

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 107

Brandon Converse

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Don and Ebony: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting edition at the WCBA Powered, of course by Evergy. Don't forget to like us. Love us share us, follow us. We truly appreciate you checking us out in the house, the converse team. E that's what's up. We have Brandon Converse in the house. How's it going?

Brandon Converse: I'm doing fantastic. Excited to be here today.

Don and Ebony: Yes. I love that. So Brandon, you are one half of a team, huh?



Brandon Converse: team, half of a, a full team, I guess half of an ownership side, but we got a great team around us.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm. . So tell us a little bit about who you are and what you do.

Brandon Converse: So the Converse team, it's I've actually worked with my brother and so Mike Converse and I, are the Converse team.

It's not far as the front stage. Got two other financial advisors as our team and then with support staff of three currently. So a total of seven of us. We really get focused in overall wealth management. For our personal clients. And, the other half of the business is focused around serving the business community.

So we get very involved in 401K 403b for obviously for non-profit and for-profit companies. But we really find our niche in getting creative, thinking outside of the box and, making complex financial related topics. really bringing it down to the layman's terms and making sure everybody kinda understands how finances work.

Don and Ebony: now, who understands how finances work, what I mean really

Brandon Converse: we, we've continued to find that more and more. And, and that's what gets

me excited is, we we're able to deliver that in a package and, and, and really bring it to those that have never had that type of financial education in our education system. Doesn't do a great job of, of teaching us some of the basic building blocks, to, to continue to, to make big impacts in this long term.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm. . So. Okay, Brandon, let's, let's break it down. . So how long have you been doing this?

Brandon Converse: I am, nine years in on the financial side.

Don and Ebony: Nine years in the game? Yep. Nine years in the game. So you have your series 6 63 65, 7. What, what do you have

Brandon Converse: you have ? You, you know the story. The story. So I've got the seven, instead of the six, you can do the six or the seven.

Seven gets you a little bit more, the 63, 65 life and he life and health. And then, big part of what we do, like I mentioned, the retirement plan side. There's a lot of different designations that, we've gotten over the years on that side of.

Don and Ebony: Are you one of those persons who have all those letters behind their names

Brandon Converse: there's a handful back there,

Don and Ebony: So, yeah, those, she's been recovering financial something.

Yeah. Those tests are, are, are difficult to get through. Right. so I, you know, I applaud everyone who are licensed. so you've been a producer, you know, like you said, for a number of years. What, what drew you to this, to this career path?

Brandon Converse: You know, it was very a non-typical route for me. I'm actually an industrial engineer by trade, so, went to K State, was a, a wildcat and went through the engineering,

Don and Ebony: a smart

Brandon Converse: There, was in the medical field for four years.

right? ? No, I, I just pretend to be sometimes. and then was on, went, was working at Garmin for four years. So it was, kind of had a little bit of a different background from that start. And then, like I mentioned, working with, or Mike, my brother, he really, since graduation, tried to convince me to come join him.

I'm like, why, why would I ever give up this great engineering career? you know, I've got this

good opportunities in front of me and, you know, over. A lot of different family get-togethers, probably a few drinks involved. He continued to twist my

Don and Ebony: arm.

That's how they always get you

Brandon Converse: Yep. And, you know, with the support of, of my wife Tara, and, two kids later, and one on the way, we decided to make the jump, moved from Kansas City and, come down to Wichita and, and really give it a try.

Haven't looked back since, and it's been an amazing experience and, Personally fulfilling for, for myself and, and our family to be able to give back to so many of the, the people in the Wichita community.

Don and Ebony: Well, we're glad to have you here. And being a part of the community and really giving back in that way because, you know, a lot of people don't begin to think about financing or their finances until they really need to begin thinking about their finances, right?

Something big happens, they're like, oh my gosh, or they don't have a succession plan, or they don't understand why it's important to contribute the [00:05:00] 401k and, and. What are some of the basics that you kind of tell an individual, especially a young professional, what do you, what do you tell them and what age do they begin this, this journey?

