

WOMEN IN LIFE SCIENCES: CARINA EDWARDS OF QUILL INTERVIEWED BY MATTHEW BROOKS

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

00:14 MATTHEW BROOKS: Hello, I'm Matthew Brooks. I'm our Northeast Digital Health Lead for Applied Intelligence and CTO of one of our digital health products called INTIENT.

00:22 And I'm here today with Carina Edwards, who's the CEO of Quill Health, who I've had the pleasure of working with, to bring a solution to market focused on helping those of us who care for loved ones who live at home alone through use of pretty innovative AI digital technologies. So, Carina, welcome and thank you for taking some time today with us.

CARINA EDWARDS: Hey, Matt, thanks for having me.

MATTHEW BROOKS: It would be great if we could just start with you sharing a bit about your background and journey as a leader in this space.

00:55 CARINA EDWARDS: Sure. So. Carina Edwards. I am the CEO of Quill. We are the digital health joint venture between Comcast, NBC Universal, and Independence Blue Cross. And, you know, I've spent the last 23 years of my career in healthcare technology, and so I've always had this really kind of purpose-driven

background to say, listen—I was never smart enough to be a doctor, I always say, like, they're like amazing individuals.

01:20 But I do have the technology skills to make patient outcomes better and help them in workflows and really bring technology to support the amazing part of giving care. And so it's been something that's followed me throughout my career and thrilled to be here on this program with you.

MATTHEW BROOKS: Excellent. Thank you. If you look at your LinkedIn profile, right, part of what it says is that you're on a mission to make better, happy and healthier aging possible. And I've certainly seen that passion in you firsthand. What's the driver behind that mission that you stated on your profile?

01:54 CARINA EDWARDS: So I think there's a lot. One, we're all getting older, right? And I know that I don't want to age the way my grandparents aged and how my family is aging.

So I want to live my fullest life. And so that's the first thing—a little selfish. Two, I'm a caregiver, right? I always say I joke around. I manage four people over 78. They are amazing people in my I

ife. It's my dad and my stepmother and my aunt, his sister, and my uncle.

02:20 And it is just amazing to be that person to help them with the challenges that they're facing. And then I look at the big stats, right, like the big demographic shift changes that is happening in the US. And I believe it's the place to focus now because there's not enough caregivers, unpaid or paid, for the people aging. So when it comes to caregivers, asking for help, I think there's a very interesting dynamic here. They don't, they go it alone. They take on the burden.

02:52 And so how do we think about getting employees tools to help them? One, understand caregiving—understand that 23% of them, on average, neglect their own selfcare and that selfcare is part of the solution for better caregiving. And there's a lot of places that they can go, and national and local resources that they can tap into, to get respite care, to get a weekend away, to make sure that their senior is being cared for, while they take care of themselves.

03:24 Because I think this goes back to the overall burnout of “this is what's causing it because there's never a downtime.” And so even just take it down to the employer level. A lot of people that will watch this are employees. Based on the research, 61% of employees are caring for someone over 65. They are missing an average of 6.6 days of work a year due to their caregiver responsibilities. They are mostly women.

03:50 They are having high rates of burnout and they are leaving the workforce. And this is a trend we have to stop. And so that's where, you know, when you think about like, we spend so much of our time at work, why not do it on something you are passionate about and really believe in that can really help a broader cause.

04:10 MATTHEW BROOKS: Yeah, it's an interesting perspective you bring, not just in terms of the personal dynamic, but also the dynamic of the employers themselves, right. And

their workforce and sort of what it means for them to help those who are working for them. In your journey, tell me about those who sort of mentored you, right. And have influenced you and the lessons that you've taken from those mentors over time.

04:41 CARINA EDWARDS: My goodness, my best mentors, I've been very fortunate in my career. My first job out of school, I worked for this amazing woman who was so supportive of me and my ideas and letting me kind of run. And so I think I've just been very fortunate to have people in my life throughout my career that I would consider mentors at different points. I think the best thing, if I kind of like netted out to what I've learned from some of these mentors, first, it's all about continuous improvement.

05:14 If you've ever think you've gotten there, like stop—there's way more smarter people, there's way richer people, there's always going to be like a next level. And so always be thinking about your plan to level up. Like, how do you level up? How do you show up differently? How do you go for what you want? And that doesn't happen—just like I'm an athlete by background and I still do a lot of sports, but that comes a practice. And so you have to practice at being vulnerable.

05:44 You have to practice and have a plan on how to keep learning. You have to think about how to embrace risk and failure. One of the best quotes I have from a mentor was, “It's okay to look backwards, just don't stare.” And I think it's a really good point. Some people have this failure, oh my God, I failed. Whatever that is, whatever level of catastrophe you've made in the back of your mind, I failed.

06:14 Well, you know what? If you actually really look back on it, it's probably the best learning you've ever had. And if you don't quickly diagnose it and move past it and go forward, you're just going to be stuck. And then you get into those people that are like, oh yeah, well, this happened to me. No, your choice, your plan. How are you changing it? So that's one.



