**Interview Transcript**

**Participant 14**

Allison S: Okay, so my first question is just do you mind introducing yourself to me and telling me a little bit about who you are, where you're from, and your education and employment history?

Participant 14: Gotcha. Okay, so my name is Participant 14. I was born and raised mainly in the Bay area. And I went to undergrad or I went to community college first at Los Positas Community College in Livermore California. I did three years there before I decided to transfer to UC Davis to complete my undergrad. Did three years there as well. I could have totally done two and two, but I was like I don't want to be an adult kid, so I started third year each (laughs). And then, after graduating from college, I moved to San Francisco. Lived with my grandpa for about five years. I was able to get a biotech job right out of…a few months after college, so that was my first officially adult job out of college. It was at a company called Chrome or sorry. They were advanced, I think it has a different name now. I was working there I worked there for about five years. While I was working, I was able to get reiki certification, which is kind of like energy healing, I did a one-year massage therapy program, got my certification in that. And then I also did a massage therapy kind of like internship for years at a hospital in San Francisco while working as well to kind of just see what massage in a hospital setting would be like.

(I) decided to go into acupuncture school, so I moved to San Diego in 2010. It was a master's program. It was, I think the title is officially or at the time, Master in Traditional Chinese Medicine. So that took me seven years to complete. Normally it's a four year program but I did the first year full time and then started running out of money and then cut back in the number of hours of school, so I went like super super part-time and then I basically worked at various biotech research jobs UCSD or San Diego company called and I did, about a year, a year and a half, there and then move to a company called Autonomy, doing some lab work there as well.

Then I went back. While I was doing acupuncture school, I did a year and a half, as the symposium coordinator, basically organizing an annual acupuncture conference for North America. They have they've had you worked for from 500 to 700 attendees 50 to 60 vendors. It was at a resort here in San Diego. I ran that for about two years. (It) went fine. It was kind of Nice networking with various acupuncturists in the field, as well as people who've written the books and acupuncture, so it's kind of cool, and then after that ended or after doing running this symposium for two years, I decided to go back into scientists, because I was winding down in my acupuncture studies. Then I got a job at Chrome Bioscience, which is where I was at for five years and that's how I met Tommy. Again, doing more lab work, and then to this January, I or sorry last year December, I quit that job, and now I am in sales but doing sales for laboratory equipment so… Yeah, I’m all over the place (laughs).

Allison S: Yeah, that's quite a lot. Like the history um yeah okay cool. Well so you're in a sales company now, or you're doing lab tech sales now and how long have you been at that job?

Participant 14: Since January, so this will be five months so.

Allison S: Got it and prior to that you were working at Chrome Bio Science.

Participant 14: Correct yeah.

Allison S: Right Okay, and about how long were you there?

Participant 14: At Chrome bio? just under five years.

Allison S: Wow okay. Yeah that's all. um so for some of the questions that I’ll ask about your company and things like that you can refer to whichever experiences you want, because it seems like you have a bunch of different work experiences around.

Participant 14: Okay um.

Allison S: so, can you tell me a little bit more about your current role, and also your current company that you work for?

Participant 14: So the company I work for is called 10 scientific. They basically provide small animals surgical equipment to the labs and research facilities, mainly small animals like mice, rats. We do small animal, anesthesia machines, noninvasive blood pressure, monitors and surgical equipment, and like tools and whatnot, so this is my first sales job ever. This was kind of something that kind of fell into my lab. It was referred to me from another coworker/ classmate who was also in biotech, who was also going for acupuncture school. We kind of like form a little kinship because we have like really similar backgrounds. So she was actually approached by one of her colleagues that she's met over the years about a sales position. She declined it because she wanted to focus on her family and with her growing acupuncture practice, so then she referred him to me and, at the time I was kind of like well I’m not really looking for anything. But let's see where this goes, and I kept saying to him look I don't have any sales position or never had a sales job before. Just letting you know, and so from him, he was more like we just want to hire someone that is in the field, that kind of talks to people, and has a really good personality can just like really build relationships with customers, and so it was like I think I could do that so (laughs).

Um so yeah so that's kind of how I got into this position. What was kind of hilarious about it was that he actually approached me in 2019, toward the last year… towards the last quarter of 2019, and so he was visiting California fairly often like coming every month or so. So every time he would come, he would call me up and we'd go out to dinner and they were kind of like interviews, but like totally relaxed, but every time we met the questions got a little bit more like specific about sales and what I do. So in March 2020, he was like “okay let's fly you up to Connecticut, I just need to get approval.” Sounds great cool keep me updated, and guess what happened. So his company was probably one of the first ones that I knew of. So the company is actually headquartered in Connecticut, so as soon as things started getting bad in New York. The CEO just like “nope, no travel for anyone.” So, unfortunately, that just meant like they had a pause in terms of hiring, so for since March 2020 up through last year, he was basically emailing me every month every other month, just like “we're still interested, we're still interested in.” So once they were able to kind of open up hiring again, he started pursuing me again. And then did a little bit more interviews with him and the HR and CEO person and then eventually worked out a contract, and now I’m in sales.

Allison S: So tell me more about what you do, like what your what your day-to-day looks like.

