

# Rocking Talent



**Hiring  
beyond  
generic**

*William Tincup*

**Business is  
still about  
relationships**

*Jacob Morgan*

**Rocking  
by making  
a difference**

*Jim Knight*

**Fighting  
uncertainty  
with strategy**

*Liz Weber*



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William Tincup



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# Punk*Edition!*

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**PUNK EDITION**

Cecilia Del Valle

# Rocking

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# Talent



JAIME ANDRÉS DÍAZ LUQUE | CEO de PDA INTERNATIONAL  
in

In my childhood, I was raised in a home where my mother always shared the role of head of household with my father. I had the incredible opportunity to walk by her side and see her professional development and to experience, from a very young age, the corporate environment at home. I grew up in a home where chores were shared and, nonetheless, you could not help but notice how much more was expected of her and, moreover, how much more difficult it was for her to develop into the professional who came to be my role model. My first years in the working world were in Asia, where my first culture clash with the massive gender gap that exists and the injustices I could banally perceive in very small cases.

Professionally, I have worked mostly with women and this experience taught me to see clearer the added difficulties they face in their day-to-day, how different the opportunities presented to them can be and, above all, how much effort is required and needed to make space for themselves.

Today, in my position as CEO, I have the opportunity to make decisions that affect and impact our staff here at

PDA International. It's very important to make these decisions consciously, looking not only at gender but also at culture, religion, and the experiences that have shaped each one of us who are part of this organization.

In this edition we want to take a journey with top leaders who are able to break down barriers and imprint that punk attitude and disruption on human practices, understanding their process and discovering the obstacles and difficulties they faced.

Today, from **Rocking Talent**, we want to celebrate the **diversity** of topics, opinions and points of view. We want to foster **humility** because we understand the importance of recognising the **contribution of each person**. We want to contribute to the community that prompted us to create this platform.

We want to invest in the **purpose of our connections**. And, above all, we want to **challenge** you to live a life of constant innovation, disruption, going the extra mile and understanding that talented people are the ones who "rock" their companies.

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# Punk *Edition!*

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« WHAT'S MORE  
IMPORTANT IS NOT HOW  
LONG SOMEONE STAYS  
AT YOUR COMPANY, BUT  
WHAT THEY DO WHILE  
THEY ARE THERE »



# “Business is still about relationships”

By LEILA OVANDO

*There is no doubt that this 2020 has brought many changes to every single aspect of our lives and the organizational area is surely one of them. Jacob Morgan, a futurist, speaker and author of the new best-selling book, *The Future Leader*, shared with us his point of view about leadership, crisis and the importance of people.*

**You state about 5 trends that are driving the change in the workplace today. Would you share these with us?**

In my previous book, *The Future of Work*, which came out in 2014, the 5 trends I talked about were: changing demographics, mobility, technology, globalization, and new behaviors. I still think these trends are very much relevant today.



**Changing demographics:** New attitudes, expectations and ways of working



**Mobility:** Work anytime, anywhere and on any device



**Technology:** Shift to the cloud, collaborative technologies, Big Data, the Internet of Things



**Globalization:** No boundaries



**New behaviors:** Shaped by social media and the web





**What advice/activity would you give to keep employees engaged understanding that from the Millennials an on it's really common to change jobs? And what would you advice on how to attract new talents?**

First of all, there is nothing wrong with changing jobs. Tenure isn't necessarily the metric that organizations should be using to gauge success. For example, you can have an average performing employee stay at your company for 20 years or you can have a superstar employee who stays at your company for 2 years, has a huge impact, and then moves on. Which one would you rather have? **What's more important is not how long someone stays at your company, but what they do while they are there.**

As far as engaging and attracting talent, the best thing any organization can do is focus on employee experience which is a combination of three environments that the organization can control: culture, technology, and physical space.

**Is it often said that a person quits her leader, not her job. What do you think about it?**

I agree. Most of the research shows that people leave to get away from a toxic leader as opposed to getting away from the company or from their role. This is quite sad because the one person who is supposed to be looking out for us, guiding us, and coaching us, is the person that so many are trying to get away from!

**This year you launched the book "The Future Leader" and actually we had a worldwide crisis that required that many leaders change the way they were used to lead. Do you think that "that" future leader is among us right now because the circumstances required it?**

Absolutely! It's one of the things I talk about with leaders today. I wrote my book with a lens aimed at the next 5-10 years and with the current global climate it's become quite clear that the time horizon and shrunk. The skills and mindsets I talk about in my book are crucial to master today!

**What are the most common challenges the leaders will have to overcome in this new normal and what skills are they going to need?**

In my book I talk about two sets of challenges which are "futurize" and "humanize". "Futurize" challenges refer to making sure the organization and the people who work there stay relevant in a rapidly changing world. This includes things like moving from short term to long term thinking, keeping up with the pace of change, and challenging the status quo.



"Humanize" challenges include things like focusing on doing good, making the organization human, and leading diverse teams.

As far how to overcome these challenges there are 9 mindsets and skills that leaders need to embrace which include things like thinking like a futurist, being tech savvy and digitally fluent, emotional intelligence, having a growth mindset, being curious, helping create other leaders, and more.

**What do you believe are the pros and the cons of having to lead through a time of crisis or uncertainty? And what are the skill required?**

The cons are that you are having to deal with something that you have never experienced. So there is no blue print, no map, and no set of steps you need to follow. This is of course a challenge. But this is also a pro because it will allow you to think outside of the box, to explore new ideas, and to come up with unique solutions with your team.

**What is the biggest outcome we've learnt from this unique 2020 when it comes to leadership and human resources?**

That we need to put people first and focus on employees as individuals and not just workers. Business is still about relationships and we should never forget that.

**What would you advice to the new generations due to the scenarios they're facing in the work world?**

Best piece of advice is to practice The Notable 9, which are the 4 mindsets and 5 skills that I talk about in my book.

The world is changing quickly and they must remember that leadership is not about them, it's about others. **Every leader should think of themselves like a lighthouse.** On one side their job is to build themselves up so that they can shine their light onto others and onto the sea of uncertainty that we are all a part on. However, they must remember that a lighthouse without ships in the water is useless! As a leader part of your responsibly isn't just to build yourself up, but to guide others to safety and success.

## Ping Pong

**A role model:** My wife.

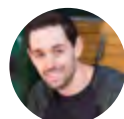
**An advice that was given to you and you would give:** be a leader not a follower.

**An advice that was given to you and you would not give:** Don't do "that" you don't have the experience or knowledge.

**A dream:** To become a chess master.

**A hobby:** Chess.

**A book:** The Foundation.



JACOB MORGAN | Best-Selling Author, Futurist & Speaker



# Fighting uncertainty with strategy

By ADMIN RAMIREZ

**W**e live in times of great change; Organizations are facing complex and challenging environments, which require leaders who have the necessary skills to turn these threats into opportunities.

We can say that one of the traits in Leadership is the capacity of influencing others to achieve the objectives of the organization through changes and trust generation. However, **the current context requires that we mix our ability to create and pursue a vision with the necessary strategies to achieve and support organizational objectives.**

Liz Weber is the CEO of Weber Business Services, a management consulting and speaking firm specializing in strategic planning and leadership development training. She has written 9 books about leadership and tells us: "A leader is an individual who is responsible for others to some degree that can help them visualize a way forward to envision the future. They're somewhat inspirational. They can help create hope and create excitement, and that's wonderful. However, **a strategic leader is an individual who not only helps to visualize but also works on how it is going to be done**, can strategically break down the steps so that those steps can also be imagined by the people who will be responsible for helping it happen. This makes the goals much more tangible in the sense that we not only have plans for the future, but we also have contingency plans. Basically, if our desired way forward cannot happen then, what will our plan B be and what will our plan C be?"







This type of leadership requires curiosity and analysis. The mindset is always thinking of a strategy to figure out: How do I go directly to what I want? How to overcome the obstacles to get to what we want? How do we get under the obstacles? How do we make this work? Due to this approach, more critical thinking is forced within team members that helps spark innovation towards problem solving and therefore creates an inclusive work environment that is much more honest, assertive and sincere that by default, increases the skills of everyone involved in those conversations.

2020 has pushed many industries to the limit and to stay competent we must renew our skill set. Liz shared a couple of tips to develop a more strategic leadership style:

**1. Ask and become aware of the strategic plan of your organization or project in which you work.** Then discuss: Where do you see opportunities in that plan that you could be a valuable contributor to and what ideas would you bring to the table? Where do you see possibilities in some of the plans now?

