Trish 0:00

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Steve 0:48

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Speaker 1 1:52

Welcome to At Work in America, the podcast that leads the conversation on the future of work, proudly sponsored by Paychex and Workhuman. We go beyond the headlines to uncover bold ideas, fresh perspectives, and the real stories of people shaping workplaces for the better. And now here are your hosts, Steve Boese and Trish Steed, bringing you the insights and trends that will inspire what's next in the world of work.

Steve 2:27

Welcome the At Work in America show. My name is Steve Boese. I'm with Trish Steed. Trish, good afternoon as we record. How are you?

Trish 2:34

I'm fantastic. How are you today, Steve?

Steve 2:37

I'm great! I am so excited for today's show. I always love when we get the chance to meet with someone and talk with someone from a brand or a company that we've got some experience with. And I'll tell I'll talk a little bit about that later in the show, but we're going to talk about talent, skills development, upskilling, maybe a little bit about Gen Z and the workplace too. Our guest today is Paul Yater from 84 lumber, and I'm gonna ask Paul to share the 84 lumber story for folks, maybe who live in a state that does not have an 84 lumber close by. But Paul is the Chief Information Officer and head of HR at 84 lumber. They are the leading, and I think, largest private company supplying building materials for residential, commercial, they're all over the place, over 7000 employees. Paul, welcome to the show. Great to have you.

Paul Yater 3:28

Thanks for the opportunity. Glad to be here and glad to get a chance to tell our 84 story.

Steve 3:32

Yeah, it is a great story. I said I've got some experience with it, which I'll share in a moment, but maybe for folks who don't know much about 84 lumber, or don't happen to live near one, because I know you're not in every state. Maybe give us, you know, the 60-90, seconds, or however long you want, about just a little bit about the 84 lumber story.

Paul Yater 3:50

Absolutely. so, founded by Mr. Hardy, Joe Hardy, and then now led by privately held family. Now, Maggie Hardy runs up the company and owns the company. We are 320 facilities in 34 states, and we're about over 7500 associates now. So building material supplier. So, you know, we really are a business to business company. So our customers are, you know, large home builders, and so the large national guys, smaller regional builders, down to your individual contractor, your deck guy, your remodeler, you know, anybody that's that's helping in building, you know, building the American dream, as we like to say, and providing shelter for folks in America. So that's who we are. Yeah,

Steve 4:31

The Yeah, the 84 Lumber is, it was great to be in one. Yeah, you mentioned sort of a business to business. I roamed around a couple 84 Lumbers. I used to live really close to one, and honestly, I would go there occasionally. I wasn't doing a lot of construction projects, but I had one pretty big one at a house I used to live in. And I, you know, when you go to, I don't want to knock anybody by name, but sometimes you go to some of these other kinds of home places, and your experience there's going to be. Little hit or miss, right? They're just massive, and they have their own challenges inside of problems with the 84 Lumber, people know what they're doing. They they're experts in their fields, and they can sort of take the time to talk to you, right, even someone like me, who was really a smaller customer, probably, right, walking into an 84 Lumber but you have that personal experience and that hands on kind of experience that day at 84 Lumber, which really makes it stand out compared to some of the others.

Paul Yater 5:27

I think we're gonna get to talk about our manager trainee role, which is our entry level role. And we really pride ourselves on that training to teach the folks to know, learn the construction industry, learn building material, learn product knowledge, and really be able to help those customers in that way that you described. So, you know, we say you don't need to know anything about construction or how to swing a hammer when you start here, but we've got what I would consider world class training programs both, you know, we've got an on site training facility that we put, you know, over a couple of 1000 people through every year. We've got a wonderful learning management solution and other tools around that to help folks learn it, and then, you know, our people in our stores are very knowledgeable, and over 96% of our store leadership team started life as this entry level manager trainee. So we've really got a culture of pay that forward and teach that and you know, you're going to be elbow to elbow with a manager, and those they were doing probably a co manager that's learned and you know, it's just really about who we are, about building that next generation of leaders in this industry, and really teaching product knowledge, systems knowledge, and just helping people understand how to how to finish their projects like this.

