

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kaneisha Grayson

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

You are listening to *Scale Your Joy* with Kaneisha Grayson, episode six. Get ready.

Welcome to *Scale Your Joy*, the only podcast that teaches high achievers with heart how to craft a life and build a business focused on freedom, joy, self-expression, and social impact. I'm your host Kaneisha Grayson, a Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School grad, author, essayist, and self-made entrepreneur. I did it and you can do it too. Let's get started.

Hey, everyone. I'm recording this episode in mid-March. And in two days, it will be me and my beloved Tyler's one month shack-up-iversary. I can imagine my maternal grandma, her name is Evangelist Beulah Mae Sholtz. I can imagine her listening to this episode being like, "Now why did she call it that?" But my grandma knows I'm a firecracker. I like to be silly.

So Tyler came over on Friday February 12th and then he got trapped here by the Texas snowpocalypse. And then very unfortunately he lost his apartment due to flooding. And so he hasn't actually left living with me since coming over on February 12th. So Tyler's here at Casa Kaneisha until his apartment can be completely repaired. We don't know if that'll be weeks or months.

And while I'm really sad for Tyler's displacement, and for all his possessions that he lost, that's super devastating, and expensive. I am loving living together. We're getting along really well. I love cooking together. I love watching TV together, taking care of Zadie together. But more room for him would be nice.

An interesting little mini story is that a year after my divorce when I was ready to start dating again, I was gifted a book called *Calling In The One*. And I read and worked through that book, *Calling In The One*, with my Harvard Business School bestie, Lisandra, who I had a conversation with on episode four.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

And Calling In The One advises you to arrange your physical surroundings to make room for the partner that you want to call into your life. So I intentionally leased a two-bedroom, two bath apartment in January 2020 when I came back to Austin from Barcelona.

I was living in Barcelona and then I decided to come back to Austin and focus on my health. Health and calling in my beloved in 2020. And I wanted to have enough space for this future beloved. So I leased a two-bedroom, two bathroom so that I could use the second bedroom as an office. And so that my future beloved could have his own bathroom. Because y'all I do not play the one-bathroom game when it comes to living with a partner. I need my own bathroom and I want that person to have their own bathroom.

But it would be nice if we had more room. Tyler and I are both tinkerers, makers, and crafters. So it would be great if he had a garage for his car projects and his outside of the house projects. And if he had an office with a door that closed for his inside projects and working from home.

I don't know if I mentioned but Tyler is a software engineer and a hacker. So he's a computer-y guy and has lots of little, I don't know what any of it is, computer things all over the place, is what he usually would have. But he's kind of confined to a little area in the living room as his workspace. So it would be nice if he had an office with a door that closed.

Zadie is also really glad Tyler's here because he gives her a lot more pets than I do. I love Zadie and I love dogs, but it just doesn't occur to me as much as it does to him to like pet her and play with her. I'm more like I like to cuddle with her, which she prefers to just be pet and have a little bit more space. And she likes to play a lot. So she's really happy that he's here as well.

Today we are learning about why you need an executive assistant, like yesterday. And how to find and hire an extraordinary executive assistant to help you in your life, career, or your business. But first, our listener spotlight.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Today's listener spotlight is from Tyler, but a different Tyler. The Tyler that's on my team. And he is the growth marketer and content specialist at my company The Art of Applying. You know I go crazy about diversity and I think representation is really important, so I'm going to mention that Tyler is a Native American whose tribe is Cherokee.

While a student at University of Texas at Austin Tyler took over leadership of the Long Horn American Indian Council. Which later merged with the Native American and Indigenous Student Assembly to become the Native American and Indigenous Collective.

And the UT website for the student organization reads as follows. “The Native American and Indigenous Collective is a student led organization at the University of Texas at Austin with the principles of native empowerment, research, transnational and inter-tribal unity, scholarship, and community. The merging of these two groups celebrates the different indigenous identities across the four directions, and seeks to create consciousness about our indigenous roots as we continue to fight for the survival of our cultures.”

Tyler: This is why I listen to the Scale Your Joy podcast. For me, I like to listen to entrepreneurship and side hustle and startup podcasts because the information I get in them is great, and I can apply them in the things that I'm working on. But a perspective that I feel is missing in a lot of those is the how do you build a business that is good for you, good for the world, and is something that you can build a lifestyle with that brings you joy? And is not just about hustling and grinding 24/7, making all the money in the world like it's the only thing that matters, and listening to a bunch of bro dudes talk about the way they think things should be.

And Scale Your Joy is everything that I've been looking for in that kind of podcast where it talks about how do you do things with a sense of integrity, where you feel like you're living your values? You're building a business that can help people and make you feel good about your impact on the

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

world. How do you gain lifestyle freedom? And for me, that's why I listen to the Scale Your Joy podcast.

All right, y'all ready to learn how to hire an extraordinary executive assistant? First, I'm going to share a few tips to keep in mind as you think about hiring an executive assistant. Then you're going to listen to an hour-long conversation between me and Ellie, my executive assistant.

Ellie and I will be talking about how we found our way to one another. Why she chooses to work for my company. What makes me a great boss. What would make me an even better boss. How you can find your own extraordinary executive assistant.

And then Ellie and I also engage in some just for fun brainstorming of what it would be like if Ellie and I ran a Scale Your Joy executive assistant search service. Because we get asked about it all the time. When we talk about how we work together, how we found each other, and the things we've accomplished together people get really excited and want us to find their own assistant for them. So we engage in some fun brainstorming of what that service might look like.

I think it's fun for you to get to see a little bit of our banter and also how we come up with new services really quickly. And also, if we ever do launch this service, you'll be able to learn about it at today's show notes at scaleyourjoy.com/six.

Lastly, I'll end with a recap of the main points from today's episode. And I'll give you your joy work so you know exactly what steps to take next to move closer to hiring an assistant so that you have more free time, energy, and inspiration to make your dreams come true. You'll want to listen to the full episode even though it's a long one, because I share about two things for the first time.

Our Review Crew, which is a free community of my listeners who have left a review on Apple podcasts. I'll briefly mention during this call how to join. And I'll tell you why you don't want to miss our quarterly Review Crew: Ask

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha Anything Q&A Calls. I'll also share during this episode about some valuable freebies my EA Ellie and I put together to help you hire your own extraordinary executive assistant.

Because my EA is extraordinary, we've put everything mentioned in this episode at scaleyourjoy.com/six so you can read the show notes, find all resources we mention on this episode, get your own free EA hiring kit, and learn how to join Review Crew where you can ask me your questions about hiring your executive assistant live.