Brandon Converse: You know, I don't know that there's a set age. I think the the, as as you know, it's the earlier you start the better.

And when we're in a situation where, you know, we, we get the audience put in front of us, especially on the company side where, where we're going out and we're meeting, whether it's with two employees or 500 employees, and get the cap, the capabilities to have group meetings and, and tilt, teach 'em the building blocks, you know, what is.

what is pre-tax? How does compounding interest work? You know, there's, there's a lot of, as with every industry, there's so many different niche areas you can get involved with, and where we've found a lot of successes is breaking it down, making it simple and, and not over complicating, you know, the discussions into investments and explaining, you know, the, the intricacies of mutual funds and large cap and small cap.

You know, there, there are definitely times to get into that and with, with individuals. Need to, you know, or want those resources. but we, we get a lot of looks, especially in those enrollment meetings where it's like deer and headlights. Yeah. so, you know, explaining how company matches work, we've got an amazing group of businesses, small and, and mid, mid-size and big companies here in town, you know, giving out tremendous amounts of dollars, to their employeee

base for participating.

some of them are even via profit share, so they don't necessarily even have to contribute, but understanding, you know, how those matches. , why you're taking advantage of it. explaining how tax credits get involved, to make it affordable. And it doesn't matter if you're, you know, making \$10 an hour or if you're making a million dollars a year.

there's ways to create plans and there's ways to defer income to make it work for the, each of those situations. Mm-hmm.

Don and Ebony: So as a small business owner, when do I come see you to say, Hey, I have this many employees. How can I enhance my benefits and what are the tax advantages for me for offering those types of things?

Brandon Converse: Sure. You know, it, it comes down to two different things, usually for, for a business owner when they're looking for, to implement a retirement plan or enhance what they've got. one, it can be personally, they wanna be able to shelter money for themselves. their family create a legacy.

For themselves, and usually through an employer sponsored plan, you can do a much higher amount, through that obviously. The second part of that is your employees, and you wanna be able to give back to reward your employees. You want to keep good employees around. You wanna incentivize people to come to you.

that's a big part of not only Wichita, but you know, e each of these employers are, are trying to bring different benefits to the table. you know, really want to bring the best of the best in their fields. and, and they understand for the most part that, you know, having this financial piece for their employee base can help them, not only now, but longer term, when, when you're looking at, you know, whether it's 5, 10, 30 years down the road, the impacts that putting monies aside can do for

Don and Ebony: And what about, is that the same hold true for like nonprofits? I know we have a number of listeners who are, you know, in the nonprofit world, a lot of times with nonprofits, you know, you're like, man, we, you know, trying to keep the doors open. How can we offer this additional benefit?

Like, can you talk to us about, about that? Cause you even, you talked about 403 and things like that. Can, what, can you even tell us what.

Brandon Converse: Yeah, the, you know, the nonprofit space, it's, it's pretty unique. And honestly, some of the best plans that we actually work with are nonprofits. They're very giving back to their employee base.

Sometimes the budgets are tight, but usually they've found ways over the years to make the, that financially work, for them. But, you know, it just comes down to where are they trying to push their resources. Obviously some of those have big boards, that have to get the approval on. Budgetary, constraints or concerns and, and you know, there are obviously in a lot of those, they've got executive directors, they've got the CEOs that are, you know, in positions where they are trying Pohto, Pohto, Pohto potentially defer income as well.

So they're different rules that go into 403 or 401ks. But, at the end of the day, a lot of 'em overlap and there's some pretty creative things that, that you can get into on both sides of the coin there.

Don and Ebony: both sides. That's what's up. I appreciate that. So, really quick before I turn it over to Don, I, I'm curious, are you guys on TikTok? It's a real serious question here.

we are not, we're

Don and Ebony: not what?

Brandon Converse: we're not, on a professional level, and I'm not personally, I, I've been told I need to,

Don and Ebony: yeah.

