



Kiley Long

Senior Account Executive with Colorado Avalanche Hockey Club

Tell us about yourself.

I was born on the north shore of Chicago but have lived in Colorado most of my life since childhood. I grew up very active skiing, playing sports, figure skating and eventually dancing in high school competitively. Being around sports and entertainment was always a part of my life and since I grew up in Colorado I can remember cheering for the Broncos and Avalanche at a young age with my family. I went to college at Colorado State University and majored in Public Relations and Business. During my senior year I obtained an internship with the athletic media relations department at CSU and ended up falling in love with the environment I was in and the world of sports as a career.

During a CSU basketball game I met a scout for the Minnesota Timberwolves basketball team while I was working and running the CSU Twitter feed with updates. He ended up taking a large measure of belief in me and gave me all his contacts at the Pepsi Center to reach out and shadow at a Denver Nuggets NBA game. I did so and shadowed media interns at games the last month of my college career. I ended up getting an internship out of hundreds of applicants. I turned down other job offers and interviews in my major and took a chance on that internship. I continued with the Nuggets and Avalanche furthering my sales skills and eventually was offered my first full time job with the company, an Account Executive with the Colorado Mammoth, our indoor lacrosse team. During my time with the Mammoth I

completely fell in love with group sales. I loved event-based sales, I loved working with people who became friends more than clients, I loved the experiences I brought people that changed their lives or made their whole year, I truly love making people happy and I knew I wanted to be in group sales. During the summer of 2013 I got my job with the Colorado Avalanche, just a few days after they hired Joe Sakic and Patrick Roy to run our team, an Account Executive in group ticket sales with the Colorado Avalanche.

I have been with the Avalanche for five seasons now and I have seen the good, bad, and everything in between. My first season the Avalanche were amazing, a playoff contending team that was hard to beat, they struggled the years after that missing the playoffs and last year they ended with the record of worst team in NHL history. I have learned how to sell and how to be proud of my team and the product I offer no matter what their record is. This season the Avalanche shocked the world and not only had a major comeback season, but made the playoffs. No one thought we would even come close to making the playoffs, but this team is young, confident, and determined. I love the team I represent and I love my hometown state of Colorado. I am a passionate advocate of women rocking the business and sports world!

When in your life/career have you been a G.I.R.L. (go-getter, innovator, risk-taker, leader)?

I believe at two major moments in my career I have made decisions that represented what it means to be a go-getter, innovator, risk-taker, and leader. When I first took my internship out of college with the Avalanche I choose a low level, beginner, non-glamorous internship that paid me \$7.50 an hour over a job offer with a tech recruiting company paying me a good salary and other opportunities with PR companies. I just felt pulled to it, I knew it was the harder path but I felt it would be more rewarding to me to prove people wrong telling me that it was almost impossible to get a consistent job in sales and build a career for years around it in sports. I wanted to prove them all wrong and I did.

I also think I represented the attributes of a G.I.R.L when I stayed in my job and stuck with our team after last season. There were many people who thought the Avalanche would not bounce back on any level this year and would be mediocre at best. Working for a team that sets a record for being the worst in history is difficult, many people did leave and question why they were doing their job anymore. There were times I struggled but I never stopped

being proud of the team I represented. I had this feeling they were special. It's hard to keep selling for a team that comes away with a season like that one but to me it was never a choice of leaving this team behind I knew I had to see them through.

What does it mean to "take the lead?"

I think taking the lead is different based on the person, circumstance, and situation but I think regardless of any of those factors taking the lead means that you are not afraid to be different and you are not afraid of failure. When you become fearless you become limitless. In sales I am turned down every single day, but I have learned to have a short memory and not let one individual person contradict what I think of myself or what I know I am capable of, because they are just one. No matter what you do for your career or what industry you represent you need to be proud of yourself and the organization you represent. When you believe in yourself and your product no one can tell you differently even if they don't want to be a part of it. Taking the lead means that you have natural ambition and ambition is priceless.

Why is it important for girls and women to "take the lead?"

It is most important for girls and women to take the lead because they are our future! I am so passionate about the women I surround myself with and have for years in my career, my internships, and my life in all industries not just mine. Women unfortunately have a history of not having as many roles in leadership, pay discrepancies, and work place issues that have affected them for decades, but I believe that is changing and is going to continue to change further. To be a strong woman and a leader in your industry it starts as a young girl, you are never too young to learn, to engage, or lead so do not let anyone tell you that you are! Your brain, your voice, and your leadership are your most important tools and sometimes all you have to do is lead by example and others will follow.

What has helped you achieve success?

My family and the friends and coworkers I have chosen to surround myself with from the beginning. My parents are both outstanding at what they do, my father has always been a role model of a strong man who has placed his family first and instilled values in my sisters

and I from our childhood on work ethic, determination, and the way we viewed ourselves. He has and continues to be a strong sales person in the commercial real estate industry and has succeeded from his strength as a leader, in his communication, and the way he engages with others in his field. My mother is the most amazing example of a woman who has done it all. There were times in her life where she stopped working to raise her children, but she has had countless careers in different fields and is the smartest, strongest, most savvy business woman I have ever known who can pick anything up at the drop of a hat. She has taught me how to be respectfully persistent and never take no for an answer. With parents and sisters like the ones I have had it has shaped me from my childhood to be who I am and been key in what I have achieved.

My friends and coworkers I have worked alongside for years have pushed me, encouraged me, kept humor in my life during hard times and been examples to me of how to succeed and I admire them in so many ways. My boyfriend who also works alongside me for the Avalanche in Amateur Hockey Development has been my partner in crime keeping me hard working, focused and driven through the best and worst of times as well.

Were you a Girl Scout? If so, tell us about your experience and what is the most important thing Girl Scouts taught you?

I was not a Girl Scout. I grew up in a small mountain community and at the time I don't think it was offered there or my parents were not aware of it because my youngest sister was a Brownie years later, but I was very involved with many programs, camps, and activities similar to Girl Scouts. From being a community partner with Girl Scouts for years I have learned about their tremendous and amazing belief and support of creating young girls who are confident, strong, and the next generation of leaders so it could not make me prouder to be a part of what they do. Every Girl Scout is equipped with the tools to be a go getter, an innovator, a risk taker, and a leader and I cannot wait to see the amazing G.I.R.L.s that come out of this program for years to come!

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