

DARE Q & A with: Veronica Sheehan



Veronica Sheehan is senior vice president of Global Network Operations and International Information Technology (IT) for Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. (TBS, Inc.), with executive oversight of U.S. Network Operations and International Operations and Technology in the Latin America, Asia Pacific, and Europe, Middle East Africa (EMEA) regions.

Most recently, Sheehan served as senior vice president of U.S. Network Operations for TBS, Inc., responsible for leading the broadcast operations, engineering, traffic and media management functions for Network Operations, the division that provides twenty-four-hour technical and operational support for Turner Broadcasting's entertainment networks, including TBS, TNT, Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Turner Classic Movies, truTV, NBA-TV and NBA-TV International, as well as content offerings and products on numerous other platforms, such as portable handsets, tablets, and the web.

Sheehan joined Turner Broadcasting in 1999 as director of broadcast operations and, later that year, moved to TBS, Inc.'s in-house production/post-production division, Turner Studios, where she served as vice president of Operations and Original Productions. Previously, she was director of Operations/Division Services for National Video Center/Recording Studios, Inc. in New York City.

Sheehan earned a bachelor's degree in communications and journalism at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York, and currently serves on the President's Council, advising the college on the evolution of the cable and broadcast industry. She is the founding chair of the TBS business resource group Turner Women Today, whose mission is to inspire, encourage and empower women to achieve their full potential. She is a member of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS), the National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE), Women in Cable Telecommunications (WICT), and Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers (SCTE).

In 2002, WICT inducted her into the prestigious Betsy Magness Leadership Institute, and in 2010, WICT National named her the "Woman to Watch." For several years, Sheehan has served as the National Chapter Advisor for the WICT Southeast Chapter and was named 2008 WICT "Chapter Advisor of the Year." Every year since 2006, she has been named one of the most powerful women in technology by CableWorld magazine. In 2007, she was named to Atlanta Woman magazine's "25 Power Women Awards" list and that same year also received WICT Southeast Red Letter Catalyst Award for Women in Technology. Most recently, she has been awarded Mother of the Year by Working Mother magazine for 2011 and was also awarded the 2011 Champion for Success by Dress for Success Atlanta.

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Q: What is the most challenging thing you have ever had to do?

A: Too many to name—so many professionally and personally (truly): moving from NYC to the South to work for Turner, being the one to tell my mother her cancer was fatal and she would die soon, caring for an older brother who has mental health issues, adopting on my own, letting go of talented employees due to cancelled shows, managing technical teams without any education or formal training in technology or IT....

Q: Where did you get the courage and confidence to do it?

A: My mother instilled in me a strong work ethic and an incredible sense of personal responsibility, even when times were tough. With only a high school degree she was left a single mother to four teenagers—and set out to search for employment. We never missed a meal, a clean home, or an opportunity to try something new. She also wanted her kids never to have regrets.

Q: What is the biggest mistake you have ever made? What did you learn and how did you recover?

A: I should have left an unhealthy relationship sooner than I did. I was forty-one by the time it ended. I had held onto the dream of having a “conventional” life as a wife and a mom, and I stayed in the marriage too long and lost myself for a period of time while I was in it. I recovered by not looking back and by just moving forward to what was possible ahead of me. I did feel ashamed and embarrassed that such an “accomplished” person hadn’t had the courage to get out sooner, but then acceptance came. It was what it was, and I knew I needed to get over the shame and regret.

Anyway, what is conventional? I didn't have a conventional childhood at all. (If you had even a glimpse of my childhood, you would know why.) I am now the proud mother of an incredible, spirited young boy, doing it on my own but surrounded by an incredible village of friends and family. I wouldn't change a thing!

You may not have it all in the timeline you planned, but anything is possible if you work hard, prepare hard, and never give up.

Q: If you had a young woman you cared deeply about entering the workforce today, what single piece of advice would you have for her?

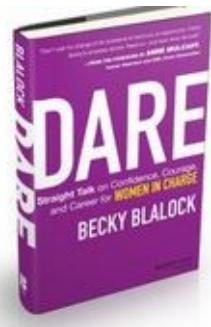
A: Stay focused on your dreams, your goals. Anything is possible. I am an example of that. Adapt the goal when you have to, but don't give up on it. You may not have it all in the timeline you planned, but (cont.)

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A: (cont.) anything is possible if you work hard, prepare hard, and never give up. Find your mentors, and find your advocates in all areas of your life.

Q: What advice do you have for building self-confidence?

A: Own and be proud of who you are and where you come from. If you are not, then go talk to a coach/therapist/priest/pastor/rabbi. Do whatever it takes to know who you are and to own it.



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