

Jackie Winters (Jackie): Good morning and welcome. We are following up today on our second learning-focused conversation around technology and learning as part of the Moving the Needle seminars that we are doing. I am Jacqui Winters and I am joined here today by Amy Titus, a partner of mine in Deloitte's public sector practice, and today we are going to be following up on our conversation with Jim Woolsey, the president of the Defense Acquisition University. In our prior conversation around learning technology Jim, you shared with us an interesting point about how DAU has moved forward in a model that relies on opt-in as it relates to learning and that got a lot of interest in the conversation and in the follow up from our participants. So, today we will be spending a little bit of time unpacking that, talking about the culture behind that, and what about today's environment allows us to bring that model to life. So, if you don't mind Jim, if we could get started with hearing from you. What do you mean when you talk about opt-in learning for DAU?

Jim Woolsey (Jim): Sure and good morning, Jacqui. Thanks for inviting me back. I am happy to talk about all these things with you today, it's a pleasure. Amy good morning to you as well. So, when I talked about optional learning in our previous discussion, like many government organizations, DAU has a lot of training that is compliance oriented and that has the advantage of course that you make sure everybody gets it, it's important, make sure people get the training and make time to do it. The disadvantage is that it's not very flexible, it's not very responsive, it doesn't allow people to tailor their own training to their needs. So, we even shrunk the amount of training that is required dramatically and instead are giving people options, giving them learning opportunities that they decide fit best for their careers and their needs, and that's a significant shift that then leads to a lot of other changes that have to be made which I am sure we will talk about as we get into it.

Jackie: Fantastic, that's great. Alright, Amy, why don't you get us started?

Amy Titus (Amy): Sure, well as we discussed in this session Jim, we talked about the impact that COVID has had. It has had a heavy impact on our colleagues and on our communities and it has really shaken up the typical way that learning has occurred and you were alluding to that and some of the changes it has allowed us to make. So there is that flipside of it, it has really forced us to question the status quo as it was before and also accelerate the speed of digitalization and of new ways to really make learning happen. So I am curious about why you think this is important to go toward this what we call this optional learning methodology and what kinds of changes you expect that will come from it?

Jim: We really have to in this environment, as complicated as it is, as fast as things change, there isn't any way to make required learning fit all the needs that people have and do that in a responsive way. We have a 180 thousand students but DAU serves actually quite a bit more than that. They all have different careers, different needs, different demands every day. It doesn't make any sense to think that a required package of learning would meet all their needs. Just like those of us today, when we bought our house, we didn't take training on how to fix all the appliances and do all the things. When your garbage disposal breaks, you get a YouTube video and figure out how to fix your garbage disposal at the time you need it when you need to do that. We need to give them those same opportunities and learning in the corporate environment. So, we have shifted to less required and now we are making more things optional. But what comes with that is if we are going to make things optional, you have got to make it easy to do. If it's hard to sign up for a class, if it's hard to find a class, people aren't going to do it. If you have a class that's a mind-numbing page-turning set of PowerPoint slides, they are never going to come back for more of that. So, as soon as you make things optional, the burden becomes on the

learning organization to make sure that the content is compelling, engaging, and useful and that people are able to find it so that you build an environment that will help them find the things they need, maybe if they didn't even know they needed them. So we have got to make it optional but we have to make sure people keep doing training. The less required doesn't just mean less training, it means that people seek training, get training, that will help them do their jobs and succeed.

Amy: Well, I want to jump in with a question that I think is so vital here, which is really the combination of culture and technology. You are talking about changing culture, and if things are going to be easy and things are going to be virtual, I hear technology, we called it digitalization before. Can you talk a little bit about that and how you have handled that?