Things to know about hiring an executive assistant. You don't have to hire an EA in person, it can be virtual. Ellie and I work together virtually. It's been two years and we've only met in person twice. You don't have to hire an executive assistant full time. It can be a few hours a week, or even a few hours a month. My executive assistant Ellie is full time, but when I was first starting out, I definitely worked with assistants, virtual assistants, and executive assistants for just a few hours a week.

EAs don't have to help you with just professional or business tasks, they can also help you with personal tasks and personal errands as well. Even if they're virtual. My last point is a very important one, which is that EAs, executive assistants, they are not magical beings who will solve all of your problems. They are people with feelings, flaws, needs, talents, hopes, and dreams.

So if you want the best out of your virtual assistant or your executive assistant, you need to show up as your best as a boss. Which means being clear on what you want from them. Clear on what a job well done looks like. And willing to give them enough of your time so that they're able to get the information they need from you to achieve that job well done that you really want from them.

And now it's time for the conversation between me and my extraordinary executive assistant, Ellie.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: So I have ambushed my executive assistant, and I tricked her. So we have a calendar event every Monday, called Kaneisha's Personal Errands. And it's where my executive assistant, Ellie, just babysits me while I do adulting things that I need to get done in order to have my life not fall apart. So that might be like opening mail, making appointments, things like that.

And I was late to today's session because I got hungry, I made myself and Tyler some steak tacos. And then when I showed up to the call, Ellie was like, "Okay, so what are we working on today?" And I said, "You've been tricked." And she was like, "What do you mean?" And I was like, "We have a podcast episode due tomorrow and we're going to do an interview between you and I, and talk about hiring an assistant. Why everyone should have an executive assistant if you are entrepreneurial or a super busy professional climbing the corporate ranks in the United States.

And you know, Ellie, how valuable you are to me and to The Art of Applying and to the team as a whole. And you have a lot to share. And we've spoken together before and it was an absolute hit. So I decided let's go ahead and speak on the podcast." So just to be clear, everyone, Ellie is not her real name. I use a disguise name to protect her privacy because when she shares what she shares, everyone's going to get really excited and I don't want her to be ambushed with a bunch... I'm the only one who gets to ambush Ellie.

So I don't want her to be inundated with inbox messages and PMs and stuff like that. So if you have any follow-up questions you should join us on Review Crew, which is my quarterly ask me anything two-hour call for people who have left a review. Right now since we're in the first 10 episodes of Scale Your Joy we're doing the giveaway, the ebook audiobook bundle giveaway. And as long as you enter the giveaway, and that's at scaleyourjoy.com/welcome, you are already in Review Crew and we will send you information.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

But if you have not left a rating and a written review on Apple Podcasts, it's not too late. You can do that, and that enters you into our giveaway. But it also makes you a part of our Review Crew, which I haven't mentioned yet. It's my first time mentioning it on the podcast. So we'd love for you all to join us and then you can ask any follow up questions you have for me and Ellie about hiring a virtual assistant or an executive assistant during our quarterly Ask Me Anything Review Crew Q&A Call.

Okay, Ellie. So first, I would love for you to introduce yourself and tell us about your personal, professional, and educational background.

Ellie: Yeah. So, hello Scale Your Joy listeners. My name is Ellie, and I am from the Philippines. I have a business degree from a university here in the Philippines. And prior to working for The Art of Applying I used to run a 700-student college. I was what you would call the school director and I handled everything from finance, marketing, sales, academics, and even HR. So I handled the overall day to day operations of the college.

Kaneisha: That is amazing. And then I think it would be interesting to the listeners to just hear about the other jobs that you have had as well. Like the references that I spoke to, those jobs.

Ellie: So my first job I was actually an executive assistant. So which is why it's so interesting how, you know, after being a school director, I'm now an executive assistant where basically what we do is we run, we're like running a school, right?

Kaneisha: Yep.

Ellie: We teach people. And then after that I worked in the banking industry for four or five years. And the first two years I was an executive assistant and then I went into corporate sales for the next two or three years.

Kaneisha: Oh, I don't think I knew about the corporate sales. What were you selling?

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Ellie: Just bank products, I would present to like the board of directors and that kind of the thing.

Kaneisha: Wow, okay, so you're used to public speaking. So my ambush for the podcast is okay. This is just life working for Kaneisha.

Ellie: Yeah, it's not so bad. Yeah.

Kaneisha: Okay, cool. Okay, do you feel comfortable telling everyone your age?

Ellie: I'm 30 years old.

Kaneisha: Awesome. Flirty 30. Okay, that's probably inappropriate for the boss to say. But we're used to that. Okay. So how did you find out about the position? And just one thing is I didn't actually originally meet Ellie to be my executive assistant, I was hiring for a customer service position or client service position. So how did you find out about that position? And what appealed to you about the position and the company? And then if you could just tell the story of how it changed from a client service role to executive assistant.

Ellie: Yeah, so one thing I love telling people is how Kaneisha actually found me, how you found me. So I received a message from Kaneisha on this website called onlinejobs.ph. And then, you know, she introduced herself, she told me about the company, and she sent a link to the application page. So I watched the video she sent in explaining what the role was, what the company was. And then I submitted an application for a customer service associate at the time.

And then after the interview, I believe after the first interview, you sent me a link to the test, to a quiz which you wanted me to take. It was the Integrator Visionary quiz, and based on the book Rocket Fuel. So what happened was I took the test, and I scored 90%. And then Kaneisha got so excited because she scored 89 in the visionary test, which meant that we both -

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: Yeah, so now that assessment is called the Crystallizer Assessment. And it's one test, it used to be two tests as how much of a visionary are you? And then the other test was how much of an integrator are you? And the visionary is the person in the business who thinks up a lot of the ideas, they're kind of the brainstormer, the traditional CEO type role. Usually, you're the one kind of making a mess in the business. And then the integrator is the type of person who's more of a clean up the mess type person, or prevent the mess from happening in the first place.

Think of the visionary as the expander and the integrator as the very necessary counterpart, the container. The person who takes the visionaries ideas and creates a strategic plan for making those happen, and then operationalizes those ideas. So you can think of the integrator as the traditional COO type role.

We don't use terms like CEO and COO at The Art of Applying. And I really don't think people should use those terms for businesses smaller than a few million, because it tends to lead to an inflated sense of the role. And can be vague in what the duties are.

But when we use terms like visionary for me and Integrator for Ellie, it helps us really understand the nature of our relationship. And it also helps me to make sure I'm spending my time on tasks and projects that have a visionary scope to them versus getting bogged down in very detail-oriented tasks of operations and integration, which is her role.

So while I was looking for that client service role, I was also learning about this language of visionary and integrator. I was reading Rocket Fuel, which is a part of the Traction ecosystem of books. And I just thought, "This person, wow, she ran a university. Perhaps she could run the, you know, the university that we have at The Art of Applying, our Application Accelerator."