Trish 6:27

You know what, Paul? The one thing when I first went to your website, even that comes through loud and clear from the moment you hit the landing page, right, you have the videos you have all about that value that you all place on training and kind of knowing every role within the company, so that everyone does have that. I don't think there are many companies out there that I've seen that are actually taking that really robust approach when they're first whether you're a customer or whether you're a potential candidate, right?

Paul Yater 6:56

I mean, it's really who we are. I mean, it's authentically who we are. That's why we try to do a lot of the day in the day in the life, so that you really understand what this is and what the opportunity is. I mean, we look for folks who are willing to work hard, you know, sponge-learn, want to, yeah, this is probably a non-traditional job, right? You're going to work outside. You're going to work with your hands, you're going to load and unload customers. You're going to be part of building materials, but you're going to learn how to operate a store. You're going to learn how to work with customers. You're going to customers, you're going to learn how to build a book of business. You're going to learn how to run a P and L. You're going to learn about inventory. So there's really a lot here. And you know, I would like to say this is a company of opportunity. If you're really good as that manager trainee in an entry level role, you probably get promoted within six months. You could be a co manager within a year. And if you're really good, and there's opportunity, which we're still growing, and there is opportunity, you know, you could be running your own store here in three years. So that's, that's something that we really, we don't just say that. We mean that. And that's, that's truly what the plan looks like, to be able to get you trained up and ready to go and to learn and be ready to run your own store in three years.

Steve 7:58

Yeah, Paul, but I'm glad you shared some of that, and it's a really incredible story I mentioned in the pre show. Before we turn the recording on, we just, Trish and I recorded yesterday, you know, run soon, where we were talking with one of the HR tech entrepreneurs in the space, Caitlin McGregor from Plum, who's fantastic, but one of the things she was talking about was with the wave of AI that's coming right into industry and into organizations that it has the potential to really eliminate, or really drastically change lots of the so these the sort of desk-based kinds of jobs that young people would take, either coming out of college or even coming out of, you know, community college, or whatever the case may be, right? Those entry level kind of startup jobs may be those images go away, like if you were going to be a, you know, a clerk somewhere, or you're going to be a, like, a lower level, you know, copywriter somewhere, right? Those jobs might be disappearing due to AI and places like 84 Lumber, I think, Paul offer younger folks, especially, lots of opportunities that at least I don't think, or at least not anytime soon, like AI is coming to take away. And I'd love for you to comment a little bit about how you think about sort of that new generation coming in, you know, and how you approach that at 84 Lumber, bringing those folks into into the workplace.

Paul Yater 9:18

Yeah. I mean, it's really, I don't think AI is going to take away these kind of roles. I mean, somebody's going to be there to need to unload and load and the physical nature of this job. But I also think the customer relationship side of it, and really understanding your customer and understanding the products and the knowledge is you know something that you have to learn and understanding the home building process and where are you, or even if it's not a home, if you're doing a deck, or whatever your project is. I mean, that's, that's, that's one of the first questions we teach everybody to ask is, what's your project, right? That, what's your project? And and figuring that out. And those, you know, consultive selling skills and, you know, asking those open ended questions to really learn about what the customer is trying to do is something that I think is going to take a human being. But I think, you know, I. I do think you're calling out a real opportunity here. Is that there, if this is really that entry level role where you can be promoted, I mean, you could become an area and it's not maybe you don't want to run us, or maybe you want to become a sales professional. We've got over 1000 outside sales people that are managing those relationships, so you could build a sales career. You know, we've got several 100, over 450 people here at our team headquarters location just outside of Pittsburgh, where you can get into a marketing or a purchasing or human resources or technology or would you consider your traditional team headquarters kind of function to support the business? But I think could AI help us speed that training process? Could AI help us help with that, that product knowledge? Sure, there may be some tools that we put in that toolbox to be able to help those associates learn faster and be more productive quicker, but I don't think it's going to replace those folks at all. I mean, we're still hiring, we're still growing. We're trying to find ways that we can, you know, put technology in the hands of our folks to be able to help customers more quickly, better, you know, all those kinds of things. Certainly, technology is part of who we are and what we do. But I certainly don't think AI is going to replace our manager trainee or our store managers or what we do. I mean, I don't think we're going to get Amazon anytime soon, either delivering lumber on drones, either, if you want to throw all the technology out there, right? So, so, yeah, wonderful opportunity. You know, really can come here to learn and really be successful and truly build a career. And I would say, connect to something that matters in the United States, right? I mean, we, I believe, we believe that that home ownership, and, you know, have building that American Dream is, is something to be connected to, right? We are a part of all the communities that we serve. And, you know, we love to give back to those communities and just being connected to those communities. So I think it's a little bit something that you can really, you know, have a passion for and connect to. There's just not enough housing in the United States right now that it's, it's a math problem, right? There's just not enough houses out there for all the folks that we've got in our country.

