Corey Andrew Powell ([00:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hello everyone, and welcome to the Motivational Mondays podcast presented by the National Society of Leadership and Success now impacting over 2 million members. So today we are so thrilled to have with us a leader, innovator, and community builder whose career journey spans from Wall Street to the heart of Brooklyn Atiba. T Edwards is the president and CEO of the Brooklyn Children's Museum, a place he once knew as a young visitor, and now Helms with a deep rooted connection to his community. Atiba, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Atiba T. Edwards ([00:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you so much for having me. I'm excited to be here with you all.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, wow. Well, we're happy to have you here too. And I will say that, um, I didn't, I'm not from Brooklyn, but I did have the pleasure of living in Brooklyn for a couple years when I first got to New York, and it was like my first time living alone in my twenties. And, uh, it was just a wonderful neighborhood, uh, by Eastern Parkway, uh, you know, Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and the Prospect Park. It was just a great area. So I, I do love Brooklyn, man. It's a great spot.

Atiba T. Edwards ([00:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Amazing.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes, yes. So, let's talk about your career, um, starting with though, I love the reflective part of it where you were yourself in your early days, um, a visitor of the Brooklyn Children's Museum, and now you're leading it. So what does it feel like to be at the helm of an organization that you so closely were connected to in your childhood?

Atiba T. Edwards ([01:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It feels amazing. It's one of these things where I wake up and just always excited to walk into work, uh, or ride a bike into work. I don't live too far from the museum, but it's almost surreal in many days, especially, you know, coming up on about a year anniversary of being the president. And every time it's just eye-opening. When I think back to my parents to consider on a daily basis, weekly basis, it was just like a, it was a common thing for us to do. Come and run around the building, enjoy it, have fun. Uh, back in the day that we had a python that any visitors might remember named Fantasia. So seeing that at the first time. So really eye-opening and joyful to be where I am right now because I reflect back on the things that I enjoy and I feel a high sense of responsibility to meaning and exceeding the memories that I made for all the families that walk in today.

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. That's wonderful too, especially when you consider the socioeconomics of art and how sometimes there's not access to young people in the urban environment. And I know for me, like PBS was my version of that. Like, I would be obsessed with PBS because, you know, we weren't a family that could afford the ballet or, you know, to go to Rockefeller Center. And so it brought it right to me. So I love that, you know, you're focusing on the accessibility as well to bring it to young people so that they can sort of enjoy it and, um, you know, feel like they're a part of it versus i I versus art feeling like isolationist, right. Like something that's not attainable.

Atiba T. Edwards ([02:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. That's a key history making aspect as well. So we were spun out of an organization called the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, Brooklyn Museum. The Botanical Gardens and Bam were our essentially all under the same umbrella. And then the directors at the time said, you know what? Let's actually spin these out and give them a chance to grow on their own. So we've been located in Crown Heights for, you know, over a century, almost two.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([03:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And it was, I highlight that because there was a point in time where this was really a temporary site. We were in two Victorian mansions in Broward Park as they were kind of building and expanding. And then the ideal was that we would be relocated from Crown Heights to, um, a sort of campus like space during Brooklyn Museum and the Gardens. But the community rallied and said, why, why does it have to leave? Why can't we have this here? Why can't it be in our community? So we feel a great sense of pride in that we are a destination museum like all of our partners across this space. Uh, we located in central Brooklyn, we super serve Brooklyn, and we always think about how we can make this building as accessible for all through just general entry rate, but more importantly the programming that we provide. Because when you are thinking about going into a space, particularly as a young person, we really think about the Children's Museum as a third space. There is school school's a very programmed aspect. You, you, there's a time it starts, there's a time for lunch, maybe recess if you're lucky. And even if you're really lucky arts and craft, and then you go home and then you come to home and much to the parent's desire, they're following a schedule. But when you come to a children's museum like ours, the child has agency. So the child is able to really think and see themself and really lead their family through the space. And then we make sure and try to couple that with celebrating diversity in every which way possible. So we do about 14 cultural festivals that we co curate to give a high level of both authenticity, but also support for artists. So we're coming up on Día de los Muertos, MLK, Lunar new Year. So when you think about accessibility, it is sort of bare bones allowing more people to enter without feeling like they're a burden. But then accessibility from the aspect of walking into a space and seeing your culture uplifted and amplified and celebrated in this really beautiful way. And if you don't identify with that culture, still able to learn and access it so your lexicon and understanding grows that much more.