So I asked her to take the integrator assessment, which is now called the Crystallizer Assessment. It's one test now, but it used to be two. And as she said she scored a 90%. And I had scored something like an 89% on

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

the other counterpart to that assessment, which is the visionary part. So I was like, “Oh, my goodness, maybe we go together.” So then what happened?

Ellie: So you offered me the role to be your executive assistant, and almost two years now that we're here.

Kaneisha: We're here. So two years later. I feel like the way I said it, and maybe I said it a little more professional than this, but I feel like I was like, “Hey, Ellie, you've done great in the application process, and I've really appreciated getting to know you. Do you want to be my executive assistant, learn everything it takes to run my business, and then run my business for me?”

Ellie: Yeah, I remember that. I remember reading the email, I was in the car, and I was like, “Oh my God, like, this is the perfect job for me. Like, it's something I really want to do.”

Kaneisha: Yeah, okay, so I did. It was an email. I thought it was an email as well. So to be clear everyone, I had a really clear job description for Ellie and everyone else on [onlinejobs.ph](https://www.onlinejobs.ph) to read and review and understand what their job is. I also had a clear application form for them to fill out. So it wasn't just like, “Oh, send in your resume and let me know.” Or, “Send me a message.”

And I also, just to show that I was like a real person, I made just a quick, easy, simple video introducing myself. I was on video just introducing myself. What is The Art of Applying? What do we do? And then I had a process.

So they filled out the application form. And then I gave them three, what I called case studies, or three little mini projects to complete. Those projects were unpaid, they were each probably took less than an hour to do. Maybe Ellie will correct me if it took longer than that. But those little mini projects helped me to see what their written communication skills were like. What their problem-solving skills were like. And can they meet deadlines? And

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

can they ask questions if they don't understand something to get the information that they need?

So I'm thinking, Ellie, what we could do is on this show notes page we could have like, maybe the job description, the application, and the video. People could opt into the Scale Your Joy mailing list and get that little hire your executive assistant, little mini kit. I think that would be cool. We could do that for people for free.

So to get that everyone, go to scaleyourjoy.com/six, because this is episode six. And Ellie's writing it down, and it's like this is why you need an assistant, right, if you're an entrepreneur. Because you have these ideas and if you have the right executive assistant or virtual assistant, they can write that down, get it all together, and make your idea a reality very quickly.

How long do you think it would take us to get that together? It's no rush, Ellie, but just to be bragging. How long do you think it would take to put that all together for us to work with our tech people that we work with, get it up on the site, and have it ready for folks?

Ellie: It's all ready, so I think I can get it ready by tomorrow.

Kaneisha: That's amazing, right? So 24 hours. Okay, so let's get back to the questions. What appealed to you about the position? Like you said, your first job out of university was an executive assistant position. So Ellie, you have a bachelor's and you also have your MBA from university?

Ellie: Mm-hmm.

Kaneisha: Okay, cool. And what appealed to you about the position? Considering that you'd already been an executive assistant and you'd done some other things, what made you want to work virtually? This is your first remote position, so what made you want to work virtually? And then what appealed to you about the position and the company?

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Ellie: So what made me want to work virtually is, you know, that's a trend. That's been the trend here in the Philippines. And I just wanted, initially I just wanted to try it out. And, you know, it really worked out because I don't know, it just really... Like, I'm lucky because I work with you and so that really works for me.

And your other question was, what appealed to me about the position was that I really appreciated how clear your expectations of me were. Especially on the position statement. That really helped me assess this is something I really want to do. And I remember when you sent me the position statement for the executive assistant role, we had another meeting where you allowed me to just ask questions, and to clarify specific items in the position statement that weren't clear to me.

So, you know, just having that level of structure and knowing that I'm not being thrown into a den of wolves just to, you know, figure it out. So that really helped. I really appreciated the structure and the process.

Kaneisha: Okay. And you said, "I'm lucky because I work for you." What did you mean by that?

Ellie: This is something I always tell you. And, you know, everyone who knows me, everyone who's aware of what I do, they know how much I enjoy my job. And a big part of me enjoying my job is working for you. And I'm not just saying this because you're my boss. I'm saying it because I really mean it.

Like, when I say I'm not feeling well, your instant response is, "Take the whole day, rest. Your health comes first." If something comes up with my family, you're like, "Go ahead, like, you know, your family comes first." Just the fact that I know that you care about me as a person and I'm not like some machine and some robot to you who's like, "Do this, do that." So, one thing I love the most about working for you is knowing that you really care about me, Ellie, as a person.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: Ah, yes, you almost said your real name. Well, I really do care. I really do care. As my executive assistant you know a lot about my life, right? You have seen me cry multiple times. You know about my multiple illnesses, and ailments, and my medications. You know about my personal goals and personal pains, right?

You spent a year working with me, with me being like, “Ellie, I really want a partner and I'm going to make that a priority. And I need you to support me in that.” Right?

Ellie: Yeah.

Kaneisha: So it's a very intimate, professional relationship. And so it does make sense to me that you would want to invest your time, talents, and energy with someone you feel like sees you as a person and cares about you and the people that you care about.

Ellie: That's so true. Some of my friends who work virtually that stay with their bosses for a long time, stay for the same reason, because they know that their boss cares about them, even if it's a virtual job. Even if they don't see each other online.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so let's talk about that virtual part of the position. I think a lot of people who know that they want more support, whether personally or professionally in their business, they feel like, “Oh, I need a personal assistant. I need someone in person to help relieve the burden.” So I'd love to just hear about what it's like working for someone as an executive assistant virtually. What is it like? What makes it hard? And are there any benefits to it being virtual versus in person?

Ellie: I guess, you know, I can only compare to my one other executive assistant role that was in person. And one thing that made that role easier was that if I needed something from my previous boss I could just go into his office and be like, “I'll stand there until I get it from him.”

And what makes it challenging on, you know, virtually is that I have to wait. And if I really need to hear back from you about something, I WhatsApp

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

you and that's when you know that I need to hear back from you. So I guess that's the only thing I would think is challenging, because having overlap at the start of my day sets the tone for what I know you need to be accomplished based on the emails I get from you, or the Basecamp notifications I get from you.

And being able to work on different things at the base, which I believe is necessary, when you give me that freedom to prioritize and to really decide which items I think are important. I think that's what works as well. But you know, we also have these meetings when I ask you, "Okay, we to take a pause. Which ones do you want me to start with first? Because we have a lot of like open issues, and whatnot."

Kaneisha: For sure. Okay, so you are my executive assistant, what does that mean you help me with?

