

Intro Music

This is the Institute for Music Leadership

Stephen: Welcome to another episode of Create. Inspire. Lead. I'm Stephen Biegner. Today we're going to talk to Rachel Roberts who is the Associate Professor of Music Leadership and the Graduate Degree Program Director for the Institute for Music Leadership at the Eastman School of Music. Rachel is a wonderful colleague and just so, so smart and incredibly helpful. She is an absolute joy to work with. When we first met, we connected over distance running, actually. I was training for the Rochester marathon - which broke me - and Rachel was training for the Goofy challenge which, if you don't know, is where you run a half marathon through Disney World one day, and then a full marathon the next day for a total of 39.3 miles. I came into the office post-marathon with a slight limp and a bad sunburn, and Rachel came in after her back-to-back half- and full-marathon wearing all of her medals and looking like a boss.

We actually recorded this interview a while back, but due to COVID and furloughs, we're only getting to it now. But basically, Rachel and I started out having a conversation about salary negotiation, and then very quickly, we turned to the topic of the gender wage gap. And that's because the two are so intertwined. From the hiring process, to negotiations, from requesting a raise, to maternity vs. paternity leave, gender - and then on a deeper level - race - can often be a factor in how much you'll be offered for a job and can affect how much you make over your lifetime. So, what started out as some practical advice, turned into something a little deeper. And we'll cover the practical stuff, but we'll also get into some of the issues around the gender wage gap and see if there's anything we can do now to change it.

So, when I first called Rachel on Zoom, I was greeted by her new puppy - Coco - a cute little black and white Cocker Spaniel. Rachel got her right at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, which, to me, sounded so stressful.

Rachel: She's been awesome, actually with everything going on. I love having her. There's only been one day, which was Wednesday, yesterday. Then I thought, oh, my gosh, this is just crazy. So one day out of eight weeks, that's not too bad.

Stephen: It's obviously been much more than eight weeks that Rachel has had Coco, and I'm happy to report, it's still going well. Anyway, one thing that made Rachel the obvious person to talk to about salary negotiation is that she actually leads salary negotiation workshops for this organization: the American Association of University Women, or the AAUW. And her involvement in this organization came about in a sort of circuitous way.

Rachel: It's kind of a random story, actually. I when I was in Boston working at New England Conservatory, I also went back to grad school part time and I had worked with a number of students at NEC to help them with their Fulbright applications or study abroad applications. I thought, "That would be so cool to travel and do this."

Stephen: One day, Rachel got an announcement for an opportunity to spend three months in Southeast Asia. The first part of the trip was for socio-economic and political research, and for the second part, students could either teach leadership communications or teaching. The bad news?

Rachel: I saw this application 24 hours before the due date, and I thought, "Oh, man." But I stayed up and I wrote it thinking, "Well, you never know unless you try, right?"

Stephen: A couple weeks later, Rachel had an interview and eventually got accepted to go on both parts of the trip. Rachel visited 10 countries in Southeast Asia over the course of 90 days. And for the research part of the trip, Rachel met with everyone from business leaders and heads of corporations and banks....

Rachel: ... and government officials from these different countries clear through people who ran NGO's. And there was 35 of us on that first part of the trip and then there was 6 of us who were teaching fellows. And on that first part of the trip, I was the only person of the cohort traveling that came from a nonprofit background.

Stephen: As the only person with nonprofit experience, Rachel was really interested in finding out how the various organizations she interacted with were serving their communities.

Rachel: The thing that I was struck by in every single country that we visited was just the huge disparity of wealth. And, I know it exists here in the US too, but watching that and seeing it firsthand, meeting with migrant workers who earn two hundred dollars a year and that's not enough to save and get home and take it back to their family, I mean, there's example after example after example in all of those countries that we saw. Aside from all of the other experiences, that kind of shook me to my core thinking, "What am I doing, you know? Music is great, but what more is there in the world? Why are there these huge inequities that exist?"

Stephen: Rachel went on the second half of the trip where she taught leadership communications. And when she got home to Boston, she had this huge, reverse culture shock.

Rachel: I mean, from the way people drive to my foot getting run over by somebody's shopping cart because there is no sense of personal space. And I just thought, what is going on? What kind of world am I living in? What does this mean, you know.

Stephen: Rachel kept thinking about those months abroad - all that time in countries very, very different from where she was now - when she stumbled across an article put out by BBC News.