Trish 11:58

Yeah, I think too, when we think about maybe students who are getting ready to graduate high school, right? We're almost to that time of year again. My kids are in college. Steve's son just recently in college as well. And so I think the one thing that we're hearing more and that we've even talked about more on the show over the last couple years is there has been sort of a wave of students from high school opting not to go into college and to pick more trade-related industries. So I'd love to hear maybe a little bit about what are some of the skills you're looking for to be in the trainee program, and is someone coming out of high school qualified to come and start up that path?

Paul Yater 12:39

So let's start with the skills. But I would say short answer to a question is yes. We think yes, we think anybody is possible potential for the for this role that they think is right for them. So what are some of the skills? I think, you know, being coachable is certainly one. We think you've got to be somebody that wants to learn and is willing to listen, be a sponge, ask questions, I would say, very driven. We're an incentive driven culture. So if you like looking at that scoreboard, those are both individual goals. So we give personal sales quotas, and then we've got store quotas where the entire store team is motivated by, you know, the entire store doing well. Those are the kinds of skills that we're looking for. You know, able to build those relationships with customers is important to, you know, able to to build a rapport and have customer focused skills, and then just sort of that grit and determination and willingness to, you know, bet on yourself and be willing to learn and dedicate it's not easy work. I mean, we, you know, we're, our typical schedule is at least 48 hours a week, and sometimes it's more than that. You know, we're open on weekends so that we can serve customers as well. So, you know, and there's a physical nature to it, right? You got to be willing. This is not your, hey, I'm going to be a manager training and sit behind a desk and wear a suit tie. This is right. Hey, look. I like working with my hands, or I like being involved in I want to go visit a job site. I want to be out. I want to be out and about, and I want to be connected to something like this. Could you be behind the computer, you know, entering orders or estimating product or looking at a set of plans and then helping somebody understand their project and putting together a material list and estimating what that project looks like absolutely, but it's, it's a little bit of both. So if you're looking for that non traditional career where you're not just, you know, sitting behind a desk all day long, that this is absolutely for that, I would say one other thing that we see is somebody that's been connected in team sports tends to do well with us, because A, there's a scoreboard. B, it's very collaborative, very team oriented. So those are some of the things that we look for as we're talking to folks and but, but, quite frankly, we draw from all angles. You know, we look for, sometimes it's military folks, sometimes it's college degree. Sometimes it's not a college degree. Sometimes it's people that started college and figured out maybe college wasn't for them, and they're trying to find that career path where I don't necessarily have I can come learn something and learn a skill and learn a set of capabilities and knowledge and be successful without necessarily having to have that degree. If you got it, great, we'll take it, but if not, there's opportunity here for you as well.

Trish 14:52

I think that's important for not just younger people to know and think about, but even for someone who's maybe been in your current career for a long. Time, there are so many people we talk to, whether it's on the show or at events or just out in the world. They love working with their hands. They love doing things where they are learning in the moment and getting to help people. And like you said, I was so glad you mentioned team sports, because when you were starting to talk about I'm thinking, like, oh my gosh, like any athlete would be a great, you know, person for this type of role. And I will say too, I think some of the recruitment things, from the videos to just the information you have on your site. After I was watching them, I went fully down the rabbit hole onto YouTube. I was watching video, and I thought I could see me working there. I could see me doing this. So even as someone who has not had any experience in the lumber business, I think it was really intriguing the way that you're it's not just about the lumber itself. It's about that feeling of camaraderie. And I think a lot of employers now struggle with getting that. So what's your secret to maybe getting and continuing that camaraderie feeling?