**2. Share information** in the right way. An example could be: "In my understanding of the plan, I see that we have Project X on the schedule for next year, and in my understanding of Project X and my background, I would like to suggest that we also consider these two ideas because, at best of the cases, it could take us here and if that doesn't happen, the next option I could take is here or the third option I could take here".

It is a matter of describing the bigger picture, then what the consequences and contingency plans are.

When we plan assuming that nothing will change in the future, we are assuming that we have control over each and every one of the variables that affect it, which is impossible. By including the possible obstacles that we will face in the plans that we design, we are less exposed to the negative consequences that chance adds to the future, we will be able to anticipate different scenarios and establish alternative strategies for each one.

A Strategic Leader has the ability to anticipate, visualize, maintain flexibility, and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organization. Someone who is able to deal with uncertainty.



LIZ WEBER | Strategic Leadership Expert



# Best fit: the key to innovation

“  
What we  
need today is  
relationship  
workers”

*Jon Ingham is a strategic HR Consultant, author of The Social Organization and creator of the Melded Network HR Model. In this conversation he shared with us about innovative management and organization of people.*

By ADMIN RAMIREZ &  
LEILA OVANDO

**The way how organizations work has changed over the years. It is not enough to have great talents, the importance of team work lies in counting with the right people, the ability to collaborate, being involved in the search for a common goal and the right workplace. What is important to take into consideration when designing workspaces that foster collaborative work?**

Work is a lot more collaborative than it was even a decade ago. Then, or certainly, 20 years ago, much of our work involved individual activity - with a computer, using paper, on a production line, etc. Now most of our work is about connecting with other people. That's why most of our time these days is spent answering emails, or in meetings, on the phone, in Zoom, etc. I've even suggested





that we're moving beyond the major focus of the last few decades which has been about knowledge work and knowledge workers, especially as AI is learning to do knowledge work better than us. What we need today is relationship workers - people who use their relationships as inputs to their activities and for whom their most important outputs are improved relationships too.

This means the individual offices we tended to have 20 or 30 years ago are no longer relevant, but then neither are individual desks or workstations. Indeed, in countries which have experienced a lockdown, people have often learned to work remotely, and we may never need these types of offices again.

Instead of this, the **digital workplace has become key**. This should allow people to find information, connect with their teams and other people, and get their jobs and administration done. Digital tools need to make it easy for people to do their work,

increasingly through apps that employees can download onto their own devices. They should also make the new type of collaborative work easy, helping people connect and maintain relationships, to co-operate and collaborate, and to share their work and ask questions across the organisation.

However, these tools do not yet enable people to develop greater relatedness. This, therefore, is what we need the physical workplace for. People can do their remaining individual work at home or in third spaces. The formal workspace therefore becomes a collaborative space for people to connect more deeply and meaningfully that they can do through digital tools.

We need to get rid of offices and workstations and move to different sized meeting rooms and spaces, for people to meet up in communities, teams and networks - still socially distanced where this is necessary.

*«most of our work is about connecting with other people»*

**In different publications you talk about the importance of becoming a strategic HR department that can create value. How can HR managers create value?**

My belief is that most of what we suggest is strategic HR isn't.

What I mean by that is that we often think, or are told, that being strategic is about focusing on the business and aligning what we do in HR with what the business needs. For example, the business needs to set up a new operation, meaning that we need to recruit a certain number of people into a certain number of new roles. This type of alignment ensures that HR effectively supports the business. However, that is just the problem. If all we do is support the business, then we're still a support function.

Instead of this - instead of just supporting the rest of the business to undertake its strategic activities, **we need to create strategic opportunities through what we do in HR**. This is creating value -

creating people based business strategy through our HR activities. This means that instead of aligning with, and supporting the business, we can offer new strategic opportunities to the business.

Importantly, we also need to recognise that creating value doesn't happen just by focusing on the business. We do need to do this, of course. However, **the opportunities for people based business strategy occur from focusing on our people, our teams, and their collaboration across the organisation**. And how these aspects of our people and organisation can be enhanced in a way that will make the business more successful.

Therefore, HR managers need to get close to their people, and understand their qualities that can be enhanced or leveraged. Increasingly, this also means freeing people up from unnecessary bureaucracy in the organisation, so that they can create value for themselves.



**You have delivered upskilling training to thousands of HR practitioners in skills such as Strategic leadership, people-centric cultures and learning abilities. As a Leading HR Strategist, how do you think HR practitioners can innovate more?**

The key to innovation is focusing on best fit rather than best practice. There is far too much focus on best practice in lots of different areas of business, but even more so in HR.

We need to break away from a tradition of copying leading organisations, working towards benchmarks, and thinking that there is one best way of doing something.

This isn't just my idea - research by the University of Southern California suggests that the effectiveness of HR activities depends upon the business strategies being followed. For example, an organization focusing on innovation would seem to benefit strongly from investments in social networking activities and systems (correlation coefficient  $r=0.33$ ). However, investments in employee relations correlates in reduced performance for these same innovation-focused businesses ( $r=-0.16$ ). That is not an issue with employee relations — other businesses, for example those using a sustainability-based strategy, would seem to benefit from investments in this practice area ( $r=0.16$ ). The research clearly indicates that what matters is not best practice, but rather best fit.

**Best fit** means we align our HR activities with what an organisation needs, and in particular the qualities we create in our people and organisations. Things are changing so quickly in most businesses, that just keeping the alignment means that HR needs to continue to change. One important example is the shift from individuals to relationships, collaboration and teams which I described above. Most organisations recruit, manage, measure, develop and reward for the performance of individuals, but that makes little sense when what really matters is the performance of teams.

In fact, the main reason we still focus on individuals is that we're still following best practices from 20 years ago. By introducing a focus on best fit, we do need to start aligning our HR activities with the performance of teams. So, for example, we need to reward teams rather than just individuals. That requires us to innovate what we do.

Innovation isn't something we should artificially try to do, but an emergent outcome of focusing on best fit.

*«The key to innovation is focusing on best fit rather than best practice»*





In your latest book released in 2017 "The Social Organization" you talk about the value of an organization's connections, relationships and conversations. Can you give us a few hints about transforming our companies into social organizations?

I write about all the above in my book 'The Social Organization'. I describe the shift in focus from individuals to teams as a transformation in the outcomes we need to create and offer to our businesses from human capital to social capital.

Human capital is about the value provided by our people, based on their skills, engagement, diversity, and so on. Importantly, this is not the same as our people, and the term is not ugly jargon for people, as it is about the value people provide. So you could imagine a group of people who provide human capital in one organisation, whereas if these people move down the road to a competitor, they may not provide any human capital at all if that second organisation doesn't need the skills these people have.

Similarly, **human capital management isn't managing people as human capital, but managing people for human capital.** That is, to create and accumulate human capital as a driver of business success.



**Social capital is the value provided by the connections, relationships and conversations taking place between people.** Or the value provided by people working in teams, communities and networks.

The **social organisation is one that competes by developing the social capital it can use to create value for a business.** This requires the sort of best fit innovation that I also described above.

Managing for social capital is hard work. **Creating effective teams is more difficult than developing effective individuals.** For example, rewarding teams can improve team performance but it can also result in social loafing in individuals, resulting in more poorly performing teams. However, if what matters is the team, it makes little sense to carry on rewarding individuals.

We therefore need to accept the challenges that come with being a social organisation - doing the right thing even if it's difficult, rather than just anything that might be somewhat easier. That's an important aspect of being a strategic HR department too.



JON INGHAM | Director at Jon Ingham Strategic HR Academy  

# Hiring beyond generic

With the urge for new technologies that help recruitment processes to be more effective we need to keep our conversations towards people, processes and products, and think about the role that technology plays in our jobs. William Tincup, has written over 250 HR articles, spoken at over 350 HR & recruiting conferences and conducted over 1300 HR podcasts & webinars and today he shares with us his thoughts about the importance of a candidate-centric recruitment process.

By ADMIN RAMIREZ

Candidate experience is gaining more and more importance within recruiting, as it not only helps recruiting the best talent, but also shapes an organization's employer brand. In the process of creating a good experience, William suggests studying and analyzing luxury brands since they are specialists in making their clients feel special and in recruiting.

THE RECRUITER  
**MUST LEARN**  
TO MAKE THEIR  
CANDIDATES FEEL  
SPECIAL.





Academically, the **candidate experience** is defined as the perception and reaction that candidates have on all points of contact with a company, from social networks, selection process, post-interview experience, etc. All this makes the candidate define an appreciation based on their experience and that directly affects the employer brand.

We are in a turning point where the focus of recruitment should be on customizing the process to identify and meet the candidate's needs. Now is the time when companies have to aim on allying with technology to create a much more attractive, rewarding and interactive candidate experience for candidates. Which will also help recruiters to identify more effectively, quickly and efficiently the workers who best suit their company. It is time to select beyond the generic.