Ellie: I help you with everything. Anything that comes into your mind, like you just put it on our issues list, is what we call how we work. And we just have like, right now, probably 100 open items, which I just need to get done little by little. They're prioritized in like ones, twos, and threes. So the ones are the most important ones. And like you're able to just dump everything. Even remember one time we had this meeting in which you called the brain dump where I just took notes of everything you needed to get done and we just sort of prioritized that.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm. So yeah, just to recap what Ellie said, the way we work together is I do my best to get as much as possible out of my head and documented so that then Ellie can categorize and prioritize those issues, or items, or tasks and then make sure they get done.

So the tool we use, I'm a huge fan of Basecamp, which is a project management tool. It's really the foundation of the entire business operations. I'm also a fan of Basecamp's founders' philosophies for how to run a business, it's very aligned with Scale Your Joy. They're very much about, you know, a business should be profitable. It doesn't have to be crazy at work, it can be calm, you can treat your employees well. Hyper

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

growth is not the goal. Sane, steady growth is the goal alongside having a great life and a business that's aligned with your values.

So Basecamp is a piece of software that we use, it's a project management software. And inside of Basecamp Ellie and I have an area called Ellie and Kaneisha. And inside of that project or that team, we have a folder for The Art of Applying, and we have a folder for Scale Your Joy. Then inside of each of those folders we create issues. Each issue is its own separate document with the title of the document, content in the document, and then a discussion area. This is all contained within Basecamp, it's wonderful.

And what we do is each issue is numbered one, two, or three. A one means it needs to get resolved within the next 7 to 10 days. A two means it needs to get resolved within the next 60 days. And then a three is basically everything else. And we only let ourselves have, or we do our best to only have 10 ones, which is very hard to do. And to only have 20 twos, which is very hard to do. And then we can have infinite threes.

We also categorize each issue. So each issue has a one, two, or three, and it also has a category. So the categories that we use are attract, which is marketing. How do we get people to know about us? Convert, which is sales. How do we get to turn someone from interested in working with us to being an actual paying client? Deliver, which is now they are a client, how do we give them what we said that we would give them and help them achieve their result? And then scale, which is how do we take something that's already working and do it more? Other things that go under scale are team issues, because our team is our most valuable resource in growing the business.

Those categories are categories I learned from a friend and business coach Taki Moore. So I don't know if he made up those categories, but that's where I first encountered them. And I really like categorizing the issues within our business according to those categories.

So what Ellie was saying earlier is that, you know, when she wakes up in the morning and starts her workday, she can see which new issues I've

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

added. And it's pretty obvious that if there's new, one category issues, and they've just come through I'm like, "Can we get this done like now?" That's kind of a, she can tell that that's what that means. But it doesn't have to be, it's usually what I want but it doesn't mean that that's what's best for the business. So Ellie will assess, you know, all the ones on our plate and see which ones really need to happen that day.

So that is a little bit of our workflow. One question that I asked that I don't know that you've had a chance to answer is... Oh, I guess you did answer it a little bit, about any drawbacks to working virtually. I know, you had mentioned that in the same location as your boss you can just stand there until you get what you need. Any others that you can think of for this role?

Ellie: I think that's the only thing. It's more of just being able to get an answer from you on, you know, how you want to move forward on certain things.

Kaneisha: For sure.

Ellie: Just waiting on that, yeah.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm. And I know one thing that people might be wondering or thinking is like, "Well that's great that you have an executive assistant or a virtual assistant, I can't afford that." And one of the reasons why I do focus on hiring in the Philippines, for our full-time back-office roles is that the cost of living is dramatically lower in the Philippines. And a livable wage is quite a bit lower in the Philippines.

And so for me, what I really love about hiring people full time in the Philippines, right now we have three people full time in the Philippines and our team will continue to grow, is that I am in a position of being able to pay people more than they even ask for when they apply for the job. So pay people a very abundant wage while still keeping our cost structure very lean and efficient.

I used to have many, many full time or part time assistants in the US and it's a lot of money for a growing business that may have ups and downs. I

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

was paying, really, a minimum of \$30,000 a year and that would usually be an entry level person who didn't go to college or is just out of college. Whereas for less than that, or a similar amount, I can get someone very experienced and the cream of the crop in the Philippines.

So Ellie, you know, you don't need to share how much you make now, but if you feel comfortable sharing how much, you know, I was offering in the beginning and how that compared to other job opportunities that you had people would definitely like to know. Like, how much does it cost to get my own Ellie, not you now two years in, but just when we first started?

Ellie: So, if I remember correctly the initial offer was \$500 a month.

Kaneisha: That is the number I had on the listing because that is what a different company that I had hired to help me find a virtual assistant in the Philippines had advertised.

Now, I cannot imagine paying that. So we're going to go ahead and say please pay more than 500 US dollars for a full-time person. There are people who will work for that amount, but you want to make sure you're not exploiting people. And you also want to make sure that you are setting yourself up to get the best fit person for the role, not just somebody who is desperate, or who may not even have consistent access to internet.

So please know that I was not looking to be some sort of like capitalist people exploiter. I was just going off of like this is what I was told. So it was advertised as 500 US... Ellie done put me on blast. But it was advertised as \$500 US dollars full time a month. But then what happened?

Ellie: And then, you know, you asked me what amount felt, I want to remember the term you used, amount that felt fair and abundant was, I think, the term you used.

Kaneisha: Yes.

Ellie: So I loved that. Like I love how, you know, you just gave me an opportunity to counteroffer.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: Yes.

Ellie: And so my initial ask was 1200 per month. And then I was actually really worried because I was like, "This is more than double what she was offering." And then you accepted it.

Kaneisha: I did. Do you remember that I accepted it and then I said and let's do \$200 more?

Ellie: Yes.

Kaneisha: Yeah.

Ellie: Because I accepted the assistant role, yeah.

Kaneisha: Yeah. So she asked for 1200 for the client service role. And I'm like, "You know what? I want you to be my executive assistant, can I just pay you more and you do that?" And you're like, "Sure." So it's been really nice to be able to pay people what they ask, what they deserve, and even some more.

So, since then Ellie has received multiple raises. But just know that, let's go ahead and just call it \$1,000 is a great place to start for a full-time person. And you can go up from \$1,000 full-time per month if you want to get someone even more experienced.

Or let's say you can't afford \$1,000 a month, then you could do some, you know, part time. I really wanted someone full time so that I could have the full mind share of their work brain. But it's also totally okay to hire someone for 10 hours a week or even 20 hours a month as long as the two of you agree on how you want to work together and the rate that you want to pay.

But I feel a little embarrassed, right? I don't want you to feel bad, Ellie. But I feel a little embarrassed about that \$500 a month number because I'm like, "Oh my goodness." You know, because we don't even hire the most entry, entry, entry, entry level person at that amount. But I just didn't know any better. And I hope that with this episode people who are thinking about

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

hiring in the Philippines will understand that like, yeah, there are people who will work for that amount of money, but that doesn't mean it's right.