Paul Yater 15:59

No, I appreciate it, and thanks for recognizing we put a lot of work and a lot of you know, hats off to our marketing partners who work with us a lot in our recruiting message and, quite frankly, trying to tell the story. I mean, that that's truly what we're trying to do, and and be authentic and be upfront about what is it and what isn't it, and that's why we try to do a lot of that day in the life. But yeah, you know, it's interesting. I would say a lot of the culture has been built over time, but it starts from the top. You know, Maggie as the, as the the owner and the she's, she's put her blood, sweat and tears and put her heart into this place. And I think she's, she knows her and her family have been successful, but she knows they've been successful because a lot of wonderful people that work here. I mean, everybody will tell you their their company, feels like a family, but this truly feels like a family, and people just, we're just collaborative. There's not a lot of politics here. People want to help each other, and it's the culture that's been built. You know, our Chief Operating Officer, who is leading the company, started his career as a manager trainee, and he's, we're committed. It is the future of this company. That role is that key to us, because it creates so many opportunities and create so many leaders in this organization. Everybody is committed to that entry level position and how important it is to the company, and, you know, the growth of the company and the opportunities that we've got. So it's just a culture of who we are, and everybody wants to help and pay it forward. And they've been a lot of the people that are in leadership roles have stood and walked a mile in those shoes. So, you know, and they remember that one of the things about 84 Lumber is everybody will tell you a story about somebody who influenced them in their career and who helped them get to where they are today. It's just who we are. The promote from within is real. Here, there's not a lot of, one to two folks from the outside who's made it, and there are others as well. But you know, like I said, over 90% of those folks, 96% of those folks in those stores are folks in those stores started life in that same piece. So I think there's a real commitment and a real understanding and real care and just, you know, it's a family and we, you know, I think Maggie would say she wants to see common people do uncommon things and be successful. I've traveled a lot with Maggie, and I've never seen her leave a store without asking, What do you need and how can I help you? So it's really about giving everybody in those stores what they need, the tools, the inventory, whatever it is that they define to be successful. I would say of those 320 facilities, we've really got 320 entrepreneurs out there who are really trying to drive their business. And we give them top line goals. They've got bottom line goals. We give them systems, we give them inventory, but how they get from where they are to where they want to be? You know, they've got to be the leader. They've got to be working with customers. They've got to be building those relationships. They're building their team. So it's really up to them to figure out how to hit those goals and what they need to do and how they do it.

Trish 18:36

Steve, you better watch out, because I'm feeling like I'm a perfect manager candidate hero.

Paul Yater 18:41

We'll take it!

Steve 18:44

And I would encourage you! Some days it beats, like, what we're doing for sure. There's no doubt, but I do think there's a lot to be said for that. Like, it's the connection part, Paul, I can hear it in your voice, right? Like the passion for the organization and what you're doing, and the difference that you're making the in two ways, right? The difference you're making for people in their careers and their development and having them be successful, but also the difference that 84 Lumber is making in communities, right, supporting those home builders, supporting those developers and trying to help people like live out their dreams, right? Like, as you mentioned, it's the dream of so many people, right, to get into that home, either whether that's that first home or the next home, right? And we don't have enough of them, right? And so any way that we can do as a society to make that dream more attainable, right and more possible, both the career dreams as well as the home ownership dreams. And it's fa antastic story, and I think, like, one that doesn't get told enough, right? Especially, we were swimming in, you know, AI, and all this, not, you know, it's like, but hey, this is like, real impact happening in communities all across the country, like right now. And I think it's a fantastically motivating and inspiring story. So much so. Trish, you're ready to, like, hang up your hang up your business analyst job and go, go apply at 84 lumber, yeah.

Trish 20:08

Well here's the thing, I think in the corporate world, it's often that we do sort of work on things that aren't directly, like a deliverable necessarily, right? So you never really see the fruit of the labor right in the form of something that occurs. So I think when you talk about I'm thinking back to working in healthcare, for example. And we had people that would volunteer time after work just to work on building things. I was at Children's Hospital. They would go and work with like our grounds, keeping team to help build things, build a garden, build all the and I think that what you're talking about, it sort of scratches both of the itches, right? You can have an impact. You can manage a store. You can do some really exciting things in that regard, but then you also can achieve something tangible, which I think a lot of workers really like to connect to companies that do that, because when you talk to employees, they can't always tell you how their role impacts the entire business. And Paul, it sounds like that's what you're giving them from day one, how you fit, where you fit, right?

