



CAPITAL H

Ethics and the future of work

Ethics and the future of work: From “could we” to “how should we”

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Paula Goldman: At the end of the day, what makes technology ethical? Well, who's it being built for, and who does it exclude? I can't think of a more important question we could be asking.

David Mallon: Hello everyone, and welcome to Capital H podcast—where we explore the topics and trends that focus on putting humans at the center of work. I'm your host, David Mallon, chief analyst with Deloitte Consulting's Human Capital Research and Sensing team. Our episode today will focus

on the growing questions being raised at the intersection of people and technology in the workplace. You'll recall this season is devoted to exploring the 2020 Global Human Capital Trends. This week we stop on ethics and the future of work. From “could we” to “how should we.”

As technological advancements and alternative workforce models continue to increase what organizations are able to do, ethics takes on a whole new level of importance and complexity. Eighty percent

of our 2020 survey respondents rated “the radical shift in work, careers, and jobs due to AI and other new employment models” as important, but just 45% said they're prepared for this shift—the lowest such score among any emerging challenges. As you might expect, organizations felt least prepared to handle the ethical dilemmas where humans and technology meet.

In an age where more people trust their employers to do what is right, and they trust governments and other organizations, it's

incumbent upon us to address challenging ethical questions in all aspects of the future of work. Rather than reacting to these dilemmas as they arise, those who wish to lead on the front will anticipate, plan for, and manage ethics as part of their strategies and missions, focusing on how these issues affect stakeholders inside and outside the enterprise. The challenge is to move beyond the view that ethical issues must be trade-offs and focus on how we operationalize and govern the combination of humans and machines, working as a team.

To discuss, first up this week you are going to hear from Paula Goldman. She is chief ethical and humane use officer at Salesforce. She is going to be interviewed by Jim Guszczka, US chief data scientist for Deloitte Consulting and now at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. Jim, over to you.

Jim Guszczka: So, hello everyone. Welcome to our latest Capital H podcast. My name is Jim Guszczka. I am US chief data scientist at Deloitte, and I'm here to welcome Paula Goldman. Paula Goldman is from Salesforce. She's the first ever chief ethical and humane use officer at Salesforce. She previously worked for the Omidyar Network, a philanthropic investment firm established by the eBay founder Pierre Omidyar, where she served as vice president global lead, Tech Society Solutions Lab. She has her PhD from Harvard University. Welcome, Paula.

Paula: Thank you. It's such a pleasure to be here.

Jim: Thank you so much. We're very happy to have you here. To start, could you tell our listeners about what you do as the chief ethical and humane use officer at Salesforce?

Paula: Absolutely. So, as you mentioned, this is a new office, the Office of Ethical and Humane Use, and it is something of a new function for tech. So, I'll sort of tell you literally what I do and then ladder up to what is the big picture goal. And so literally it comes down

to really two things. One is integrating ethical considerations as top of mind in how we create our technology product. And then the second is creating policy for how customers use our product, and all of those things with ethics in mind.

Paula: But if I ladder up, I think it's about culture. It's about integrating these considerations into the day-to-day way in which we do business and creating a culture of ownership in which all of our employees, and hopefully our community, owns these issues and has a way to participate, and where we're driving these issues in a very conscious way.

Jim: Great. It almost sounds like both the thinking fast and the thinking slow thing. The creating policy is very much a rational approach, right? What should we do? What are the policies? But cultural, those little kinds of institutional norms, those social norms that really actually drive day-to-day behavior, almost automatic behavior, right?

Paula: Totally. Absolutely.

Jim: That's great. And what attracted you to the role personally?

Paula: Well, a handful of things. So, I will say, Salesforce is a company I've admired for a long time as a values-driven company and a company that's in many ways pioneered lots of different aspects of what does a good technology company look like. So that was part of it. I think part of it was the fact that this role has never existed before, and I like challenges like that. And also, I'm deeply passionate about tech ethics and deeply passionate about these issues. And I thought what a fantastic platform to make some progress on these issues.

Jim: What prompted Salesforce to create this role?

Paula: Yeah, that's a great question. I think we can all agree that the tech industry has been at an inflection point. And if we think about a

couple of decades ago and the optimism of how the internet was going to democratize everything and not—there became louder and louder concerns about the social implications of technology. And I think there is a recognition by Salesforce leadership that it was a responsibility for us to really think about it and to really make that a big part of our processes and operations. And I will say, those concerns keep getting louder from all elements of society. From civil society, to our employees who really care about it, to our community. And a lot of my work is about creating channels for listening and creating channels for that input to be fed into our decision making.

