

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 143

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler

Don and Ebony: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting addition at the W C B A, powered, of course, by Evergy. Thank you for listening. Don't forget to like us. Love us. Share us. We truly appreciate you checking us out. Today, we are excited to have JR custom metal products, E yes. What an exciting opportunity from, for us to hear from some of my favorites, Patty and Jorge.

Welcome.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Thank you very much. Well, thank



Don and Ebony: They're my friends and they and they are Don's friends. I got it in. You did I I'm excited and happy for you. so, this is such a great privilege, cuz I've heard so much about the, the business and so much about the two of you. Community servants. And, it, it's been a few years, Don actually introduced me to you and gave me an opportunity to come toward the facility.

And I tell you what it is absolutely amazing. So I just really wanna stop talking and hear your story from what I understand and what I recall your father started the business. Is that correct?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: That's right.

Again, my, our father was, had worked for many places, doing metal fabrication type work. he immigrated here from Mexico in the mid fifties and came here. He came here to study and, and go to school, but starting a family. Also, he decided to, he had to go to work and he went to work in an industry.

that he kind of knew cuz our grandfather was an engineer on the railroad back in Mexico.

And, and because of that, he had a machine shop. So he had learned a lot of things about machining and welding and things like that. But as he came here to the us to study and stuff, he, he furthers his studies by going to some of the aerial technical colleges at that time and doing more when it came to layout and weld.

Things like that. So, in 1974, he decided to pull the trigger. He had this ambition that he wanted to have his own business after working for other people, everywhere he had worked, he had climbed the ladder and went up the ladder and became supervisors or, partners with another guy that he helped start a business here.

And so he wanted to do it for himself. And one of the things that was told to him that he would probably struggle because of his language barrier. But that just pushed him that much harder because the skills that he knew when it came to fabricating were pretty superior and there was some people that gave him a chance.

So in 1974, we started in our garage at home, with just a few jobs and hand tools in a welder. And, Patty can talk a little bit more about some of the opportunities that as he left the business that he was with some people in the meat packing industry gave him an opportunity to. do some custom metal parts for, the kill floors that they do when they were processing meat.

The pack, the meat packing industry was pretty big at that time here in, in Wichita. there was a lot of packing houses here, and we could actually name 'em all off, but they've a lot of 'em sensing gone or have moved to, to the western Kansas area where the majority of the cattle coming but, Patty had talked a little bit about some of the opportunities he had early on.

Yeah. After, the meat packing industry leaving, Wichita and we're headed, west, he diversified, with Wichita being the capital of the world. As far as, aviation capital. He, started in by, marketing his services in the material handling equip. To all the aircraft companies here. So anything from carts to dollies, to ergonomic tables, An frames L frame dolly that moved the fuselages.

so there was, special tooling. I remember one table, it was called a mushroom table. Oh wow. And it had these big baffles in the table and the table would move up and down and this, this baffle would blow up into a mushroom. Yeah. I really don't remember Jorge. what all it was used for. It, it was used in [00:05:00] processing some of the skins and stuff when they do the stretching and stuff, or basically holding them in place, cuz they use what they call stretch forms to do some of the, forming of the skins that go on the fuselages and But the aviation industry, gave us a chance to do a lot of. You know, the, the name J our custom, is part of the reason from that. And the name actually stands for Jesus Raul, which is my dad's initials and custom metal products. And so, the, that, most of the stuff we were doing was custom things in the, in making outta metal, I should say.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: You know? So when you look at one of the other things, when he left the. When the meat packing industry left, he started doing more for the milling industry too, which is grain Making special cyclones and, and hoppers and spouts and stuff, everything to move grain. And although there's, and there's companies here.

In Wichita, they do all the production stuff of, of, conveyors, whether it be jet belt, conveyors, air handling, pneumatics there's several companies. And he worked right alongside them because

although these companies were here doing that, there was always that custom one that didn't fit the process where they were doing the off the shelf type stuff.

