

Colleague Profile

Angie Freeman

Those of us who spend any time in the lobby of our Brattleboro office, where our operations department is located, cannot help but feel that we are in the middle of a very well written sitcom. The one-liners fly fast and furious. We even have some regulars who seem to stop in just to keep the repartee going. In most sitcoms, there is a central character, and we have ours. So this profile could be subtitled "Everybody Loves Angie".

Andrea Freeman, known to her family as Annie, and to her colleagues as Angie, is the kid of the company. As the youngest of the Founders, she is the head of our operations department. This is her story.



Sometimes a simple talent determines your destiny. Angie entered high school eager to participate in the process of developing her skills in primarily one area, socialization. An extrovert, she found no need to focus on a career when "being in the moment" was more than satisfactory. She had hints, though, that she had a talent, other than a natural ease with people, that probably needed nurturing. She liked accounting.

So, when it came time for college, she selected Champlain College in Burlington to study business and accounting.



After a year, she returned home. Born and raised in Brattleboro with deep family roots, she made the decision to stay, get married to Jim Freeman, her boyfriend from high school, and find a job locally. In 1984, she applied for a job at the Vermont National Bank and was hired to work in the trust operations department. Although she had little formal training in accounting, which should have been a prerequisite for the job, she brought with her a simple talent that she excelled at: she liked to balance. If the inbox were six inches high in the morning, she wanted the outbox to be six inches high at the end of the day. If the ledgers were out of balance, she didn't leave until they were in balance. It was this simple talent that developed into a skill that developed into specialized knowledge that few possess, that led her to becoming one of the founders of our company.

In January of 1986, she left the Bank and resettled in Texas after her husband entered the service. When he was sent to Panama, military rules prevented her

from following him.

Angie can be very tenacious. This was most evident when she took on the U.S. Military. She returned to Brattleboro and started a letter writing campaign to get him stationed in the States. Only intending to get him relocated nearby, she was surprised when his commanding officer offered Jim early release, citing letters from a Vermont Senator and Representative. Upon his return, she resumed work at the Trust Department and eventually became head of trust operations at the age of 26 in 1991.



In 1996, before mergers changed the landscape, Angie was managing a department with \$800 million with half the staff found in departments of similar size.

Angie was balancing at an even higher level. With three young children, she was trying to balance the increasing demands of work with the increase in responsibilities at home. Were it not for a supportive husband, and the extended family, this might have become an insurmountable task.

In 1999, Angie started the trust operations for our Trust Company. She is a specialist in multitasking. So she continues to do her magic. She balances home and work, books and ledgers, and more recently, her kids. And she balances us. Her humor radiates from the lobby to the branches, to all of us who might take ourselves a little too seriously.
