

- Your attitude will take you a whole lot further than your education. And what I mean by that is, you can be the most intelligent person in the room, you can be the brightest star in the room, but if you do not have a positive or a good attitude, you are not the most attractive person, nor are you anyone that anyone wants to be around.

So we teach people how to treat us. We do unto each other as we would have them do unto us. So yeah, the best foot forward that you can possibly make and the best first impression that you can make is your attitude.

As a project manager for GADC, I am responsible for the recruitment of industry into Greenville. So any industry that's interested in Greenville-- coming to Greenville, I assist them in helping with that decision, as well as helping our existing industry expand. So really I coordinate a lot of meetings. I negotiate deals on behalf of Greenville County.

I do it all. I'm a one stop shop. If something goes wrong with the company, even after they've come to Greenville, which they then become an existing industry, I also help them with any problems that they may have moving forward, hopefully not.

Biggest challenge in my job, day-to-day-- probably not knowing what to expect, but that's almost the most fun because no day is like the other. I can come in expecting that I'm going to do one thing and it completely turns around to something else on that day. So yeah, that's the challenge and I also believe that's the beauty of it.

My first real job, I was a cashier at Harris Teeter. My first job taught

me about the working world that yeah, it was hard. It could be fun, and there was opportunity for growth if I took advantage of it. I worked hard. I stayed at it, and every day becomes a little bit better.

I am not in a career where there are a lot of women who are in the room, and one of the greatest obstacles I had to overcome was to realize that that wasn't a bad thing. You know, sometimes our obstacles also become our strengths. But still, even though I may be a little afraid navigating the waters and that we're all in the same room to get the same thing done, and that's perfectly fine. So just because I am the only female in the room doesn't mean that I can't prove myself or show myself.

It is refreshing that I am now seeing even more women come into the field of economic development, and there are more faces everyday, much more opposed to when I started about 10 years ago, 10-plus years ago than I do now. And it's a great field and it's an excellent one for women.

If someone's interested in economic development, the skills that they should possess, first of all, are organizational skills. Because there are a lot of lists that I have to make. I have to keep people on time more often than not. I have to prepare for meetings. So organization is really key to me.

You need to be able to multitask, not only multitask for what you do, but so much of my day I usually say is not mine because I don't know what will happen from moment to moment. So being able to organize, multitask, and you know, I look at what we do as a customer service oriented business. So-- which was a great skill that I got as a cashier in Harris Teeter.

So yeah, being in the customer service business, learning people, accepting people for who they are no matter where they are or where they come from. So yeah, definitely customer service.

In leading projects or prospective industries, I believe it's important to

be able to allow things just to play themselves out. You are not going to be able to control the situation at all times, nor should you feel like you should because sometimes that's when you get your best things that happen.

In regards to my leadership style, you know, a few things ruffle my feathers and maybe that's not really a good thing, but like I said, you never know what the day will bring. So I can't stress out about it. I just really need to move into the flow, especially if I'm dealing with a prospective company. There's no room for error. There's no room for attitude or even to get upset. You know, move with it. If things don't go your way, there's always tomorrow, and that's why there are erasers on the back of pencils. We just keep it moving.

Oh, it's important to have people who continue to work on economic development because it is what sells your community. It's what influences what comes in to your community. And without those jobs, and you know-- it represents our quality of life. So if we have a thriving community, you have a economic development office that represents you, then you have an opportunity to land those companies to come into your area and provide a good quality of life for your residents.

My name is Tavia Gaddy, and I am a voice of the Palmetto State.