# New skills set

**Going beyond generic implies the creation of a new recruiting manual.**

The recruiter now requires a new skills set including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, negotiation and technological competencies such as being an advanced user of social networks such as LinkedIn or Twitter. Different technological solutions will focus on automating the most cumbersome tasks in order to make the recruitment team more efficient.







**Put fear aside  
and rely on  
technology** to  
improve the candidate  
experience.

# Every interaction that a candidate has in any of these phases affects their experience and, therefore, their opinion about the company.

To use technology as a strategic partner in the recruitment process, we must start by defining the criteria that allows us to predict good performance, such as behaviors or skills required for the position. William invites us to **put fear aside and rely on technology to improve the candidate experience**. “The future is today”, he says, “it is already common to do an interview through a video call, present psychological tests online in a few minutes or upload personal presentation videos to the companies’ web pages”.

The need for automation has led companies to develop predictive algorithms for performance and turn over or artificial intelligence that allows analyzing facial characteristics through video interviews. William recommends not to fall in love with technology just because it is shiny and new.

“Make sure it solves a real problem. Talk to your peers about technology, what works and what doesn’t. Do you know what you do? What are you struggling with? What doesn’t work? Request a demo to be sure. Let’s be informed consumers and interact with another professionals in the field”, states Tincup.

A few important benefits of having a great candidate experiences are the increased mentions and acceptance of the brand by candidates and reduction in the cost of hiring. Thanks to tasks automation and CVs filtering, the time is reduced between 50% and 70% and the conversion rates improved by up to 40%.

The candidate experience has to be understood as a fundamental part of the selection process and intervenes in three distinct phases: before the candidate is considered as such, during the selection process and once it is finished, whether or not the candidate is hired. Every interaction that a candidate has in any of these phases affects their experience and, therefore, their opinion about the company.

The relationship between a candidate and a recruiter is delicate, but achieving a transparent, well-communicated and accessible process can transform the candidate experience and lead to better hiring results



WILLIAM TINCUP | President, Editor-at-Large at RecruitingDaily.com [in](#) [globe](#)





# New Strategies to the Coronavirus Pandemic

*L&D expert Mark Spratt discusses the top priorities for HR teams as they try to help their organisations stay in business and keep everyone safe*

Since the start of the 2020 global health crisis, the Josh Bersin Academy has been in dialogue with HR executives from more than 160 companies around the world. We have organised these leaders into multiple **'Big Reset' working groups** that meet each week to discuss organisational responses, strategies, and challenges related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Shared by most leaders is a new focus on employee wellbeing – demonstrated through empathy, support, and connectedness. This new emphasis, typically being led by HR, has put many CEOs into the role of

**'chief empathy officer'.**

Senior leaders are actively involved in virtual town hall meetings, producing videos from their homes, and issuing frequent updates – all to keep employees informed and updated.

Companies are also re-evaluating all aspects of employee wellbeing. In addition to reviewing existing benefits, many organisations have added new offerings for physical, mental, and financial fitness. Additionally, we are seeing more focus on family life and developing many initiatives to directly support employees' families. Examples include setting up tutoring programmes for children, creating social channels around special interests, such as cooking, hosting movie nights, and offering special support for those employees dealing with aging parents or children now schooling from home.

## Multi-functional HR

**HR teams must now broaden their areas of expertise**, as they need to work much more closely with other functional areas of the business such as facilities, IT, legal, and finance. Many HR teams are also finding that their scope of responsibility has expanded, and in some cases, they've been moved into completely new roles. HR professionals have to learn about workplace safety, public health, and facilities design. They have to deal with issues like employee commutes, restroom, toilet and cafeteria policies, and a myriad of legal issues created by the pandemic.

In many ways, the pandemic is forcing us to tear down our functional silos and

**work more closely together than ever before.**

Throughout the pandemic, most organisations have continued to hire, onboard, train, manage and promote their people. Recruiting and onboarding are now being done digitally, often with great success. Global firms such as L'Oréal, Microsoft, Epic, and Atlassian are now routinely using video hiring interviews, managing internships remotely, and conducting online onboarding.





## Agile HR

Executives are very engaged in how rapidly their organisations have successfully adopted digital tools for remote work, recruiting, onboarding, collaboration, and communications, as well as for surveys and check-ins. Tools for daily attestation, virus response, remote onboarding, team collaboration, and real-time information were implemented in days or weeks.

A PepsiCo executive described this approach as 'being scrappy' to solve pressing problems quickly. Leaders have seen that employees can work together with focus and solve problems in days or weeks, rather than months or even years. Nextdoor, for example, developed a new COVID communication portal using an existing onboarding system over just one weekend.

Along with this agility, companies are now pushing forward on the goal of creating more distributed organisational charts with empowered employees, operating under shared policies and guidelines. DBS Singapore, for example, has inaugurated country-located crisis teams that bring multi-functional leaders together.

## Homeworking

Before March, about half of the companies we surveyed did not permit work at home. Today, almost every company has some portion of its workforce still working remotely. As a result, new work-at-home policies have been created and new tools have been rapidly adopted. We're also seeing more flexibility in work hours to help people juggle commitments.

Of course, remote working has its issues. HRs and CHROs have been looking at ways to make work easier while maintaining productivity. Many companies set aside 'no-meeting times' so people could focus, rest, and re-energise themselves instead of becoming drained by video conferencing all day, for example.

## Policies need to be clear

One of the main findings that come from our working groups is the need for clear communications. After all, a whole series of new workplace protocols are being developed, from areas such as workplace operations, workplace technology, safety and wellbeing, service delivery and execution, logistics, and culture. There are new protocols for testing, identifying vulnerable employees.



Company leaders are realising they must organise and manage for continuous uncertainty. To help employees adjust, HR leaders must communicate a sense of optimism and competence even when conditions continue to change. Companies are using coaches, psychologists, and many new tools to help employees take a positive view of the future.

We've heard countless examples of how employees have come together through a shared sense of purpose and collaborated to develop innovative solutions to keep their companies viable. Let's hope we all can continue to leverage the positives of this crisis for longer-term business success.

*Learn more about the working group findings discussed in this article by downloading your free copy of [The Big Reset Playbook: What's Working Now](#).*



**MARK SPRATT** | VP of client support at the Josh Bersin Academy







Jim Knight,  
**rocking** by  
making a  
difference





*2020 has been a huge lesson for everyone, both on a personal and organizational level. Undoubtedly, managers and HR departments are facing new challenges that could not be predicted and building changes that will eventually lead companies to a better version of themselves. Jim Knight, keynote speaker, best-selling author and podcaster, shared with us his advices to the new generations, COVID-19 and the importance of putting people first.*

**By LEILA OVANDO**



**JIM KNIGHT** | Founder &  
Owner at Knight Speaker











**You have worked with iconic brands; what are the common denominators when it comes to challenges that you find in all of them no matter the industry?**

Iconic brands that have real staying power seem to have worked out many ongoing challenges, but other legacy brands or ones that are first to the market have the same challenges I always encounter.

1. They focus too much on the product (vs. people), which eventually has no differentiation.
2. There is a lack of enterprise-wide communication, so confusion creeps in across the brand.
3. The brand is too slow to pivot and move with customers' needs, ultimately becoming irrelevant.
4. The company becomes so big that they lose sight of the importance of strong "employee engagement".

**Knowing that Millennial and Gen Z generations aim to change jobs frequently because they are seeking new opportunities to grow, what would you recommend to companies and entrepreneurs on how to build an attractive brand where people want to work and stay?**

Knowing that this is important to today's workforce, it should be all-hands-on-deck initiate with a collective focus from the brand's leaders. Great pay, benefits and physical work environment are going to be "price of admission" items, but the ones to really focus on is addressing items that are important to today's generations and **truly rock their world**. These include

-  1. providing ongoing development—personal and professional
-  2. implementing meaningful reward & recognition programs
-  3. providing flex work hours—for some opportunities to work from home or to come and go
-  4. creating self-directed and/or clear pathways for advancement—into management or next level pay & responsibilities
-  5. implementing a robust Mentorship program—where new team members can learn from more seasoned leaders and create meaningful connections
-  6. providing the best resources available to do the job—whether technology, materials, environment, support staff, etc.
-  7. engaging in authentic philanthropy to make the job bigger than a paycheck—like donating a portion of profits, offering vegan/vegetarian options, implementing recycling programs, volunteering for local charities, etc
-  8. creating an environment of fun—where team members are surprised and delighted from time to time.