So we did a lot of that type of

growing the aviation industry opened up opportunities for some of these other things like Patty was saying some of the custom tables and carts, we've done a lot of that. And still do, since then most recently, even though there may be one to 2% of our work and you would think it'd be bigger than that.

Being in the aviation, we are very, very diversified. Different products for different companies, but most recently, spirit put our name up because SpaceX is actually using spirit for building some of the components that they use for anything in the aerospace industry, whether it be a rocket or what, on some of the skins that are used, they have the ability to do what they call stretch forming, which makes those skins.

But once you form something. Until it's put into the rest of it. It has to be held in that position. So because of that, they need these special carts that have the shape of the part to be able to transport 'em back to where they're going, whether they're going to Florida or Texas or California, and you know, anything, any place that SpaceX has facilities that are doing aerospace parts.

And so, you know, the fact that we've been in business here now going on 48 years, we, we, have a lot of contacts. A lot of people we've worked with that. Sometimes the word of mouth carries on in the case of SpaceX. That's what happens. Spirit. We've been working with him ever since it was Boeing and Cessna and Beech and Learjet that, all of them, you know, people that have worked there, know us and stuff know. And Don from years of being here,

Don and Ebony: Excellent. I mean, that's just, that's great. Sorry, Don. I was just gonna say, you know, from the garage to, SpaceX. Yeah. You know, isn't that wild.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: It's very wild.

Don and Ebony: That's pretty cool.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And we try to diversify, we always say that, no, we don't wanna be no more than 25% in any one industry.

So we're in the ag. oil industry. we do things for Siemens, and we can kind of talk, you know, if you were to walk into Siemens today, anything that you see that's aluminum that is, whether it be walkways, support, equipment tooling. I mean, it it's JR. I remember when they came to town and actually they came to the state and.

We would go to their presentations and we would hear all, all the products they were gonna

need. And I turned around and looked at my brothers and says, this isn't gonna work for us. And there's just so many people, there was like 400 and some people in the room and we thought, nah, they, and we were very happy to hear later that we were won the sole supplier at that

Don and Ebony: Wow. I remember that.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Of, of product. that we were going to build for them. And we have a great relationship with them, even though they're, they're not here in Wichita, they're out in Hutch, but they're corporate being in Florida. And then also in Denmark, Jorge can share stories of his travels to Denmark, to.

To work with them out in their plants and learn what, what the needs were. So, but yeah, be being diverse in the fact that we don't have our own product, basically we're selling a service, quality delivery and our reputation is critical to the success of our company.

Don and Ebony: Excellent. And [00:10:00] while we're talking about your history, walk us through your locations. You started in your dad started in the garage. Where did you go from there?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Well, we started in, in his garage, then we moved to 18th and Mosley. Okay. And we were in a 4,000 square foot. Facility and outgrew that. And he built his very first building in 1979. It was 10,000 square feet. And by 1995, we had five buildings and, 35,000 square feet.

It was very choppy. We had an alley that was basically dirt. We had it paved like a year before we moved out, but I remember winners and, hot summers trying to move product from one building to another, for the different processes. So we decided at that time, the family that we would build a new facility.

That would encompass all the needs that we had coming up. So we, we built our building, at, west street and K 42, trying to think how many. Acres that we had out there west street, K 42. We started off with eight and a half acres that we bought. And then we, we started building then after that, I mean, here in the last six years, we bought some other acreage across road where we built our powder coat it's steps, sometimes little steps, sometimes big steps throughout the 48 years.

Don and Ebony: So, if I remember, is that a cul-de-sac you're on? Yes. Okay. Are y'all changing the name to JR Lane or something, I mean,

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: you know, we've never really thought about that, but call, yeah.

Don and Ebony: JR

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: that's that's funny. We do encompass the whole end of the

Don and Ebony: that's what I thought.

That's what I

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: the whole circle. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: And how many square feet you got out

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: there now?

