

The Purple Promise

An Interview with Tracy B. Brightman, Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer, FedEx Corporation

EDITORS' NOTE Tracy Brightman leads FedEx Corporation's Human Resources function which includes talent development, succession planning, executive compensation, benefits, workforce strategy, and HR operations. Brightman is a member of the FedEx Strategic Management Committee which is responsible for developing and reviewing the corporation's strategic business activities. Before transitioning to FedEx Corporation, Brightman's 20-year tenure at FedEx Office included her serving in the Legal Department as General Counsel and Senior Vice President of Legal and Human Resources, Vice President, Assistant General Counsel and Managing Director of Litigation and Employment. Prior to joining the company, Brightman was Vice President and Assistant General Counsel for Associates First Capital Corporation/Citigroup and worked as an attorney for private law firms. She has also provided volunteer hours for North Texas Food Bank's Love Packs program, as well as several other Dallas/Fort Worth-area family and children's nonprofit organizations. She recently joined the Memphis Botanic Garden board of directors. Brightman received a BA degree in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and earned her JD from the University of Virginia School of Law. She is admitted to the State Bar of Texas.



Tracy B. Brightman

COMPANY BRIEF FedEx Corp. (fedex.com) provides customers and businesses worldwide with a broad portfolio of transportation, e-commerce and business services. With annual revenue of \$93 billion, the company offers integrated business solutions through operating companies competing collectively, operating collaboratively and innovating digitally as one FedEx. Consistently ranked among the world's most admired and trusted employers, FedEx inspires its more than 530,000 employees to remain focused on safety, the highest ethical and professional standards and the needs of their customers and communities. FedEx is committed to connecting people and possibilities around the world responsibly and resourcefully, with a goal to achieve carbon-neutral operations by 2040.

Will you highlight your role and areas of focus?

I'm a huge fan of Simon Sinek, and his concept of identifying your "what" and your

"why" has truly resonated with me. In fact, I've used this method to become very clear on my purpose within my work at FedEx throughout my career. My purpose is to enable others to find their paths and achieve their full potential in work that brings joy and meaning to them. I am a champion of our culture at FedEx, reinforcing our values through every initiative, every communication, and every interaction between me and my team and the team members that we support

in the field. One element of being a culture and team member champion is having a focus on creating a team member experience that is just as engaging and intentional as the customer experience we want to have. We want to make sure we are looking at every stage in the development of a team member and giving it the time and attention needed to make a difference in that team member's career journey.

Also, being very data driven is an important aspect of my role and my focus. How do we think, in a global world, about things

like data, demographics, labor availability, and market wage rates and how they drive what we do? All those things are critical in our decision-making. Another goal of mine is to be a leader across the organization. I want to be known as someone willing to be in the trenches collaborating with my team – I would never ask anyone to do something I wouldn't and haven't done myself. Bringing authenticity and transparency to the role is so important, especially during a business transformation.

How important is it for the Chief People Officer function to be engaged in business strategy?

It's critical because the role of the CPO at its very core is to ensure that the talent strategy matches up to the business strategy. There are of course multiple facets to the job, but if you think about it – you manage the strategy and processes associated with building and retaining an exceptional team and there's a lot that gets packed into that.

Not only do you need good business acumen, but you must also understand the business strategy – not just the current state,



FedEx-HBCU Student Ambassador Program representatives standing outside the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)

“One of our biggest competitive advantages is our culture. Our team members around the world are committed to the Purple Promise: ‘I will make every FedEx experience outstanding.’”

but also how it will develop for the future – because the talent strategy must line up to all those things. In other words, you must be the talent architect for today and in the future to make sure we have the talent to meet our goals. Succession planning plays a huge part in that. How we identify, curate, nurture, and develop our diverse talent throughout their careers is vital so that our leadership at all levels represent our team members on the front lines, that in turn represent the communities where we live and work.

Will you discuss FedEx’s commitment to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

Our greatest asset is our people. They are at the heart of our success and are the foundation of our strong reputation. Our company’s commitment to diversity began nearly 50 years ago, long before it was an expected part of corporate strategy. The cornerstone of our work is our commitment to fostering respectful, safe, and inclusive workplaces that celebrate the unique contributions of each individual.