**What do you think is the thing that makes you different from the rest of the HR speakers? At plain sight, you do not have the regular formal "look" we see in other speakers, but there is definitely something that makes you different; what is it?**

Unpredictability. I pride myself on finding the right balance between education and entertainment, which I call

**"edu-tainment".**

By immersing myself in the spirit of Rock 'n Roll (via spikey hair, blue jeans, music orientation, using band & brand analogies, etc), I tend to resonate with audience members who need some meaty professional real-world takeaways to amp up their business but also some bold showmanship to keep their interest. My goal is to always provide both.

**What made you decide to become a Rock Star Leader? How did you get into the personal development industry, and why do you stay?**

My initial background was in Music & Education. I went to university to be a Music major and hopefully a professional singer. Discovering that you actually had to be extremely good to do that (which I wasn't talented enough), after I received my music degree, I focused on children's education and became a middle school teacher for 6 years in public education. After taking a summer job at Hard Rock Cafe initially as a host and a manager, I turned toward being a trainer. This eventually led me to my ultimate career position as head of L&D for the global Hard Rock brand. My journey to becoming a "rock star leader" was a long a winding road, but pulling the levers of Music, Education and Hospitality were the perfect stepping stones to getting to that level. Whether it was during my two decades at Hard Rock or all the time being a keynote speaker now, teaching personal development is a massively rewarding endeavor. **Experiencing people's lives change because of my influence is Nirvana.**

**What advice would you give to new generations so they can become Rock Star Leaders in a constantly changing world?**

I would recommend to not take the job for granted. Even though it is an "employee's world" these days (and they hold all the cards), to truly reach iconic heights in a career and become a rock star leader, there are some basic things to do, like

1. **bring your passion and commitment to the job every day**
2. use what my friend Kat Cole calls your

- "hustle muscle"—out work everyone else
3. become a true student of the business and look for opportunities to grow
  4. invite yourself to the party—look for opportunities to get involved in decision-making opportunities
  5. find 1-2 mentors who can help you grow—at least 1 inside the company and 1 outside to learn from, vent and discuss issues
  6. be nimble—be prepared to deal with change and challenges as they arise
  7. become the leader for others that you would want in a leader.

**How would you define yourself in a word or a phrase?**

I'm an Influencer.

**Did COVID-19 bring changes to the cultures of organizations?**

Sure, the ones that were great showed everyone why they continue to be a rock star brand and the ones that were not good at all just revealed themselves more as to why they struggle. As leaders came to the realization that their business was really about to take a hit financially, the ones that prepared and took care of their team members are the ones that will continue to produce sustainable results. Part of that process may have included

1. keeping the team employed
2. keeping the team engaged through virtual communication
3. providing the tools/resources needed to be productive from home
4. providing free learning opportunities while the team was on lockdown
5. communicating all of the procedures put in place to keep the team members and customers safe.

Many specialists are saying that this crisis is a chance to see the best in people and organizations. What would you recommend to make the best out of this situation?

This situation is horrible, especially the lost lives, destroyed careers, bankrupt businesses and the ongoing stress and depression of the public. However, I do agree that there is some good that will come out of the crisis. Families have reconnected and spent quality time together. Society has had an opportunity to get back in touch with nature. Businesses have been able to pivot and reorganize their offering. **Those companies that really amped up their service delivery to customers and focused on protecting their team members will be rewarded with loyalty for years to come.**

**What would you say are the keys to create a culture that rocks?**

There are several things a leader could do to create, maintain or revolutionize a culture that rocks...and I detail many key areas in my book, *Culture That Rocks*. However, the greatest way to do this is to focus on human behavior.



## Surrounding yourself with an army of brand ambassadors will mask all other issues a brand might have.

I would focus all of my energy on enhancing every area of the employee life cycle—recruiting, interviewing, hiring, onboarding, training, developing, communicating, rewarding, recognizing and retaining rock stars. This is how you get to icon status. Everything else is just short term initiatives.

**What advice would you give someone changing careers?**

**Be appreciative and go all in.** It's not always easy changing careers, especially if it was not your decision, but taking on a position to represent a brand and also provide for your family is part of life's journey. Few people actually find their perfect career early in life, which means most of the jobs they have are just stepping stones. However, regardless if a person is transitioning into their ultimate career or just another stop along the way, they should bring passion, commitment and their best work everyday.

**What is the most interesting trend for 2020 related to leadership and development?**

For 2020, it would have to be how to work, learn and provide content remotely. The era of virtual learning and communicating is now critical. **Individuals and companies have to figure out how to keep teams engaged, provide distanced-based learning opportunities, allow flexibility for team members to work from home, and encourage self-development with external content online.** As part of that, brands need to invest in video equipment and elearning processes to up their virtual learning game. For 2021, it's going to be about **"employee engagement"**. Although companies will have a better selection of talent due to the massive workforce reductions and business closures brought about from COVID-19, the fight for the best talent will still be important. The L&D role will be in creating an environment (in person and from a distance) of continuous learning. To get rock star talent to stay with a company, the brand is going to have to love on them even more...and part of that is in education. **HR professionals need to look for world class ways to keep team members engaged.**



### Ping Pong

**A movie:** The Greatest Showman

**A book:** Black Sheep

**An artist:** Bono

**A role model:** Tim Tebow

**A hobby:** American Football, Collecting Star Trek memorabilia

**A place in the world:** Bali, Indonesia

# Getting back on track

«...teams  
need to be  
exceptional  
at managing  
conflict»

*There are two ways of looking at things that happen to us and around us, and it boils down to making opportunities out of them or counting them as losses. Liane Davey, Co-founder of 3COze Inc. and author of "The Good Fight" explains how we can turn conflicts into productive outcomes, managing team work and the competencies that are in the spotlight.*

By LEILA OVANDO

**On your book "The Good Fight" you state "Use productive conflict to get your team and organization back on track", but we're used to a negative meaning of conflict. What do you refer to "productive"? Can a conflict be productive and how?**

Productive conflict is when you have a difference of perspective that contributes to a better outcome. From an organization perspective, it's the kind of vigorous debates and discussions that lead to increased productivity, greater innovation, better risk identification or mitigation. From a team perspective, it's the willingness to engage with candour to strengthen your relationships and understanding. From an individual perspective, productive conflict is about addressing issues so they don't lead to resentment or stress.

## PRODUCTIVE CONFLICT

**What is in your experience the most common challenge of working in teams?**

One of the challenges is that most teams have not only people with different personalities, but also with different roles. Those roles cause us to come at issues differently. As you fulfill your role, you bring different expertise and experiences, you represent and advocate for different stakeholders, and you have different obligations to put tension on the discussion. Those different roles mean that teams need to be exceptional at managing conflict. Unfortunately, as humans, we tend to be poor at conflict...and the result is that our teams get into significant conflict debt.



LIANE DAVEY | Keynote Speaker,  
Author & Co-founder of 3COze Inc.





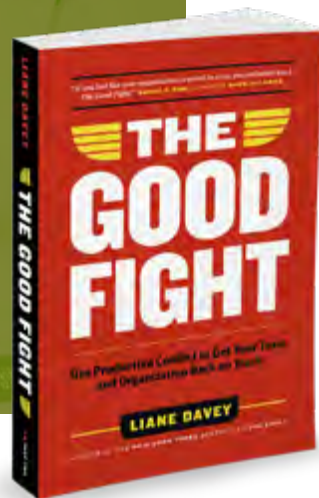
**According to your book, 23% of senior leaders say their team is effective. What happened to the other 77%?**

Teams fall down in one (or both) of two different areas. First, teams become ineffective when they don't have strong alignment about the purpose and mandate of the team. Gaps in perception lead to different priorities, different actions, and ultimately an erosion of confidence and trust. The other area where teams become ineffective is in the team dynamic. When team members don't trust one another, they hesitate to communicate transparently and proactively, they shy away from difficult conversations, and they misinterpret one another's behaviour. Between alignment issues and team dynamic issues, there's lots of room for teams to be sub-optimized.

**Which competences are in the spotlight right now?**

The pace of business in 2020 was already putting a spotlight on resilience, communication, and collaboration skills. Since COVID-19 and the upheaval of working at home, these skills are becoming even more important.

## Resilience, communication, and collaboration



**Another surprising number shown is that we spend almost 3 hours a week dealing with conflict each week. Why do you think this happens? It's because teams don't know how to communicate or because maybe things about compatibility between personalities?**

Often, managers behave in a way that exacerbates the problem. One way they do that is by trying to maintain team harmony at the expense of dealing with challenging issues. Unfortunately, the issues don't go away, they tend to get bigger. Another issue that causes managers to spend an inordinate amount of time dealing with conflict is that they often ignore or underplay their team member's emotional reactions to issues. Counterintuitively, trying to minimize drama actually amplifies it. Managers minimize drama by making room for people to express how they're feeling and then to pivot the conversation to what would help or how to move forward. When an employee gets emotional, I like to use the phrase, "This is important, what do I need to understand?" Another thing managers can do to reduce the amount of conflict

they are dealing with is to set strong norms up front for the type of conflicts that team members should expect and should consider productive. Then, managers can set clear expectations about which types of tensions they expect people to solve on their own and when it's appropriate to escalate the issue.