So we've got 130,000 square feet of manufacturing facility, 25,000 square feet of Pohto coating facility. And then another 10,000 square feet. That's offsite. That is about a. To the east of us. That's another small shop where we do, specialty type items or offload type work, where we have too much that it's a smaller shop and we have like three and a half acres

Don and Ebony: Excellent. Now Ebony went to Southeast, so that those were big numbers, but that totaled 165,000 square feet. So you go from a did, was it even a double garage back in the day?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Yeah, it, it was a little double garage, but it was, you know, where we live. We grew up over off, Dallas and

south west over there, close to pond Meridian area.

Right. And, So the garage was a garage that my dad had built later on that was center block type garage. And it was a, it wasn't connected to the house. So eventually instead of parking cars, he, we were making parts. And, what was the gentleman that at M Pickel that helped that. Marcus. Oh, Sam Marcus.

Okay. Was,

Don and Ebony: oh yes,

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Sam Marcus was, basically my father's mentor really and helped him immensely over the years. I remember dad telling stories that Marcus would say. Mr. Marcus would say, here here's the keys. So you can get into the maintenance shopping and just, go see what they need. And so he would go out there and he would take dimensions during the day and go home at night to, fabricate and weld.

whether it be a table, you know, in the meat packing companies, they have box. Stain the steel boxes, where they keep all their stamps and all their knives. Okay. Specialize, or they needed a new kill floor. So he would rip out all.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Stainless, walls and floors and then re refurbish 'em. We built a lot of freezer doors and things like that because you look at you think of a packing house in the inside that what big walk and freezers all the cattle.

halves are hanging, you know, and we built a lot of custom stuff that helped them because everything had to be stainless. Everything had to be clean. It's all FDA was always in there making control and making sure that you don't get any contamination. So the way things were made were very specific.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And so, but Sam Marcus really helped my dad have opportunities. You know, especially from the custom side, cuz they needed so much, everything is just not stuff you can buy off the shelf. Right. And back in them days also working with stainless there wasn't the technology and the equipment there is to be able to cut and drill.

And, and so it was a lot harder to do it and technique had a lot to do with

Don and Ebony: This story is just so amazing because you know, you, your father came over here as an immigrant.

and

started a business and, you know, started the [00:15:00] American dream and then really instilled that in, in the family. So can we just, how many kids, or how many your adults now, obviously, but how many of you were there that he said, you know, Hey family started this business and these are the areas I need help in.

And, Patty, you're gonna do this, Jorge, you're gonna do this. I mean, like how did that.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: one night we were at the dinner table and you know, he'd always talk about work at the dinner table and about his business and his dreams. And so one day he looked around the table and he says, you know, I'm going to need some help.

I'm gonna need engineers. I'm gonna need sales. I'm gonna need administrators account. and I would like for each one of you to, you know, take it seriously. And so, but we were going to school while we were, while we were working for him. So, my brother Rau and I were up at K State and we would, come home on weekends to help

And,

Don and Ebony: You needed to come home.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: We needed to come home, but our friends would look at us like, are you homesick?

No, we're not homesick. We're gonna go home to our

Don and Ebony: Wow. Yeah.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And, and so we would, we, we would come home on the weekends. I would sit on a type invoices form and I do not like carbon.

Don and Ebony: Oh, carbon.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: So I would have three sheets and I'd put the carbon and I'd start typing and course, and make a mistake. And you had to correct them.

And, it was a mess, but while we were at school, then Jorge would help him. You know, he was in high school and he'd help him after school. On weekends. And of course we did get to enjoy life and be kids, but at the same time, we all had that responsibility to help our folks and being Hispanic. You know, we spoke Spanish at home every day and we spoke English outside the home.

Don and Ebony: Did your dad speak English?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: My dad spoke English. Okay. But it was a broken English. Okay. And, he had, he had a partner one. In, in a business that they were in, tell him that Raul you'll never make it in the business world because your English will always be a barrier. And dad said, you know, with my perseverance, my faith, my family, we'll just.

Do the best we can.

Don and Ebony: And he, and 165,000 square feet later, later proved

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Never, he never gave up. And he, he, he definitely was, our hero because you look at your parents and the sacrifices that they go through, to give you a better life. And, and I can say he just didn't give us a better life, but he gave our employees.