Atiba T. Edwards ([05:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So when I think about something like Día de los Muertos that's coming up, everybody loved Coco. I would, you know, that's kinda like the general blanket statement. I'm making some assumptions. <laugh>, um, Coco was really rooted in the aspect of Día de los Muertos and like telling a story around remembrance and memory and ancestors. So I share that because for families who might not know that beyond the movie, their child might be watching or they might be watching, it's like, I don't understand this thing. They get to come to the museum and see it Understood, explained, and really celebrated. So when I think about accessibility is just getting people through the door, but it's also reflecting cultures that make up Brooklyn, New York and the world that uplift and amplify them as well.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, that's amazing because it starts with children, right? That's where that programming begins. And if you don't program that correctly, we see today <laugh> examples, <laugh> of isolationism and people who are separatists and are not necessarily welcoming to other cultures. And it's funny you mention the, um, the Cocoa film because I have always been a person who, like, I hated to see skulls, like, and.

Atiba T. Edwards ([06:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

People would wear skulls in their jacket or skulls in their clothing. I'm like, oh, that's so, like, I hate that. That's so like morbid. And you know, and then when I, when I, well, when I went to Mexico, quite honestly, <laugh> and started to see this whole other sort of interpretation of the skull in that culture when it comes to the ceremony you just mentioned, or when it comes to the art and just sort of how it's in a different, it's revered in a different way and presented in a different way, um, respectfully, I said, wow, that's something I had not even considered in another culture. Now I, I kind of have a different perspective on it. So anyway, the point is, yes, being exposed to other cultures is very important because it can help change your perspective or, or break stereotypes, you know? Yeah. It's very, very,

Atiba T. Edwards ([07:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes, I shared that. I, it's very similar to me. I, I remember I got a gift one time because there was a period in fashion where skulls were all the rage. Somebody gave me a sweater and it had a skull. And I said, thank you, uh, for the gift and the thought, I honestly won't wear this. And the reason is like, skulls as I knew them similarly, were always attributed to like death and morbidness.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([07:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And then I really expanded upon to that same aspect of like how it can be revered in this light of remembrance of ancestors. So I'm right there along with you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Atiba T. Edwards ([07:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And you know that, yeah, that's kind of continues underscoring. The more we can learn is the more we can actually understand and really appreciate that what might seem different or we might have one interpretation of it, the more we know kind of like that good old cartoon and that animation is the better we are for the future.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>. Absolutely. And I even say too, when it comes to, you brought up fashion, but culinary stuff too, you know, there's cultural things that we are all acclimated to. And I always laugh at my mom 'cause, you know, in my household, like we were just, it's a joke that black folks just don't eat rare meat <laugh> <laugh>, that meat better be cooked. I better not say no, no. And then I became really good friends with really high-end chefs and you know, they convinced me to try my meat a little pink. And, you know, and, and now, you know, I'm, I'm a whole other person now. The, the, the meat is like on my plate kicking still at this point. So I have changed, you know, it changes, changes your palette, you know, you become more sophisticated. So anyway, the point is everyone watching and listening Yes. Expand your horizons and, um, your life will be much more enriched for it. Now you started on Wall Street.

Atiba T. Edwards ([09:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([09:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Is that like where your professional career began really?

Atiba T. Edwards ([09:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Professional career began there. Uh, I went to University of Michigan, studied engineering, liberal arts with a focus in poetry and musicology. But throughout that time, while I was in college, I interned through a lovely organization called Inroads, and I interned at JP Morgan when I graduated. I worked in investment banking, which was a desire of mine in many ways, but also, uh, a sense of like, wow, the world's really different. Um, you know, in terms of appearances. And it's for, you know, just to be frank, I think everybody knows it is Wall Street's a predominantly white male institution, um mm-hmm <affirmative> and me entering that space, I desire to go there to further craft my own skillset, but also understanding and learning more. And I loved it. Um, I would do it all again in the exact same processes. I, I learned a lot there. And my first boss is still a near dear friend of mine and a mentor. I'm seeing him this week in Michigan as well.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. So when you say that it was a world you wanted, you were interested in, I mean, was that distinctly finance or that drove you to it that you were interested in? Or the idea that there could be a lot of money made there, which is sort of like the, the provocative part of Wall Street. What was it the, what was the actual attraction to working in Wall Street?