Ellie: Yeah, I think it's also just a misconception. And, it doesn't say anything about you... there was no judgment or anything. It was just because that's the rate that I would also see online. It wasn't just you that was offering that amount. I didn't even see the listing, actually, since you sent me a message directly. So it's just something I think people believe is... Some people would accept \$500 a month, there's no issue with that. Yeah.

Kaneisha: And what made you so brave and courageous to ask for more than double of what the listing was?

Ellie: I knew that I was good. I know I'm a great employee. I know that when I work, I really work. I'm very confident that I'm a great worker.

Kaneisha: You're a great worker. I love that confidence. And so what makes you a great worker? What makes you a great employee and team member?

Ellie: You know, I get asked that a lot by my friends who are looking for virtual assistant jobs. And the first thing I say is always you have to care about the company you work for, and you have to care about your boss. Like, if you take care of your boss, if you take care of the company, they're going to take care of you as well.

I mean, I hope you also see and know that I genuinely, like, care about, you know, Kaneisha as a person and the business. And another thing, I think, is integrity is very important. And you know, like, you're given that trust, and I don't want to break that trust. Once that's broken it's hard to rebuild that.

Kaneisha: Absolutely.

Ellie: I think those are the important things for me.

Kaneisha: Good, absolutely. And yes, you've been with me where we have had trust broken with other team members in the Philippines or in other

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

countries where I'm like, "Ellie, I think we got to let this person go." And we've let a few people go in our two years of working together because of lapses in integrity, or at least a mismatch in values. So it does happen. I appreciate you surfacing that.

So what qualities, what qualities make me a great boss? We've already said that you can tell that I care about you as a person. But what else? What makes you stay at The Art of Applying? What makes you stay in this position? I don't know, maybe some of my friends or colleagues have approached you privately trying to poach you. I don't know, has that happened? No, that hasn't happened? Okay, cool. I'm a dramatic person.

But it could happen. And that's okay, you're an autonomous person and you're allowed to do whatever you want, and work wherever you want. And to keep up-leveling yourself personally and professionally. But right now, we're together on this journey. And what can people learn from me as a boss, or our working relationship, as they work with their own executive assistant or virtual assistant?

Ellie: I think what really works is the clarity that you give in your instructions. The way you give instructions. You're very specific when you tell me what you want, how you want it done. And the videos you make are so helpful. It helps to really just understand, just hearing your voice and how it goes, because we don't have a lot of overlap and so hearing your voice and seeing exactly how you want things done is so helpful to understand. So I'm not double guessing myself asking, "Is this what Kaneisha or wants? You know, how would she want it to be presented?" That is so helpful.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm. Okay, so clarity in delegation. I use some software that I really like called Loom, their website is useloom.com. And when Ellie says that I record videos, it's not videos of me painstakingly doing the thing I'm asking her to do. It's just a video of me talking through what I want, "Hey, here's what's going on. I could use your help with this. And this is when I want it done by."

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Sometimes I'll do a video where I'm like, "Hey, look at the website. I don't like how this looks can you work with..." We use Automation Agency, we'll include a link, a referral link to Automation Agency in the show notes. If you sign up to work with them through us, I think we'll get some sort of referral payment and I think you get something.

So, you know, I'll make a video sometimes and just be like, "Hey Ellie, I don't like the way this thing looks on the website. Can you ask Automation Agency to fix this, this, and this?" And I could sometimes just make the video directly speaking to Automation Agency and then, you know, give that video to Ellie.

Ellie does manage two other administrative assistants that we have. One has been with us for a year, and one has been with us for probably about a month. And so she'll pass on tasks to them. But that's what we do when it comes to videos. It's not that I'm sitting there painstakingly, excruciatingly doing the task that I don't want to do. It's more me identifying what the task is, sometimes I do show how to do the task. And then talking about, you know, what would it be if it has been done the way I want it done.

And then we just go back and forth in Basecamp. If you remember that issue is a document. The document has a title, a category, and a prioritization number. And then beneath it is the discussion area where we discuss back and forth.

Okay. And Ellie, where should someone start? What is the first steps to finding and hiring their own executive assistant?

Ellie: Can I add to the previous question?

Kaneisha: Oh, for sure.

Ellie: So another thing that really works is how I am never afraid to ask questions. If something is not clear, like clarity I believe is something really important to you. And if something's not clear, and I have to ask questions just to be sure, I'm never scared of thinking that you might get angry, or you

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

might feel annoyed. Like, you're very open to receiving questions. And I think that really helps to clarify again, I guess, yeah.

Kaneisha: For sure. And it's important for people to understand that virtual assistants no matter where they're located, executive assistants, whether they're virtual or in person, they are not mind readers. And nor are they magical fairy beings that can solve every problem you've ever encountered in your life or business. They are humans with thoughts and feelings, strengths and areas of development. And the more clear you can be in how they can help you and what a good job or a job well done looks like the closer you're going to get to what you want in the end.

So I just wanted to say that because I think sometimes people, they expect to hire someone and then abdicate all responsibility for tasks they don't want to do in their business. And that's not really what it is. You want to set them up for success. And the way you do that is by being clear about what you want. Clear about what's going wrong, or clear about how they can help you. Clear about what a job well done looks like. And then they report back to you like, "Hey, this is what I did." And you let them know, even if the task is done, you let them know why it was done well, or what they could do for it to be better next time.

Let's see, what did you find most surprising working as my executive assistant Ellie?

Ellie: What did I find most surprising?

Kaneisha: Yes.

Ellie: Is how, I don't know what that document was called, but you liked to focus on fun, like -

Kaneisha: Oh, I think it was our values, maybe? And I had written out our values.

Ellie: Yeah, and the last one was fun. And I realized, you know, when we work, you know, it's still work. Like, there are times when the days are like,

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

it can get stressful, especially when there are a lot of things. But you always make time for fun. You always, you know, we have like 5, 10-minute conversations before our meeting just catching up and updating each other about, you know, our personal lives. And then, you know, like, it's different every day. That's what makes it surprising. That's what I was surprised the most, yeah.

Kaneisha: Oh, that it was actually fun and that we interact as people.

Ellie: Yes.

Kaneisha: Yes. Yeah, there's like, you know, we've gotten to get to know each other well. I know you like rap music. You know that I like to eat fried food. And when we're together in person, you're like, "Ugh, you're ordering a lot of fried food." And you're also very good at bringing me back to the topic at hand, and you have private messaged me to say that we're supposed to be talking about how to start the process of hiring. So thanks for that private message.

Okay, let's circle back to that. Where does someone start with hiring an executive assistant or virtual assistant?