Jim: I see. So, it sounds like Salesforce leadership was actively involved in setting up this role, and they're a bit ahead of the curve in setting up this role. Do you think that it's been good for business and good for employee engagement?

Paula: Yeah, absolutely. I think at the end of the day, when you think about tech ethics, there is—look, there's a number of very difficult issues to think through. Some of them are cut and dry and some of them are just endlessly complex, but the important point about all of it is that actually there is one, a clear leadership prioritization of these issues and that people will recognize the importance, that the importance is signaled. And two, that there are processes when these tough questions come up, to adjudicate those questions and that people trust that process. And so, I do think it has been very important for—how many reports have there been about mission-driven employees or millennials looking for purpose and whatnot. And I think this is one very important piece of that puzzle. Which is how does a company think about integrating ethics into day-to-day operations? So yeah, I do think it's been a very important step for us that has been positive for the business.

Jim: That's interesting, and the reason I ask is that ethics is sort of like a dismal science like economics. The reason they call economics

the dismal science is because it's about trade-offs. You can't always get what you want. We have limited resources. And ethics is also kind of the science of trade-offs. We have to kind of trade off efficiency sometimes for fairness, for example, or false positives versus false negatives, or all these different ways these trade-offs appear. And I think the sort of knee-jerk reaction that a lot of people might have is that if you start to kind of bake in ethics into an organization at these high levels, maybe that'll kind of hinder our ability to succeed in the marketplace in the long run. But I'm not sure that's really true, if you take more of a long-term view than the short-term view. And I'm wondering if you would agree with that.

Paula: I absolutely agree with that. I think I could cite study after study that talks about how consumers really care about the ethics of the companies that they're purchasing from. I know our customers really care about it. I think that Salesforce has a brand reputation of sometimes taking stands on issues and really caring about the community and caring about stakeholder capitalism. It actually matters for our business. It's very positive for us.

Jim: That's right. And another distinction is when you said you set up this role, you mentioned multiple things. You want to make ethics top of mind to people. You want to make it part of the culture. You want to kind of create policy. And it may be the case that, again, this is trade-offs, it's kind of a domain where you're not always going to get the ideal answer. It's going to be a lot of back-and-forth debate. And I just want to make a distinction that sometimes there might be specific outcomes that specific people might disagree with. But what's interesting is that you created a forum for these debates to take place in. Is that a fair statement?

Paula: Yeah, you said it better than I could have said it. I really appreciate that framing. And look, it is hard because, you're right that the exercise of ethics is looking at all the different angles on a potential problem or an issue. And then it really does come down to values and which values you prioritize

in making decisions. And so this actually also gets to another reason why I joined Salesforce. Amongst our four key values at a corporate level, one of them is equality. And we weigh that really, really heavily when we make decisions.

Paula: And I've seen it in action over and over and over again, but it's like you keep going back to what's your North Star. And not to downplay the complexity of the decisions themselves and the issues, but I do think that sort of grounding in values is super crucial.

Jim: I am going to ask you a follow-up question to that, but just as a tangential note, I did find it interesting that—and I believe this is true—that the head of ethical technology reports to the chief equality officer.

Paula: Yeah, that's right.

Jim: And so that's just kind of a statement that that's a very important principle for you guys, right?

Paula: Yeah. And a really brilliant choice that I appreciate more and more in the long run at Salesforce. But if you just think about at the end of the day, what makes technology ethical? Well, who's it being built for, and who does it exclude? I can't think of a more important question we could be asking. And how do we ask that question effectively? Well, by embedding ourselves in the middle of our equality effort, with our employee resource groups, with all of our community members that care about equality that are closest to these issues, who are most closely impacted by these issues, that is an absolutely essential part of the story.

Jim: I see. You said part of the challenge was kind of changing the culture. Maybe say a few words about what you've done along those lines, and the challenges that you've faced.

Paula: So, there's a couple of end games for us. One is a culture in which, especially when you think about our employees, where everyone feels like they own this. And then the second is that people trust the process.