Participant 14: Yep, so most of my day is kind of spent just on emails. I work from home. I’m aiming to travel about 50% of the time. But because I’m still learning a lot of things, I’m kind of that's kind of what's holding me back, because I don't have like the full knowledge of all the equipment that we have. So a lot of my day I’d say about 75% of my day is just answering questions from customers either new ones or current. A lot of it is also just kind of pursuing leads that we have gotten through conferences or through our website. And just kind of emailing them or calling them and saying “hey we heard you're interested in blah blah blah want to set up a call, let me send you some info.” So it's a lot of that just kind of like touching base with a lot of these customers and just making sure that they have all the information that they need to help them decide whether or not to buy our equipment.

About 25% of the time is spent troubleshooting so we you know, obviously, sometimes there's we call it like human error, when it comes to like learning new products, so what I’ll do is I’ll either get on a call or hop on a video call with them to kind of step them through the product and making sure that they know how to use it, that they understand. I kind of do some troubleshooting with it as well.

And then, like I said about 50% of the time is what I’m aiming for in terms of travel. So right now, I’ve been traveling maybe once like a week out of each month. And that's where I kind of plan like I pick a city or an area and kind of like set up face-to-face meetings with customers. And that time is normally split between existing customers, just kind of getting my face out there and saying “hi I’m your guy you know feel free to call me or whatever.” And then the other half of the time is kind of spent like doing actual demos. So I’ll bring the equipment with me. If they have animals, and I said anesthesia we could like use that and then kind of give them a demo of their product. So that's pretty much it, so far, and like I said I’m still learning.

The company itself it's really small. I’d say there's probably about 20 or 30 people at most. I have only physically met two of them, everyone. Maybe about five more I’ve only chatted with online like face to face through teams or zoom. And the people that have physically met was my manager, who's the head of global sales, and then one of my fellow salespeople. She is in a different territory, but what I took one week to go out to Colorado, and it kind of help shadow her and see how she takes care of sales calls. And yeah there's about seven of us that are on the actual sales team. I’m the west coast guy so I take care of 10 states, including Alaska and Hawaii, basically everything from Montana westward. And yeah, that's large territory, especially since you know, concerning California has one of the few hubs or many hubs of like biotech and research, so I’m pretty busy trying to, you know, learn the territory. And now that I’m getting more confidence in terms of like being able to kind of understand what is where, kind of trying to branch out and like you know snag up those areas that we haven't touched yet as a company so.

Allison S: Gotcha, so this is a really heavily client facing role. You're dealing with customers, most of the time.

Participant 14: Correct, yeah.

Allison S: And you didn't really work with customers at all in your previous job or?

Participant 14: No, so in my previous job at Chrome Bio. It was mainly just doing animal work and research and doing formulation, so we were definitely not client-facing at all. Chrome bio is a contract research organization or a CRO, so you know a lot of the work is dependent on how much we can bring into you know what people can hire us to do for them. So for me, I was not on the client-facing side. I was more on the like “let's execute the work.” There were definitely people in our organization, who are more client facing who would talk to the customers and help develop the protocols and whatnot, but no, that was not me so (laughs).

Allison S: Yeah sure, so in that previous role, though were you working a lot with colleagues, or were you mostly doing so lower?

Participant 14: Um I think it was… okay so here's where it gets a little funky too. So at chrome bio when I first started, I was employee number like three in the department that was being created. And so, what was kind of neat was that, like because I was there at the beginning, I was kind of able to get my fingers into a little bit of everything so helping develop protocols, the assets that we were trying to use for our studies. And then kind of creating like data templates and training newer people that would come in. Over time, as our team grew, I kind of pivoted myself in terms of like “well if no one wants to do formulations, or if no one likes doing calculations why don't I assume that,” and then I’ll take care of formulations for our entire team as long as you guys don't give me too many like lead roles in terms of the projects that we get. And everyone totally agree because apparently a lot of people hate math and excel. So, then, about two ish year to three years, I was kind of split, where I was 50% of time doing like enviable work for them, the other 50% type like taking care of formulations. And then the last two years, two ish years, one of our one of my coworkers in another department, she got terribly sick not due to Covid, something else, but it happened, right at the start of covid. And she basically had to take medical leave and she was one of the formulators for another department. So because I had formulations experience that I gained through the job, my role suddenly pivoted from you're no longer in the department now, you're focusing purely on formulations you're helping this other person takes care of formulations for the whole company. And so that's what I ended up doing for the past like year and a half, two years before I left so.

Allison S: Gotcha. Yeah, did you did you like your different jobs and like if you could rate them on a scale from one to ten, what would you have been both your previous roles and your current one?