Ellie: So they start by getting clear on what they want the person to be doing, specific action items. And then where you found me was [onlinejobs.ph](https://www.onlinejobs.ph) and a lot of my friends have found jobs there as well. So they can create a profile there and start. And that's how we also found our two admin assistants now.

They create a profile there, they can search words, like specific items like executive assistant or virtual assistant. Or someone who's able to create design, someone creative. So that's where they start [onlinejobs.ph](https://www.onlinejobs.ph).

Kaneisha: Okay, so clarity about the role, and we'll have on scaleyourjoy.com/six we'll have an example, we call them position statements, but an example job description. And then also just a place where there are a lot of people looking for online jobs, and the place we like is [onlinejobs.ph](https://www.onlinejobs.ph). We'll also put a link to [onlinejobs.ph](https://www.onlinejobs.ph), maybe some sort of

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

referral link, maybe it comes with some sort of discount. I'll have to see what they have. But definitely come to scaleyourjoy.com/six and get all the links and everything in one place. Was there anything else?

Ellie: No, that's it.

Kaneisha: Okay, so clarity about the role and then actually post the job. And then I would say have a hiring process. Don't just talk to one person and then hire them, but have an application form, have some little mini projects that take less than an hour each to complete for them to do. Talk to multiple people and also ask for references and actually speak to those references.

Even if you're excited about someone, you feel 97% sure that they're the right person for the role, speaking to their references can actually be amazing because those people can tell you things about the person that maybe the person won't tell you about themselves. And they can actually take that 97% sureness and make you 100% sure that the person is the right fit for the role, like I was with Ellie.

Let's talk about some wins we've had in the business in the two years, you've helped The Art of Applying achieve or that The Art of Applying has achieved in the two years you have been on the team.

Ellie: My personal wins in the business is I have taken almost full responsibility of dealing with our company lawyer. So all the agreements, everything we need that's legal, it goes through me and I deal with the lawyer. And I have now, all of our consultants are interviewed and hired by me, but we have our other consultants as well who help in the process. But the final interview and deciding whether we hire them and whether they join the team has fallen on me. That's something Kaneisha and I really worked towards was like building my confidence in that.

Kaneisha: That's amazing. Let's pause there. We now have, I don't know, 30 plus consultants on the team. At this point, I think more people have been interviewed and hired by you than not, what do you think?

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Ellie: Yeah, I think so too.

Kaneisha: Wow. So the majority of our team are people that submitted applications and Ellie was the one who reviewed their application and said yes or no to pass them on to the next stage. Then sent them the editing test and worked with our consultant team to evaluate their editing test, yes or no. Then they went through an interview with Ellie, yes or no. Then Ellie onboards them to the team. And the first time I meet the person is when they have already been hired and I'm just there to meet them and welcome them to the company. That is amazing.

Ellie: Yeah, I think that's one of our biggest wins.

Kaneisha: For sure.

Ellie: And then we were able to increase the prices of our...

Kaneisha: We doubled, we doubled the price of our program, of our signature program, Application Accelerator. And we added the Green Light Guarantee, which you and I worked on for hours and hours in person at our team retreat in California.

Ellie: And we just, we were able to clean up a lot.

Kaneisha: Yes.

Ellie: I remember coming in, and then, you know, looking back and then reflecting on all the work we've done. It's really, it's something that makes you proud. It makes me proud to know that I was able to be a part of that.

Kaneisha: Absolutely. Absolutely, I'm proud of myself for finding you, and hiring you. But I also don't want to make it seem like you're some sort of magic genie, right? It's about the amazing synchronicity, and efficiency, and effectiveness of the two of us together, both showing up fully to our roles. And being in our particular zones of genius.

My zone of genius is ideas. Getting people inspired, excited, managing relationships, creating new opportunities and avenues in the business. But I

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

can only do those things if I have the mental space and energy to do those things. And so your zone of genius is making things efficient, making things happen, following through, checking up on things, cleaning things up.

Ellie: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Okay. Those are some of our wins we've had. What are some wins you'd love to help the business have or some things you want to get accomplished in the next six months, one year, and beyond?

Ellie: Well, definitely my one-year goal or like 2021 goal is to bring our revenue up to a million dollars.

Kaneisha: Yeah.

Ellie: Like that's the goal I've had since 2019. So hopefully this year, we bring it up to a million dollars.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so Ellie joined us after, right after we had our million-dollar year in 2018, which was not that profitable of a year, it was fine. 2019 was a very, very barely profitable year, but it was fine, I was living my best life traveling. But then 2020 was really an amazing gangbusters year, the profits off the charts. The amount of money I made is almost double, the money that went to me was almost double that of before you were with the company during our million-dollar year.

But yeah, so Ellie, her goal is to help us have a... So how will you help The Art of Applying have a million-dollar year in 2021?

Ellie: Just by supporting you and generating leads and, you know, now that we're hiring breakthrough, more sales people, I think just reminding you that you have to send out emails, you have to do this, you have to, you know, we have to hire someone to generate leads for us, which I think we're already...

Kaneisha: We do, he accepted today. Actually, he's our listener spotlight for today. So Tyler recorded an awesome testimonial of Scale Your Joy, so he's our listener spotlight for today. And he's also going to be doing growth

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

marketing for The Art of Applying for the next three months and possibly beyond. So yeah, I think that'll be great.

And just to be clear, Ellie does not generate leads for The Art of Applying. That is something your executive assistant could have as part of their job. But she just means by keeping my attention where it needs to be. Which, in order to have a million-dollar year my attention needs to be on making sure that our breakthrough coaches, our sales people have enough people to speak to on the consultation calls that can then be converted into actual clients. Which we're familiar with these steps, right? If we've listened to the episode on the coaching business cycle.

So Ellie, one of our favorite things to do together is brainstorm and to dream. And this podcast is really the result of some of that brainstorming and dreaming. But let's brainstorm and dream around this idea of us, you know, having some sort of service through Scale Your Joy where we help people, you know, find and hire their amazing executive assistant. Let's just brainstorm and have fun.

So, do we have any business names? What would the business name be? Or I guess the business, it's Scale Your Joy but what would the service, what would we call our service? I'm really the one who's good at naming.

Ellie: You're good at naming, yeah.

Kaneisha: You came up with the bold soul, which was so good. So we would have some sort of cool... Okay, so, okay, VA, or EA? I don't know. We'll skip over that one. We'll skip over the name. It takes me a while, but of course...

Ellie: Takes a little while, like we go on a tangent.

Kaneisha: We do go on a tangent, and we just end up an hour later, like, "What were we talking about?" But we can use what I taught in episode five about naming things perfectly, Kaneisha's Perfect Title Principles to come up with the title of this offer. So let's say we'll just use that, it doesn't happen quickly.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

But what would make us different? Why would people hire us if we did this like service through Scale Your Joy of like helping people hire their assistant?