And so, there were a number of things that we rolled out. One for listening, for example, employees know that if they have a concern, there's a confidential hotline, there are office hours. There is our internal social media, there's all these different channels to raise questions. And they also know that we have this ethical use advisory council that when certain questions get escalated as "these are key priorities we really need to look at it from a policy perspective," that our council really weighs them and adjudicates them and goes to leadership with decisions, and we have a number of decisions under our belt.

I think that process is becoming standardized and understood and people trust it. And I think that's one big part of it that they know there's a way to raise the question. The other part of it is training and awareness. And this is both on the sort of policy side and also with our product teams. But we've been piloting a bunch of stuff, some of which is sort of standardized training, and we have this platform called Trailhead, where we've been developing trails for our employees on ethical use.

We do consequence scanning, which I can talk about, but that's sort of like training people how to think about unintended consequences or unanticipated consequences of their technology. And we're continually figuring out new methods. But I think it's those two things that we know that we don't want to be an office in a corner prescribing the answer to a question. It's all of us together wrestling with the questions.

Jim: That's right. No, that's a very interesting distinction. Can you describe what consequence scanning is? Where does it come from? Who originated the idea? And how is it used in Salesforce?

Paula: Yeah, for sure. So, consequence scanning is basically a methodology, it's actually meant to be part of the agile process that helps teams, particularly scrum teams, think about the consequences of the product they're building. That's really the idea. It was developed by a group called Doteveryone, a UK-based group. It was an effort actually

that I had funded when I was back at Omidyar Network, and they developed this methodology, and we've since rolled it out internally and with a number of teams. And it's been a super interesting experience because the number one piece of feedback we got from our teams is, "Hey, thank you. We haven't been asked this question. We need to be asking ourselves this question all the time." And then the number two piece of feedback is, "Thank you. We think we could have spent all day and all week thinking about these questions. Maybe we need more time."

And so that's been super interesting, and we keep pivoting and experimenting with that. And there's new tools coming out as well and I think they're really, really important for helping people in this broad universe of potential consequences narrow down to what really matters for them.

Jim: It's very interesting. I mean, one takeaway from that for me is that there are actually tangible methodologies you can build into everyday practice that prompt this ethical thinking, which doesn't always happen. A lot of times, people don't really—I'm a data scientist by training and there's so many cases in my own professional history where I remember sort of having conversations with people and the focus is on optimizing algorithm or making sure it's as effective of a sample as possible.

And there's these other ideas about, well, is it fair? Could there be disparate impact? It's kind of like, well, that's somebody else's problem, or it's really not part of our job. And you end up self-censoring a little bit, it's a behavioral economics thing. And you mentioned culture change. I mean, just by introducing this process, that actually changes the culture where people construe their job through an ethical lens, not just through a technical lens.

Paula: Right, exactly. And you want as many people as possible asking these types of questions.

Jim: That's right. Because you're trying to see the future, essentially. And the more diverse perspectives, the more likely you are to come up with a potential unintended consequence.

Paula: Yeah, absolutely. That's right.

Jim: So, when we're doing things like consequence scanning and consequence sweeping, in the midst of these advisory council discussions or other deliberations about ethics, to what extent is diversity an important input into that?

Paula: Great question. I talked about how the Office of Ethical Use is part of the Office of Equality—it's because diversity is crucially important. Thinking about who products are being built for, who they might unintentionally exclude, how product use and product design can protect vulnerable populations, especially now, especially when we're in the middle of a racial justice crisis and a pandemic, which is disproportionately affecting people of color and poor people. These are the most important questions, from my perspective. And so, I really appreciate that question. In my mind, there is no tech ethics without thinking about the who and bringing in the perspectives of folks that are most impacted by these problems.

Jim: Well said, thank you. Paula, can you say a little bit more about how this relates to your product teams? How do you embed ethical considerations into your actual product design?

Paula: Yeah, absolutely. We have an incredible group of people working on it across our product team. So we've got folks in design, and folks in research, and folks that are within engineering, et cetera. And we've been testing a lot of things, but really where it starts with is, we organize our products at the cloud level. So cloud is a massive cluster of products. And we'll work with the leadership of that cloud first to develop a risk taxonomy, which is specific to this group of products. What are the highest risks we want to avoid, and the highest positive value that we want to uphold? And we found that when we first started, we thought like, "Oh, maybe there's one universal taxonomy for all of Salesforce," but quickly realized that wasn't going to work. Because marketing cloud is different than service cloud, which is different than work.

com, which helps companies return to work. There were different issues we had to pay attention to. So, we start with that taxonomy, that's almost the most important heavy lifting. And then when we're done with that, then we're able to create specific educational tools for people that are working on that cluster of products. And we're able to escalate the issues that most need attention, because we've done the hard work of just deciphering, what's a five-alarm fire from a one-alarm fire. And then we're able to also add value with specific product differentiators that actually make sure that the product is helping our own customers use it responsibly. And that's the process that we've been piloting and are beginning to scale across our product teams.