Brandon Converse: yeah. my, you know, I think that's a battle at our, at home too, with a, with one teenager right now. and

Don and Ebony: I bet you your teenager can help you get this started

Brandon Converse: We're trying to shelter her as much as possible at this point, but,

Don and Ebony: this would be, an entry point that would probably be acceptable to, to the household, right? Because you, you guys already do educational videos, right?

Brandon Converse: We do

Don and Ebony: see,

Brandon Converse: Yep. So we have, we have talked about it. that that's actually a big opportunity for us. I think moving forward we're, we've continued to refine our brand.

who is the Congress team, how do we market in our community? obviously there's the [00:10:00] Facebook and the LinkedIn, but we're always looking at different avenues to do that. We, this year we did our first billboard here in town, so that

Don and Ebony: ah,

Brandon Converse: was kind of an interesting thing for us. And, you know, you never know.

With marketing sometimes it's like you're have got a shotgun approach and you never quite know, completely how that's worked. But I think that might be TikTok. But on the TikTok side also, who we don't know who that target audience may, may or may not reach

Don and Ebony: Well, Don is an expert.

Brandon Converse: I go watch some of his dance moves.

Don and Ebony: Oh God. That's probably what you don't want, but , we finally agree on something. Yeah, we agree. But you, you mentioned your brand. What is your brand? What sets you apart from other, there are thousands of advisors out there, right? What is the Converse team's brand?

Brandon Converse: You know what? I think the big part that makes us different is our, like I mentioned before, the innovative approach that we bring to planning on, on a personal side, we, we really focus on tax.

and, and that starts from a business level, for business owners, but also for individuals where they're looking to diversify some of the things that they may be. Doing now. but what some, some ideas that maybe CPAs aren't bringing to 'em. They're accountant, their attorneys where there's just countless meetings that we're in and we just maybe throw a plug in on, on this different, whether it's a tax credit for a small business owner for starting plans or for individuals doing, you know, simple things that, or what we consider simple like Door Ross and why hasn't anybody brought these to our attention before.

Brandon Converse: So that, so I think that's one area that we really differentiate our aid ourselves. Not necessarily getting into the weeds all the time on investments. We are completely independent with everything we do through our broker dealer. And so while we have access to everything, that's probably not necessarily a different differentiator on that side.

Don and Ebony: That's

That's critical though.

Brandon Converse: It is, it is. We have to have access to it.

Don and Ebony: Yeah.

but we are, I, I would say a big part. We also very responsive. you know, we, I couldn't tell you how many times we get a call, or a, a follow up maybe that we've been maybe dripping on a company, whether it's one year and heck, even some here in the last week, we, we picked up a new company retirement plan that we've been talking to for seven years,

Don and Ebony: Yeah. Wow.

Brandon Converse: And, we just got the green light.

We're moving forward, but it's, we, we are there to answer the call. We, we are, you know, I. can tell you same day most of the time. I, I tell you, 99% of the time, you know, it's just, we may put the client first. and while all advisors and all industries try to do that, we've really put our stamp behind that and being responsive, and acting as that liaison between that, the personal clients and then the, the business side where there's the 401ks and there's the TPAs and the record keepers that all have to be in incorporated in, in those, and, and we really act as the quarterback to that side of things.

Don and Ebony: No, I love everything that you just said because, you know, having a trusted, person or advisor to say, Hey, have you thought about this Kansas, you know, service tax credit or whatever, and you're like, what? Mm-hmm. , what is that? Why haven't I known about this? Is this helpful? Having someone, because a lot of times, like you said, the, the accountant sometimes don't bring it to your attention or they don't know.

So I think that's really, that's key and that does set you apart. I was just reflecting. I've been around a long time.

I don't think I've ever met or talked to anybody whose last name is Converse. So I'm gonna ask, are you part of the Converse shoe brand?

you know, not as far as I know. I get asked that quite a bit, but, you know, I wish there was some type of, royalties coming my way, but, that, that hasn't been the case so far.

Don and Ebony: Excellent, excellent. And I have to ask, did you grow up here?