Participant 14: Yeah, so my current one I’m calling it a seven right now, just because I’m still learning. It's still a little rough because it's my first like working from home. I feel like I’m still getting used to like what to do with myself, and I’m working from home all day. And of course, there's still a lot that I need to learn, and a lot of it is you know motivation on my end, to kind of get my ass into gear. But everyone says I’m doing fine, so maybe it's just me I put a lot of pressure on myself, so I’m trying to like ramp it up in terms of like my own personal motivation. But again, everyone that I talked to at the company they keep saying “oh you're doing great you're doing fine” like “okay, this is great then maybe I’ll slack little.” I don't tell them that (laughs). For my previous job I’d say was about an eight, and mainly because it was a fun group. A lot of my coworkers were great. Like I’ve made a lot of friends through that company. The hard part and you probably hear this from anyone that's a bit any job ever, is management. Like it just feels like management always seems to like screw things up somehow. And so that's where I had a lot of trouble and kind of ultimately what led me to like didn't want to pursue this new sales job or stay with it. Even in my previous companies leading up to now, the main reason that I would leave was because of management. Like I was totally satisfied with everything except like the management just kind of suck too, so I decided to move on, so.

Allison S: What were some of the things that they did that made it like not good?

Participant 14: They were not good at listening to the workers. And it seemed like as much as they wanted to help us it was just all like a lot of this, but not as the action. So over time, it kind of made me a little bitter person like in terms of working, because I noticed that, when we would get these new younger kids I would start all that kind of fresh out of college, “this was my first official job.” I’d be like “hey I’m participant’s name. Let me give you the lowdown.” Like just kind of lay it into them and, like look I know it's going to sound terrible, it was your first job out of college, but the business, like the company, they're there for themselves, you know you have to look out for yourself. Like I’ll help you as much as I can, to develop your own needs, your own goals. And I can only take you so far, but I will help you as much as I can to get you there, but just know that in the end, it's ultimately your call not the company of how happy you want it, so. That was that the right…Did I answer the question?

Allison S: Yeah, yeah, no that's very interesting, and so overall, what would you describe the culture or like the mood at your workplace to have been like?

Participant 14: So current job or previous job?

Allison S: Both, I guess.

Participant 14: OK so currently again because I work from home, it's been a real shift for me, because I feel like I’m a kind of a social guy, like to talk. I like to meet people become friends go out all that kind of stuff. So to go from like being surrounded by people in labs and like hanging out and going to happy hours to like “I’m here in my apartment oh yay.” It's been something for me that I’ve been trying to get used to on the plus side, working from home it's kind of forced, not really forced me, but it's kind of made me really appreciate the friendships and relationships that I currently do have, and then trying to really maintain them as much as possible. Even if it's simple things like through text messages and like, you know, social media just little things like that. Kike even that's fine because I have, I feel like I have that connection to them still.

And oh man, I totally forgot what the question was oh, the atmosphere of or the how the company was… My previous job again it was the people that I worked with that's kind of what helped me get through the day, knowing that kind of like we're all suffering together, and in that suffering like we bond so. Through that I think that's where a lot of like the relationships really built in the friendships came as a real (something) to have that. And you know, it's kind of weird because, like, I never really thought age kind of mattered but…So I’m 40 years old and to work with people who are like fresh out of college and in the 20s and then they are not realizing that I’m not that…I’m 40… It’s kind of funny to play with, and so you know, when initially, they would talk to me kind of like oh, you know, like “oh hey participant’s name bla bla bla.” They used all these words. I’m like “I don’t know what the fucking you’re saying.” (laughs)

So I think over time, as I got to know me they were like “how come you don't know this.” It was like I’m old guys are like “whoa what like 26?” I am like “no I’m 40.” They’re like “no you can't be 40.” Like no I really, so it's kind of fun just kind of getting a glimpse into like the newer generation. It just seems even weird saying that aloud, but like. But again, because I like to get to know people, I think that kind of helped me kind of understand them more and just really build those friendships and whatnot so. So again, that kind of helped me get through my previous job and just kind of the atmosphere. Actually in all of the jobs I’ve ever had, I’ve been kind of really lucky that everyone around me that I’ve worked with has been really good like. I still talk to people that I’ve had that I’ve met at my first job out of college. Like we're still great friends. We still call talk to each other. They send me Christmas cards, you know, that kind of stuff. So it's really just having those relationships get me through the day kind of ultimately is what helped me survive I guess. And again, like it's because of the management over time that we would see kind of the cracks and like what would eventually break us down and that's kind of what… And I said this before driven me out of those jobs, just like ultimately I love you guys, but I need to look out for myself and I’m not happy so.

Allison S: Yeah no that's fair. So it sounds like you were pretty close with your with your co-workers in general.

Participant 14: Yeah.

Allison S: When you talk to them or hung out with them, did you feel like you could discuss anything like personal matters anything or did you feel like you had to keep it kind of business professional?

Participant 14: Oh no definitely as especially as we got to know each other more and as we hung out outside of work we definitely got to…I felt more open to talk about certain you know other aspects of my life. We definitely knew who were the gossipers, so there is a certain people that I was friends with that, like everyone just kind of knew like, careful what you say, around this person. Like they're great but filter yourself, because if you tell them, then the whole world's going to know type of thing. I’m sure everyone has most friend groups have like that one person (laughs). But ya you know, like I said we would go out we'd go clubbing we go out drinking together, you know, and yeah had fun so.

Allison S: They did so, is it safe to say that you felt like you could be yourself at work most of the time or did you ever feel like you had to act a certain way?