Jim: Could you talk about the ethical considerations that Salesforce has explored with respect to COVID-19? What guidance do you have for organizations on that front?

Paula: Yeah, absolutely. And I would say, it's interesting obviously. I don't know about you, I did not predict the COVID-19 pandemic, but we had already in place a bunch of infrastructures for integrating ethical use into our product. And when the pandemic hit, we pivoted and focused on product that was being specifically developed to respond to the pandemic. And so, for example, earlier this year, we released a new product called work.com, which is meant to help workplaces and employers reopen safely. It has a number of really interesting products. It has a product to support human beings who are contact tracing. It has a product that helps people manage shifts for, if you imagine you can't fully occupy an office because there's new space constraints, so how do you manage shifts in an office? That kind of thing. And what we did—and we published a couple of posts about this—but we created what is essentially a set of principles and a risk taxonomy about the stuff that we are most worried about, the places where we felt we had to go out of our way to make sure that we were anticipating consequences, and those were in areas of both privacy, as well as questions of differential impact for vulnerable populations.

So, we published a set of principles first, internally and later externally. And then we had a series of direct workshops with all of the different product teams that were working on elements of this cluster of products and came out with a bunch of very simple but impactful design choices that really make a difference. So, for example, a lot of employers today, as they're thinking about whether folks are ready to come back to work, we'll give them a questionnaire. We'll give their employees a questionnaire just to make sure that they haven't had any symptoms of COVID in the last however long, say, call it the last week.

And we looked at the draft questionnaire, which was part of this product, and we said, "Well, first of all, do we really need all of these questions?" So, we whittled down to the essential questions. And then we made it all a single yes/no. Like, yes, I've had some of these symptoms, or no, because actually what the system should record is simply the yes/no, it doesn't need to associate specific symptoms with specific individuals. Now, why do I dive deep on that particular example? Because it's small choices like that that actually make the difference on how a product can impact someone, particularly in this case, for example, someone who may be vulnerable for one reason or another, whether about their job, or their health status, or whatnot. And so we want to make sure that we're being super thoughtful as we make these decisions.

Jim: Out of curiosity, Paula, you were trained as an anthropologist with a PhD from Harvard. How do you leverage that background in different organizational things throughout your career? And in what ways do you wear your anthropologist hat in your role with Salesforce?

Paula: Yeah, well, a couple of things. So, anthropologists are definitely trained to listen, to listen across difference, to solicit different conceptions of the world. So, it's certainly a key element of the ethical use work at Salesforce. It's certainly been a key thread across my career. But I will also say my PhD dissertation was on how controversial ideas scale or how norms shift, essentially. And I

think of this body of work around ethical tech as an example of that. So similar to maybe 20, 30 years ago before the security industry was super robust, if people were saying, "Oh, hey, we've got to think about the security implications of product before we ship them." People might have laughed them out of the room. But now you know why it's really important to think about security before you ship a product. And I think we're kind of at the early days of ethical use in that regard as well.

Jim: I love that. That reminds me of a conversation I had with David Danks at Carnegie Mellon, he's a philosopher there. I know you know David too.

Paula: Yeah.

Jim: And we both think about ethics as sort of a design challenge. Ethics is a set of design considerations, that might be a way of framing it. And he made this beautiful analogy, which I love. He said that in the old days, Steve Jobs was this sort of lone voice in the tech world saying, "We need human-centered design." Do you remember the movie, right? Wozniak was just focusing on the circuit boards and Jobs was like, "No, the sans serif font is important. You can use the mouse in your jeans." That's not just a small thing, that's central, right?

Paula: Right.

Jim: And now that's kind of commonplace. No tech company would say, "We can just release some technology without user-centered design." And I think just to paraphrase, I think Danks said, "Maybe the day will come when it will be equally outrageous to say we could release tech into the world without some type of ethical design considerations."