Rachel: It said at the current rate of change, gender equity will not be achieved for another 208 years. I thought, "Fantastic. I will be dead, long dead, as well as a couple of generations, you know, at the current rate of change."

Stephen: That same week, Rachel heard about an initiative put forth by Boston Mayor Marty Walsh to eliminate the gender wage gap.

Rachel: He hopes to eliminate the gender wage gap by 2030, and it was a three-pronged approach. One, working with companies to make their salaries transparent and, you know, equalized. If two people are doing the same level of job, they should be earning the same thing. The second was to take the lead on maternity and paternity leave research. Because, as you likely know, there's very wide-ranging views and support for both maternity and paternity leave across this country. The third piece is that he partnered with AAUW American Association of University Women to make their salary negotiation workshops available for every person in Boston.

Stephen: Rachel was intrigued - especially after reading that BBC article. So, she signed up for one of the workshops - just to see. And:

Rachel: I love the material, the workshop. I thought I could do this.

Stephen: She signed up, learned how to give workshops herself, and during her last 16 months in Boston, she facilitated 32 workshops and trained over 850 women. And this was totally volunteer. She purposely signed up to go to all the different sectors around the city so she could work with different populations and demographics.

Rachel: It was such a memorable and impactful experience. It was very eye-opening as well to hear the stories of what women have experienced in their own walks of life. I don't know that it solves the problem of inequities because there are so many in this world, but I felt like it takes a village to make change happen and if I could do just a little piece, then maybe that will help change other things.

Stephen: When Rachel got to Eastman and the U of R, word spread that she used to lead these workshops back in Boston. Through a series of conversations with the right people in the right place at the right time, she was able to license those same salary negotiation materials and make them available to all students, faculty, and staff here at the university. So, let's first get into the practical advice segment of this episode. We'll talk about what specific skills Rachel covers in these workshops, but first, why is it important to practice salary negotiation?

Rachel: As a musician, would you walk on stage and sight read a performance?

Stephen: I mean, no. For everybody's benefit, but...

Rachel: Right. So it's kind of that same thing. You know, I had a colleague that I worked with before who was in fundraising and I have borrowed this phrase when I teach my fundraising and development course that hope is not a strategy. You know, if you hope that something will work out, that's great. But you can actually take steps to be more competent in the skills that you have. And the way that you approach what it is that you're doing, regardless of what it is, but salary negotiation especially.

Stephen: Practice makes perfect. Well...practice makes permanent, but, that's maybe another episode...Anyway, in the workshop, you focus on 4 basic concepts.

Rachel: Step 1 is articulating your value. How do you talk about that? Step 2 is doing your background research. Step 3, developing your strategy and step 4, which I love, built into this program and this material, is actually practicing both the role of the employee and the employer.

Stephen: Ok. If you've listened to any previous episodes, you know I love a list. So. Number 1: Articulating your value.

Rachel: And it begins with asking yourself the question, "What are you really good at?" Now, when I attended this workshop, I sat there just staring at them. I'm like, "I don't know what. I don't know what I'm good at, you know, I do things, but what does that mean?" Well, I attended the workshop with a very good friend of mine, and she kind of laughed. She's like, "Come on, Rachael, this is what I see you do and this and this..." and I'm like, "Oh, okay!"

Stephen: And then, it flipped, and Rachel's friend who came up with a laundry list of things for Rachel, suddenly couldn't think of anything for herself. And so, Rachel jumped in and helped her friend articulate her value. So, if you're feeling like I did when Rachel first talked about articulating your value and you're also breaking out into a cold sweat and having a major bout of imposter syndrome, reach out to a friend, or someone you can trust who can help you come up with a list. And once you have that list, you can begin to build on that.

Rachel: What did you do to make that happen? Was it a project? Was it an event? Was it a big something that you accomplished? What specifically did you do to accomplish that? And so the idea is that you take all of those things that you are proud of and then you break those down into those different components. And that helps you better have the language qualitatively and quantitatively for how to talk about the value that you would bring to an organization, to a position, or maybe to an advanced role in where you're at right now.

Stephen: Another thing Rachel recommended was to start a document - right now - that you constantly add to each time you participate in something. Most people update their resumes months or even years apart from the last time they applied for a job, and so, they're faced with having to figure out what it is they did for the past month, year, 5 years. Having a running document of projects, papers, performances, volunteer work, or committees you worked on, will help you when it comes time to figure out what you're capable of doing.