Participant 14: No, I think, for that I’d say about 98% of the time I was pretty much as authentic as I could be. And I think that's kind of what helped me land this current job too. It was the fact that, like even these people who I’ve never met before, coming from a different side of the biotech industry that I wasn't familiar with that. They were able to kind of pick up like oh this the participant’s name guy he does seem pretty open personable. You should grab him and throw him into the wild and see what he does with these customers. The other like 2% of the time, where I kind of felt like I wasn't being authentic I that sounds really terrible um. I think I was just being more professional, in a sense, because a lot of people say that I have this like really sunny disposition. I’m always smiling and so I’m just like the happy guy. That's like usually what people labeled me as, and so it's kind of a good thing and a bad thing. Good thing in the sense that you know it helps me kind of be friends with everyone, including the management. And bad in the sense that sometimes people don't realize how hard like… They think it's like oh he's always happy all the time, like no it's just I don't want to be the Debbie Downer at work. Like it's already sucky enough as it is out in the world. Why do I need to like you know talk sadness all the time? Everyone gets that crap from the US and whatnot. But another way that it's kind of helped me, too, is that, like when things get bad like if I start to complain about it, they know it's a bad. Because I’m pretty chill. Like it doesn't take… It takes a lot for me to get angry at things, and for me to really speak up, and like talk about issues that I’m having so in a work setting. If things get so bad that participant’s name is the one complaining. Then everyone kind of like “oh shit like this must be a terrible thing happening.” So, in that sense, like it's not that I’m being less authentic, I think it just means that people kind of like… I don't know how to describe it. They kind of view me more professionally or more seriously in that sense too when issues do come up because yeah of that.

Allison S: Sure.

Participant 14: Does that make sense?

Allison S: Yeah, that does make sense. Yeah um overall, so it sounds like you don't get angry, very often, but can you think of any times, where you may be did feel angry or a particularly emotional?

Participant 14: Oh yeah, I guess several options, there are several stories there. The second part, again, is because of management like they they've known that this issue has existed, and I brought it up to them I’ve had the receipts, I’ve had the emails, I’ve had… You know I did everything I could to cover my ass to make sure that it wasn't me causing the issues. So at my previous job, we had a particular study director, who… Initially when we hired her, she seemed fine. Like she seemed like oh I’m going to help out blah blah blah, this kind of stuff. So we were like “cool we'll hire you” because our team that's how we are we help each other. We want to learn, we want to expand this group, and in order to do that, we need everyone's help. We need everyone to contribute, because we're still a small team, and we can't just have people like only willing doing their own thing and like and hoping that the rest of the team will pick up the slack.

So, eventually, she got kind of like sort of promoted not really a promotion, but like because our actual director left, and she had to kind of pick up the pieces. So, she was kind of doing double duty, doing study director work on top of like managing, or I would I don't even want to say managing, because she was a terrible manager, she didn't have… Not have that title! But (she) kind of running this team. She would, you know, do things like promising to the client that we couldn't necessarily do for them. She would plan things quite terribly like she would stack the studies that are very intense in terms of like manpower. One on top of the other, we’re basically no one was really getting a break, and it was hard for us to really schedule weekends out when everyone's so burnt out. Unfortunately with our studies that we had the team that I was, they weren't just kind of things like “oh let's just measure things twice a week. if it falls on a weekend someone take care it.” It was like we have this study it's 10 days long. Someone needs, you know needs to be like the lead and be there for all 10 days so. Other studies might be like this one's like a 30-day study like blah blah blah, so as you can imagine, if someone has to be stuck doing one particular thing over and over again with no break, it kind of burns you out. And for some reason she seemed to be getting burnt out too, which we were kind of like you have half as many studies compared to everyone else at this company, how are you being burnt out? And it's just like we couldn't comprehend, maybe there's something going on the background that was the figure. That was the kind of mystery that we never understood, but it got to a point where this happened I think right before the Christmas break, and I’ve had this like I usually try to take the week between Christmas and New Year off. So this was like already in the books. Like I’m going to be gone. And she planned study, and I was doing my formulations things everything prepared. My coworkers were getting the animals ready. They were getting off the labels and tubes ready to start this study. And what I normally do is when I have a formulation, I say like “look I don't touch nothing until you with a study director approves what I created because you're the study director, you need to have it, you need to make sure we're executing this correctly.” Again cover my butt, and so I sent her the stuff and you know, we started dosing because she told me “oh yeah we did it that gets approved.” Cool I got the official email. Let's get it started.

So I’m like prepping stuff for the rest of the week, because I was going to be gone for half the study and I was trying to allocate everything out so whoever was going in so. One of my coworkers could come in and just like all they needed was a totally add crap mix, and they could be good to go. And I’m looking over my calculations, and I’m looking over what was actually sent to us from the client, and I was like, why do we only have enough compound for three days? This is a 10-day study. This is not right. So, I called my study director. She came over to the lab and she's like looked at what I was doing. She's like “where's the protocol you were using?” It was like this one, the one that was in the folder where only final protocols are supposed to be sitting, and she was like “that's not right. This is not the final protocol,” and then she like runs out of the room, and I was like “what?!” Like we already started. We literally started dosing the animals. My coworkers run the other set of leverage. Like what the fuck just happened. It's like “oh apparently, I screwed up the study.” He’s like “how do you screw it up, we just started today,” and I told him like apparently, I was using the wrong protocol and we're like “well we've been using that same protocol this whole time. What's going on?” and apparently, she wasn't paying attention the past like three weeks when we were talking about the protocol each week. And she came back and to labs like “the updated one is in that folder now.” It was like where was this before? She was like “it was on my desktop. I just didn't put it there, because I was so tired,” It was like what???