Paula: Yeah, or even I hear a lot of people talking about moving from user-centered design to society-centered design. Because user-centered design is about the individual. In some ways, the shift is like, "Okay, how does this affect groups of people? And how do we think about that?" And so maybe that's the next evolution of user-centered design.

Jim: Right, value-sensitive design is another.

Paula: Exactly.

Jim: Right now, future of work is top of mind, right? There's a lot of concern around technological unemployment. To what extent do you think that the ethics of people driving meaning from work should be part of the discussion around the development of smart technologies?

Paula: Yeah. I definitely think it's part of the discussion, and I think you're right, that there are a number of futures that we could choose with AI. And there's a bright one that augments humans to do what really only humans can do, right? And there's one that takes away a lot of agency, and we have a key choice that we have to make as a society and as companies. And it's something we think about a lot.

Jim: Well, what advice would you give to leaders who'd like to follow in your footsteps, or to get started in their own journey? This might look different in different organizations, I imagine. But what advice would you give to leaders who would like to bring ethics to the forefront of organizations' discussions and decisions but are unsure how to get started?

Paula: That's a great question. I would say a couple of things. One, leadership really matters. It does matter that ethical use is coming from the bottom up and the top down. And so it's, one, how do you create channels for folks at all levels to raise these questions, and two, how do you make sure those questions are echoed, authentically echoed, with a spirit of humility, with a spirit of understanding how hard these questions are, but are also echoed at all levels of the organization. And the rest is actually, honestly, details. All the methodologies I talked about, all the training, the specific risk taxonomies, details, the prize is the culture.

Jim: Yeah. Well, what would you say to an individual employee who works for an organization where he or she feels that top-

level commitment is either missing or maybe not authentic?

Paula: No time like the present. Seriously, in all seriousness, I think employees have a lot of power, and we have seen that in all shapes and forms, and I think people really care what employees think of their companies and are willing to go to large distances for that. And so, don't underestimate the power of your voice.

David: Thanks to Paula Goldman. Thank you very much for sharing your perspective and for giving us a peek into how Salesforce is incorporating ethics into product design, decision making, and the overall culture. I think it's really fascinating to hear about the anthropological underpinnings of the work.

Now it's time for our roundtable, in which a few of our colleagues are going to join us to share their perspectives on the topic. Enjoy! David Mallon: Joining me to discuss are Erica Volini, the Global Human Capital leader for Deloitte Consulting. Hi, Erica.

Erica Volini: Hello.

David: And Catherine Bannister. Catherine is the US leader for Development and Performance for Deloitte Professionals and the architect for Deloitte's Tech Fluency and Tech Savvy programs. Welcome, Catherine.

Catherine Bannister: Hi there.

David: And lastly, Jim Guszcz. Jim is the US chief data scientist for Deloitte Consulting and a member of Deloitte's advanced analytics and modeling practice. Glad to have you back, Jim, and thanks for that fantastic interview with Paula.

Jim: Oh, thanks so much. It was a pleasure doing it.

David: Great. So, let's dive in. Erica, I want to start with you. As an author of this year's study, frame the issue here. Why should we be paying more attention to ethics and the future of work?

Erica: Well, it's a great question, and frankly, I think a lot of us think about ethics, but when we went through our Global Human Capital Trends survey this year, there was some data that I think really caused us to think we need to focus on this issue a little bit more, and I'll give you a statistic here. Eighty-five percent of our 9,000 survey respondents this year around the world do believe that the future of work raises ethical challenges, but only 27% have clear policies and leaders in place to manage them.

So that in and of itself caused this to be one of the trends that we really wanted to focus on this year because we all recognize it's important, but if we don't have the infrastructure, the leaders, the policies, the programs in place to manage it, we're not going to be able to get there.

When we surveyed a little bit deeper, just to share a little bit more, we asked our respondents, "What are the major drivers? What is causing this increased importance?" Let's say we all knew it was important. Why is it even more important right now? And there were four drivers that really came to the top.

Legal and regulatory requirements, the rapid adoption of AI in the workplace, changes in workforce composition, primarily with the continued rapid growth of the alternative workforce, and then pressure from external stakeholders, whether it's investors, customers, special interest groups. Those were the top four.

And when we think about each of those four, you could see why they're all creating this environment where you have to focus on ethics. We have major shifts in the laws that are guiding organizations around the world, and we've seen everyone from the European Parliament adopting a resolution around AI and robotics to the legislation in California around the treatment of gig workers, so that's really putting this issue front and center.

