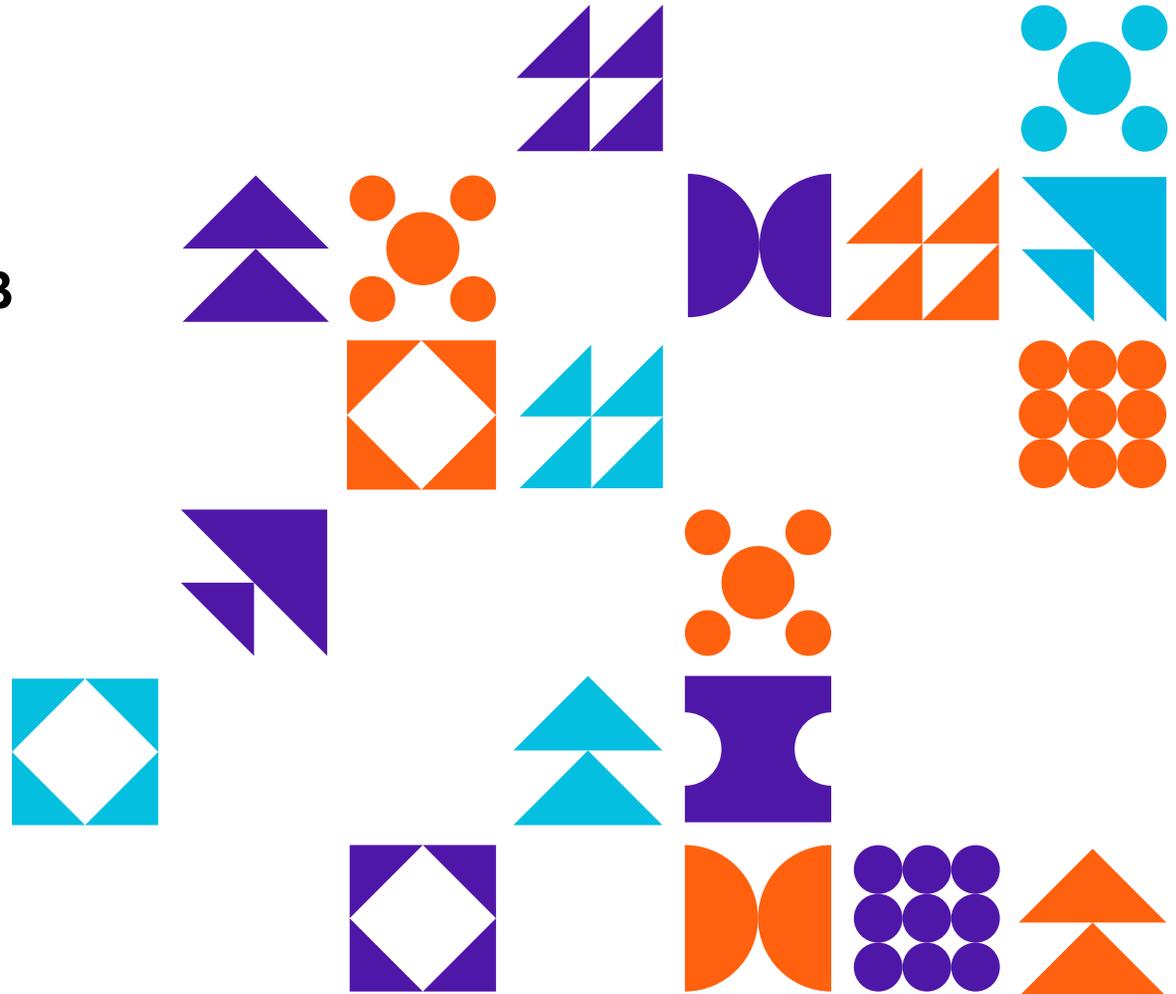


CENTER STAGE PODCAST CLUB

PROJECTS DISRUPTED:
INNOVATION =
KNOWLEDGE + UNLEARNING

HIGHLIGHTS AND INSIGHTS

October 28, 2020



Moderator and Discussion Provocateurs –

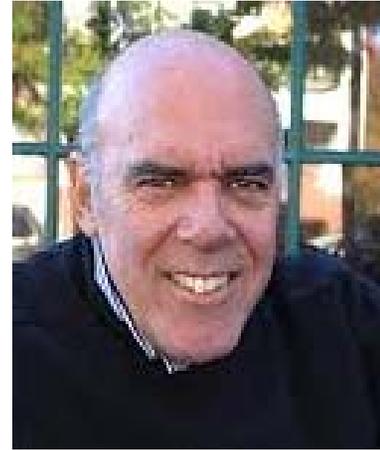
Tammy Ashraf



Barry O'Reilly



Larry Prusak

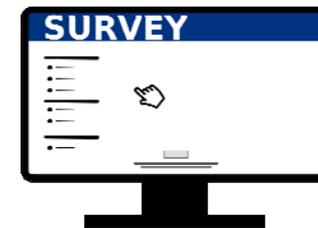


Peter Temes



Audience – 890 participants from 66 countries

Format – Participants answered three survey questions, listened to discussion among the four speakers, and submitted their own questions in real time.



