is balancing out the reactive versus the proactive initiatives.

“We have a requirement to introduce new technology and at the same time develop the skillsets within our industry to take current technology to market,” said Lujan. “There’s this foundational shift that’s happening right now where our dealers are learning more about technology and leveraging it internally, which, in turn, creates adoptability and confidence in driving new revenue streams with new technology. At the same time, there’s also a lot of noise. There’s noise coming in from companies that have good tech, but the infrastructure doesn’t exist. Dealers are able to see that Toshiba is balancing the two, while ensuring both the tech and the business side are in sync, so when we launch, they have a best-in-class offering.”

As Lujan’s career has progressed, her initiatives and successes have garnered much attention internally at Toshiba. Lujan has also become involved in Toshiba’s efforts to drive collaboration with its worldwide subsidiaries, working on special projects that help support key business strategy, design, and implementation internationally. Through a company-sponsored mentoring program called Empowering Leaders Today (ELT), which is designed to identify the future leaders of Toshiba, Lujan was recently selected as TABS CEO Scott Maccabe’s “protégé,” meaning Maccabe will be helping develop her talents and how they can best contribute to Toshiba.

“I’m motivated by a continuous improvement mindset and the sense of always needing and wanting to upgrade an organization, build a better delivery process or system of communication, and I think that ties to the core of Toshiba,” said Lujan. “Our value is helping to communicate business information that systematically is locked within digital documents and on paper. It’s what we print on these paper documents that gets routed throughout organizations, attached to processes, and updated within systems. Being part of an organization that identifies innovation and embraces that technology culture from the inside out before it becomes a marketable trend is something I respect.”

Victoria Ringwood

Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Konica Minolta

For Victoria Ringwood, senior vice president of human resources at Konica Minolta, an ongoing interest in learning, listening, and understanding has fueled her career. A keen interest in technology, the ongoing digital transformation of companies, and enabling people and teams led her to several HR-related positions at Tyco and then Samsung Electronics

Americas over the past 15 years. In November 2018, Ringwood joined Konica Minolta, bringing her voracious tenacity to match talent with the evolving needs of the imaging business not only for her own company but also for dealers.

“In my interviews, I could feel a unified vision with everyone marching in the same direction at Konica Minolta and ultimately seeking the same outcomes,” said Ringwood. “Having a unified vision across the leaders and employees makes a lot of difference in terms of HR’s ability to have an impact. HR is a supporting function. For HR to be most effective, it has to be in lockstep with business strategy. When you have an organization in alignment with what its future state is, it makes it easier to know what levers you need to pull—be it talent retention, attraction, development—to align the HR strategy to enable real impact.”

Once Ringwood joined the Konica Minolta team, she became quickly entrenched in working with her team to evaluate the company’s talent sourcing processes and tools, looking closely at its online presence and the tools it was using to connect with candidates. Ringwood worked to make Konica Minolta’s online media more contemporary in order to find the right people and incent them to apply for positions, and since January, this effort has tripled candidate flow dollar for dollar.

In this same vein, Ringwood also turned her focus to help dealers attract, develop, and retain talent, using some of the same methods she is helping Konica Minolta employ for itself.

“We recognize the dealers are a critical channel and an extremely important relationship for our ongoing success,” said Ringwood. “We believe we have accountability to not only help them with our technology, solutions, and products, but also to help enable them to be successful in their businesses to the best of our ability without crossing any inappropriate lines.”

With her team, Ringwood developed a toolkit for dealers that features some of what she dubs “easy-to-implement” practices to attract and retain talent. One of these practices includes the effective use of social media, a free outlet for dealers to tap into.

“By sharing your wins and your culture via social media with the passive workforce—people just checking out your website or checking you out on chat boards—you are not only informing a potential candidate of who you are, what you do, and what differentiates you from other companies, but you also help engage your workforce in that kind of promotional activity. Everyone loves to talk about themselves, and asking employees to go out and Tweet, Snapchat, post on LinkedIn about their experiences helps in outreach and engages that workforce.”

Another tip Ringwood shared is implementing an employee referral program. This type of program gives employees visibility to the jobs a company is trying to fill and asks them if they know someone who could fill this business need. When a referral is hired, Ringwood recommends a fee—and it doesn’t need to be a sizable sum—paid to the referring employee.

According to Ringwood, engaging a company’s current employees with a referral program incentivizes them to reach out into their personal networks to draw in other like-minded candidates with a similar work ethic and culture-fit, as well as build the company’s potential employee pipeline.

“Your employees who love where they work will invite others like them to come to your company,” said Ringwood. “Very often, they are the ones you want because they have a better understanding of the culture and the needs of your business by having this internal connection point.”

While attracting and hiring talent is paramount for any organization, Ringwood is also encouraging dealers to take a close

look beyond the hire and examine how they welcome new employees. Dealers should look to develop thoughtful onboarding programs to help new employees learn a dealership’s organization and expectations, as well as introduce them to the people they will be working with, show them where the bathrooms and breakrooms are, introduce them to their work technology, and connect them to social groups within the company.

“Think about creating an experience, like it’s an employee’s first day of school,” said Ringwood. “On your first day of school, you’re nervous, you don’t know anybody, you don’t know where to go. Onboarding an employee with learning, structure, and agendas with expected outcomes engages employees in a deeper way and can make them more effective. Employees today expect to have an engaging experience.”

As customers and employees continue to evolve in how they interact with companies, Ringwood encourages Konica Minolta, as well as dealerships, to embrace flexibility. Job sharing, flexible work hours, social networking, mentorship programs, and employee diversity programs are all examples of creative avenues for companies and dealerships to explore as a means to attract and maintain talent in today’s competitive employment environment. Each opportunity offers a company to develop a unique, tailored relationship with employees and customers alike.

“We are culture ambassadors and business enablers,” said Ringwood about leading Konica Minolta’s internal and external human resources efforts. “We understand how to connect the stakeholders, which are the leaders and the employees. We are helping them close the gap in their career aspirations and their talent needs.”

Questions About This Story?

Contact Sharon Tosto Esker
Email: sesker@cannatareport.com