Obviously, AI in the workplace, and as technology like AI is becoming more embedded into work, there's a lot of views that the design and use needs to be assessed for fairness and equity. Changes in workforce

composition. I mean, the gig economy continues to rapidly increase, projecting to hit 42 million workers in the US. Here we are with a real need to recognize what this shift is and what this shift means. How are we going to treat these workers moving forward?

Then finally, we have all these external stakeholders in the age of the social enterprise, where we have a lot more people looking at what's happening in the organization.

It's really this combination of these drivers putting pressure on organizations, and then the reality that most organizations, based on our survey, are just simply unprepared. Our view right now is, "Why are they unprepared?" It's really a matter of how you frame the question, and most organizations are tackling ethics through a question of, "Can we do it?"

By the way, the answer is probably, "Yes," because you can do most about anything in the future of work right now. The shift we see needing to be made is this focus on not "could we," but "how should we?" Taking the time to really evaluate the way forward, understanding both short- and long-term implications to the decisions that you're making.

David: Jim, your thoughts? What's the difference between, as Erica put it, thinking about this point of view of "could we" to "how should we?"

Jim: Yeah. I'll introduce my perspective as a data scientist. What I perceive is that a lot of people who both sell and build and maybe design AI technologies and the other types of technologies, they tend to construe what they're doing in largely technical terms. So, can I predict who's going to default on this insurance policy? Can I predict who's a fraudster? Can I predict what emotional state is behind this facial expression? Or can I build a chat bot that is so effective that the person at the other end of the phone can't tell if it's a human or machine? Once you've accomplished something like that, it can feel like a real technical rush. It's like, "Wow, I've made a real accomplishment here." And it's fueled by technology. It's fueled by big data.

It's fueled by machine learning algorithms. This gives us great power, and it can just feel extraordinary to say, "Wow, I've cracked this incredible technical challenge."

But the training of a lot of people that work in data science, it feels like data science and AI, is largely technical, a lot of people will come from statistics, computer science, and so on. What's sometimes not really in the front of one's attention is that you're really creating a socio-technical system. Wait a minute, is that good to build a chat bot that could actually cause someone to be fooled that they're talking to a machine rather than a real person?

If we're building some kind of organizational network analysis to be used in the workplace, is this going to be really good and deployed and designed in a way that can empower employees? Or is it something that can promote more of a surveillance workplace? When you're working on a technical problem, it's hard to focus your attention and give equal amounts of attention to both.

So, I think what happens is very often the availability of big data, the availability of powerful machine learning algorithms sometimes outruns our capacity for thinking through the sociological and social and ethical implications of those technologies.

Catherine: Well, Jim, I would jump in and extend even what you're saying about, I think that—and this goes back to something that Erica mentioned about how organizations are relatively unprepared—I think that lack of preparation stems from the historic separation of the technologists from the functional users. Or in the academic setting, the technologists from the humanities, right?

And as an organizational leader, as someone who wants my people, my employees to start asking questions about the usage of these technologies, the impacts of these technologies, I need to start interrogating the teams and making sure that the teams themselves have both the technical expertise, but also that diversity of background, that diversity of experience that is going to bring different lenses to bear.

I think that what we're seeing is that we needed to embed this interrogation along the way, this humanities perspective on top of the technology. Because as a technologist myself, I would say that most technologists, the vast majority of us, only see the benefits of the technology. We're doing technology because we think we can cure cancer. We can save the world.

We see the ultimate benefit of that said technology, and what we need is different voices and we need designated dissenters, as it were, to challenge and say, "How might this technology hurt some populations? How might this technology be used in ways that we didn't intend?" We need to enable those conversations. I think that that's where we're starting to see organizations start to look at, "How do we create the environment, create the teams, create the culture to enable those conversations?"

Erica: Catherine, I love this point for two reasons, and it ties so much to what we've been talking about in the Human Capital Trends report. First of all, your idea that we need to cross disciplines within the organization, I couldn't agree with more.

In 2018, the number one trend in our Global Human Capital Trends report was called the symphonic C-suite, and it was totally about this idea that we can no longer operate the organization in the traditional functional and divisional silos that we see. That we have to work across disciplines if we want to tackle anything, whether it's future of work, whether it's becoming digital, whether it's tackling these ethical issues.