So, I panic. I’m freaking out. She's freaking out because it's right before Christmas, like this study was supposed to end literally on the 23rd, and then so if we delayed any longer, people are going to have to come in over Christmas and New Year and Christmas Eve, and I got so worked up over this, because I was angry, because it was just all these little small issues that were happening and just kind of culminated into this like big issue. It was kind of… It was on a Friday at 4pm too, which is even worse, and our general manager called us in. It was like “all right, let's talk about what's happening here.” You know, mistakes were made. Let's just move on. Let's see how much we can salvage study, and so I’m like… They told me like “participant’s name, can you calculate how again? If we can rearrange the group somehow, how can we start with this study?” It’s like “okay well, let me go run the numbers and figure it out,” so I run back to the lab I’m like chicken scratching everything as much as I can. And by chicken scratch, I mean like I’m doing what I was taught in chemistry like, write all your steps, label everything, step by step. And so the other RAs were like running around seeing if they could find 100 extra mice like restart the study. And at the like so I’m sitting there with my calculations and one of my coworkers sit next to me, and then our QA guy walks into the lab, and it's like “hey guys, I heard what she did, are you okay?” And my coworker turned in. He's like “well it is what it is.” Like we'll see what happens, what ends up getting decided after she talks to the general manager and the client. And then the QA guy turns to me was like “hey participant’s name,” because he knows I’ve been having issues with the study director, and he was like “how you do it,” and I turned to him, it was like “excuse me my friend, but I don't give a flying fuck about her right.” He was just like “okay bye.” He’s like scampered and like because, again, it when I get mad it's like a very rare thing. So for him to like witness that like it was just yeah… So um I finished my calculations, and I run over to her office and, of course, she left for the day and I’m like you got to be kidding me. So, I take a picture I send it to her. Like that you left like I thought you were helping everyone else, but instead of helping out the team you like left. Here's my calculations, I get home and I just like lay down on the floor, just kind of like okay cool off before you enjoy your Friday night.

One of my other coworkers text me. She's like “hey, why is the general manager mad at you.” I was like “what?!” So, apparently, the study director looked at my calculations and couldn't understand it for some reason, and before he sent it to her, I had all my other coworkers look at it like this, “does this make sense to you? Am I missing any numbers?” It’s like “yeah, that's fine it looks well thought out.” So she apparently complained to the general manager that I was screening up again. And that, like she couldn't understand my numbers, and I was like “I’ve been doing studies for you, for like a year and a half now like, why do they not make sense all of a sudden?” I don't know. So I got angry again. Just like hah (frustrating). So the next morning at 5am, I’m rolling up to work, so I could start prepping. I see a note on my lab door, saying “hey participant’s name, give me a call before you formulate anything.” It was the study director, so then she comes in. I give her a call because she was in (place) already helping them set up. She comes in, and she was like “I don't understand your calculations.” I was like “okay well here, let me step it through you.” She’s like “oh, I guess, I didn't read it.” Like (ironic laughs). So, needless to say, we restarted it. It went off without a hitch. We were fine, but this lady like we've mentioned this to management so many times, I like it sucks that management doesn't see all the terror that goes on behind the scenes, because all they see at the end is that we're making money, but what they don't see is the hell that we have to go through to cover her up for all her mistakes that she does.

There was another time where she literally threw me under the bus to management, where I sent a very thoughtfully and professionally worded emails that I again I had my other coworkers read it before I send it, just saying like “I don't understand what you're doing with this study. This is last minute. I was not aware of this. If you want to start this tomorrow at 6am, I saw your email at 5pm.” Like was the team warned about this? Like you need to tell me like what you really want to do, and apparently she took that email as me yelling at her. The next day I found out that like she… We were going to start this important study again, and she ignored all my emails. She didn't look at me in the lab. She left early right before lunch, and apparently, she went to our general manager's office and was sobbing because I yelled at her and what's cool what is happening.

But again my ass, trying to cover my ass as soon as I saw what was happening, or before I knew that she went crying to someone, I sent the email out to HR, to QA, to my manager, just saying like “hey guys, this is issue was happening again. Like it's a cycle that happens every few months just said, you know, this is what I’m saying to her.” And they all were like that's fine, go talk to her and like yes, because I’d rather talk to her first, before I escalated. But she already left because she was crying to the general manager, so HR pulled me into the office and they're just like what is happening. I was like “I don't know.”

She was saying, like yeah apparently, you yelled at her. It's like “I have not talked to her this morning, and I’ve come to each one, after I send all those emails out, I made sure to see each of us face to face and you guys know that I’ve been alive all morning, and it wasn't until like after she left that it came out.” No it's kind of so. Eventually, we got pulled into a meeting on a Friday at 5am that it was me that study director, the general manager, HR, and my manager, and she like fessed up like I may have misspoken, when she was really upset over the days. It’s like cool. Thank you for saying that you live in front of everybody. I’m still not going to respect you as much. I’ll be professional but I’m not going to trust you but shit anymore.