FROM RECOVERY TO LONG-TERM CHANGE



Poll Question: How strongly is your organization emphasizing long-term changes to ways of working versus recovering from the shifts necessitated by COVID-19?

Audience poll: No strong consensus emerged. Most participants indicated that their organizations seem to be moderately preparing for the long-term change.

Audience question: What are your thoughts on how companies can implement strategies to shift from being reactive in the short-term to thriving in the long-term?



Barry O'Reilly

Certain businesses have created very high-performance cultures as well as technical competency to allow people to execute at speed. All organizations are sensing and responding to changes in the marketplace. Companies with weak cultures and that lack technologies will continue to fall behind, stagnate and lose. Companies face the decision to invest or to lose out. Organizations cannot learn if they don't move.



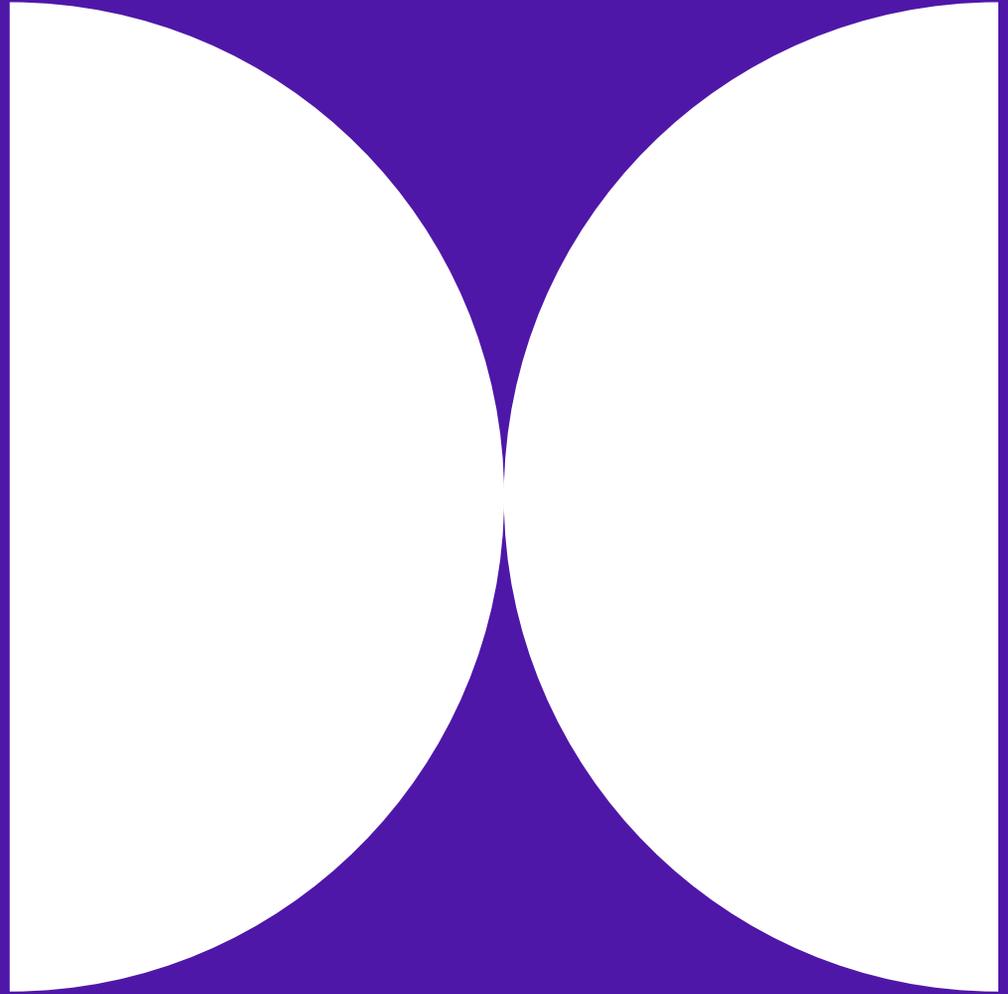
Peter Temes

Clarifying the purpose and values of the enterprise is something you need to invest in daily. It's important to remake the workplace in ways that strengthen the enterprise as well as the individual. Events like the pandemic illustrate the need for organizations to provide "guide maps" to keep teams focused and enable them to continue self-directed work when they cannot get in touch with headquarters.