Those have been with us for many years, will tell you stories. And they even tear up because he was such a, he was a father image, a mentor, and a friend to, and he believed in giving people second chances. we work with people coming out of incarceration that are coming out of, The, work, work release

programs. and some of 'em come with skills, some come with no skills, but we give 'em opportunities to help better themselves.

And then we work with organizations such second chance, to help them move.

story.

Don and Ebony: Take us the break.

I think well friends. We've just heard a wonderful beginning of a story and, but we'll be back cuz we need to hear from our sponsors, but we'll be back to hear more from JR Custom Metal Products.

Welcome back friends. We're here with Patty and Jorge from JR Custom Metal Products. And we are hearing a riveting story about how the company began and how it's going. I mean, all of the different products that they, that they touch because they don't have a specific product. Right. You don't have a specific product, but it's your, your, your service and your reputation.

You mentioned that earlier, and it all began with your father and now it's the two of you and then the next generation. So this is multi-generations right. And you just got done telling us that you give people a second chance and that's the type of culture that's instilled in your business. Talk to us about your workplace culture.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Our workplace culture is very family. Very family oriented. It's a place where not only is it diverse in the [00:20:00] different nationalities language, it's a place where people are proud to work.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: It's about our heritage, where we come.

Don and Ebony: Mm-hmm

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: The honesty, our faith. if you go into our, into our offices, you'll see crosses, you'll see saints.

and that's not normal in, in business now. It is very normal in the Hispanic, businesses. You'll see that. You'll see your faith in Oriental. I've seen it in the Oriental businesses also, but we're there to help one another, to grow, coach, you know, train wherever we needed. And when we train, we just don't train a specific group.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: We try to train as many people as possible. right now we're working with WSU we're training with, leadership skills. And so we have new leaders, but we also have the existing leaders, join in, in the training process. So, and I think that the other thing is about communicating, communicating with our employees.

Some of the things that we're using today is called connect teams. It's a, app and it allows us to post daily, anytime during the day, About birthdays, anniversaries, what's going on. If we have new, customers or potential customers walking through the floor, who they are, Just keeping them informed.

We also have a, a newsletter that we produce once a month.

Don and Ebony: Will this podcast be your newsletter with my picture in it?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: I will do my best to make sure we do that.

Don and Ebony: Please do, please.

Thank you.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And, and so they can come and, and listen to see if we, if, if we were all, we didn't leave anything out, but yeah, it's just communication.

Making them feel a. That they are part of the family. Even though we have a lot of family members, everybody's family, and we care about everyone and we wanna take care of all our people and really it like, like Patty was saying earlier, but it started with. Obviously my dad and our family. And today there, there is four of us siblings that are co-owners of the company that were active.

There's actually five siblings and our youngest sister chose to study in Mexico. And. And married there and had her family there and stuff, but even she's been a part of the business more, offsite type. But, my brother Rau, is over engineering. Patty's president CEO, myself, I'm in sales and marketing, but also do all the facilities and all the expansions and project manager over all of that.

But then you have, and then my other sister, Maria is, is in accounting and stuff, part of the accounting team. But then, and then we have third generation that are pretty involved and won't go through all of them, but there's about 11 of them that are involved as far as third generation mm-hmm . Yeah. some in engineering, some in maintenance, some in operations, some over the Pohto.

I mean, they're. Throughout, but they've also gone to school to align themselves with those types of jobs. So, but then we have our staff and everything. That's also.

Have been with us for a while that have key positions. So if we get hit by the bear truck today, I mean, the business goes on. Cause there's plenty of people there that, can operate and carry on.

We, yes, definitely have the talent, but Jorge, you can't forget. Jorge's wife, Kim she's head of. Purchasing an inventory. And then I have a brother-in-law Scott, Kayla. He is also involved in the business and he's also in marketing and has been very involved in the community. so yeah, we, we have enough team, it takes a team and we are also real proud to say that, all of our third generation of all completed.

Four year,

Don and Ebony: what?