Rachel: Just wherever you are, start that document today. That's my biggest piece of advice of all of this, because whether it's your brushing up your resume to apply for a new position or you are wanting to approach your supervisor for a promotion or increased responsibility, you know, all of these things that you have been doing demonstrate your capabilities to take on these expanded responsibilities that show

you are ready for a step up in responsibility or in pay scale or all of the above. But it's, again, going back to that step one, articulating your value. If you don't do it for yourself, no one will take the time to do it for you.

Stephen: Which brings us to number 2: doing your background research. Now, there's a lot to consider when researching different positions. On one level, the research can be as basic as looking into the organization you're interested in applying to and considering whether or not you actually should apply. But, it's also important to know things like what the laws are regarding compensation and salary. And that can be different from state to state.

Rachel: Every state in this country has differing laws, and it's important to know what the laws are surrounding salaries and equity and transparency. For instance, when I was in Boston, Massachusetts was the first state, I believe, to pass a law saying that you cannot ask for past salary history and making it illegal to pay a different salary for the same type of job.

Stephen: Another layer is to find out how different organizations compensate their employees.

Rachel: ...because even if you say this is what I want to be earning and what the market says, especially if you're working in nonprofits, nonprofits have a different pay structure than for-profits do.

Stephen: So, what kind of research can you do going into the job search? Or let's say you get an interview at a place you really want to work at, but they haven't offered their salary ranges. How can you sort of figure out what's an appropriate amount to ask for?

Rachel: There are different ways that you can approach doing research. What AAUW recommends is that you go on salary.com, which is a free resource. There is a paid portion of it, but you can get a lot of information through the free resource to put in the job that you're doing. The zip code and location that this is located in because of cost of living differences and that will churn out a range of information, a bell curve, the lowest twenty five percentile qualified for that position clear up to the seventy fifth percentile and what that ranges and the median person that is qualified doing that role in that zip code.

Stephen: This works great for jobs that are for-profit. If you're looking at a nonprofit job, however, - which is where many of the jobs in arts and music are - you may need to dig deeper.

Rachel: One resource, especially in the Boston and New England area, is called Third Sector New England. And if you Google Third Sector New England salary comparative chart, you will find a list that they are building similar to Salary.com only for nonprofit organizations.

Stephen: So, this is specific to New England, but it can still give you a pretty good idea of the going rate for certain positions. Obviously, the cost of living in most places in New England tends to be higher, so...

Rachel: So, if you live in Iowa, you know, you'll want to take that with a grain of salt.

Stephen: Says the Iowa native. But if you don't want to look at New England stats and then adjust for the state you're looking in, there are other things you can do. You can call HR and see if they'll provide you with a list of salary ranges. In some states, it's now mandatory for a salary range to be posted with any open position. Google can also be your friend. Nonprofits are tax exempt, so they don't file a tax return, but they do file something called a Form 990. And while this won't tell you what every individual in that nonprofit made, it can at least give you an idea of the financial health of the organization which can help inform your job search or your expectations of what is reasonable. Or, if you're looking for a job at a state school, often, those salaries are publicly available. But Rachel made another recommendation, which I've personally used and think is so important in helping create transparency in the job market.

Rachel: And another thing that I'd like to recommend is calling on colleagues that work in the same industry or that may be in that organization to ask them to help you find out. It's not as if you're asking for their salary and what they make, but instead asking them, you know, I'm interested in this job for a variety of reasons, but I want to make certain it's the right fit for what I'm looking for.

Stephen: We'll come back to that last idea a little later, but let's go on to the next step. So you've articulated your value; you've done your research. Step 3: Developing your strategy.

Rachel: In preparing for a negotiation, you do want to be an advocate for yourself and you want to have that language for what is it that you will bring to this position uniquely, right?

Stephen: The question that always turns my blood to battery acid in the middle of an interview is, "What salary would you like to make?" Even if you've done your research, this question can be so uncomfortable, and in many ways, it's not fair. You don't want to give too high a number to make it seem like you're out of the running for the job if the salary is less than that, but you don't want to go too low because you don't want to get undercut or undervalue yourself. So, what should you do?

