

# powerplay

[ THE EXECUTIVE SUITE ]

## SUPPORT AT THE TOP

A seasoned professional knows how to motivate employees

### A number of people on your team are happy and excited to come to work. How do you make that happen?

When people take a position, of course, they want monetary satisfaction. But they [also] often want to feel they are providing added value and being creative—that their thoughts are being honored and heard. A leader really needs to understand that to motivate people.

### Do you use pep talks to motivate your team?

I don't think that I give them pep talks as much as I spend time teaching. I feel it's important when you work with someone who is seasoned that they spend some time with you to share their experience and their wisdom. That certainly is how I've succeeded here at Merrill Lynch.

### How do you reward people when they are succeeding?

One is certainly public recognition, acknowledgement not only to them but a personal note to management to let them know the contribution. I will do flowers or gifts, or take them out to lunch or dinner. Sometimes I'll give them a comp day because very often today what people need is time. I also work to continually motivate them, which is to give them unexpected gifts along the way.

### Do you also look out for staffers' future growth?

I'm a big proponent of that. Growth is important, and if you're committed to growth you have to be committed to change. I have wonderful stories of administrative assis-

<b>Name</b>	Westina Matthews
<b>Title</b>	Managing Director, Community Business Development, Merrill Lynch
<b>Location</b>	New York
<b>Age</b>	58
<b>Power Play</b>	Inspires excellence by leading with wisdom and faith

tants who dreamed of getting a college degree, and I was supportive when they went back to college. One went on to get a master's degree and moved out of that slot. It's also about understanding the need to be supportive on the flexibility of the schedule while they're doing it and then looking out for opportunities for them.

### What do people need to know about leadership?

Understanding that it's not the title or the position that makes you a leader and that you also have to honor the work that you have. I respect and admire anyone who honors the work that they have. I think we get so caught up in titles, in offices, and positions. I talk about "compare, covet, and compete." When we start to compare ourselves with others, what they're doing and what they have and what we don't have, we start to compete with [them] and we begin to covet what [they] have. That's when we get in trouble. But if we stay focused on ourselves and do the best that we can do, the reward truly will come. Now it may not come in the way that you would like it to, but the rewards and the gifts do come.

—Laura Egodigwe