So those are some of the incidents that have happened (laughs). And again, it just sucks because you know, even when it's heartbreaking. When HR even says to me like “participant’s name, the fact that someone tries to pick a fight with you of all people, like what was she thinking. Thank you for sticking it out for staying here for so long despite all the issues. Will do our best to like correct it.” So I end up leaving and then find out she gets promoted and now she's in charge and I’m like “hey oh my God!” (Ironic laughs)

Allison S: Oh boy.

Participant 14: yeah.

Allison S: Do you feel like you ever were you were you ever comfortable enough telling her how you really felt or did you kind of just have to hold that inside?

Participant 14: Uh no, so I let her know, especially at the beginning, because, again, our group was so small that like I… And because she was like “the leader,” I did not want any weird issues going on, so I kind of took it. And again it takes a lot for me to kind of like do confrontation and all that kind of stuff too, but like because it's a work setting, I wanted to make sure we squish this crap down as soon as possible so. The first time that it happened, you know, I emailed her, and I said her like “can we talk? We need to sit down and talk,” and we like talked about our issues and I was like look, you know you need to communicate better. You need to let us know what's going on. You need to ask us if there's something weird that the client is asking you, so we could actually pull this off and like you know you need to include me on like what's important, and it doesn't help when you flood my email with 100 of the… With hundreds of emails that like don't make any sense to me, because I’m not on the customer side. Like it's I’m not going to sit there and waste my time to weed through what's important. It's just not efficient for me, especially because at the time when I was take care of formulations for like half the company. Like I’m not sitting here catering to you anymore. Like now you are one of many people I have to answer to. And we, you know she also said, like well you know I need to be more communicative and you're like…Sure whatever.

So after that first one, I felt good okay we're back on like even terms. We're back like out of working level again. But every four to six months it would just cycle, she'd be doing okay, and then we get sucky again, and then doing OK, and each time I try my best to like let's sit down and talk about what happened this time.

And again, like with HR, they…you know they acknowledged that like I have had multiple chats with her before escalating. In fact, our HR person was like participant’s name, thank you for being professional about it, and thank you for like being brave to like doing this professionally most people would just like fly off the handle on there to be a bigger mess, but like you know you're a great guy you know how to do this stuff. So I’m like “well very cool.” But then again just to kind of hear him be usual HR crap like “we'll see what we can do we appreciate you. Thanks for hanging out.” But what's really going to change nothing so.

Allison S: Um is this… Would you describe this as your personality to not get angry and to not usually be very confrontational or is that…?

Participant 14: Oh yeah.

Allison S: Yeah, that's just who you are.

Participant 14: Yeah I try as much as possible, just because it's too… Too much energy is wasted.

Allison S: What about like emotions, in general? Are you the kind of person who is pretty emotional or emotionally expressive, or is that something that you either you're not very emotional or you don't express it very openly?

Participant 14: Got it. I think it's harder for me to be more expressive of like the more negative emotions, I guess, like sadness and like frustration and whatnot. And like I said before, like it takes a lot for me to kind of like vent out those things, and it's not that like I don't get frustrated. It's just most of the time I’m like, okay that's like a little thing I try to brush it off, but like with that particular study director, it was happening so often that it just kept like I have enough piling up.

And even in my personal life I don't think like you know… I try to keep them more, I lean towards the more positive aspects of life, so and it's kind of getting over not really getting over by like kind of just learning to balance out the bad stuff with the good stuff. That's something that I’ve I think kind of have learned more over time since graduating college, you know, especially being out in the professional world learning how to really rain in those emotions, and professionally, and knowing how to deal with them in a more positive way, to just like screaming at everyone like that lady does (ironic laughs) and yeah so.

Allison S: Is that difficult? Does it like feel like you have to do a lot to make sure that your professional still or?

Participant 14: Um it's gotten easier over time, especially with… since we've been down here to San Diego. And I think, because in the Bay area with that one job that I had after college before I moved here, you know, I think it was, it was a happier time. My manager at the time, she was also Filipino. I’m Filipino. She was a Filipino and to see someone like a female Filipino in like a lead to another director, but like kind of in a management position. Like to me that just was like whoa and like you're super smart, you're super bright, you're like really intelligent, and the fact that, like we couldn't bond over like our Filipinos miss, and how that kind of like affects our life, you know and in the sciences and all that kind of stuff.

So for me to have her as a mentor throughout that time was like it really kind of gives me it kind of fit into that whole positive aspect of like “oh my job is great I’m just out of college, like all my friends are here working and getting paid to hang out.” All that kind of stuff but it all changed when I moved to San Diego, and it seemed like any type of manager that you could think of that everyone has ever complained of at every job, I’ve had that kind of manager and it just perplex me and like “what am I doing wrong?” Like I’m a positive person why can’t I have cool positive people that are like thinkers? and know how to like talk to their workers and whatnot. So yeah as I’ve moved to San Diego and just gone through all these different jobs, I think it kind of helped me kind of develop professionally as a person in terms of like learning how to manage these emotions, and like not trying to fly off the handle of the sense. Like there were days that were very frustrating, and I would just go home and be like “fuck the world” but again once I calm down and just kind of like “okay, now they got that out.” Like what do I need to do to kind of improve the situation and just kind of tackling it that way. So, for me it's again, it's like I’m trying to be positive, so I could not have to worry about all the negative shit that goes on, because I figure if everyone's happy and that's just less crap that we have to worry about.