We bring this commitment to life in part by integrating it into our global governance structure with DEI committees at FedEx Corporation and a DEI team at each operating company. Our DEI Corporate Council connects DEI representatives from across the HR, Sourcing, and Communications functions of our operating companies through bi-monthly meetings to foster collaboration, discuss best practices, and support programs in the communities we serve.

Additionally, we continue to provide opportunities for all team members to advance in their careers at FedEx. More than 33,000 frontline team members are learning new skills through our Purple Pathways program, which won the American Transportation Association DEI Change Leader Award this year. And thousands of team members are earning certificates and degrees through tuition assistance and access to free online courses. In the U.S., we also work closely with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to help students gain leadership skills and access to work experience while they complete their education. FedEx Express Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and Africa (AMEA) is collaborating with specialized universities to develop a quality

talent pool with specific skills and knowledge in gateway operations and customer service.

How engrained is diversity and inclusion in FedEx’s culture and values?

One of our biggest competitive advantages is our culture. Our team members around the world are committed to the Purple Promise: “I will make every FedEx experience outstanding.”

We are focused on making FedEx an outstanding place to work by fostering a diverse and inclusive team that reflects our operations globally. Our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) commitments are aligned with our shared culture values and guided by the absolute belief that everyone deserves to be themselves and see themselves at FedEx. To highlight one example of this belief in action, FedEx team members who identify with a minority group held 36 percent of U.S. management roles in FY22.

Our efforts to provide fulfilling employment and advancement opportunities, to build community and allyship through affinity groups and resource teams, and our relentless focus on safety and well-being has consistently earned FedEx recognition as one of the world’s best places to work.

We believe a winning culture leads to winning strategies. It sparks the development of ideas, products, and services that help better serve our customers and drives our success.

How important is it to have diverse perspectives and experiences at the table when making business decisions?

We enhance our business performance by supporting a diverse and engaged workforce. This workforce, our supplier base, and supporting culture, all enable FedEx to better serve customers and compete in the global marketplace. We have a saying at FedEx, “we are as diverse as the world we serve.” We reach over 200 countries and employ over 500,000 individuals. Diverse perspectives and experiences allow us to tailor our services, approach, and relationships to customers around the world. Research links higher levels of diversity with increased innovation and economic performance. The world around us is changing quickly. Diversity is one of our most valuable tools as we continue to lead and innovate into the future.

Do you feel that there are strong opportunities for women to grow and lead in the industry?

We are intentionally supporting leadership, development, and advancement programs for women across levels within our business as well as in the communities we serve. While women have traditionally been underrepresented in the logistics industry, we are actively working to create more balance within both front line and corporate roles. Internally, we have created spaces for women to build community, learn, and grow together. Our Women in Leadership, Women Leading Change, and Women in Logistics business resource groups provide networking, professional development, and unique mentoring opportunities.

We recently celebrated a new milestone – our first all-female African American flight crew took to the skies in 2022. Less than 1 percent of the world’s pilots are Black women and we want to encourage others to join and fly for FedEx. On the roads, a female driver for FedEx Freight was named a 2022 Women in Trucking Driver of the Year finalist, and FedEx Freight was also named a top company to work for by the Women in Trucking Association.

In our communities around the world, FedEx Cares supports leadership, advancement, and economic opportunity programs for women to achieve economic mobility and small business success. We have special small business accelerator programs with Babson College, E-Commerce training with Accion Opportunity Fund, mentorship with the Asian University for Women, basic needs support with the Women’s Foundation of Greater Memphis, and leadership development with Dress for Success Worldwide, to name a few.

You have spent more than 20 years with FedEx. What has made the experience so special for you?

Every day brings new opportunities here at FedEx, and the experience has made this a place I’ve wanted to stay and grow in my career – especially as a female leader. Along the way, I’ve sought out different experiences – including lateral moves – and I’ve never ceased to be able to learn something new. I have a strong belief that careers are much more lattices than ladders, because it’s getting those experiences and exposure to the business that makes you a more well-rounded leader and team member. By continuing to learn and grow, I’ve been able to work alongside gifted and inspiring leaders and team members – especially our frontline team members whose stories and dedication are motivating beyond belief. Our organization is made up of over half a million of those individuals all with inspiring stories, and their unique contributions and commitment speak for themselves. It’s the everyday work – things like interacting with our customers, making sure packages and projects get where they need to go, and understanding that every single delivery has a story and a meaning to someone – that’s what inspires me every single day. ●