Atiba T. Edwards ([10:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

The way that you learn a sense of conviction to cut through noise and make the best assumption possible? So, um, because I think, and I know my sort of training as a school person is an engineering, and engineering is optimization systems. Looking at known variables and known inputs to then make a next discernment to how to optimize that system.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([10:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Carry that to Wall Street. Things happen in a split second and a market will move. So how do I sharpen my ability to take in a whole lot of information, distill it very quickly and make a decision.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([11:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Uh, I covered the automotive sector and that's when all the bankruptcies were happening. Um, they were, I remember one day there was a protest in, I think in Britain, they were protesting, I think student loans or the rates were increasing, so students are taking over the street. So I get a phone call at my desk, Hey Tiva, I'm not sure if you saw the news. I was like, well, it, yes, it just happened. Okay, what should we do? I was like, oh, alright, here's my best assumption. Um, so I was drawn to the aspect of having to make very big ripple effect like decisions in a split second, but also feeling comfortable and confident with your sense of conviction.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Atiba T. Edwards ([11:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'm making the best assumption possible. I forecast, I model out what production might mean, car sales might do, and here's what I've landed on. But this aspect of a short feedback loop was another thing that drew me to it. 'cause I'm gonna make a decision, buy seller hold, the results will come up. I'll either be right, wrong or in between, and I can say, okay, here is why they beat or missed estimate based on what I predicted. So for me, it's this really innate high level sense of learning and knowledge and the money for sure, the money was good, but that wasn't the real attraction. It was being in an environment where you're forced to learn every single day and you're surrounded by people who, for the most part also want to learn. And it's a very short feedback loop. I make a decision and at 1255 something happens. I can know if I'm right or wrong, but I can go back and back into why it was right or wrong.

Corey Andrew Powell ([12:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. Wow. It seems like a lot of high pressure though, <laugh>, I'll be honest with you.

Atiba T. Edwards ([12:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hundred percent.

Corey Andrew Powell ([12:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Because you're kind of dealing with other people's assets and, you know what I mean? It's like, it is different. If I put, if I bet the form and, and the form is mine and I, and I lose it, that's different. But, whew, that sounds like a high pressure. And for me, my first experience with that whole world, I think when I really maybe considered working in it myself, was the film Trading Places, <laugh>

Atiba T. Edwards ([12:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

<laugh>,

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You know? And I thought, wow.

Atiba T. Edwards ([13:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Great movie.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, a great movie, A really funny movie. But really, um, when you watch it, I saw it as a kid, of course, as, as an Eddie Murphy fan, watching it again as an adult and seeing sort of the social implication of what that film is really saying about wealth and the, the class. I definitely recommend people see it again with that lens. And it's really a fascinating movie. Um, so I, I know the, the, the money is why a lot of people go into that, but it's, um, high pressure. So make sure you guys all consider that part of it before you make that decision. Um, when it comes to you now being, well, I guess the, the previous role, uh, of the COO of the museum, right? You focused on, I guess fine tuning areas that really were part of the experience for the people who would come in to check it out, like the visitor experience or Reno maybe doing reforms in finance or hr. So how did you, do you think those, your Wall Street experiences sort of prepare you for that whole world because there's like two different worlds happening?

Atiba T. Edwards ([14:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, that's a fantastic question in many ways, because I would say to that same point, there's a sense of, it's a high pressure environment in Wall Street. We're playing with assets, and then if I parallel that to this, it's all around the experience. So just to kind of like oscillate back and forth in terms of a financial analyst where, no disrespect to us, but we're a dime dozen. There's 60 different people you can call, but the clients come to me, my senior or my junior analyst because there's a sense of connectedness but also an appreciation of the service that we're giving. I'm giving you the best advice I can possibly do in a way that lands and sit with you. And if I don't know the answer, I'm not gonna waste your time. I'm gonna let you know, I don't know, gimme two minutes, I'm gonna call you back. So that sense of service is really paramount because again, they can call any of the clients and they often do, but they come back and rely upon the teams I were on because of that level of service and really just honest relatability. Um, as a result, we were ranked number one all the years we're publishing, so it felt revered and honored.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Atiba T. Edwards ([15:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Jump into the museum. We are a paid experience. We compete with the parks and all the pop-up experiences there. So like really, when I think about the visitor experience, it's the same aspect. Everybody has a choice where they can spend their time and their dollars and their weekends. What can we do to make sure that experience is as best as possible from the minute you walk into this building? So are you being greeted correctly? Does the space look a certain way? So that's where the sort of engineering systems optics comes to play for me, but rooted in the aspect that systems and the structure that people experience when they walk into those opportunities or places is what brings them back.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([15:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So fine tuning was the aspect where if we don't get something right, we might not see that family again. But then that family's just like, yeah, I went to the museum. I don't think it's good guys. And then they're actually marketing a bad experience to others, which then people, you know, trust each other. So they're limiting that experience there. So that's how some of the work showed up. And then also I covered, well, I managed the finances, so also sort of like playing the CFO role as well and looking at our budget on an ongoing basis to think about how do we make the best decision for the organization knowing that it might not be the best decision for any one specific individual all the time, but for the most of the time it will be. So that has been the COO operations is trying to make sure this building runs as smoothly as possible. And if there is a fix, it's a similar short feedback loop. And how do we make sure that experience, that system, that building infrastructure gets fixed as quickly as possible so that we can provide the best experience for every single person that walks into this building.