Ellie: Hire? Or would we also help train the assistant?

Kaneisha: Well, that's my question. What would we do? What would be fun for us? What would be fun for me and you, maybe our two other admins that are in the Philippines? What would be fun for us? And would it be just hiring? What would you want to do? You'd play a really big part in this.

Ellie: I think it would be important to train people as well.

Kaneisha: Yeah, I think so too.

Ellie: Hiring is not easy. But I think what would make us excited is the added challenge of having to train them.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm, so it's almost like we'd have like an assistant academy where they go through our assistant academy for eight weeks or something like that. And then they have a credential, the Scale Your Joy Assistant Academy, a credential. I'm just thinking of all this off the top of my head y'all. But it's just to show you how me and Ellie kind of work together to think of new things in the business.

Ellie: Training, like writing, how to write emails, how to respond to clients kind of training.

Kaneisha: Yep. How we use Basecamp in our business. Like how to ask good questions of your boss. How to give your boss feedback. How to solicit feedback from your boss. How to anticipate your boss's needs. How to manage your boss's calendar.

Ellie: And email.

Kaneisha: And email inbox. The reason why Ellie is saying that is she got a tsk-tsk from me, because, you know, one of her responsibilities is to manage my inbox and it got OOC, it got out of control. And we missed a

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

few important emails, so that won't happen again. But yeah, and train them in how to manage your email inbox and do all those things.

Okay, so they would go through, is it eight weeks, our Assistant Academy?

Ellie: Eight weeks would be fine.

Kaneisha: Yeah. And then we match them up with someone, or are they already pre-matched and then go through their eight-week training?

Ellie: I think they should be pre-matched. So first, like what can do is we can, you know, give people top three, our top three candidates and then they can, you know, interview them and then decide which one they want to hire and we only train that person.

Kaneisha: Okay.

Ellie: Or what we could do is we could also have like a pool of people who we're training so we can employ them.

Kaneisha: Okay, and do they pay to go through the academy?

Ellie: No.

Kaneisha: How do we keep it to where people don't just get trained, and then run off and leave us?

Ellie: If we're able to offer them like a minimum amount that, you know, an amount that's able to make them stay with whoever we're going to employ them with, they might stay.

Kaneisha: Oh, so they get like a little completion, so they actually get paid to learn. So maybe whatever amount we charge on the front end to the hiring company, some percentage of that we set aside to pay three candidates kind of a completion bonus for successfully graduating from the program.

Ellie: Mm-hmm.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: That's cool, I feel like people would be knocking down our doors to go through our training academy, get paid to learn, and you get a job at the end of it?

Ellie: Mm-hmm.

Kaneisha: That's amazing. And you know I like to charge a lot of money for things. For services, for me, I have had success in charging thousands of dollars for things versus hundreds of dollars for things. I've had success charging for an outcome, not charging by the hour.

So let's pretend that this is going to be something around \$5,000. Somebody pays us \$5,000 and then that means we're going to find your candidate, train them, get them credentialed, then present to you three people. Why would it be worth it to people to pay us \$5,000 to find their executive assistant that they still have to pay?

Ellie: We can have a guarantee. Like if they're not happy with their assistant in the 90 days we can replace that assistant. Guarantees need to work for us, so we might, you know, have to incorporate that as well.

Kaneisha: That's true. Okay, so that's... I love a guarantee, right? So in the episode about an Assumption of Permanence I talked about the Green Light Guarantee we have at The Art of Applying. Which has been really amazing for us and helped us stand by our premium prices because we have outstanding results and we also have that guarantee.

So okay, so we'd have a guarantee that if it doesn't work out what their first person within 90 days, they'd get another person, credentialed person?

Ellie: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Okay, this sounds super fun. Let's pretend I was super hype about this idea and I was like, "Okay Ellie, let's work on it starting next week." What would you say to me?

Ellie: No, you would actually work on it right now. You would build a page.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: I'd be like, "Okay, let's work on it. Let's work on it right now." Okay. So then what would you say.

Ellie: You'd build a page right now. That's what we would do.

Kaneisha: We would build the sales page immediately. Everyone, go to [scaleyourjoy.com/...](https://scaleyourjoy.com/) Okay. Okay. Well, let's say I had roped you in too, let's create. So I got you so excited, we're working on the sales page. But you know, let's demonstrate to them how you sometimes help me contain myself and contain my ideas when I get really excited about things like this.

Ellie: Yeah. I have to remind you of your goals. And what really helps when I have to push back is your mind is asking you whether you have time for this. I noticed time is very important for you and, you know, you mentioned that you were able to double your pay, but then you decreased the amount of time that you work in the business.

Kaneisha: That's right.

Ellie: I think that's another win for us as well. So just reminding you that, or asking you even like, "Do you have time for this? Is this something, is this a priority right now? Is this something we want to do." And then I remind you of everything we have planned. And then if they say, yes, this is still something you want to do. Then we go ahead and do it.

Sometimes we work on something for a few days and then you realize it's not something we should do right now and then we just go back to it.

Kaneisha: Okay.

Ellie: Like the podcast, right? Like we planned this a long time ago and then we only launched it recently.

Kaneisha: Yes, yeah. Yeah, just very recently. Yeah, that's a great example. So everyone, I took you through an example of what it's like for me and Ellie to get super excited about something and brainstorm. And the next step sometimes is let's build a sales page for it right now. And sometimes Ellie's like, "Okay, let's do it." And we do it.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

We have totally launched things that I have made thousands of dollars from, from us. Well, actually, I think we made a sales page one time in 45 minutes together, and it resulted in an extra \$30,000 that we made that month, the new package that we created.

Ellie: The Application Intervention.

Kaneisha: Yeah.

Ellie: We did the sales page in like 1 meeting and in less than 24 hours you had one person sign up.

Kaneisha: That's right. That's right. So that quick start, fast moving, partnered creation process can be really amazing. But in general, we try and get things that we get excited about, at least documented somewhat so that we can then prioritize and make sure that it is something that we should be working on.

So this idea that we just worked through is not something that currently exists or that we're available to do. But, you know, this podcast I think is going to get more and more popular and the audience will grow, and the things that we offer through this podcast will grow. So always visit scaleyourjoy.com/six to see what it is we actually are offering. Maybe it is a service we'll be offering and then you can read about it at scaleyourjoy.com/six.

Okay, Ellie, let's start to wrap up. And a question I have for you is what would be different about this job to make it even more of a dream job for you?

Ellie: One thing I really enjoyed was meeting you in person.

Kaneisha: Okay.