**What do you believe is going to be and is already being the most teachable lesson teams AND leaders are having through this unique 2020 we are having worldwide?**

Teams are doing a great job of getting the mission critical work done in this unprecedented time. The best teams are doing that by improving their focus and prioritization. Where many teams are struggling is maintaining a sense of connectedness and belonging. It will require more learning and practice to communicate more effectively without the advantage of being co-located, including making space for casual conversations and not being afraid to have uncomfortable conversations virtually.



COMMUNICATE | CONNECT | CONTRIBUTE

By LEILA OVANDO

# The challenge of evolving in AI and HR

*Integrating Human Resources and Artificial Intelligence is undoubtedly the challenge that almost every organization faces nowadays. Mark Stelzner, Founder and Managing Principal at IA and HR Tech Influencer, talked with Rocking Talent about the reason why the HR departments will have to maintain their flexibility and how the question “Why wait?” is so important when it comes to transforming and complementing with AI.*

**COVID-19 has been an accelerator for the transformation of most of the organizations, how do you work with the organizations to make those changes be strategic and sustainable?**

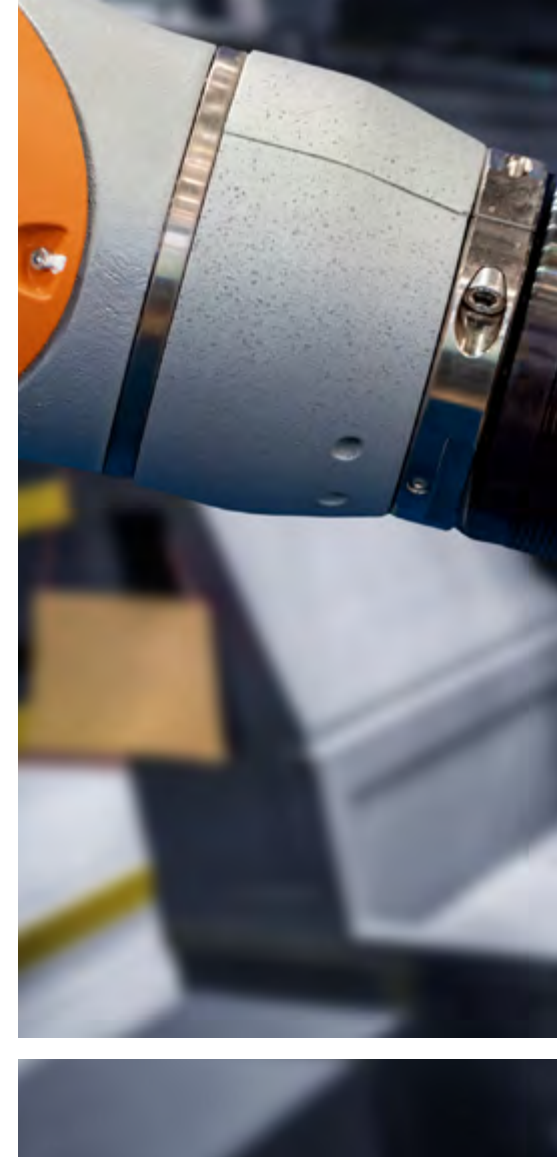
COVID-19 has given employers permission to drive change in areas that were previously immovable. That same permission has also overwhelmed organizations who struggle to reprioritize based upon the incredibly dynamic nature of today's environment. Given our approach is grounded on developing deep and meaningful relationships with the C-suite, we spend a tremendous amount of time and energy ensuring we understand both the subjective and objective criteria for internal decision making. That foundational work then informs the development of a strategic roadmap for the organization, including the ability to adjust as new initiatives or requirements arise.

Insofar as sustainability, I recently shared with the CEO of one of our clients that, “The goal should always be to get rid of the consultants, including my firm”. These comments are always met with a knowing smile by C-suite leaders who have been bled dry by management consulting firms. “No consultants” is an ironic goal

from the leader of a consulting firm, but I believe intentional knowledge transfer can eradicate codependency and set our clients free!

**How long do you think it will take people and companies to stop talking about Transformation and AI and start talking about what is already established and using it in their favour?**

Organizations are like humans – constantly reflecting and evolving. For some, that evolution is gradual and iterative, yet for others it can be shocking and rapid. As HR budgets have been significantly impacted by the financial headwinds of 2020, many organizations are looking at process optimization versus wholesale transformation. AI can certainly help to intervene through the emergence of chatbots in service centers, natural language processing in engagement surveys, and other high-value use cases. The challenge is that not everyone agrees what “AI” means in the HR space. We are just now understanding the real-world impacts that overreliance on AI can have, especially when it comes to bias. Whether intended or not, how we are programmed to change – as humans and AI – will profoundly impact our ability to learn, engage and transform.



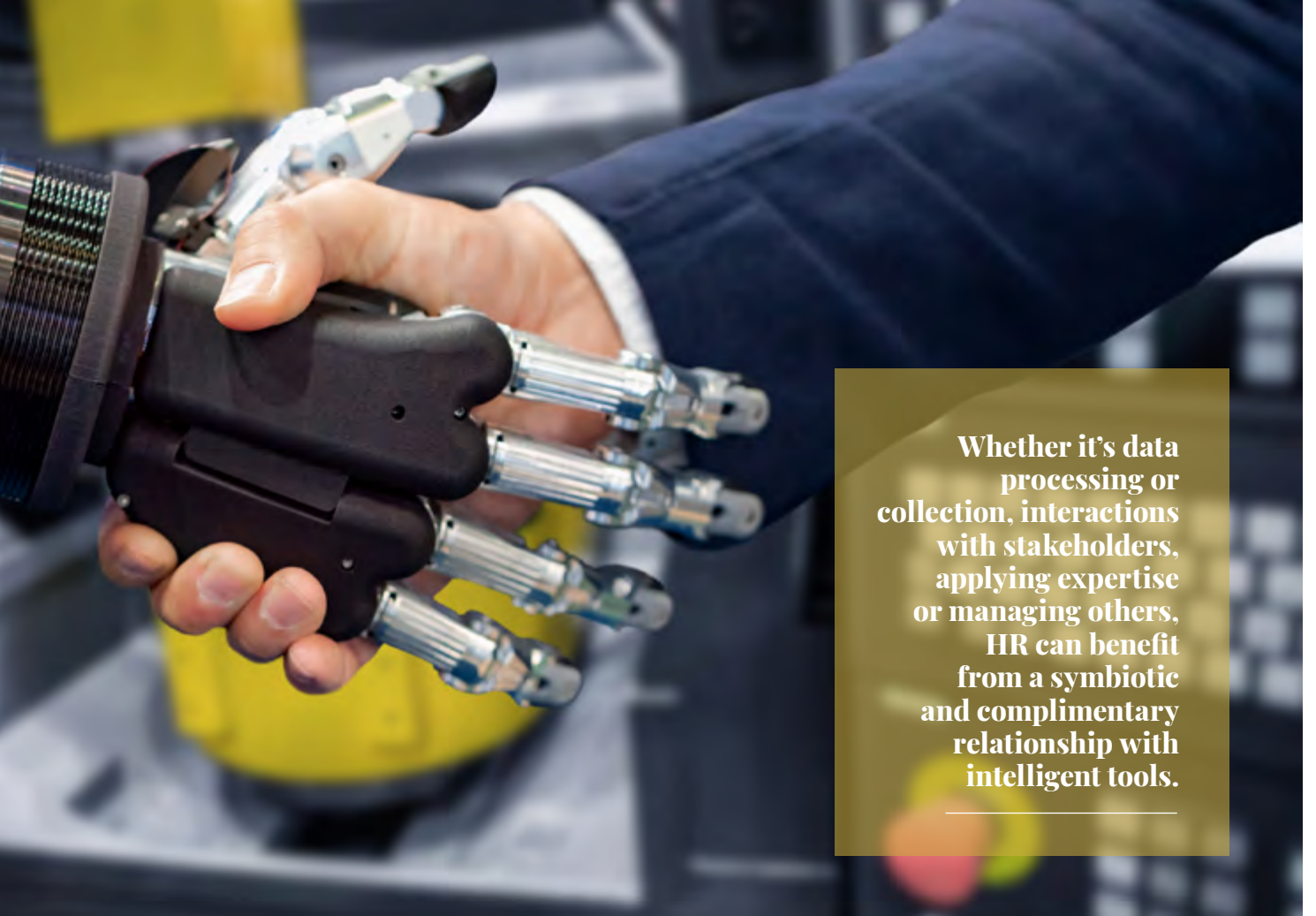
**There are professionals that for a long time resisted transforming their processes. What would you advice to walk by these people to accept cultural changes?**

We often challenge organizations and individuals with this simple question: “Why wait?” Starting small with a process each individual owns (as a proof of concept) will continue to build the case for increased process transformation. Naturally, part

how we are programmed to change – as humans and AI – will profoundly impact our ability to learn, engage and transform.

of this is about true empowerment at the individual level. No one truly works in a vacuum and you probably own more than you think you do. More simply stated, you can change a process without disrupting an entire company. We firmly believe that





Whether it's data processing or collection, interactions with stakeholders, applying expertise or managing others, HR can benefit from a symbiotic and complimentary relationship with intelligent tools.

the best transformation is the one you don't need, so start doing the work now and build on that positive momentum.