Rachel: I would encourage to try to find deflection strategies and instead say, "Well, I'd like to learn more about the responsibilities of this position first before I share a number, right?" Or you could say something like, "I'm curious to know where you value this position relative to where other compensation structures are in the organization."

Stephen: On top of all the research you've done, getting some additional information from the organization you're interviewing with can help you better prepare for the upcoming negotiation if you're offered the position. It can take a lot of energy and emotional stress to prepare for those interviews, and you don't want to waste your time only to go through that ordeal and then be offered a salary nowhere near where you expected.

Rachel: And on the flip side, if you're the hiring manager, it really stinks when you go through this and find the perfect candidate, but you aren't able to hire that person because of the salary that you're offering. As the hiring manager, you are losing time and productivity and all types of things, you know. So, I think it behooves both parties to be as transparent as possible.

Stephen: If an offer is made, you're on to the next part of the negotiation. And the first thing you should do?

Rachel: My first recommendation is to say thank you. You know, "So excited!" I mean, be truthful. If you aren't excited, then remove yourself, but be excited. Say thank you. Listen to what is being offered and then say, you know, could you email me this: both the offer and any benefits packages and could you set a time to talk in 24 to 48 hours?

Stephen: You want to have a copy of the full offer, because while the salary may be nice, that's not the hard number you're going to be bringing home. You need to weigh the value of the benefits - health care, professional development, tuition assistance, some organizations in bigger cities may even have transportation benefits. Each organization has different perks, and sometimes, a job with a slightly lower salary offer can still end up benefiting you and saving you money if it has a really comprehensive benefits package, which, incidentally, are also points - in addition to salary - that you can negotiate.

Rachel: ...is it work from home? You know, we've all proven right now in COVID 19 to work from home. It's possible to varying degrees. Or maybe it's professional development and having the ability to go to two conferences a year or something like that that help further you in your profession. Yeah, really think hard about what benefits matter to you.

Stephen: And finally, I asked Rachel how many times you should go back and forth with your offer while you're negotiating.

Rachel: 00:38:35,000 My students will laugh if they listen to this because my answer in class for so many things is: "It depends." So, one of those "it depends," you know. It depends on the level of job. It depends on who you're negotiating with, you know. If you're negotiating with the head of the organization, you probably have the ability to speak directly and know what is a final offer or not, right? If you're speaking with someone who is not the head of the organization, you have to remember that you will have a conversation with that person, then that individual will likely go to H.R. or their supervisor to say, "Okay, this is what I'm thinking. Can I get approval to come back with this counter?" Right? So that person, your supervisor or whoever it is you're negotiating with likely will have double the conversations that you have. It's totally fine to have a couple conversations. I would say, you know, two or three conversations would be just fine.

Stephen: The final step - Step 4 - in preparing for negotiating your salary is to practice. Not only as yourself going out for the job, but to practice the negotiation from the perspective of the employer.

Rachel: There's multiple layers to it in terms of thinking through the objections that employer may have becoming sensitive to the dynamics and what limitations they may be going through, but also thinking through, what is it about you as a candidate that is, you know, really sticks out to an employer. It's like understanding the theory and the chord changes and the history and the time period of a piece. It's those same types of components just from the perspective of how do you prepare for a negotiation.

Stephen: Coming up, we'll talk about a few other things to consider when negotiating your salary, and then, we'll get into the gender wage gap, why that's important, and what you can do about it.

AD: The institute for music leadership has three different grant programs to help you take your idea or project to the next level. There's the Paul R. Judy Center Grant, The Eastman ArtistShare Partnership, and, finally, the IML Grant and Mentorship Program which is a program that provides students with opportunities to receive funding and mentorship to encourage new thinking and the development of innovative ideas in music. The deadline for the next round of grants is Thursday, October 1st, so get yours in today. To find out more about each grant, eligibility, find applications, and more, visit iml.esm.rochester.edu/grants.

Stephen: Welcome back. So, we talked about all the steps you could take to prepare for negotiations. But, as much as you can prepare, sometimes, there are things you learn the hard way. Even Rachel, who teaches these negotiation workshops, had a few hard knocks when she first entered the job market.

Rachel: In my first job, I did not negotiate at all. I probably lost out there.

Stephen: In fact, she knows she did. And the two words she wished she knew early on in her career are: compound interest.

Rachel: If you don't know what compound interest is, look it up and understand it, because every penny that you put away now will only compound and serve you well into the future, especially if you want to retire.