Paul Yater 21:15

Absolutely, it's, it's such, I mean, as the guy that heads recruiting and thinking about that. I mean, it's truly we have opportunities here. How do we go find those right people to match with those opportunities? Because we know folks can be successful, and we will do everything we can to help them be successful in every single way. I mean, I've got recruiters that get calls from guy, you know, folks that they hired as manager trainees years ago that are now running their own stores, and they love to see that. And you know, every once in a while we'll do a coaching tree of one of our store managers and say, okay, here he was. He had these people, and now here are, here all of the managers that are on his coaching tree that he created and started as manager trainees. And it's just, it's amazing to see that and hear that and be a part of that, because it's truly about giving opportunities to people, and you can be successful here. It's, it's fun, it's enjoyable, it's motivating. I'm glad you can hear the passion, because I am passionate about it is, that's what we're trying to do, is just match those people with it. It's not for everybody, right? It may be a non traditional career. It's not, we're not a corporate kind of place, right? If that's not what, that's not necessarily what we're looking for. We have corporate roles all that. But sure you know this opportunity, we're trying to find that unique candidate and find that, you know, we always keep saying, Hey, how can I find I wish I could get AI to clone that, you know? Hey, these are what these people look like, and it's a natural fit. We mentioned, we talked about some of those skills and some of those competencies and capabilities that we look for, and what we think is successful, but it's not necessarily always the same, right?

Trish 22:40

Well, I think AI is bringing it, though, that's sort of what we're seeing, even from vendors in this space. It's vendors are going to be able to help, you know, store store managers or owners of these types of businesses truly kind of figure out what needs to be they are, from a skill standpoint, again, working in HR myself for many years, over two decades, it's like I, there were definitely times where we thought we knew what skills were valuable in a certain role, like for sales, for example. And when you really peel it back, it was maybe some different skills that we weren't even tapping into. So I do feel like there is a room for AI eventually to kind of filter into what you're doing from a recruitment standpoint and help you out there. Yeah, lots that's coming.

Steve 23:25

I want to mention a couple things, Paul here. You know that I have in my notes that I think that the team at 84 can be really proud of, and I think is proud of. First is 84 Lumber has been named one of news week's most trustworthy companies in America for the last two years, 24 and 25 and also named one of Forbes America's Best Large and Mid Sized Employers for the last three consecutive years, right? So those are two different awards, but two really prestigious ones. I'd love for you to comment a little bit about that, Paul like you know from your experience, both the trust angle, but also, hey, this is really good place to work. We've got some external validation, right? That, that sort of back shirt, sure.

Paul Yater 24:07

I think trust is a key word, and trust is something that is earned, right? You don't nobody hands. You trust. You have to earn trust from from associates, from customers, from everybody, right? And I think that's just something that we take a pride in, and then people have told us, because they that's, there's a whole process for the interview customers. They interview associates. It's secret sauce as to how they pick it's not like you get nominated for it, and those guys, at least, on the trustworthy side. So I think that means a lot to us that our customers and our associates have told us that they trust us, because I think relationships are built on trust, and success is built on trust. So that's an important one to us. And then I think the other one, you know, talks about success. I mean, hey, look, we are a growing company. You know, we're, you know, this industry has opportunity, but we're one of the leaders in this industry, if not the leader in this industry. And I would say we train a lot of leaders throughout this industry, even if they're not wearing the 84 ball anymore. You know, a lot of those folks that are at some of our competitors have, you know, spent. Some time here with us, and maybe cut their teeth and learned about the industry and learn some of the processes here. So I think it says, you know, we're still opening stores, we're growing there's a physical presence to who we are. So, yeah, I think those are, you know, nice accolades to have that that are reaffirming of the mission that we're on and what we're trying to do and and the people that we're doing it with. Quite frankly, I mean, you don't win those awards without a wonderful group of people that you're working with every day and that that's, that's the other thing that's so special here is it's, it's a collaborative environment. Nobody's trying to this is not a political, corporate kind of place. It's a roll up your sleeves, get her done, kind of blue collar. We're connected to a very hands on industry, and we're a very hands on kind of group.