Brandon Converse: grew up military family. My dad was in the Army, for about 23 years, so we moved around quite a bit, growing up, but, ended up in Manhattan and, went through high school there. Obviously stayed for K State and then, been in Wichita now for, like I mentioned, a little over nine years.

Don and Ebony: Right. Excellent. Oh, that was good. Except for that Manhattan, I mean, that is detour the best. That just part of in the road. Everybody has a bump in the road. No,

Brandon Converse: well, I gotta give the shout out. Shout out to, both. Manhattan High just won

the 6A State, that's right. State title and football. And, and obviously we got the, the

Don and Ebony: big 12.

Brandon Converse: Big 12. That's what's up. Are you going to, new Orleans? At this point, no. But, just was having those conversations with a few friends last night, so it, it may not be completely out of the cards, but I'm not sure how we're gonna make that work yet with the, with the family.

Don and Ebony: right. Gotcha. In, in your business, how do you define success?

And are you there yet,

Brandon Converse: you know, I think success is a, is a moving. You know, target, probably for all business owners, but you know, while each win is, is powerful for us, for as a team, we celebrate each of those wins and we try to take track of what. You know, what we do year to year. so we're tracking, you know, the wins. so whether that be assets in new company plans, but it's always trying to do things better.

be more creative, be innovative, refine our processes, and then tackle out, tackle our, the challenges in front of us. so, you know,[00:15:00]

Don and Ebony: I

Brandon Converse: I think we've had a lot of successes, within our firm. We were the leading advisor team, within a Keating and Associates, which is kind of a parent company, if you will, to, to the Converse team.

and so we've had a lot of wins through the years. but we continue to, to move that target to continue to be better and do better to our clients, and provide great value to those that we get to serve.

Don and Ebony: excellent. And hopefully I didn't miss this earlier, but as you and your brother.

and who else is part the, your organization?

Adam Eilert is another advisor on our team.

Angela Malley actually is her third day in. She's a, CFP and CPA that, we, we just, she just started with us. Yeah. Erica Farney, Renee Kinner and, Monica Young. So we've got a great squad around us and, and they, they do their best to try to polish this up and make us look good.

Don and Ebony: yeah.

Excellent. Now, what kind of culture you got over there for this squad?

Brandon Converse: You know, I think we're, we're really a work hard, play hard group. you know, we, we have, you know, not necess. Day-to-day expectations. so much of what we do is selling hopes and dreams to people. So it's not like we're on hard deadlines. We're a lot of times looking 20, 30 years out, but we build a culture of, you know, client first.

I think and, and everything we do. What, why are we doing it? what, how can it benefit the, the end client? But we, we do want to empower our staff to, you know, where are the, where are the holes? Mike and I, while we might be the visionaries of what are we doing next and where we're going, there's so many opportunities, not only in our industry, but just even within our office to, to continue to.

Brandon Converse: Refine that process, and, and bring in different perspectives of, okay, well this may work with this group, but not, you know, this group and it, but we want them to be in charge of their destiny. we've, we've got the opportunity for internal growth, whether it's taking on new projects. If they want to become advisors.

That's what Monica's track is right now. She's working on getting her designations and we're so excited for her and, and the the different perspectives that she brings to our team. coming out from a banking and ethanol background with without, you know, having a whole lot of financial side to her. but she, she bring really rounds us out well, and, and bringing that type of, different perspectives to it.

Don and Ebony: Hopefully she'll onboard better than somebody I brought on from that section. Well, listen, I see where this is going to break.

And for and for, for Don's benefit, before we hear from our sponsors, Mike, I'm sorry. Oh my gosh. Brandon

Brandon Converse: alright. Not the first time. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: Mike , but Brandon, could you tell us you. Is it wise to check your account every day? I mean, because, you know, e especially right now, I mean, things are kind of wonky. You're like, man, I've lost everything.

Well, not everything

Brandon Converse: Yeah. You know, typically, no. most, most of the clients that we do work with are longer term investors.