Stephen: You may have heard of a 401k, which you typically get in for-profit jobs. Some nonprofits also offer a 401k, but most often, they have a retirement fund called a 403b. Either way, these retirement accounts are so important. We talked about benefits earlier, and this is definitely one to look into. For example, for some jobs, there's often a waiting period before you can begin contributing to your retirement account; or, there might be a waiting period before your company will start making contributions to your account. And that's another thing to check. Does your company make contributions on your behalf? And if so, how much? Do they match what you put in? Do they double it? This can all add up so quick, and missing out - even for only a couple of years, can be a difference of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Ok. So, bear with me here: - really small scale. If you contribute \$1 to your retirement account starting at age 25, that dollar will be worth \$4.80 by the time you're 65 and ready to retire. If you wait until you're 35 to contribute, that same dollar will only be worth \$3.24 by retirement age. But it's actually even crazier if you look at the bigger picture. Let's say you start to contribute to your retirement account again at age 25 and you're able to put in \$10,000 a year. Let's say you invest \$10,000 a year and get a 6% rate of return each year. By age 40, you've invested \$150,000 of your own money, but that money will accrue to be worth \$1,058,912. Wait just 10 years until you're 35 to start, and you invest the same \$10,000 a year - even if you invest that amount all the way until you retire at age 65, under the same circumstances, you'll end up investing \$300,000 of your own money, but it will only accrue to \$838,019. And that's after saving twice as much for twice as long, yet you come up almost a quarter of a million dollars short. So, do your homework, and like Rachel said:

Rachel: ...if you don't know what compound interest is. Look it up and understand it.

Stephen: Another important financial thing to consider is taxes. Your overall salary is one number, but your net, or take-home pay will be completely different. Which, admittedly, I totally didn't consider when I got my first salaried job. And Rachel - she also forgot.

Rachel: Yeah. So, I called home. I did the exact same thing. Totally forgot about taxes. I got my first paycheck and I called home to my parents and I'm like, "What the bleep is FICA, and why did they take so much money out of my paycheck?!" But there is this great resource right now. Gosh, what's it called?

Stephen: The website Rachel eventually pulled up is Paycheckcity.com which is a great salary calculator. You can put in the state you'll be working in, what your gross pay is...

Rachel: ...whether the method is annually monthly, bi-weekly, whatever it is, you can put in your federal withholdings as well. If there are other things like your voluntary deductions for parking or transportation or whatever that is, you can put that in and then hit this calculate button and it will tell you what your actual take home is.

Stephen: And that's important. Because that's what you should use to figure out how your salary will work in your budget. A \$40,000 offer in New York City for example will be different than it would be somewhere in Iowa or Texas - not only because of cost of living, but because each state takes out a different amount for taxes. So be sure to try to figure out what your net salary will be, and work that into your budget. Don't have a budget?

Rachel: If you don't have a budget for yourself, take the time to do it now. You know, understand what's coming in. Understand the obligations that are going out and what's often forgotten about. Think about your long-term financial goals.

Stephen: It's easy to get wrapped up in your immediate expenses, but maybe you want to buy a new instrument, or enroll in some continuing ed classes, or even just take a trip somewhere. Figure out

how you can factor that into your budget as well. And, by the way, there's no excuse for not having a budget. There are so many resources out there.

Rachel: One that I love to recommend is a program called You Need a Budget or YNAB for short. I love this program. It's taken my spreadsheets and everything that I have wanted to do with spreadsheets and put it on steroids. So, that's why it's worth the \$45 a year for me to have this.

Stephen: Don't worry - there's also a free version that has all kinds of tutorials and training. And if spreadsheets aren't your thing, there are other programs that help you create and manage a budget. One note though - apps that claim to do it for you so you can set it up once and then forget about it? Skip those. This is one thing where you *want* to have total control and oversight. It's something you want to do if not on a daily basis, at least every couple of days or once a week. Because things change - unexpected expenses, random gigs - and you want a clear picture of where you're at when you look at your budget.

Rachel: Just what do you spend in 2 week's-time? You know, what are all those coffee trips to Java's? They're fun. They're great. But how much are you really spending versus how much are you investing in your own self? So that's the second biggest mistake, is that a lot of people don't really have a sense of what their budget is and what their financial goals are. And that conflates and compounds and confuses what it is that they are looking to earn in a position.