That is so amazing.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Four years. And, some of them have gone to, there's a couple that have gone to technical schools, but, my dad would always say that education was key to the success of the business. And as it continues because of is forever changing, especially in technology.

Mm-hmm ,

Don and Ebony: I, I, I love everything about that. You know, that I've always, admired family own businesses and to see, you know, what the success plan looks like and what if it's going to continue after the first generation. And it's really, you know, I've always admired you and your family and as a Hispanic family, Doing great things.

And, and like you said, putting your reputation out there and knowing that you can call on JR Custom Metals and get a fabulous product, that that's, that's huge. There's other families that you've teamed up with. I mean, you guys started [00:25:00] back in 74, but there's other Hispanic families that you've worked with or you've worked aside.

Can you share how that Alliance is? Yeah.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Well, back to where we were saying where Hispanic families. As they're starting off. A lot of times, they, you know, they stick together. As far as the family, when they're starting a new business, a lot of the family members, whether it be kids or brothers and sisters and stuff tend to work together.

And I mean, we, I can recall back when we first started and we were at 19th and Mosley that we had, we had a little shop. We had just built our first building in. Down the road there. We had the Cornejo family that were doing not only starting to do concrete work, but they did a lot of demolition of buildings and excavating.

And, and I remember Ron and Marty and Richard and all the brothers over there cleaning

Don and Ebony: Yeah Clean

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: you know, for their dad, Jesse and, and my dad was there and me and my brother were. Either welding or machining parts. And, I think even as a young person being out there, it's almost like the movie karate kid, the kid learns to wax on wax off and he doesn't realize that he's learning the moves.

Right. And sometimes parents put you in a position to learn stuff and, but you see families like that. Whether it be a restaurant or construction or fabrication, Hispanic families tend to have their family members help. And a lot of times, they learn that way. so that was.

That's part of our story and how we all learned the skills and stuff.

We've been doing them since we were little. And so we don't know no better.

Don and Ebony: Yeah. I hear you. I hear you. That's a beautiful story. And how many employees you got now? You went from zero to what?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: So we have in the range of a hundred, 140 to 150 employees today. I think to be exact it's 148 today. That's with more

Don and Ebony: exact

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: to be exact,

Don and Ebony: pat they're just like, yep.

My

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Well, and that's why we both came. Whether we make sure we tell about everybody that's family members and all the employee, it's hard to keep up. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: well, you've been doing it and I'll do my Northwest math here almost 40, no 48 years. So your anniversary has already. Right. What did y'all do?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Well, we had a luncheon for both first and second shift.

We had little

Don and Ebony: days.

Ooh,

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: and fix this, a Mexican dinner for our employees and they all received a, t-shirt and. Then we let them go home 48 minutes before

Don and Ebony: Ah, I see what you did

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And it happened to be on a Friday. So we felt that they could go out and celebrate if they wanted

Don and Ebony: God. That is that's pretty bad. That's cool. That's cool. 48 years. Congratulations on

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: on that. Thank you.

Don and Ebony: And, one last question. I think I'm gonna turn it over to E we'll see, what's on horizon. You guys went from zero square. Well, a few square feet to 165,000. you went from zero employees to 148, according to Patty what's next?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Well, there's some little bit of expansion planned.

Some of the products and OEMs that we do work for today, where we fabricate parts, here. Well, it's gonna be six years ago. We, we, built our powder coat facility. And so we could paint some of the products that we, that we currently fabricate. The thing was that we were sourcing a lot of our codings out and most of it's all powder coding.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: And so we decided to go out and build our own because of the amount that we were outsourcing and which opened up a lot of doors. So some of the OEMs that we've manufactured parts for today, we actually code as well. So we, we call it fab to finish from, from the start

And so, but now they're asking us to do assembly and finish complete finished product.

So we're gonna add another 12,000 square feet to our Pohto co facility to be able to, when the parts get painted, they go right into assembly and eliminate. Some of the extra handling, some of the growth with our company has been because we've always worked real hard of staying up with technology, the latest, equipment, when it comes to cutting, when it comes to forming welding.

we do, we've Patty, I think what do we have? 48 welders. What we have today? what was it? I say 40, we have 49 welders and five robots running, two shifts.