Mm-hmm. , You know, unless you're out there doing day trading, which isn't a part really of our

practice.

Don and Ebony: I tried that. That's not the way to go. my husband said, if you do that again, , let's do it again.

Brandon Converse: mean, and that, and that brings, that brings so many different heartburn and, and the pains of seeing it, you know, it's, it's. While you do that and, and you know, we get, we deal with usually the, whether it's monthly or, quarterly statements. So usually we're encouraging people to look at their statement just to get a general idea.

You know, we are always trying to, when we do our enrollment meeting, use us, use us as a resource. And if something doesn't look right, Reach out. you know, when we, when we do have the opportunity to serve, you know, it's close to 5,000 different employees or employees through the Wichita area, we don't, we can't actually go out and look at what, how every employee's invested.

We've got great default investments for 'em, but at the end of the day, it, it does take somebody looking at what they're doing and then asking, am I on the right track? And how.

Don and Ebony: Yeah. So long we're in it for the long

Brandon Converse: Yep. Game be with it on the long

Don and Ebony: All right. All right. I guess I can, I'll take that advice, . All right, Francis, it's time to hear a word from our sponsors. We'll be back for more with the Converse team.

Welcome back friends. We're here with Brandon Converse of the Converse team, so we've been just really talking about his business and how he's helping small businesses, nonprofits, and individuals with their finances. So, Brandon, you've been back in Wichita for nine years and you've been a part of, the Converse team and you've helped it grow.

Talk to us a little bit about the, [00:20:00] growth spurt that you guys have. Do you have anything exciting coming up?

Brandon Converse: You know,It, it has been pretty wild a year over year, continuity. The, the overall asset level will grow, but just, the number of families and companies we've been able to help, which leads us to continuing to continually needing to expand. as I mentioned, we just added a, a new advisor to the team just three days ago, so really pumped about that.

But we're gonna continue to, to be on that journey of continuing to look for advisors, or those that maybe are looking to be in that path, which. Also comes with support staff in that, that realm. currently we're getting ready to, to redo our, the basement of our location now. So it's gonna add about four or five other office spaces in that zone.

So, we are building out, for that continued growth of our team and, and really excited about the, the opportunities ahead of us. We've got, there's a very bright future in, in just the way that we've seen and the opportunities that are. That are ahead of us. the, the nice part on the business side, it's, it is a slow.

Don and Ebony: Process to, to add clients. These aren't, you know, you're not calling a business owner or, or HR or, or cfo F and they're not making those decisions lightly. It's not like next week they'll be like, okay, sign me up. You know, you mentioned earlier that you've been working on a client for seven years.

Mm-hmm. seven years. Yeah.

Brandon Converse: and, and there's many others that have been a lot longer than that.

And so, you know, nine years in and, and it's pretty neat cuz we've got a. We call 'em warm lead, warm leads. you know, the, the great part of, of being an entrepreneur and and being in this area is, is you do have to be bulletproof. And, nos today don't mean no in three years, or five years or 10

Don and Ebony: right, right

Brandon Converse: down the road.

So continuing to show up, do the right things, you know, and not, not do anything that, that are gonna upset people. you know, that's, that's kind of how we've continued to grow and, and build that reputation within the c.

Don and Ebony: well, congrats on the expansion and, and growing.

If you need an interior design person mm-hmm. , you know, let me know. I have some great ideas for . Mm-hmm.

Brandon Converse: I like it.

Don and Ebony: I'm just saying, just that out there where she was going. So, Brandon, tell us who is your ideal client? Like, would you look for me, would you look like for someone who's near in retirement, like Don, who do you look.

Do you look for small, like we have small businesses? I mean, like what, who, who's your ideal client?

Brandon Converse: Sure. I think when we look at it, we want somebody that is, that's coachable,

that does have

Don and Ebony: not Don Wow, okay. Coachable. I'm

Brandon Converse: coachable, growth potential. you know, we, we've got, whether they're somebody that's starting from zero or somebody's got. You know, half a million dollars at, at the end of the day, if they're, if they're not gonna be able to put monies aside or do some of the, with or utilize some of the tools that we're trying to share with them, there's probably not the opportunity for us to help 'em.