Steve 25:41

Yeah, Paul, I love that. I just think this is a great you know? I mean, this happens in other places too, but I don't care about those other places. This is a really good American success story. Quite frankly, absolutely, the company is almost 70 years old, privately held, right? Expanding, expanding, as you say, as we speak, still, 7500 employees, plus, according, I'm not quoting anything that's not written down in publish Paul; $6 billion in revenue, right? So we're not talking about a tiny little thing, but, but it comes across that way, right? You mentioned like you've got these 300 locations out there, and they're all empowered, right? They have their goals, and they have their metrics and trying to meet, but they're like 300 small businesses, maybe in a way, right?

Paul Yater 26:28

Yeah, that's absolutely right. That's well said, I would tell you we feel like a $6 billion small family business. That's, that's what it feels like. But we've got size and scale to help us to be successful and drive change, and, you know, help us do the best for our customers and for, you know, all the folks across the United States doing what they're doing. And but, but we're not, we're not too big for our own britches. How's that?

Trish 26:52

I think it's such a good story. Paul, like, what are you thinking in terms of, I mean, obviously your role is beyond human resources, but just in terms of future growth, maybe a year out, two years out. Is there anything that's really top of mind for you? Is it something more traditional, like compliance? Is it something you know, more functional to help the people in the field when they're working? Like, what is really something that you're thinking about?

Paul Yater 27:18

Yeah, I mean, so I'll take both technology and human resources. So it's about our technology and our people, and it's, how do we continue to find ways for our associates to leverage technology? And you know, what does that roadmap and what does that transformation look like, and how do we give people the tools that they need to make the best decisions and serve our customers in the best way that they possibly can, whether that's faster, whether that's easier, whether that's the right information to make better decisions, just putting those tools into their hands and helping them. You know, I was, you know, lots of companies, or product companies or marketing companies. This is absolutely a stores company. I mean, our 7500 folks are out there helping our customers every day. We at our team headquarters, are here to serve our store associates and help them, help our customers, and whatever I can do, from a technology or people perspective, to help that happen. That's that's my mission, and that's what I'm trying to do every day when I when I wake up, and that's what gets me out of bed in the morning, and that's what I hope at the end of the day somebody would say, Yep, you're helping, and we've got the right people and the right technology, and we're doing the4 right things.

Trish 28:16

Yeah, having the two titles together, though, gives you a little bit more leverage than some of us have just had that had to make firewall, seriously, because sometimes those are the two that kind of fight over, what, what are we actually finding impactful? What are we going to invest in? And, you know, in technology? So, yeah, I mean, kudos to you. You've kind of, you can just come up with your idea, and immediately we're like, Yeah, let's do it.

Paul Yater 28:37

That's right, that's right. It's just that easy. It just happens. Like

Trish 28:42

you've got this excitement, this passion, I would say, yes, I don't

Paul Yater 28:46

know. And I've got wonderful teams on both sides that help us to be successful there too. So it's, it's great. We're doing good things and got good people. And it's, it's a good place to be. It's a very good place to be very happy.

Steve 28:56

Hey, Paul, the last question I think I want to ask you is maybe just a bit of a maybe give folks listening to the show like HR leaders, business leaders and all kinds of industries, right? All of them, really, right. Maybe just a little bit of, I don't know, rally them a little bit to, like, try to help them understand that the value of committing to the ongoing development, to bringing folks in at those entry levels, really investing in their development and nurturing that next set of first line managers, next line managers and leaders. I'd love for you to maybe just from your perspective the value of making those investments. I mean, I