Don and Ebony: That's Patty she's gonna be exact

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: You know, with today's, ability to find [00:30:00] employees, skilled employees. we have to work closely with, trying to figure out ways of, of getting product out, whether it be technology in the case of the robots.

But also working with the technical schools here, whether it be WSU Tech, Kalis the Butlers, the, the, Hutch, jucos all the jucos and all the technical colleges working with them and working with the young people that are coming out. we work real closely with WSU Tech on, doing internships with some of their welders finding all different ways to be able to recruit people and, and not just welders.

I mean, it goes into other machines where it comes to lasers and robotics and bending. I think, the internships have worked so well with many industries like the medical industries for so many years. I think the, manufacturing needs to do more of that and getting people in because we're all getting older and somebody has to step in ho automation is, is critical

Don and Ebony: Automation.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Okay.

Is, is critical. And some of our work centers that we're setting up now where you have a.

and the parts are coming in after they come off the lasers and they're going to break. And then, to the robot, that's gonna weld the parts. So it's all in one, one work center, a cellular, a cellular manufacturing, I guess you would call it.

Don and Ebony: Do you see that automation that it's going to be increasing over the next few years? You see that being a

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: if, if, if manpower doesn't increase, I think for us today, if there's any. Any area that we're the only, that's holding us back in growth would be people mm-hmm . cuz if we could find the people, we could start that third shift, the opportunities are there.

And now with, with insourcing instead of outsourcing everything is it's gonna be critical.

Don and Ebony: Did

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: I think,

Don and Ebony: oh, go ahead.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Excuse me. I think pandemic opened up a lot of eyes to, when things are.

Outsourced offshore. And then now trying to onshore 'em because of the fact of, restarting back up once the pandemic kind of settled down is the shortages of chips.

Say mm-hmm , or you can almost look at any kind of product. That's done outside of this country to make it in this country. You have to be competitive. You have to have the resources. most recently we had another opportunity is, making parts for companies doing the semi-conductors, where making the chips, we have opportunities and people that have come and visited us.

Cuz they're looking for capacity on manufacturing, some of the equipment. So opportunities are

out there, especially for us because. They're looking to fabricate something, right? If they're looking to fabricate this stand for this speaker, right? I mean, it doesn't matter what kind of industry it is, their metal parts.

And if you can fabricate it, manufacture process it all the way through you have an opportunity. Technology allows us to be more competitive worldwide, because now you have a machine instead of manual labor doing it. So those are things that. I mean, you look at inspirational things like pizza hut, starting here.

It started as a little deal and made pizzas and manufactured pizza, all kinds of things that came from that. And it's worldwide and the same thing could happen here.

Don and Ebony: You've added, you're gonna be adding 12,000 square feet. So for Ebony's benefit, that's 177,000 square feet total. So that's, that's awesome. But I wanna hit. Quick hit on a, what you mentioned before the pandemic. Did you think you would make that third shift higher, make that third shift happen before the pandemic?

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: No, it's always been an issue. It's always been an issue. Yeah. Just finding, skilled labor. Okay. so we finally realized that, let's work with the tech schools. Let's work with the high schools. Let's start em young and kinda like we, we did, you know, right. Didn't have the skill we learned among the job and, and that's been a success.

Excellent.

I feel that automation probably. Helps with that third shift, because that's a hard shift for people to hire onto regardless what industry you are. I mean, it's, it's, it's always one of the most difficult ones, but if you have automations that machines run automatically through, through the night.

You have a short window from the end of second shift to the start of first shift, then the opportunity is for automation to help with

Don and Ebony: I just have one last question. you know, you've been talking a lot about, inspiration and how companies have started here and I've grown and you've talked about your father and what he's instilled it new.