I think the second thing I'll say is we always think that these people that make it, made it alone—and none of them did.

06:42 And every single time in my life, I've reached out and asked for help. Help being like, "Hey, you know this market, I'd love your perspective," or help being, "Hey, I'm having this challenge with my contract or my boss or whatever, I'd love to get your perspective on it." People love to share their experience. And so I think what I would say to people listening is seek out if you really are questioning something and you would love a person's perspective, I guarantee you they will find 30 minutes to give you that perspective if you prepare.

07:14 MATTHEW BROOKS: Yeah, and maybe it's expanded on a bit. I would assume you've sort of been asked to mentor a number along the way as well, and interested in sort of maybe the fulfillment that that gives you along the way, as well as someone who's now learned from some of the others.

07:34 CARINA EDWARDS: It's huge. I think it's interesting. One of my mentors, when I first started working with her, she literally said, "Listen, I love helping women in early in their careers advance, but I'm going to put some rules in place. In a way, I'm going to actually formalize our time together." And I've taken that as a learning in my own mentoring. So I will happily meet with anybody and give them, I can't even say advice. I think it's the wrong word.

08:04 I can give them the experience I had, and I can share with them some thoughts and ideas or help them brainstorm something. But what I love to do is, I belong to a network called CSweetener, and it's for emerging women leaders, and they can seek mentors on the platform and they reach out. I always say before I meet with somebody, "What's your objective for the call? What are you looking to accomplish, and why do you want to speak with me specifically?" And so I think it's really important for all of us out there mentoring younger folks.

08:36 And I mentor all folks, not just women, but

I think it's really important to really have a difference between what is just catching-up and making a friend and making a network versus, "Hey, I have some advice and or some mentoring I want about this thing" and defining what that is. So, you know, hey, I'm happy to meet with you for the next six months, and we'll meet once every two months and we'll leave with homework and like, you'll report to me back on your homework, and like, we'll continue the conversations. So it comes in all forms. And I think when you seek it out, seek it out with purpose.

09:13 MATTHEW BROOKS: Great. Very good advice for those seeking mentorship from leaders. I also noticed in 2019, you were named Becker's Healthcare by Becker's Healthcare as one of the female health IT leaders to know. One, congratulations on that. But maybe as you talk about mentoring feeds into the notion of the importance of networking, right? And so what do you think it's important for females to have in terms of strong networks in business and in this particular space as well?

09:35 CARINA EDWARDS: Well, I think everybody needs to be reminded of the facts, right? In 2021 and continuing in 2022, all of the reports on women in the workforce and diversity in the workforce are the same and not trending in a great direction.

10:07 We learned that the pandemic led to massive setbacks. Women are now even more burned out than they were, and that gap is almost doubled between women and men on burnout levels. And so caregiving, back to the mission here, is one of the reasons why caring for elders, caring for children, caring for all of the things of work from home, transitions to work from home, schooling from home, all the things that happened in the past two years.

10:36 I think the other interesting stat I'll share is that in the past year, one of three women has considered leaving the workforce and downshifting their careers. And it goes back to we continue to face this broken wrong problem. And that broken wrong problem is for



every hundred men being promoted to their first manager role, only 89 women are getting promoted into that first manager role. And so then as a result, as you kind of grow into the C-suite, it just becomes less and less and less. And so now you're kind of not changing the dynamic.

11:05 And so the reason why I want to fix this and be part of the solution is because many studies have shown that women managers are consistently doing more to promote employee wellbeing. Checking in on team members and managing their workloads, providing them support for, like, time off and dealing with work life challenges—and burnout, especially in healthcare and healthcare providers, is at an all time high.

11:32 And so one thing I would say to anyone leading organizations out there is in 2019, we Quill took the Parity Pledge. And if you haven't taken the Parity Pledge, take a look at it. But basically it's simple. It's just agreeing to interview and consider at least one qualified woman and one qualified person of color for every open, VP, director, C-Suite level job. And that's resulted in us being recognized as a great place, one of the best places in 2022 for women to excel and get promoted.

12:00 And I'm so passionate about this because I always hear like, it's a pipeline problem. No, it's not. We're entering the workforce at the same levels, and so it's a systemic change thing. And so that's the piece here of, like, we as employers can do more. And I think Accenture is doing a ton more, which is phenomenal to see. And I love seeing what you guys are doing across the board for diversity and inclusion.

12:26 MATTHEW BROOKS: Yeah, I love the paradigm concept. That's a great goal for all companies, ours included. Well, thank you for spending some time with us today. This was definitely a meaningful conversation to me. I'm sure I'm sure all those who will listen and watch this will find this so as well. And just really wanted to say thank you again for taking the time and sharing this today.

CARINA EDWARDS: Well, Matt, thanks so much for being a partner in this. And for those listening, if you're caring for someone over 65 and you need some help and a technology assist, head to [Quillhealth.com](https://www.Quillhealth.com) and check us out.

13:01 MATTHEW BROOKS: Absolutely. Thanks. Thank you again.

CARINA EDWARDS: Thank you.