Don and Ebony: But you do start with individuals who, don't have a plan.

Brandon Converse: We do, we do all that on the business side. We are at a point where we aren't necessarily doing that on the individual side unless we are able to help facilitate them on the outside. So whether that's business owners, execs, key employees within businesses where maybe most of their assets are wrapped up already in the 401k, we're there, we can get really creative, with outside planning ideas that, you know, most advisors won't necessarily.

Take the time to, to mess with where we, we know this is a long game. And, and not only are we gonna show 'em how to do the baby steps that maybe they're not doing on their own, we can do that. But then we know in 5, 10, 30 years down the road, that's gonna be a, a great opportunity for us to continue that relationship and for all parties to, to have success.

You know, I, I think a big part too with our clients. We, we like to see them when they're, where they are appreciative of.

Don and Ebony: of guidance

Brandon Converse: And like I said, they're, they're respectful, but respectful, not just to us, but of the, of our staff. our staff work hard and we really appreciate everything that they do. and it's, it's phenomenal to get the feedback and, and when, we have clients reach out and say how, how pleasant it has been, the experience of working with our staff, it's, it's, it, it makes me extremely proud of the team that we've built and, and the culture that we've been able to create.

Don and Ebony: that's, I mean, that's rewarding, isn't it? And you know, your job is kind of a high stress job. You know, you, you have people's futures, you know, in your hands and your team's hands.

So that's a lot. So I'm wondering what type of mental health, things do you do to balance work, life and family and all those things and community?

Brandon Converse: you know, it, it is. So there no day is the same for us. And, and that's a, a good thing, but also can be lead to a lot of chaos. Mm-hmm. , you know. But, I've been fortunate

enough with, with my wife Tara, she, she takes a huge burden, from the family side of things. I try to be as active as possible when we've got three children that are, extremely blessed, but also very, Crazy for us that they are doing extremely well in sports, and school activities.

So we are on the go nonstop. And she, she does bear the burden of that. But, I, if I can get it on my calendar, you, I'm, I'm there and, and that happens

They get their athleticism from Tara. Yes, , [00:25:00] both sides. It's kind of the, it's, it's great because she was a, a stud, athlete as well

Don and Ebony: and Okay.

Brandon Converse: it was pretty, it's pretty great to see, see them, our kids succeed through, in, in a, pretty much whatever they put their mind to.

And, and it's, it's nice and also frustrating for us at times, sometimes going back and looking at Covid where everything kind of stopped.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm.

Brandon Converse: about the, a pretty nice little break for us too.

Mm-hmm. . other than that, I, I do try to get out, have a, a good friend that introduced me to getting up at four 30 in the morning, going

Don and Ebony: Four 30.

Brandon Converse: I know, yeah. Getting into the gym. and, and so we been made that a routine. It's been about two years now of, of going in. and you know, shout out to, to the chamber and the, the, the podcast at YouTube put together cuz that's been a staple of. what I cycle through. And sometimes it's music. A lot of times it's the, the chamber accelerator

Don and Ebony: Yes. Shout out to the accelerator.

Yeah.

Brandon Converse: Heck yeah. And, and then a little bit of Craig Rochelle and, and getting just that, the inspiration before getting the day started and, and kind of clear the mind and, obviously feel a little bit better too. And when you get that going so that, I found that, that is, that is the only time that is truly my time.

Get home before anybody wakes up in the house. you know, nobody's asking me questions about work and, it's, it's a great way to get the day started.

Don and Ebony: So, you know, we've kind of talked about family and we've talked about how you start your morning, but let's talk a little bit about community. It sounds as if you, have started a new role here as a director at the Chamber of Commerce.