What's the best advice you've ever received and implemented.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Don't forget where you started from.[00:35:00]

Don and Ebony: Yeah.

we had a customer that came in one day and he had, he was a electrician. I believe he had a little small shop and, he had called. And was wanting a part manufactured, an electrical box, specialized box and person that answered the phone and just told him that, we're sorry, but we

don't do that anymore.

he didn't do anything, but jump in his car and come down. And so he called me up to the front and he said, Patricia, he knew me

Don and Ebony: No, no,

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: I wanna give you some advice. And I said, sure, how can I, you know, any advice is always welcome. And he says, don't ever forget where you came from. Don't forget the little So when you never know, I remember one Saturday, my brother RA was working in the office and he had a, and the front door was always locked on the weekends and someone knocked on the door. And it was a gentleman that was coming in and he had an airplane part that he wanted to see if we could. I don't remember if we were gonna manufacture some or repair some parts for him.

And, and, so Ralph talked to him and he says, well, sir, we don't work on aircraft parts, but. It's Saturday and it's your, your aircraft come on down. Wow. So he went ahead and helped him. Wow. Lily, did he know that he was head of purchasing at

Don and Ebony: Oops In

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: and the next day, and the next week he got a call from a buyer wanting to purchase and it became and opened the doors to an opportunity.

So you can't don't ever say never. And don't say no. always find a way if, if we can't help 'em then we find a source that can help 'em.

Don and Ebony: That's a great story. Thank you for that.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Thank you. I, I wanna add a little bit to that is keep keeping it home, keeping it here in Wichita. There tall. There's so many companies here that have done well that have learned that have helped each other.

And I know there's been plenty of companies that have helped us. And we try to do the same thing back. One thing my dad said is, you know what, we started from a little garage at home, but if we ever get to the point, make sure and give back to the community. Oh yeah. And that's one thing that we've always tried to do, and if somebody's starting off and we can do anything to help 'em we, we will.

And so that's one thing, I mean, this is a great community and. Wichita Kansas has done a lot for us and continues to do a lot for other people as well.

Don and Ebony: Well, thank you for what you do. No better way to wrap this up. And you've dealt with Ebony a long time and it's been the best time for life. we're gonna do some word

association.

You can both answer one answer. It doesn't matter, but, give you one word, gimme one word back. It's not wrong, cuz it's your y'all's word. Okay. Are you

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Ready? Yep. I good.

Don and Ebony: Oh, she said ready? She said 49

Leader.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Sam Marcus,

Don and Ebony: Sam Marcus. Okay.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Ben Hutton.

Don and Ebony: Ben Hutton. Oh, wow. Very nice. Okay. Gentle Ben. Yep. Success.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Pizza Hut.

Don and Ebony: College.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: WSU.

Don and Ebony: Thank you. That's why you came home. Their dad knew they needed to get home. y'all been through enough. Failure.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: What's that

Don and Ebony: What's that? I like that. Entrepreneur.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Jesse Cornejo.

Don and Ebony: Okay. Hero.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: My dad.

Don and Ebony: Excellent. Nice vacation.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Mexico. Europe. Pohto

Don and Ebony: Europe. Okay. Mexico. Wichita.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Home.

Don and Ebony: Wichita Chamber.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Leader.

Don and Ebony: One at a time. Yeah. they were hello, a Chamber. What was that again?

mine was leader.

Don and Ebony: Leader. Okay. Jorge.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Partners partner.

Don and Ebony: Partner. Gotcha. Nice. wanna get it all.

everyth.

Fun.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Vacations.

Don and Ebony: Last but not least. And you each need to tell the truth about this one. Beverage.

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Bud Light.

Don and Ebony: Ha that's

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Wine.

Don and Ebony: Little wine and a wine. Okay. You know what? I'm just, my heart is happy. Yes. My friends came in. And showed up and showed out. I love it. Thank you guys for coming in.

Yes. Truly appreciate you taking the time to hang out with

Jorge Martinez and Patty Koehler: Thank you. Well, thank you for having us.

Don and Ebony: Absolutely. Well friends we've come to the end of today's show. If you would, please make certain that you share this information with [00:40:00] your circle of influence and share it with someone who you think might find value in this story till next time.

Peace.