**Could you give us advice on how to find an opportunity to apply AI in talent management area?**

Continuous conversations between managers and their employees/teams has increased the deployment of tools and techniques to capture sentiment, goals, objectives and feedback in a much more conversational way. This focus on an open narrative means that natural language – and I mean how we really talk and converse – is part of the entire talent management lifecycle. Emerging technologies such as AI can crawl through millions of conversations and elicit intent, emotion, action and reaction to inform organization-wide trends, suggested interventions, high-value focus and flight risk.

**What do you believe is the most challenging situation HR departments are going to face or are facing right now?**

Two words – staying nimble. Globally, HR departments have been challenged to adapt to a rapidly changing world and have largely been successful. They

were able to focus on the top priorities, eliminate bureaucratic obstacles and simply execute on what was needed. The business and quite frankly, HR, will not accept going back to the old way where red tape and elaborate approval processes ruled the day. HR will need to maintain a flexibility in thinking to be able to address changes as they come, as well as build an infrastructure that can support the need for rapid response. That being said, we've largely succeeded through blunt force and long hours, so HR needs to. Be more efficient and fluid to avoid burnout and high turnover within the function.

**On an article you wrote on LinkedIn "The (HR) Leftovers" you commented: "Imagine a world in which organizations and their HR teams work together to find new ways of boosting revenue and profitability without having to fire half their people", what do you consider is the missing piece in the organizations so that the HR teams can work this way?**

Frankly, I think it's the right mindset and operating model. HR can often get in its own way, applying ridiculous processes and policies to achieve even the simplest things in the organization. As a result, the business will often bypass HR to drive truly innovative work in the areas of dynamic

teams, people development, and other key careabouts. This isn't about the much-discussed "seat at the table" (I hate that term); instead, it's about how we deploy highly skilled HR professionals to both the opportunities and challenges that exist throughout the enterprise. When properly mobilized, HR can help the business think through pros and cons, navigate legal requirements without sacrificing innovation, and truly plan for the future.

**And lastly but not least, what are your expectations towards HR working along with AI in the near future?**

Many roles are eligible for high-value augmentation through automation, and HR is no exception. A recent study by the McKinsey Global Institute suggested that, "fewer than five percent of occupations can be entirely automated using current technology". They added, however, that "about 60% of occupations could have 30% or more of their constituent activities automated".



**MARK STELZNER** | Founder/  
Managing Principal at IA, C-Suite  
Advisor, HR Transformational  
Leader & HR Tech Influencer



# Selling vs. Serving:

## 5 ways to get them both right

By GRANT CARDONE

**W**hen it comes to successfully closing sales does your team know the difference between selling and serving? Better yet, are they selling a product or service or are they properly serving your customers? It's a trick question because if they knew how to close deals properly they would be doing both! If your team is not doing both you are losing out on potential profit and they are losing out on potential commissions.

There's a simple solution and it all starts with implementing new strategies and effective tactics found in the How to Close Deals: Massive Profits course now available on Cardone University. To give you a sample of how we can help your team here are are FIVE ways to distinguish serving vs selling:

- 1 Offer Value:** Be resourceful for your prospects by providing valuable information in the form of emails, blogs, social media, mail-outs or phone calls.
- 2 Offer Time:** Show your potential customers and clients that you respect them by listening to them – listening builds trust and helps establish a foundation for a viable and profitable relationship.
- 3 Offer Solutions:** Businesses will buy products or services which solve their problems. So be the solution to their problem but also tailor it to their needs – a personal touch is more about serving than selling.
- 4 Offer Understanding:** Do the background homework on your potential customers and clients. Do NOT assume you know everything about their business and what they need – ask questions so you can get to know them better. This will help you understand their pain points, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.
- 5 Offer Consistency:** This is what differentiates a selling VS serving due to the fact that serving follows up and doesn't forget a customer. You definitely want to stay in touch with your customers post sale and keep them updated on any new valuable information, products or services, special offers, deals, news, and company updates.

**Make sure your team knows how to sell your goods or services and how to serve our customers.**

**Sell! Serve! Succeed!**





**« THERE'S A SIMPLE  
SOLUTION AND IT  
ALL STARTS WITH  
IMPLEMENTING  
NEW STRATEGIES »**







# Is your organization ready to learn?

Practices to promote agile  
organizational learning

in By CECILIA DEL VALLE  
Chief Innovation Officer at PDA International



**W**e are experiencing a process of a deep transformation. Experts maintain that covid-19 has advanced the efforts that were estimated about the digitization of the organization by 5 years. Without a doubt, this requires a huge learning effort from individuals, teams and organizations in a short time. Organizational learning is key to transformation and agility for learning becomes the spearhead of the ability to adapt to the new context.

However, the vast majority of organizations still have learning systems designed for another type of environment, more stable and traditional, which makes it difficult for organizations to learn and capitalize on what they have learned.

**A learning system is an environment designed so that people can access meaningful and active learning, by interacting with the environment and its different elements.**

**The challenge, then, will be to promote a systemic and agile organizational learning model. aprendizaje organizacional sistémico y ágil.**

The question is: how do we do it?

In this content, together with 3 professionals who are experts in organizational learning, we will go through some of the keys to promoting the agile learning culture.

Key 1: What are learning organizations like and how can we hack learning to learn better and faster

Key 2: How to promote the learning mode and the learning mindset within organizations?

Key 3: How to teach soft skills from the perspective of strength, social learning and neurodiversity?

# ORGANIZATIONS THAT LEARN

From content delivery to  
experience delivery

By ROI BENITEZ. | *Learning Agility, Innovation & Technology Consultant* 

## *A framework in transition*

The digital transformation accelerated by the covid-19 crisis put in check how we have been managing learning in organizations.

We began to wonder if all those interventions that had been doing made sense in this new context. We discovered something interesting.

We discovered the need to develop capabilities that empower the business, develop robot-proof skills, and accelerate interventions that build employability.

Capabilities that empower the business to achieve rapid adoption and adaptation of new models that allow us to emerge stronger even in the mouth of the storm.

Develop robot-proof skills. It is not only necessary to learn critical technical skills, but also to be able to develop soft skills for harsh realities, digital leadership focused on empathy to manage uncertainty, adapt to changes and always put people at the centre. Being creative, solving problems, collaborating, are the centre of the skills of the 21st century according to the World Economic Forum.

Build employability so that each employee can be the protagonist of their journey, design their future and choose. Learning is a catalyst for human development and is a great instrument for change.

This whole scenario represents a framework in transition, a space to be built, and the opportunity to think systemically about other types of organizations focused on learning skills for work and life. It is possible and desirable for our organizations to become true learning hubs.

This moment is an opportunity to accelerate the transformation in our organizations and recover the internal learning ecosystem.

Many companies in times of widespread crisis choose to cut training budgets first. But, this measure that is not isolated in the world of organizations, far from signifying savings, implies delaying the development and adaptation of people to new scenarios. Delaying development implies losing the ability to be prepared "in time" for future critical junctures and thus, our organizations lose responsiveness, stay on the road, people get frustrated, collapse and losses are enormous.

**All this does not happen in isolation, it happens at a time when the role of Head of Training or Human Resources is reconfigured. Where once spasmodic lectures and courses were given, the learning culture needs to permeate throughout the organization. If capabilities are remodelled, culture is remodelled. The future is systemic and the learning approach must be systemic.**

## Hacking Learning

So that as humanity we can live up to the historical moment that we have to live, it is imperative to create learning systems that are following the complexities of the present and the future.