Brandon Converse: So I'm gonna be excited to be able to bring some talents and, and different perspectives, hopefully, to the chamber board this year, you know, humbled to be part of that. Had, Jose Gutierrez in invite me and, and John Rolf, you know, the fact that they thought that highly of me to be able to bring me in.

it, it was. Pretty big honor and then to find out at Honors night, back in December that we're gonna be, that I guess made the cut, to be part of, that's pretty neat. but definitely have been excited to continue to be part of the, the Chamber Champions Group build about welcome new chamber members to the community.

love that part of it. you know, being able to make them feel at home with the Chamber and, and be able to spread that ag advocacy that the Chamber, can, can bring to small businesses and, and mid-size businesses throughout the.

Don and Ebony: business.

Yeah. And how long have you guys, been members

Brandon Converse: going back to Mike? He, he, 20 years.

Wow. So I obviously, since I started, that was one of the first things he said, we need to be active in

Don and Ebony: chamber. Mm-hmm.

Brandon Converse: know, so, at that time it was just the tag team, the two of us knocking him out. So, but he, he's been very active starting way, way back when he, he came to Wichita, I wanna say back in 2002.

Don and Ebony: That's wonderful. You know, I think that it's always refreshing to hear business owners and like you said, starting as a two person business and now have expanded the benefits of how the, the Chamber has assisted you in that growth. And so maybe as we're closing out, maybe can you share some of those benefits that the Chamber has provided you?

Brandon Converse: You know, I think with, as with most things in life, it's what you put in is kind of you get out tenfold and it is better to give than receive. and, and the Chamber does that for, for businesses. It's if you are active, if you want to take.

Ownership and being, part of something. You know, there's such a great community of businesses that you have, you know, a, a warm lead to, and whether that's in a sales role, a marketing role, or getting your business started, that they're, they're the people here that are part of this want you to succeed.

they're, they're your advocate, whether that's in Topeka or in dc. and then also here at home to point you in the op in the direction of potential new leads. Bringing in, you know, whether it's new employees, and they're just a wealth of resources. And, and I've been fortunate enough to, to be on the side of that with, you know, the small business awards over two of the last couple years.

Brandon Converse: And, and it was just a great experience. And, and the things that they do have, have come so far, over the, the last, you know, 10 years since I've been here. And I know even going back to the 20 years that Mike's been involved, the, the growth and the continued, e evolvment that, that the chambers brought to the city of Wichita.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm. . I, I, I love that. And I love that you guys chose to put your business right here in Wichita and, and support the community in that way. Very last question, Pharrell . And then we're gonna . No, seriously. This is it. This is it. I think. where do you draw your inspiration from? Just.

Brandon Converse: It's a good question. you know, it, for mine day-to-day, but probably the, my biggest inspiration has been my wife Tara. you know, she, she pushes me in in ways I didn't think possible. Makes me think outside of my, probably the engineering side of me that, is very black and white.

She brings creativity, and, and grace to so many things that she puts together for us, for our family personally. But then, challenges some of the things that we, we have really created as a brand for the converse. While we, you know, the team and Mike inspire me a lot, a lot of the things that I might bounce off her, and, and never give her enough credit for it, but she, she [00:30:00] really has been a big part of helping us refine how do we do our, some of our client touches and, and make them a, a personal feel.

I don't know whether it's. By nature what it is. I don't think that I'm always the best at, you know, ma having those personal touches. And, she has, she has shown me different ways to do that. and, and how, and to continue to better our, our relationships with our clients and, and continue to prospect

Don and Ebony: That's wonderful. Well shout out to your wife, Tara. That is, that's something very special. Thank you for acknowledging her in this platform. I'm sure she's grateful and thankful for that. And last thing, Pharrell, what can the Wichita community do to help your. What can we do?

Brandon Converse: you know? I, I think there's, you've done so much. I mean, the, the big part is given back to all the small businesses and, and given, given.

Don and Ebony: the

Brandon Converse: All of us a shot. buy local, stay local. a few opportunities we've had this year happened because we were able to take over some, some big plans here in town that were not, withheld with advisors here in Wichita.