Stephen: But there are other situations Rachel has run into. Like one time, she had two offers from different jobs, and in the interest of transparency and in trying to leverage the best opportunity for herself, she went to the job she was really interested in and let them know.

Rachel: ...the supervisor said, "Are you playing me right now?" Just really getting very defensive about this. And I thought, "No, I'm not playing anyone. I'm trying to help make this possible, you know?"

Stephen: Rachel was just trying to advocate for herself and let the employer know the stakes. Not every negotiation is like this, but you should be prepared in the event an employer does react that way. And honestly, if they do have this reaction, you should ask yourself if you really want to work in that kind of environment. I mean - what if down the line you want to ask for a promotion or raise? Aren't you going to get the same hostile reaction?

Another time, Rachel got a great offer that was supposed to include both a one-time bonus, and a salary increase at the end of one year of service. She never asked for a written version of the offer, and after a year of service, she didn't get the bonus or the raise. She asked someone about what happened.

Rachel: And the documentation was not filed. And so, it just pains me to know. Yeah, I can't even think of the value of that as to what was lost. But it's through all of these experiences that you learn the hard

way and try to share it with others to say, "Okay, here is a lesson that I learned the hard way. Don't repeat this for yourself."

Stephen: But even knowing all of this, it's still possible to make a mistake and that's okay. Or, you might not be in a position to negotiate right now.

Rachel: You know, there's times in your life, and everybody has a different situation. Sometimes, you may just have to take a job to take a job, because you have to pay bills and you want to put food on the table, and that is okay. You know, every career transition does not always have to be the right next step. Sometimes, it just has to be the next step to get you through what it is that you're doing. And so often I see people get so hung up that this has to be the perfect thing. Negotiations never end. And, you know, I guarantee most people listening to this podcast will have many opportunities to practice negotiations throughout their life, you know?

Stephen: The main thing is to learn from each experience, add that knowledge to your repertoire, and then you'll get to try it again when you look for another job. And, as you learn more, it's important to share what you know with others. Transparency among workers is such a crucial element to creating a more equal playing field. And that can be a hard thing to overcome because of a culture of discretion that's been forced on us by employers over the decades.

Rachel: The history is that your employers would fire you for talking about salary.

Stephen: Wait, that's crazy. They would fire you?

Rachel: Yes. And in the past, you know, because they didn't want employees to compare who was making what, you know, but being more transparent about what it is that you make only helps to push employers towards fair and transparent compensation levels.

Stephen: And despite the former backlash employees used to face if they shared their salaries, companies are trending toward being more transparent. And that's helping to normalize pay ranges for different positions throughout an organization.

Rachel: And, in some instances, actually, there's many articles written about this that it's, because of the employees talking about their salaries with one another, that they have uncovered gender and race inequities in how compensation is handled in an organization and instead has used that knowledge to push for change.

Stephen: Here we're going to take a little diversion to talk about the principal flutist at the Boston Symphony Orchestra - Elizabeth Rowe. She was actually the first person to file a suit under the Massachusetts Equal Pay Act that Rachel talked about earlier. When Elizabeth Rowe was negotiating her contract with the BSO in 2004, she'd followed a lot of the steps we've already talked about in this episode. She'd done her homework, and was ready to negotiate. The principal oboist, John Ferrillo,

had just been poached by the BSO from the Met Orchestra for a yearly salary of \$314,600. Rowe asked for the same fee as her colleague and was turned down. Eventually, after some back and forth, she did agree to a deal.

However, over the next 14 years, she continued to ask to be paid as much as her male counterparts. Rowe had found out all the other principals in the wind section of the BSO - all men - made more than she did. And so, in 2018, she filed suit. The case is really complicated, and covers a lot of additional topics that could take up several separate episodes. But basically, the BSO claimed that Rowe's salary had nothing to do with her gender. They said, "The oboe is a harder instrument, there's a smaller pool of oboists, and the whole orchestra tunes to the oboe. That's why it fetches a higher salary." But even John Ferrillo doesn't agree with that logic. In a quote from a great article on Boston.com he says, "Yeah, the oboe is important, and it is difficult, but so is the flute." He says, and I love this quote, "Every instrument has its own private hell."