Ellie: To get that face time, like physical, being there, like actually seeing you, that was even better. I'm one of the lucky ones honestly. Like my friends, I don't know if any, not very many of them have seen their bosses

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

in person. And just being like, seeing the real Kaneisha and being around her and her energy that's really, that would make it even better.

Kaneisha: Yes, I agree. I agree. And we were so fortunate to see each other twice in person before the world shut down. So we saw each other in Fall 2019. I flew you from the Philippines and paid for your flight and housing, just to be clear to everybody, to go with me to Taki's business retreat that he put on for his clients. And then we hung out afterwards to also work together. So we stayed a few extra days in California to work together. And that was great.

And then in January 2020, the craziest year in the last 100 years, I flew you to Austin, and you stayed for, I don't know, a long time. Like two and a half weeks, three weeks?

Ellie: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Wow. That's so cool. And we stayed in a nightmare Airbnb. Yeah, it was two separate apartments that were attached, which was super cool for us to be that near to each other. And we were in a great part of town, right across the street from Whole Foods and a bunch of restaurants. But the Airbnb units that we rented, it was just absolute nightmare.

But it was really great for us to get to spend three weeks working together. And because you have the biggest family in the entire world, you had family in long beach where we were, and you had family in Austin, and San Antonio, that was so cool. So you had things, you know, during your free time you had things to do and people to keep you company, that was so cool.

Ellie: I had the weekends off, it was a regular work week, just we were in person. That would make it so much fun, you know, you could fly to the Philippines and I can show you around, that would be amazing.

Kaneisha: Definitely. In fact, let's resume that conversation of just like when would some timing be. Offline, let's resume that conversation. Because yeah, when it is safe to do so it is time for me to come to the Philippines.

[Scale Your Joy](#) with Kaneisha Grayson

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

And for me and you and our other two team members in the Philippines to work together. You actually just got me so excited. Let's talk about that when we finish recording this. It also means a lot to me that you got to meet... Did you get to meet my family?

Ellie: I did, except the twins. I wasn't able to meet them.

Kaneisha: You didn't get to meet my twin nephews, yeah. And you also got to me my bestie JJ, and we cooked together and watched that movie and cried. Yeah, so yeah. And it was great. And I'm a huge fan of co-working spaces, so we worked out of WeWorks, multiple WeWorks in California and multiple WeWorks in Austin.

Ellie: That was so much fun.

Kaneisha: So much fun, so much fun. So this has been amazing. Thank you for letting me ambush you. This is exactly how the episode with Lisandra happened, because I was like, "So we're supposed to have a call but can it be a podcast episode instead?" Yeah, people are going to be afraid to have calls with me.

I called both my grandmas this weekend being like, "So Grandma, do you know what a podcast is?" And both of them are like, "What? No." And I'm like, "Okay, so it's like a radio show but like on the internet." And they're like "Okay." And I'm like, "Can we talk about our family history and Black history?" And they're just both like, "I mean, maybe." So we might be hearing from both my grandmas soon.

But thank you for letting me ambush you, for thinking on the top of your head and sharing your advice and insights. And you know how much I love working with you and how much I appreciate you. Just thanks for everything you shared.

Ellie: Thank you so much. I didn't think I'd be this calm, normally I'm like, "No, I don't want to." But yeah, I'm excited to be a part of your project and your newest baby.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

Kaneisha: Yeah, my new baby, Scale Your Joy.

Okay everybody, hope you enjoyed that. And for your recap, I will just say, remember the things that Ellie shared with us. In order to find your own executive assistant, come to scaleyourjoy.com/6 where you can give us your name and email address, and we will give you a little kit.

So in that kit will be the position statement for an executive assistant that you can adapt to your own needs, you can add stuff, take stuff away. It's going to have the exact video that Ellie watched that I made, super simple using Loom of me just explaining the position. It may not even be a video of me talking about an executive assistant position, I think it's me talking about a customer service position. But we'll show you the exact video.

It'll also have the exact application form that we used. And also, we can put a link to onlinejobs.ph. A link to Automation Agency, and any other links to things you might need, such as Basecamp and other things like that. It'll be a whole little nice kit, you just give us your name and email address and we'll give you that kit for free. And you'll join the Scale Your Joy mailing list.

And so your recap is to come to scaleyourjoy.com/six, get your EA hiring kit. And to get clear on what you need in an Executive Assistant, what do you want to pay? How many hours a week or per month do you want the person? Also, to get your software together to figure out, just the most basic software you think you might want to use to communicate with your executive assistant.

Ellie and I, we have Zoom calls. And then for written communication we use Basecamp. We don't exchange emails, which is really wonderful for both of our sanity.

And to take your candidates through a hiring process. So you can look for people on a site like onlinejobs.ph, use keywords to search for them. I found Ellie by searching the word admissions actually. And that was one of the words that was in her profile for handling admissions for the university she used to help run, or she used to run, not help run.

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

And so take people through a hiring process that includes an application form, that includes some mini projects. So maybe three mini projects that have a deadline and clear instructions. That includes an interview via Zoom, and includes you asking for references and actually calling those references and speaking to them. Pick the person that you like.

And in order to make sure you get enough candidates, you may need to do what I did and go approach people, find people, and invite them to apply to your position. And just know that you can listen to this episode anytime you need a refresher on how to hire your own very amazing executive assistant.

And for your joy work I want you to come to scaleyourjoy.com/six and download the kit and read through it. And I want you to make a list of 10 tasks. They can be personal, or professional, entrepreneurial, just tasks that would help you have more time and space in your schedule.

And then I want you to journal doodle and noodle on the question of what would I do if I had an extra 10 hours a month to do with whatever I want, because I have hired an executive assistant to help me for 15 hours a month. And then that person working 15 hours a month frees me up. Let's say they take a little bit longer to do the tasks. So you hire them for 15 hours a month and that frees you up for 10 hours. What would I do with an extra 10 hours a month? So I want you to journal doodle and noodle on that.

All right, so this has been Scale Your Joy with Kaneisha Grayson episode six, interviewing her amazing executive assistant Ellie. And I will speak to you all next week.

This was Scale Your Joy with Kaneisha Grayson, episode six. I can't wait to speak with you next week.

To celebrate the launch of the show. I'm giving away a Scale Your Joy audio book ebook bundle. These are five handpicked books that I have

6: Hire an Extraordinary Executive Assistant: A Conversation with My Executive Assistant

read and I love. They're about life, joy, and entrepreneurship, and five lucky listeners will be chosen to win.

The way you enter is you subscribe, rate, and review Scale Your Joy on Apple Podcast. It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you're loving the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an amazing show that provides tons of value. Visit scaleyourjoy.com/welcome to learn more about the contest and how to enter.

I'll be announcing the winners on the show in Episode 11