Traditional ways of imparting knowledge are trapped in an unspoken irony: perhaps the most important institution that has the greatest power to change the future of our generations is probably the one most rooted in mechanistic ideas from the past. We are not strangers to this, we know that traditional ways of teaching need to be hacked, but for something we have not yet taken the big step.

Building learning systems means embracing the challenges of generating knowledge based on the future and not in the past.

It implies accelerating skills and abilities that make sense for the jobs of the future, building employability, and that also make sense for our lives. It implies not losing sight of the fact that we can be protagonists in solving the complex problems of our world

by working together, in community.

Systemic learning is putting our creativity at the service of the pains of our humanity, our organizations are a reflection of these pains. It means creating networks, ecosystems that learn 24x7 and 360°, it means putting people with all their potential at the centre of learning. It means that learning has to take place individually and collectively (person-team-organization).

All this is not utopia, it is a possibility

To hack learning, we have to be able to break the inertia of stopping delivering content to deliver real experiences, which allow learning with another, about problems, from mistakes, iterating and awakening curiosity. That is why I dare to share this “manifesto” to make this change happen.

## Hacking Learning Manifesto

Meta Skilling (Digital Reskilling + Human Reskilling + Upskilling)	for	<i>Upskilling - Reskilling</i>
The ability as a mean to	for	Skill as an end in itself
Develop capacities with a systemic, experiential and pragmatic approach	for	Develop skills through the catalogue courses and programs
Dynamic and iterative agendas that allow us to learn as we go and adapt quickly	for	Annual training plans that are not modified
Development of skills for work and life	for	Development of technical skills
Programs co-created with internal experts to capitalize on the collective wisdom and external thematic experts.	for	100% outsourced programs focused on linear-unidirectional training (I learn by listening)
<i>Experience delivery: Flexible devices such as peer-to-peer learning spaces, maker, learning from mistakes.</i>	for	<i>Content delivery. Virtual, face-to-face or blended courses</i>
The training support is real projects and experiments.	for	The training support is video and PPTs.
Social recognition systems that adapt to apprentices: nano certificates, badges. System for promotion or benefits within the company.	for	Traditional Diplomas
The evaluation of learning is given by the application of skills to real challenges, using during and post evaluations. “We measure the learning process and real impact on the business”	for	Learning assessment is done through post-self-assessment. “We measure person trained our hours of training”
Dynamic and flexibles trajectories	for	Linear trajectories
Management is led by an agile cell between People and the business. It is designed and co-created horizontally with all areas of the company, stakeholders and collaborators.	for	Management is led by Human Resources

This new logic of developing capacities in organizations is planned as something more than a catalogue of courses to take.

This Academy of the future is a space, a place that finds us, a breath of fresh air to enhance our professional careers and that of our teams, and not a place that we suffer.



**Developing skills is the present of the future. Do you dare to travel the trip?**

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## **ACTIVATE YOUR LEARNER MODE**

By ANA JULIA BOUCHER. [in](#) | Consultant for learning solutions and transformation in organizations and people

Learnability, learning Agility, learning to learn or whatever we like to call it: this is not a fad, it is a skill that the world of work (and life itself) asks us to develop.

Exponential change, new technologies and global interconnection accelerated transformation processes and require us to adapt by learning more agilely.

If you are reading these words it is because you understand that this change is going through us and that as a manager of the human capital of your organization you face a great challenge: to get the whole organization to understand it and act accordingly. And here, I would like to put a stop. The first thing we have to understand is that we cannot give what we do not have. Or, put another way, if I want to motivate other people to awaken their passion for learning, I should have it first. The challenge involves us.

In addition to driving cultural change to become a learning organization, we also have to activate or Learner Mode.

### **What is the Learner Mode?**

I once heard a person say: "But if with the more than 20 years that I spent in the educational system before entering work I do not know how to learn, then what?"

Well, you hit the key. We are going to make a distinction between studying and learning. In formal education things usually, go backwards. Our society creates a culture and then defines which of those components it wants to pass on to subsequent generations. A didactic transposition if this universe of content is carried out (it is cut, arranged and facilitated access to said information) and the student is guided through a structured program so that they live certain steps that will guarantee that they can repeat and reproduce those contents.

Being a student, then, translates into capturing what they are giving you, responding to the prompts they request, and moving forward.

When we come to life things work differently. The world changes and there are no longer experts who know how to operate in context. I have to construct the answers and what is worse, making mistakes!

There is no structured schedule that indicates what I have to read and do to "pass" the "practical work".

And I add something to you: along the way, you are generating new knowledge, sharing it and reflecting with others. This automatically ejects us into a mental model shift from "passive student" to "creative active learner".

The Learner Mode is the and attitude, a way of living life, in which I open myself to the unknown while doing what I don't know how to do yet. It is a disposition that makes me more open to discovering new worlds, new looks.

# The Learner Mode is a way of manifesting myself in the world in which I am connected with myself and with the environment, open to discovering the emerging learning that arises in each conversation, in each encounter, in each situation, attending to what is modified in me from those interactions with the environment and how they impact on my context.



So, the key is to ensure that the learning culture encourages and favours this Learner Mode in people. So, this changes our objectives as People Managers. Now, instead of forcing people to get training and control their presenteeism, we become facilitators of environments that are conducive to learning so that people voluntarily choose to generate learning and discoveries and share them generously learning. And it comes back, almost like a mantra, I can't give what I don't have. First thing: If you work in people management, you first have to activate your Learner Mode.



## How do I activate my Learner Mode?

**1.** What is my value proposition? Faced with disorder and chaos, an excess of information and educational offers, and life that gives us surprises around every corner, we need to filter and focus to learn. The great filter to focus is to know who I am, what I want, what I contribute, what offer of value I am for the world. As I understand what my purpose is and connect with this, the more clarity I will have to focus my antennas.

When was the last time you asked yourself about your purpose? This is like the scene from Alice in Wonderland in which Alice asks the cat which is the best way and the cat answers that if he does not know where he is going, anyway is good. Where do you want to go, where are you today, who you are and what you want to be. With this defined, I can begin to filter learning and focus on capturing those that help me develop my best version.

### Questions to active your Learner Mode:

When was the last time you asked yourself about your purpose?

What is your value offer?

Are you clear about who you are and what you want?

**2.** What do I already have? Many times, it seems that we learn a lot, because we are always up to date, reading, studying, watching videos, etc., but we manage ourselves in the order of deepening the skills and knowledge that we already have.

We become mega-experts of something, and only of something. In this way, it seems that we are learning a lot, but we do not feel that we are advancing, we do not change our paradigms. You don't need to stop doing what you do, I invite you to try in your free time to learn something that you like a lot and that is different from what you do, since what seems disjointed, suddenly gives you a new look about life and can positively impact your mark. For example, a few years ago I studied theatre,



something that seemed to have no point of contact with my work, yet it opened the possibility for me to empathize more with my internal clients, observing what happens to them, how they are, what they feel and live, just as he did when building a character. There are many skills that can transfer from one domain to another as long as we have the wealth of varying the domains in which we develop.

3. Gerry Garlunsky says that we are the average of the 10 people we surround ourselves with.

Although no research supports this claim, it is very consistent and is very close to the PLE (People Learning Environment) model. Our environment is full of educational stimuli.

Depending on who I surround myself with, the quality of the conversations in which I am immersed, the stimuli and challenges that my network proposes and inspires me, this will be the lenses with which I will look at the world. This is valid for both the virtual and the face-to-face.

4. Learn by doing (and thinking). This is counterintuitive. They taught us to give us the theory, provide us with the hows and then expose ourselves to experimentation. Today's changing, complex and ambiguous world requires that we act without knowing all the variable that is at stake. We have to do without knowing everything. To achieve this, the key is to expose ourselves to as many stimuli and new experiences as we can and then reflect on what we have experienced and its impact and this rescue new knowledge.

### Questions to activate your Learner Mode:

What is it that you always wanted to do and never gave it time?

What attitude or skill can you take from one of your activities to another?

### Questions to activate your Learner Mode:

We invite you to make a relationship map to analyze and determine how your stimulus network is doing.

How varied and challenging is your context?

How much diversity of looks does your network give you?

How is your participation in professional and personal networks?

To what extent are you connected and do you actively participate in these networks?