You'd also expect that if this were some kind of industry standard - that the oboe is hard and everyone tunes to it - that it would be the same across the board, at least among wind sections. But that same article goes on to reveal that in the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, their principal flutist, a guy named Mark Sparks, was required to be listed in the organization's tax filings as one of the top 5 earners over \$100,000. The principal oboist in that same orchestra - Jelena Dirks - didn't even make enough to be listed.

And you see that across major orchestras. Top earners in orchestras are 82% male, 18% female, and the average salary for male performers is about \$255,000, while for women, it's \$203,000. And that doesn't make sense, because according to a 2016 study, women actually make up 46% of orchestras. Now, this was greatly improved by blind auditions that started 1952 - by the BSO. At that time, women only made up about 5% of orchestral players. Even just looking at one organization - the NY Phil - as recently as 1993 - their makeup consisted of 90 men and 26 women. Today, they're almost evenly split with 48 men, and 44 women.

So, let's talk a little more about what is the gender wage gap, because, the BSO in their own defense mentioned this next point, and I hear it all the time from people who don't think that this is important, or even real. And that's inevitably someone saying something like, "Well, my boss is a woman" or, "What about this company - their CEO is a woman." Even the BSO tried to say that while Rowe was paid less than all the other wind section principals, she was still paid more than 9 other principal players in the orchestra - including some who were men. So, gender couldn't have been an issue. Right? So how can we say the gender wage gap is real?

Rachel: There are studies upon studies, upon studies and people keeping track of trends that look at the specific jobs and look at companies that look at broader trends and sectors. So, breaking it down to the very minute to the larger, both the macro and the micro, and the gender pay gap is how we describe the inequities between what men and women make.

Stephen: According to research shared on AAUW's website, on average, women working full time are paid 82 cents for every dollar earned by a white man. And if you break that down further?

Rachel: Asian women earn 90 cents for every dollar a white man makes. White women: 79 cents. Black or African-American? 62 cents for every dollar a white man makes. Native Island or other Pacific Islander: 61 cents. American, Indian or Native Alaskan? 57 cents. And Hispanic or Latino women earn 54 cents for every dollar a white man makes. Now, to put this into hard numbers in terms, let's look at it a different way. Put that into dollar figures. So, if you assume a 40-year working career, white women who have this 79 percent rate as compared to a white man, that translates into roughly \$460,000 lost over their years of working. Black women: that translates into \$946,000 over a 40-year career. And for Latina women, this equates to over just slightly over 1.1 million dollars over the course of their 40 years working. And I don't know about you, but I could find ways to spend or invest four hundred thousand dollars over the next 40 years, you know. And I'm speaking from a very privileged position. I have a job and I'm able to provide the things that I want for myself and by myself. And by leading these trainings, it's not just the hard skills of how to negotiate, but what's incorporated in there is understanding the impacts of the gender wage gap and how it impacts everybody, not just the women who are earning less. It impacts our entire society, our entire economy and the entire way that this world functions.

Stephen: This is why corporate transparency and laws making it illegal for employers to ask for your salary history are so important. Salary history, for example - I mean, if you're a woman, and you're undervalued at your first job, or even your second or third - whether it's through implicit or explicit bias - carrying your previous salaries with you from job to job allows employers to continue undervaluing and underpaying you. That wage gap follows you wherever you go. By eliminating that, everyone - and especially women and people of color - regain the ability to negotiate based on the position and what it's worth - not how they were valued at their last job.

But even with more transparency and the ability to negotiate with a clean slate, Rachel points out that there are still other things that put women in a difficult position. For example, women are often overrepresented in undervalued fields - think nursing, education, administration, or child care.

Rachel: And you know, they're discriminated against and face barriers that result in lower pay because women are typically viewed as caregivers. You know, you can go into all different types of stereotypes and the double bind. So, women often receive very conflicting messages that the stereotype is when men take charge, they are viewed as strong and decisive and assertive. Yet when women take charge, they are viewed as competent leaders, but ones that cannot be liked. You know, another stereotype is that women are the ones that are nurturing and emotional and communicative. But when women try to fulfill that role, they're liked but viewed as less competent and not strong leaders. So, you get these double binds that you cannot do right on either side. And there's all these things. And again, this is a generalization. It's not as if this plays out for every person in their life right now. But it's a generalization that what causes this broader picture of the gender wage gap and why it still exists today.

Stephen: Rachel mentioned a simple thing employers could do to help combat the gender wage gap and recommended a book:

Rachel: ...What Works: Gender Equality by Design is by Iris Bohnet.