Allison S: Sure, sure. Can you tell me a little bit more, and now the speaking of like your previous manager who it was Filipina like, can you tell me a little bit more about the kind of demographic of the people that you worked with in your last role?

Participant 14: Okay, okay. So for that particular job, the one where I had that to you know Filipina manager that was at fair events. That was the first job I had out of college. I’d say the group that I worked with was pretty diverse. Yeah pretty diverse. We had… Actually a good chunk of us we graduated college within one to three years of each other. So it seemed like we were all getting kind of hired around like the same time, same age, so that was kind of nice because we were all able to just hang out together. There were there weren't any huge age gaps, for the most part. You had like all the Ras who were like come together. They're all similar age, and you have more of the managers, like a little bit older than us. Like maybe they had a kid or starting to have a family, so they were kind of like to hear. But again, like whenever we will go out because we were all we all got along pretty well we like hey guys, I know you have families, but who wants to come drinking with us, or who wants to go bowling, and you know. They were like Oh, they told me they're inviting us yay we feel young, so they were appreciative of that.

Um but, again, it was a pretty diverse group, like I’d say it was leaning more toward more like Asian demographic. But, but it wasn't like.. no, we even had a Scottish guy Indian that like it was super diverse.

Compared to my current role as a salesperson. I found out through one of my co-workers when I was shadowing her in Colorado, she's like you know “participant’s name, you're like the first non-white person we hired.” Like that sounds to me that just sounded weird because in all my previous jobs, I felt like it's been fairly diverse, and I was like “wait really?” She’s like no, really like “this company was founded by Mormons. We were based on the east coast. Like you're like the one Asian guy and I joke with her.” Oh so now I’m the diversity hired. She’s like “no, no, no, no. I’m just kidding with you,” but it was just kind of interesting to like hear that. And again because they're all on the east coast, I think they might have more…a few of them, I can tell, to have more a conservative views than what I’m used to hearing, so I get a lot of the oh you're in California. Oh, you must pay so much oh yeah blah blah blah. I’m like Okay, we know it everyone loves California. Don't complain about not leaving here so.

Yeah anyway that's completely separate topic, but (laughs) yeah. That UCSD I fairly say that, like the people that I worked with there was pretty diverse too. I did have another older, much older Filipino manager, and to hear his perspective and how he ran his group was something that I wasn't expecting any kid. He was kind of he moved from the Philippines to here. I think he had like some engineering degree. But when he moved here all he could do was like just like managerial work in a vibe area or something like that. And so, I feel like with that kind of generation, a lot of them had that, like my grandpa too. I think he had like some sort of engineering degree, but here, he just worked like as a tax person or something you know. Yeah and so for him like he pulled me aside, and he was like you know as Filipinos, we need to stick together, I scratch your back, you scratch mine, so you know don't… Like he would talk to me like I was a kid, like one of his kids. He would give me the lecture about like how to properly work in this environment and talk to me about like, you know, when you want your career to be as robust as mine, you know, you, you need to really be serious about it. I’m like, I thought I was being serious like I don't understand where this is coming from. Actually, I do know where it came from, but like it just... The fact that I was getting treated like a kid instead of an equal, and the fact that he had to talk down to me it's like I’m your elder like that's threw me off so much, especially coming from like here's a lady who's a mom who like nurtures her coworkers and like wants me to succeed and acknowledges like look, I know you don't want to be here forever, but until you leave, please do the best you can, and I’ll help you get to where you need to go, whereas this guy was like “do your job, keep your head down. This will, this is what we do here.” It's like so… yeah.

Allison S: Yeah that's very different. And this changing topics, a little bit like the recent past couple of years there's been a spike in the news at least of violence against Asian American. Is that something that has affected you at all, or that you've seen you know…have you experienced anything different based on that network or otherwise?

Participant 14: Yeah thankfully no. I have not experienced it like personally. I don't know anyone either that has had those issues. But it definitely has kind of been like this thing on my mind. Like okay well now that I’m in sales, especially if I’m traveling like what's it going to be like when I go to Utah? What's it going to be like when I go to Arizona, like Montana? For the most part, I think, to that like part of the thing that makes me feel a little bit more comfort, it is that I’m going to be I’m in the science, you know, doing science at work. And for the most part, I feel like a lot of those people tend to be more open, and bore you know more… get more open to like life and other people, and so I haven't had any issues, yet in terms of like feeling any discrimination or any like hatred or violence toward me. But it is something that like is always in the back of my mind, there was this group that they started offering these free online trainings for you know what to do if you're in a situation where someone like violence towards Asian Americans, and they have these like five… They had this acronym and you know.

Allison S: Is it Holla Back?