So I agree, and I think this continues to be a wake-up call for organizations that they need to look at how their organization is operating, because you cannot possibly solve these ethical issues and bring technology and humanity together if you continue to work in a siloed manner. The frame of this year's report is about that. I mean, the fundamental question we tried to solve in this year's report was how to remain distinctly human in a technology-driven world.

I absolutely love what you say, because at that intersection of humans and technology is the answer.

Catherine: Absolutely, and Erica and Jim, you probably remember this, and when David introduced me, he talked about me architecting Tech Savvy. At the heart of Deloitte's Tech Savvy expectation was what you just described, Erica. Which was three, four years ago, we realized that all of us are technologists, right? That there was no longer this ability to separate your work from the enablement that technology brings, and so it was incumbent upon everybody at Deloitte to become much more what we call tech savvy, meaning much more conversant in the language of disruption, so that you can understand it, talk about it, apply it, talk to your clients about it, talk to your teams about it. For us, ethical tech is the natural extension of that. Because if you call yourself tech savvy and you're conversant on these technologies, then you best be also considering the overall impact and the ecosystem in which those technologies reside and are applied. And so, it all kind of synergistically comes together at the end of the day, by recognizing that none of us operate technologically in silos anymore.

David: Jim, Erica and Catherine have both just talked, hinted at, or addressed, I should say, what is really an age-old dialogue, which is the intersection of humanities and I would call it scientific progress, for a phrase. Let's pull it back, though, to more recent history. Obviously, something happened for us as a firm. Catherine's just referred to Tech Savvy in the last decade, that made us think differently about this question. How has the conversation shifted in the last decade specifically? How are companies thinking differently about this intersection of ethics and technology more recently?

Jim: Okay, sure. I've actually been a data scientist for about two decades now, and I've actually seen an oscillation. Going back about 20 years, and I joined the firm about 20 years ago, there was no such thing as data science. Well, there was. We were doing data science,

but the term didn't exist yet. Data science originally, at Deloitte and in many other parts of the larger world, was an offshoot of insurance. Our initial AI applications were in insurance, helping predict who's going to crash the car, which businesses are going to have a high loss ratio or whatever. And what's interesting about that is that the people building those algorithms, people like me, a lot of them early on came from actuarial science. Actuaries are trained in both statistics and economics and, more recently, machine learning, but they'd also get courses in law and regulation and professionals in continuing education.

It's a very interesting construct. That went on very happily. I was very happy for about 10 years. Then, about 10 years ago, there was a pivot in the community, and it became—big data came online. There's this exponential availability of data. It's not so much the machine learning algorithms are new, but those algorithms had more power because there's so much data around, and very quickly, the field became much more tech-dominant, much more dominated by people trained in pure computer science, pure machine learning. They didn't have that, what Catherine called it, the more humanities background or the law and regulation, the more social sciences perspective. There's this exuberance about 10 years ago, and not just at Deloitte, but in the larger world, where, if we connect everybody, the world is going to be so much better.

If we give everybody all the information they can possibly want, boy, this is going to be great. But we weren't thinking about things like, "Gee, if you connect people and give them the information they want, that could actually cause group polarization." Or if we give people devices that are so attractive and easy to use, it can addict them, right? Or we can build algorithms on whatever big data happens to be available. Well, wait a minute. That data can encode societal biases, which can be amplified by those algorithms. Those are a little bit hard to think through if you're trained and focusing all of your attention on technical aspects. So, this is why, what Catherine and Erica were

saying was really important. There's been this recognition that if you're too quick to throw these purely technical solutions out there, and as Catherine said, if they're divorced from the end users, or they're divorced from the people that they're going to impact, they can have negative consequences.

Catherine: Jim, don't you think that many of the drivers that Erica listed at the start are driving some of that recognition, driving some of that evolution? I think that AI gets all the airtime these days, but technology ethics has been around, as you mentioned, for many, many, many years, right? Every technology that has emerged has played out with ethical dimensions. You think about, when automobiles were first created, we didn't have stop lights. We didn't have speed limits. We didn't have seatbelts and all of that stuff. That kind of happened. What we're seeing now is just this rapid acceleration and more widespread impacts that are becoming more visible and are moving to the forefront. I also think that you cannot diminish the social enterprise part and the broad connectivity and how news and information is just shared in split-second these days. There's just a heightened hyper-awareness of this. I think that also plays into the evolution.