Stephen: In that book, Rachel read about a way she could review applications while eliminating any biases she might have herself.

Rachel: I had my student workers print out all of the resumes and then black-out the names of the applicants so that I was reading through the resumes without any inkling of gender. And that was eye opening. I didn't realize the bias that I carried with me in that voice that I had in my head reading.

Stephen: Rachel ended up pulling 10 resumes for interviews - 5 were men, 5 were women. When she had to hire another position a few months later:

Rachel: I did the same thing. And again, half and half.

Stephen:-So, it really seems like redacting any personal information that reveals gender, race, or ethnicity could be a good way to level the playing field. Another thing you can you do?

Rachel: ...go take in the implicit bias tests that are online for free. Harvard puts them out, just type in "Harvard implicit bias test," and you don't have to tell your score to anybody. But I have all of our students do this as a homework exercise in the leadership classes just to prove the point that all of us carry biases whether or not we want to.

Stephen: Knowing your biases can help you take deliberate actions *not* to be biased. It can help inform your decision making. Or, it can hopefully inspire you to surround yourself with people who have differing perspectives, different experiences from you, and alternate points of view.

Rachel: It takes all of us to own solving the problems and listening and understanding and trying to find solutions and doing it in a very informed way, but not projecting your own biases on somebody else. That's really hard to do.

Stephen: Knowing is half the battle here. If you haven't experienced it directly, it's sort of easy to remain blind to the problem. Everything seems like it's flowing along normally, but there are all of these preconceived notions, stereotypes, gender roles, etc. that are sort of baked in to the process and to ourselves. And I mean, I know that as a mostly cis white male I come from a place of extreme privilege. And personally, I wonder if a level playing field is enough. There's an argument to be made that in a way blind resumes, blind auditions - these don't give you the ability to actively create a diverse workplace. The argument for blind auditions and things like that is you're, I guess, trying to create more of a meritocracy, but maybe it's important to know what someone's journey was that led

them to that audition or interview. But even though I haven't experienced this directly, it's still important to fight it. And that's because I know people who have been affected. Like Rachel.

Stephen: As a woman, do you feel or like know that you've been affected by the gender wage gap?
Like...

Rachel: Yes.

Stephen: How has that happened?

Rachel: It's happened from things that I have learned that I probably should not have learned in past positions that I have worked in and knowing quite directly that I haven't been compensated fairly when compared with others. And I found that out and it's made... those were not happy days.

Stephen: But even before Rachel experienced this directly, she had heard stories from her mother. And that's part of what helped shape her, and even before her trip to Southeast Asia, it made her want to work to help fix this.

Rachel: ...growing up hearing her stories of taking leadership positions in banks and being one of the only females at the table and the boys club and what was being talked about or her going in for a raise yearly review and a raise in her boss saying, oh, well, I know your husband got a really good raise this year so, you know, you weren't going to get one this year, you know, and just you know, I it's only been recently that I've really appreciated how much those stories had an impact on my life and how it shaped my thinking about equity and transparency, because it it has taken all of those women and individuals before us to live through those hard times. Because when I talk to my mom about a lot of this, she said, this is great, but you have to understand the privilege that you have right now. You know, and she's very true. But on the other hand, there's still inequities that exist and progress left to be made.

{Outro Music}

Stephen: Special thanks to Rachel Roberts for talking to me and sending me down some really interesting rabbit holes. The intention for this episode was to be solely about salary negotiation, but hopefully we've shown you how intertwined these issues are, and why it's important to work toward closing the gender wage gap, and in turn the race wage gap. If you want to learn more, you can visit the show notes for this page. I'll have links to all the articles and websites that I quoted as well as a link to the AAUW's website where anyone can log on and take one of their salary negotiation workshops. You can also follow the IML on Facebook and Instagram to get updates on when Rachel might be leading another workshop here at Eastman.

Special thanks again to Alexa Silverman. Alexa is like autotune for my brain. She's been so great.

As always, if you have any comments, questions, things you liked, things you hated - whatever - please let us know. My email is in the show notes, *and* you can also comment now directly on our *new* Soundcloud page. We'd love to hear what you think, any topics you're interested in having us cover - it's all fair game. Go out, make art, do good work. From the IML, I'm Stephen Biegner. Until next time.