(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)



OBSTACLES TO ADAPTING



Poll Question: What is the strongest force pushing against change and adaptation in your organization?

Audience poll: **Work overload** and **leadership support** were cited most often as forces holding back organizational change.

Audience question: How do you get everyone on board with a new change when things have been done a certain way for a very long time?



Larry Prusak

Executives whose reputations are built on what they have done may not adapt to changes in technology, socio-political dynamics, competition and may not admit their inability to change. Since they are rewarded for past performance, that makes it hard for them to take risks and shift a corporate culture.



Barry O'Reilly

A major airline needed to move from “too big to fail” projects to incremental projects with more frequent delivery cycles. Adopting this approach freed project teams from having to solve every problem at once and enabled them to become more responsive to customers.



Peter Temes

Properly aligning incentives is important. Incentivizing people in traditional ways based on quarterly job performance, bonus structures and the like and then shifting ways of working without changing the incentives creates headwinds to adopting the new ways of working.



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

Audience question: How can we get leaders to unlearn more?



Peter Temes

The ability and inclination to observe before making decisions or taking action is the first step in unlearning. It's important to strike a balance between focusing on what the organization needs to stop doing and what it needs to start doing. Leadership listening and observing is the key to engaging people and creating an atmosphere for change.



Barry O'Reilly

Leaders are not stopping everyone from changing. Everyone has to take responsibility for their role in creating change. Individuals can “role-model” leadership for their teams and start a cascade effect. It is too easy to say the manager won't let me do it.



Larry Prusak

A manager at a bank in Brazil took 40 minutes every day to open up a conversation with anyone in the bank. He always pointed out things that were positive and attributed the success to people. It made a tremendous difference. It's so important for leaders to engage, be there, observe and listen.



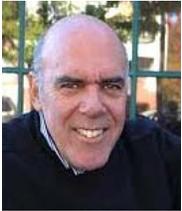
(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

SHIFTING THE FUTURE OF WORK



Poll Question: What do you believe is the most significant macro force shifting the future of work?

Audience poll: **Technological forces** and **economic forces** were cited most often.



Larry Prusak

Hard and soft technologies have had a major impact, but all the forces—political, social, economic, environmental, and technological—are interwoven. Today’s inequalities are not sustainable.



Barry O'Reilly

A lot of changes will happen in unobservable ways which may create new challenges. For example, AI code and programming can have significant implicit biases built in. If AI thinks for us, those biases will affect everything. But government and corporate leaders are not really focused on these aspects of the future of work, equitable opportunity and the impacts on people and society.



Peter Temes

One of the deficiencies in the U.S. system that affects social equity and competitiveness is access to good healthcare and the associated costs imposed on business. Unfairness in access to and affordability of care creates gaps that businesses and taxpayers have to fill.

(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)





Participant
insight

Project management is all about working with people. Changes in our social setting—both norms (and) culture—used to be taken for granted. However, the tools we use to collaborate and work together are causing us to reconsider/ adopt a new social contract.

Question for the Audience - Consider the macro forces currently shifting the future of work. How are these macro forces reshaping career paths and opportunities?

It is no longer possible for most workers to plan a long-term career path. It is likely that the path will change frequently and end up at a place that was not envisioned when they started out. Flexibility and continuous learning are key.



Participant
insight

Question for the Audience - How are you personally helping the future workforce build the necessary skills and knowledge?

As I near the end of my career, I regularly focus on sharing skills and knowledge through coaching and mentoring, frequently reminding the project management team and project teams that change and continuous learning are necessary and ongoing.



Participant
insight

Question for the Audience - What is the strongest force pushing against change and adaptation in your organization, and what are you doing to overcome that force?

Response 1: Too much change to new technologies and business processes before the previous changes can sink in.

Response 2: We have a deep org structure that is steeped in bureaucracy. Working to improve processes.



Participant
insight



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

Moderator Insights

Tammy Ashraf



- High-level of audience engagement and questions around the topic of unlearning and how it relates to the leadership culture in organizations.
- Implications of ethics in emerging technologies such as AI and how this can be explored to augment diversity and inclusion efforts in organizations.
- Technology was voted by the audience as the most influential to the future of work. Explore ways organizations can adapt people and processes to embrace disruptive technologies.