Participant 14: Yes, Holla Back. So I did that, just because I was like concerned I was like well, this is scary like you know, especially with Covid going on and like. Oh they're bringing the Asian flu, or whatever, all that kind of stuff like I was concerned. I was like well I want to be able to feel like I have something in my pocket to like whip out in case something does happen. And what was kind of interesting was that I, I thought the training was really helpful that I told some other friends about it, and they ended up doing the training to again because it was free so we're like sweet. It's been a couple hours on the afternoon or whatever doing it. And so, I feel like it hasn't necessarily been more comfort, but again, it has kind of given me a bit more confidence, and trying to see you know if I ever encountered that situation, would I be able to? I want to say yes, because the training so yeah. So across many years. Nothing happens to me. We'll see.

Allison S: Have you ever experienced any kind of racial comments or anything like that, at work at a new of your job?

Participant 14: No.

Allison S: No? That's good.

Participant 14: Again I think I’m like one of the lucky people that like just every job I’ve ever had and internship like everyone's been really opening welcoming accepting and all that stuff so I’m…

Allison S: With the exception of maybe your previous manager.

Participant 14: Yeah (laughs).

Allison S: If you don't mind me asking what race and age was she.

Participant 14: Which one? The crazy study director?

Allison S: Yeah.

Participant 14: Yeah yeah, okay I don't know what her ages, and this was has always been like… kind of you know a thing that we always chatted about like offline. I want to see she's probably in her 50s. Maybe I want to I was trying to give her the benefit down, maybe she's just an old looking 40s, but yeah. She's also very German. She's like German um. I don't know when she came to America or anything but like very thick German or not thick German accent, but a German accent. And you know that's all I could tell you sorry.

Allison S: No. Yeah that's fine. I was just curious um. Is there anything else about your work or your job that we haven't discussed that you would want to talk about?

Participant 14: Nothing off the top of my head that I can think of. Yeah I don't know. I always kind of feel like I’m the odd duck whenever I get interviewed and asked questions, because I feel like even with when I was doing that symposium role. So I got that job because I was doing an internship through the marketing department at the school that I was attending. I became really good friends with my manager because we're both we both love to eat, and so we just kept swapping restaurant recommendations, and even after I quit that internship, we still kept in touch. We go out drinking or eating, all that kind of stuff. And now she knows a lot of my college friends, I know here because I was like let's invite (his manager’s name) because she loves to eat. And when she hired me to be the symposium person like during one of the marketing sit downs that we had in general for the school, plus the symposium. They knew that like when they hired me they were like “oh participant’s name, he's a student here. Like maybe he'll give us some insight.” That's like I don't know, and (his manager’s name) like she's my friend, she spoke up like “yeah participant’s name's kind of an odd ducky. He was the one person through one email campaign that we did for that one week in that one month in that one year. He was the one lead that we got from it.” What you actually know what I’m talking about because I told her like I know that exact email and blah blah blah so like yeah that email listserv that you were on like literally only ran it for one month, and the fact that you like, I can pinpoint like and look! Look what you're doing. I think you guys did pretty good so every time they asked me all these questions about like well what student life like I’m like I don't know I have fun you're like friend your to positive. We don’t need all the good shit. I tried to like enjoy like. I don't pursue anything that like I… If it's not going to be fun, for me, why would I go for it, so you know so, even though it took me seven years and there were setbacks like it's still a super fun, for me, and like I just yeah, I’m not going to talk shit unless something bad happened so (laughs).

Allison S: Sure, yeah no that's good yeah I love the positivity I think it's great so. Um yeah I know we're getting close to time, and you have a food truck to go to, but I wanted to ask you just a couple quick.

Participant 14: OK.

Allison S: There are some questions if they haven't already come up. Okay, can you tell me where you were born and where you grew up?

Participant 14: Yep so I was born in UCSF, San Francisco. I grew up in the Bay area so basically my family moved around a lot after I was born, so we lived in Daly Ccity for a little bit. We lived in San Lorenzo San Leandro area for little bit. We lived in Vallejo BeNicia and then after my parents got divorced, when I was in second grade. My mom me and my younger brother, we moved to Livermore, which is the East Bay and that's basically where I grew up after that so from about fourth grade onward all through fourth grade through senior high school through three years of college, I was in Livermore and then yeah.

Allison S: Got it and you mentioned that your grandparent your grandparents, maybe you were the ones who had come to the United States from the Philippines?

Participant 14: Correct, yeah. So my grandma was…She was a nurse so she came over to America, through a nursing program or like they hired a bunch of nurses to… Yeah so when she moved to San Francisco and got a job, then she petitioned, she was able to petition the rest of the family so she petitioned my grandpa and there are seven kids to come over so that's how my mom came over here. My dad, on the other hand, they came over here as a result of they were… My dad was an army, served in the US army. And then I think one of my or his older brother served in the US Air Force, so I think they were able to get citizenship through that and that's how they came to America so.

Allison S: Gotcha okay cool, and you said you were 40. Is that correct?

Participant 14: Yeah.

Allison S: And then my only other question is oh your gender pronouns.

Participant 14: Okay sorry he/him.

Allison S: Um yeah so well that's it for all my questions well, thank you so so much for sharing your wonderful stories with me.

Participant 14: I tend to go off on tangents. Sorry.

Allison S: I know I love it that's perfect.