

How to Manifest Your Ambition with Stacy Brown-Philpot

According to Anna Fels in her book *Necessary Dreams*, ambition is the desire to achieve mastery of your craft combined with a desire to receive public recognition for it. You want to be good at something, and you want your gold star. [Stacy Brown-Philpot](#) recalls hearing the word “ambition” in her childhood, how it was used with a positive connotation for little boys but not for little girls. To Stacy, ambition is being able to put yourself out there to get the thing you want — and that is exactly what she did.

With more than fifteen years of consumer-technology experience, Stacy led the growth and scale of large and small enterprises in the digital economy. She’s the former CEO of TaskRabbit, a company she grew from ten to over seventy markets. Prior to working at TaskRabbit, she served as entrepreneur in resident at Google Ventures. Before that, she spent nearly a decade at Google, leading global operations for Google’s flagship products, Search, Chrome, and Google+. She started her career in finance at PWC, then moved to investment banking at Goldman and Sachs. She’s on the investment committee now for SoftBank Opportunity Fund, a company that works to fund Black, Latin, and Native American founders. She’s on the board of directors for HP, Nordstrom, and Black Girls Code. She has an undergrad degree in economics from Penn, the Wharton School of Business, and an MBA from Stanford.

Stacy’s ambition knew no limits. Here’s how to manifest your own ambition using Stacy’s lessons:

1. **Don’t be a victim of your circumstances.** Stacy uses a sweeping euphemism to describe her childhood, “The circumstances around me were not always good.” She had a good neighborhood, she says, but it wasn’t great. Her mom was a working mom, who co-parented Stacy and her brother with their grandmother. They struggled to make ends meet. “It wasn’t always good,” Stacy punctuates. Stacy’s ambition was born of the thought, *How do I not become a victim of my own circumstances? How do I turn my circumstances into an opportunity? What kind of opportunities can I create for myself, and what opportunities can I create for other people.* At The Cru, a common quote is “We keep waiting for the right time, but the time keeps waiting for the right us,” and Stacy absolutely embodied it in her formative years.
2. **Find your own way.** During her undergrad, Stacy was a member of Delta Sigma Theta, a Black organization founded in 1913, specifically the Gamma chapter, the third chapter that was created in 1918, built on the principles of scholarship sisterhood in service. She came from a family of Delta members and knew she would pledge at Penn. “You have to find your own way into Delta,” Stacy explains, and what pushed Stacy into the program was her desire to serve her community. This desire eclipsed her desire to follow in her

family's footsteps, and it was ultimately the reason she was accepted into the group that enabled her to form the connections she needed to impact the lives around her.

3. **Jump to learn.** Many of us feel we need to learn before we can jump. But for Stacy, learning was the leap. In 1999, Stacy entered the wild, west West of the tech world. When she was at Goldman and Sachs, she understood monetary value. In the tech bubble, however, "clicks" were unthinkably seen as valuable. Her curiosity about emerging technology is what propelled her to get her MBA at Stanford. She immersed herself in a totally different world and found her people.
4. **Focus on the talent, not the title.** After graduating from one of the top business schools in the country, Stacy was offered an analyst position at Google. Many people would have balked at the offer, claiming they were above the role. In hindsight, it's clear taking it was the right decision for Stacy's career, but the reason she accepted it in the moment was because of input from well-informed friends. One told her, "I've been in tech for 20 years, and I've never seen a company like Google. This is probably going to be one of the most defining companies of your lifetime." On the day of her interview, she met 13 people, all of whom were some of the most impressive people she had ever met. At that point, she knew it was the right decision — one that enabled her to work closely with Sheryl Sandberg for a number of years.
5. **Know you won't grow in your comfort zone.** Stacy had to leave Google to make TaskRabbit what it is. When she was established in the world of finance, working with Google had been the risky decision. Her mom told her, "If that Google thing doesn't work out, you can always go back to Goldman and Sachs," but "the Google thing" had worked out! Instead of feeling too afraid to leave what was many people's dream job, Stacy took Google's success to mean that she could take another chance and make it work again.

Learn more about manifesting ambition from experts like Stacy: [Apply to The Cru.](#)