Corey Andrew Powell ([16:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. You know, there's so many great nuggets of leadership, um, inspiration in what you just said tied to this thought that I had while you were speaking 'cause you're, we, well, if you also share with our audience very often is that you take all your life experiences and you are the culmination of all those things. So when you are now yourself a brand, I can remove you from any of those situations and put you in another one. And you're bringing all those experiences to the whatever role you're in. And it's an asset, not a detriment that you have all those experiences, right? So it's almost like the idea like with you, you are your own brand, and in that brand is this Wall Street experience.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

User experience for people who are doing, uh, in, in the arts world, um, an affinity for the arts. And I think the lesson there is that people need to realize that they are a culmination of author life experiences, but find a way how to now transition and market that into a career where they can utilize those things or where those things are welcomed as part of what their offerings are. And that's how you stand out really as your most authentic self. And that seems like what you've done and the career that you've had.

Atiba T. Edwards ([18:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. I I, you, you think you've said it so well. I often laugh at, when I tell people my essentially track record and was like, oh, I started arts not-for-profit back in college. I then worked in investment banking, I co-ran the school and now I'm leading a cultural organization. And like, oh, you're such a renaissance, or you're, you're, um, multihyphenate all the different ways that describe it. I was like, yeah, that's considered multihyphenate because of the way we approach and think about life in this aspect that is a one track. You know, you find a thing, you'd be really great at that thing. And if you, another thing, oh, you are an artist and a chef and of this and of that and of that. It's like we're all amalgamation of experiences. And for me, knowing that all of these puzzle pieces that predate this point in time have led to who I am right now. And I'm gonna get some more along the way.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Atiba T. Edwards ([19:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

But I just always, the trick is to figure out how they fit. And I always love that puzzle analogy because you'll never be complete until you're complete. So there's a bit of sort of like esoterism in there for sure. But this aspect of along the way, something might feel like it's right, but then as you start putting other pieces around it, you realize like, Ooh, let me flip that, or let me rotate that because now it actually sinks in even more.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Atiba T. Edwards ([19:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'm a big fan of cartoons, so, you know, Voltron is one of my favorites. And like, you know, the five Lions came together in a very specific way and they all had their own specific talents, but together they were even stronger. And that's what I think about that amalgamation of experiences. We pick up more along the way and our lived experience then becomes our expertise.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So also you mentioned in your discussion topics that you have this one area where you like to really stress, which is, um, the importance of leading from the back. So explain what you mean by that. Can you elaborate a bit more?

Atiba T. Edwards ([20:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, and I mean, it's a hats off to a dear friend and a mentor in many ways that actually suggested that as a, a topic focus for me. And then what I would think about it when I think about leading from the back is you are as a, you know, in this clear example, CEO, COO. So I'm effectively the number two riding shotgun, essentially controlling the radio, if you will, if you think about a drive. But it's what can you do to help be an example for everyone else without, and also accepting the fact that you are not the primary leader, right? The presidency at the time is a primary leader.