Mm-hmm. . we were able to bring not only obviously the Wichita field to it, but really bring some creative ideas to,

Don and Ebony: a,

Brandon Converse: A, an opportune board that they were looking for different things than just a 401K guy. so we were excited to do that. So I guess, you know, if you're looking for opportunities or wanting different ideas, Just call us.

We're, we're, we're wealth of knowledge. I would tell you there aren't many situations that we get in where we're not gonna know the answer to the question you've got. Cause we've, we've dealt with it. and so, you know, there are no dumb questions. And that, that's kind of the big part of what we, what we do is we, we, people are intimidated when it comes to money.

It doesn't matter if you're, again, that, that hourly folker or the ones that are running the business, sometimes you don't know the questions to ask. So we're able to. Take a look at what you're doing and challenge. Why, why are you doing it this way? What if we took away all the rules? What if we showed you different ways to create some credits?

And it's always that aha moment for, for those. And when, when we get that chance to get, get our at bats

Don and Ebony: I love it, Don. Excellent. You done? No. Yeah. like pass an offering plate three times. , but that's okay. hope pastor Pastors listening to this. Yeah. No. . I'm probably gonna get an email , but talking about us. Okay. You've dealt with Ebony.

Long enough time to have some fun.

we're gonna do word association. I'll give you one word. You gimme one word back. That's not wrong cuz it's your word. Are you ready?

Hope so.

I have a couple too, so just, okay. I you, you're into this finance thing, so I, I'm good with that.

Leader,

Brandon Converse: confidence.

Don and Ebony: success,

Brandon Converse: Persistence and

Don and Ebony: college.

Brandon Converse: K. State memories.

Don and Ebony: I I started to skip that, but I gotta be. What about money? Ooh.

opportunity.

Don and Ebony: Opportunity. I like that. Excellent. Failure.

Brandon Converse: Well, that's probably what I would say for opportunity as well. I mean, you, you gotta learn from your failure, so I think opportunity would fit that too

Don and Ebony: Retirement. Nice.

future

Don and Ebony: Hmm. Entrepreneur,

Brandon Converse: Bold.

Don and Ebony: Wichita,

Brandon Converse: Evolving

Don and Ebony: vacation

Brandon Converse: adventure.

Don and Ebony: tax credit. I knew you had one. something. I got that look.

Brandon Converse: Was that a question? Yeah. Oh,

Don and Ebony: that was a word. It words, but find them.

Brandon Converse: Find them.

Don and Ebony: them Find them. Nice. Vacation.

those were the adventures.

Don and Ebony: Oh, okay. Hero.

our veterans and service men and women.

Don and Ebony: Nice. Wichita chamber

Brandon Converse: advocate,

Don and Ebony: family

Brandon Converse: inspiration,

Don and Ebony: fun.

Brandon Converse: friends.

Don and Ebony: You got a last one? Yes. Trusted advisor.

Brandon Converse: The Converse team.

Don and Ebony: Yes. Woo Oh, nice.

Last but not least, you gotta tell the truth about this one my friend. Beverage

Brandon Converse: bourbon.

Don and Ebony: Yes. That's, we're good friends.

Excellent.

Thank you. Zvi

Brandon Converse: I can handle that. I, I've got kind of a, a weird thing with when it comes to drinking, it's probably not the best thing, but it's a, I don't, I'm not picky, so I, can go across the board.

Don and Ebony: Yeah. Again, again, my friend I, I was gonna say that, but you beat me to it.

Thank you for coming through, my man. Truly appreciate you.

Brandon Converse: I appreciate the time.

Don and Ebony: Yeah. We are excited to, finally have this conversation with you. So thank you for being here and sharing your story and congrats on all the wonderful things that's going on with, you and your.

Brandon Converse: Thank you so much.

Don and Ebony: All right, friends, we've reached the end of the segment today.

If you would please like us and share us. Let us know who you wanna hear from next. Until next time, peace.[00:35:00]