David: One of the things that I think was most worrisome that we found in the Human Capital Trends study this year was only 12% of respondents felt that the board and the C-suite are actually driving a focus on the ethics of future work. So obviously, boards and leaders have to set the right tone from the top. What advice are we giving clients? What advice are we giving to C-suite, to boards, to executive leaders to create the space to have these kinds of conversations?

Erica: I think there's a couple of pieces of guidance that we could provide and are providing. Number one, sense what's going on, use active listening to understand the dialogue that's happening. Because I think as it relates to a lot of these issues, it's important to have a pulse on how your workforce and even how the external environment is, what the sentiment is.

And there's so many different tools that are out there to allow you to understand that sentiment, to get that pulse on the organization. I think that data becomes incredibly important because it allows you to stay in front of what's happening and to really understand what issues are front and center, and how they need to be addressed.

The second, I would say, is make this an enterprise-level issue. Make this an enterprise-level mandate. Make sure that all of your leaders across the C-suite understand that this has implications to what they're doing and the way they're going about doing it. Because then it becomes something that can permeate the organization versus being a program or a set of policies that are held on the side.

And then I think the third piece of advice is increase the level of transparency around this issue. This is no longer something that should be discussed in the back room with only a few people because we don't want everyone to know. Ethical issues as it relates to the future of work, everyone understands there's more transparency in today's world than ever before. I think leadership teams need to lean into that transparency and open up the dialogue, because none of these have easy answers. And none of them are black and white, none of them have right or wrong answers necessarily. But having that dialogue and being transparent in terms of not just the outcome, but the decision-making process that you use to get there, I think not only is powerful in helping to solve the ethical issues but becomes powerful in terms of shifting the culture.

David: Catherine, what is your perspective? Why is bringing ethics to the forefront imperative for organizations today and in the future?

Catherine: I think that if we don't make the space, and if we don't adapt our culture and our leadership perspective and enable and empower our people to make decisions around these technologies, it's going to be done to us. And I also think that organizations who don't figure out how to think ethically

about technologies are going to be at a competitive disadvantage. I would warrant that the intersection between inclusivity and ethical design are very close. Why would you not want to design a product, to design a solution for your people, for your clients, that encompasses the broadest user experience, enables the broadest set of users to benefit from your solution? And by thinking and making ethical decisions and interrogating the outcomes and the impacts of the technology throughout the lifecycle, you broaden that aperture of who could potentially benefit from your technology and you minimize who could potentially be harmed.

And that has a distinct competitive advantage in the marketplace, whether it's an enterprise solution for back office, or whether it's an app on someone's phone. And I don't think that that's going to slow down anytime soon. David: No doubt. Erica, I leave you with the last word. With this desire to be distinctly human in a technology-driven world, to embrace perspective, where is this conversation on ethics and the future of work going?

Erica: Yeah. I just want to say what Jim and Catherine just said because they articulated it so well. I mean, I love this idea of the focus of design, and I love Jim's aspiration, which is, do we get to a place where we remain distinctly human in a technology-driven world, which means when we design technology, it is natural to think about the implications, not just from an ethical standpoint, but on humans overall. Not just whether they're going to be adversely impacted, but whether we're using

the technology to create greater value and ultimately greater meaning for workers that will translate into true sustained value for the organization and true sustained value for the society as a whole, because organizations as social enterprises have a much bigger role to play and a much greater responsibility than they've ever had before.

So that's certainly my hope for the future. I do think that's the direction we're heading in. I think individuals are pushing us there because it's now more visible than ever what is happening. And there's more people who are looking and watching and calling out organizations, and it will impact not only an organization's employment brand, but ultimately their consumer brand, their trust and their loyalty, if they don't figure out how to navigate. So now is definitely the time to focus on this issue.

David: Thank you, Erica. And thank you, Jim, and thank you, Catherine, for a great conversation.

Not just asking "could we," but "should we— or more specifically, how should we?" It's a significant shift and a change in thinking. But it's a conversation we must have—and it's one that organizations are uniquely positioned to drive in the age of the social enterprise. Thank you again to Paula Goldman for sharing her insight and experience. And thanks again to my Deloitte colleagues for exploring this issue and its impact on the future of work. Remember that in addition to tuning in to our podcast series, you can also read the report online at www.deloitte.com/HCTrends.

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