Corey Andrew Powell ([20:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Atiba T. Edwards ([20:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So leading this, the back is taking care of all the other things so that the number one can focus on the larger, bigger parts of this work, making sure that they're not worried about payables, financials. You know, do we have the right staffing? There's all these things that the leading from the back comes to mind when you don't always have to be in the front. Sometimes you can be in the background or in the, in the, in the shadows in some cases doing the work and leading by example so that many others who play a role are seeing that mode of showing up be an exemplar for them. So the person who's leading from the front, they're out there often being the face of the organization, externally leading from the back comes to mind of a complimentary leader, but focus on the internal aspects of making sure we can achieve and succeed. Um, so that's one of the ways I think about leading from the back is. There's a lot that gets done behind the curtains, if you will. So the stage hands, the lighting, the grips, the ca, everybody's seeing these, these things come to fruition so that we can all collectively have a really great experience.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. Yeah. And very often you're right, the people behind the scenes are really the reason why stuff gets done, right. The people who you don't see. Um, and I think on a very basic level too, if you think about leading from the back, I mean, if you're leading from the front, you can't see what's going on. If you're leading from the back, you can see everything that's occurring in front of you and you can make a better, a better assessment. So that's great advice. And also it's very aligned with lead when we talk about leadership. You don't have to be the smartest person in the room, but the smart leader knows how to get the smart people in a room with him or her

Atiba T. Edwards ([22:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Exactly.

Corey Andrew Powell ([22:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

To help make the, the best decisions for an organization or yeah. So, um, wise, wise, uh, example there. Now also, my final question for you is this notion also that you've shared about it makes sense to me, you know, as a, as a theme if you will, and as it pertains to making decisions about career and um, professional choices in general. So when it comes to that, what advice would you give young people? I would say, um, from underserved communities, especially to find a career that quote makes sense for them.

Atiba T. Edwards ([23:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

The biggest advice I would say is think about what your passion really is and then the work you're gonna put in to make that happen. Um, I share that connectedly. So I used to run a middle school and I coach or boys basketball, girls basketball and soccer.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Atiba T. Edwards ([23:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Almost all like, I wanna be in the NBA Mr. Edwards. So like what's your work ethic like though, because right now you're showing up to practice, you have a soda in your hand and a bacon egg and cheese <laugh> and doing that the last three days. So I'm let you know that's not gonna help get you where you, so that is, to me the biggest focal point is like, what is a thing I really, really love doing? And for me it was working with communities and bringing them together and that looks different when I'm doing my arts programming that looks different when I'm in finance and investment banking at a school and out at museum. But I know that was my drive and that was a thing that when it became hard, it's looking back and reflecting on that as my purpose and my North star, it's gonna make it work. So that's gonna keep fueling me and giving me that passion. So don't really take in what people are saying and they're suggesting for sure, but make sure that the path you are charting and carving is your own. And I use carving intentionally because it is gonna be hard. Just the same with somebody carves or rockets. It's not, we often celebrate the final chip that gives us the sculpture, but we don't think about the thousand and millions of trips that take to get to where you are. So it's gonna be a hard path forward, but find the thing that you really wanna do and you really wanna say, you know what, I'm gonna wake up. I'm gonna be happy 51% of the time I'll be okay. And that's, you know, a, a fair average. It's a low average, but it's a fair average. But finding the thing that you really want to do, but you also want to put the work and energy and ethic behind because that's what's gonna help you reach to that level of success in that stardom if you will, is.

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Atiba T. Edwards ([25:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It'll always be hard in whatever thing you choose to do or you end up doing, there'll be days you're gonna doubt yourself. But knowing that North star of this is my passion in many ways, this is my purpose and I'm gonna back it up with the work ethic. So whatever it is you want to do, you have to really ask yourself, who do I know is successful doing it? How did they get there? And I'm, am I ready to replicate and exceed that level of work ethic, practice repetitions, whatever it might be to get where I am.

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. Excellent. Excellent advice. And I will also say, um, the bacon, egg and cheese though from the bodegas, you just can't, um, I can see why that might be a problem, <laugh> <laugh>, 'cause that's some good eating right there, but I get, it's not conducive to <laugh> probably wanting to be, um, a sports celebrity. But that is wonderful a advice. So thank you so much for sharing that. Atiba T. Edwards, the president and CEO of the Brooklyn Children's Museum, a place he wants knew as a young visitor now helping them take the frontier to the next level. So thank you so much for being here today on Motivational Mondays.

Atiba T. Edwards ([26:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/WAEAm75SeGKZj6wgcYcouoR9YWK7GEKM2iH0h5Ysa3huycYCjZdb6muL3rltcZGroHDLl_WjMOqi93Xmr4_askjeNcw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you for having me, Corey, and the entire team. It was a great conversation and a wonderful time with you