### Questions to activate your Learner Mode:

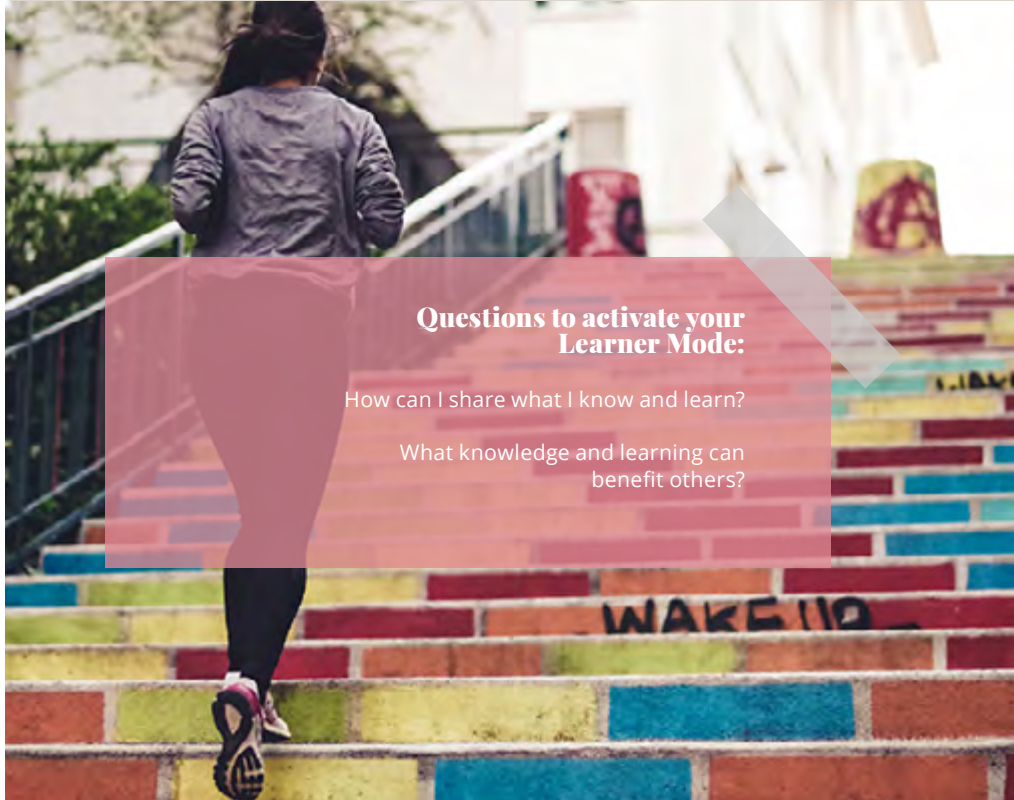
To get used to it, we invite you to try something new every day, whether it be a new meal, a new way to go to the usual place, a new greeting (we usually greet the same tone of voice, the same word) or a new role in some meeting (If I am the person who usually sees what is missing, change my hat for a meeting).

Then, at the end of the day, reflect on what you learned about yourself, your task, what you discovered, what you had fun with, what you felt challenged or challenged with. This exercise will help you naturalize doing without knowing to learn later.

5. And with all this I learned, now what do I do? Share it! The best way to learn is by teaching it as close as possible to the moment you learned it and from the humility of someone who knows that they still don't know everything. Sharing what you discovered and what you know has huge benefits: Improve the quality of the networks in which you interact.

People find out what interest you and if they see something related to the topic they will bring it to closer to you, making you search for content easier. It positions you and your personal branding, because showing that you are learning does not place you in the place of a junior, but on the contrary, it shows you as someone open to discovering and growing.

Returning now to our role in the organization and facing the cultural change that we want to accompany, the proposal is that, having managed to accept ourselves as being that we ignore much more than what we know, as learners and onlookers who put our feet in the mud to co-design the solutions together with our internal clients, the focus of our activities changes.



### Questions to activate your Learner Mode:

How can I share what I know and learn?

What knowledge and learning can benefit others?

**We then went from being training managers, compulsive “bookers” of training rooms, data entries of results of satisfaction surveys and contractors of catering services and expert providers, to being facilitators of valuable conversations, generators of inviting questions “empathizer” professional and inspiring.**

### **It was time to stop pushing to start inspiring.**


People need to be question and sustain during in the process until we arrive at a new provisional response to being told revealed truths. How do you get these questions? What if in your next meeting you try putting yourself in a serial inquirer?

Maybe you will be surprised and learn something new about yourself, about your links, about your tasks.





# LET'S HACK THE SOFT LEARNING

By SOFÍA GEYER  Creativity, Innovation & Behavioral Design  
Professor and Consultant LinkedIn

I want to ask you a question. What was the greatest earing of your lives?

Some of you will surely tell me: a moment of a great change in my life. That was an extreme situation that they had to face, where they had no choice but change not only their behaviour but also their view of the world.

Or there, it was thanks to helping with attending therapy, where a psychologist helped them for a long time to develop tools to be more empathetic with their family, for example.

What do these examples teach us? That learning about soft skills is not as simple as we usually believe in organizations.

Creativity, empathy, emotional regulation, resilience, flexibility... They are not so simple to "train", as we something seek to do in 2 or 3 days workshops.

## Why do they often not work?

**1. "Having" skill does not mean that we will use it.** We have to separate the concept of skills from the concept of performance. Performance can be observed in concrete observable behaviours. Many times we believe that if a person has certain ability (we believe they are "creative"), they will perform behaviours that will impulse that creativity (example, present multiple ideas to solve problems on a day-to-day basis). Why? Because we are highly influenced by our environments, and by our motivation. These two factors will greatly influence that performance.

**2. Those environments also teach us skills.** We learn more by imitating our bosses or people of high influence in the organization, that in a workshop. This is thanks to our Social Learning, for our mirror neurons. Much of what we do we learn through modelling and imitation.

**3. Not EVERYTHING is trainable.** And here we are not referring to genetics, although it has a lot of influence. We mean that to develop certain skills... There has a to be that motivation that just mentioned. Without motivation and the desire to make real changes in ourselves, there are worthwhile development plans.

**4. Because we are not exercising it in the same area where we have to use soft skills every day.** Neuroplasticity showed us that we can generate new neural connections. But it also taught us that, to generate those new neural connections, I have to be exercising exactly those same groups of neurons. Which means that if I need to be more empathetic with my team, the best way to work on it is lives with my team.

5. Many times we use skill models based on "trends" skills, but which were not developed and investigated under scientific methodology. For example, the case of Learning Agility constructs, where many researchers still refer that it means different construct depending on the consultancy that presents the working model. The other consequence is that very important skills, such as perseverance, humility, courage or even humour are discarded, just because they do not belong to the most popular.

**6. The "improvement opportunities" approach is not usually the most effective.** We tend to work under the

paradigm that, to develop, a person has to improve those skills that does not "have". The funny things are that investigating the effectiveness of people to achieve changes in their behaviours...

They find that deep changes do not occur when we try to improve those that go "wrong". But the other way around: when we learn to use much more and better, those strengths that we already know how to use well. By learning to know our natural abilities better, it is easier for us to use them to improve those behaviours that we need to change from ourselves. And in this way, we activate positive emotions and improve our self-esteem. E.g. using my creativity to get to meeting on time. Under the eve of "improvement opportunities", I should simply focus on improving my "lateness".



7. We tend to have a more reductionist and individualistic view of skills. The most “powerful” at the performance level does not go through a single ability of ours: but through the set of all those skills together. It is not the same to have empathy and teamwork. It is the set of the three that makes the person have a truly unique performance.

**8. And this more “comprehensive” look at skills is not only for one person...** but also for teams. Sometimes we believe that all people should be trained in all the so-called “future skills”. But we don’t teach people to complement each other’s strength as a team with other people. Returning to the example of leaders who are trained in developing soft skills such as empathy... What would happen if we work with them, with their teams, to understand what all the strengths they have together...And together improve group empathy.

**9. Never forget about neurodiversity.** We have to understand that people are all very different from each other. The “one size fits all” model, works only with one stereotype of people... But it will not work with many others.

We were not born to be all in the “same” way, or to have all the same abilities. We all have different ways of learning, different ways of giving and receiving feedback, different ways of managing stress and meeting goals... And it is key that we know that sometimes what works for a person is the complete opposite of what works with someone else.

**Because at the end of the day, the true potential of each person will depend on how far they want to go... And how far we manage to generate committed teams with the desire to transcend.**

You already have many ideas to drive systemic and agile organizational learning in your organization.

Remember that you can start from your place, with small actions that promote a culture of learning. You can start from your learning mindset, activating your learner mode and becoming an ambassador of the importance of learning for the future of people and organizations.

We wish you success!

**Cecilia del Valle**

If you have questions or comments about how to get started, you can write me at [mdelvalle@pdainternational.net](mailto:mdelvalle@pdainternational.net)



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abilities.»





PDAPROFILE

# SOFTWARE TALENT ANALYTICS



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