Paul Yater 29:35

I think if you think about your people as your most important asset, and really you want to train those people if they learn your culture and are committed to your culture, and you can help them grow and give them opportunities and and train them and teach them. And one of the things we didn't talk about is we move people around a lot like, you know, how the heck does the IT guy end up running? HR, good question. I think I'm just symbolic of, hey, look, if you're willing to do good things, we give people opportunities and. Think the opportunities are endless, and I think that helps to foster the culture. It helps to have people be committed. I mean, we've got some very, very long tenured folks here, because they've never been bored, you know, they feel like they're running their own business. They feel like they're involved in something that they're committed to. They're connected to it, the passion, the mission, is there. And they've never felt like they hit a ceiling, or got capped, or don't know what's going to be new, or don't have an opportunity to do something different and or weren't able to get trained and taught how to be successful, or don't have the right tools or processes to be able to figure that out. I think those are the things that you've got to stay focused and committed on developing your folks and giving them the chances and the opportunities, but you got to listen. I think the only way you know what those look like is you've got to listen to your folks and be connected and be out there. And you know, I like to say, God gave me two ears and one mouth, and I like to use them in that ratio, right? Ask questions, listen, understand, find out from people what they want and ask, right? What do you need? What's what's working, what's not, what's in your way, what? How can I help you? I mean, take Maggie's words, right? How can I help you? What do you need to be successful? Those are the things that you know breed this kind of continuous success.

Trish 31:08

Paul, you are my ideal leader. You know, we get asked that from time to time, when I'm point to you, I'm going to say, this guy gets it right. Thank you. I appreciate that. Really doing a good job. I again, for people who have any interest in this at all, please go check out the website. It's it. It will make you want to work there, really, not just be a customer there. It makes you want to be part of something that's so connected, I think.

Steve 31:33

Yeah, great story, 84 and 84 is, I didn't know this either, Paul, I've been around 84 Lumbers. I've been in one at my project was a big play set thing I had to build, and I had a very complicated bill of materials. I'll tell the story now real quick. And a very complicated bill of materials I needed for this thing was very large. I kind of didn't really know what I was doing, either. And I ended up in 84 Lumber and they helped me. They got all the stuff I needed, got it all together, got it all put together, got it delivered out to my place, and then it was up to me to try to assemble the thing. But that was another story, but I wouldn't it saved me so much time and so much heartache the fact that I was able to go into a store like that and get that hands on help. This is 10-15, years ago. I still remember it like it just happened, right? So very meaningful to me. And I speak from personal experience there. But I Paul, I love this. I love the passion. I love the story. I love the 84 Lumber story. I love how in a world that like, where we can feel kind of cynical about what's going on in the job market, and with AI, and there's a lot of Gen Z ers out there like, oh man, you know, late stage capitalism is conspiring to give me a really bad deal. There are opportunities at a place like 84 but 84 Lumber for folks who, as you say, I'll use your willing to bet on themselves. And I love that, Paul. It's been great to meet you. Thank you so much for your time today. I really appreciate it, and I'm so, so glad we got the chance to talk.

Paul Yater 33:05

Thank you for your time. I'm glad we got to have a chat, and I hope we get to do it again sometime.

Steve 33:10

I would love it. I'm going to send people to 84 Lumber.com/careers by the way, check out what's going on. We'll put that link in the show notes. I love the 84 Lumber shirt, by the way, church. I gotta get my hands on one of those.

Paul Yater 33:20

We ahve a Logo shop.

Steve 33:24

I have to get one of those. I love that shirt.

Trish 33:26

And Paul, where can people connect with you directly on LinkedIn? Where's the best place?

Paul Yater 33:30

Yep, LinkedIn is probably the best place to grab me. Yep. And I'm happy I'm a big LinkedIn guy, so let me know if I can help. And if anybody's interested in a career, I can point you in the right direction. And we've got opportunities across the country.

Trish 33:40

I'm going to be your new like, external recruiter. I think I'm going to meet people there, left and right.

Paul Yater 33:47

We have got plenty of opportunities, so we'll take it.

Steve 33:49

Well, you got two new fans, and ask Paul for sure, and probably lots more. Paul yeater, he's the Chief Information Officer and head of HR 84 Lumber. Thank you so much for talking to us today. Go check out the website, 84 Lumber.com/careers, you're interested in that. We'll put that link in the show notes. Connect with Paul on LinkedIn. We'll put that link in the show notes too. And Trish, thank you. Great stuff tonight. I loved it. Favorite show of the year so far for me, I think.

Trish 34:13

I think I would agree. I would say I agree absolutely. Yeah, yes. Appreciate your time.

Steve 34:17

Thank you, Paul. Thanks so much for being on the At Work in America show and to Trish Steed and Paul Yater. My name is Steve Boese. We'll see you next time, and bye for now.

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