Jim: No question about it. So you alluded to the changes that COVID forced us to make, many of which are turning out to be positive, we are doing a lot with technology to make virtual learning compelling and engaging and powerful and we have made a lot of progress on that. Sometimes it's little things like getting people together before the class to know each other a little bit to create engagement and then sometimes it's technology getting the right platforms, getting the right microphones, little things like that, and increasingly using modern learning techniques that can be either synchronous or asynchronous. So, the content increasingly is delivered with technology obviously and includes more technology naturally as you do virtual learning. I said things have to be easy to discover, there is a big technology part of that as well that you need to create an environment that gives people what they expect from Google world where I find what I need easily and quickly and intuitively. There is a technology part to that clearly, whether it's LXPs or different websites. There are a lot of tools we can use to help things be easy to find. So, both in the discovery and delivery, technology is going to be an increasing part of all that we do.

Jacqui: Fantastic. Jim, I'd like to unpack like how to make this real, a little bit more with you. As we know in government, there are a number of regulations, rules, requirements, and compliance is an essential factor for many of those things, right? For many agencies and their personnel. So, as you think about sort of moving away from those requirements, what's the fail-safe there? Like, how do you approach this in a way that allows every agency leader to be confident that people are going to take advantage of it. They're going to participate. They're going to be able to comply effectively if they're not relying on that rigor of a required course?

Jim: That gets to, Amy talked about culture a minute ago, there's a cultural part to this for sure, that we need to work a mindset that allows people to be proactive, to seek the learning they need, and figure out what learning they need. There always is kind of careful what you wish for sometimes, you hear people say that they're tired of so much required training. We tell them what they have to do and they don't need it all. Okay. Now, it's up to you and people go, 'oh, wait a minute, now it's up to me.' We need to build a culture that gives people the tools, the knowledge, and the motivation to do that, and then as I said, we need to make it as easy as possible to find the learning you need once you have that motivation. So it's all of the pieces. You've got to have the technology part. You've got to have the culture part for all that to work, but it is the culture we're living in, right? We're expecting workers today to adapt quickly to figure out what needs to be done and figure out how to do it and then make it happen. It's a much more dynamic world where people have to take initiative. Well, if we're expecting that of them, then we need to do that ourselves and make things that are responsive and dynamic and meet needs quickly. I think that's up to us to help lead the way in those areas.

Jackie: Do you also apply in that, Jim, an approach that reflects on human behavior and what motivates people? For example, you'll see kind of scorecards or giving people a platform to visibly see where they've made progress and what they've sort of satisfied. Are there any capabilities that you have in place that really focus on providing the employees the platform to see how they're doing against these expectations?

Jim: We're in the process of rebuilding all that, part of the excitement and the challenge of this is finding what the right tools are and we could do a whole different discussion about xAPI and LXPs and badges, and all the pieces that have to fall together. It was so much easier when, if you're going to be a contract officer you've got to take these 14 courses and you just check them off as you go. Now, we want to give people credit for things they're doing that might not be formal learning, and we need to help them have maps about where they might want to go and there are a lot of firms out there thinking about ways to do that, a lot of organizations are, I think that's really exciting to make learning more flexible and organic to what we do so that you get credit for what you're doing, you find what you need as you're doing the work. I think it's a really exciting domain. There's a technology play and there is certainly an intellectual play or a thinking play for all of us who are trying to make it work in organizations. And we are right now rethinking all the pieces of that from the LMS through the LXP, to the websites, to how we do badging, all of that is currently up in the air.

Jackie: Fantastic. That's very exciting. As you're thinking about that, I heard you say in the webinar as well that it's important to think about what's the right mode, right? As you mentioned before, we're still very much in the middle of this pandemic. It's causing lots of complications to how we work and how we accomplish our mission, but on the other side of that, there hopefully will be a point where we have recovered and we have a more stable environment. I heard you say we should be asking ourselves, can this training be delivered virtually, but is there a reason for us to do this learning experience in person? What are your thoughts on that and what do you think the role of in-person learning might look like in that world of the future?

Jim: We've already made a really dramatic change at DAU that way driven by COVID and again I can't say enough that I feel bad about seeing the good parts of something, it's so awful and like all of us, I can't wait till it's over and there's light at the end of the tunnel. Thank goodness. That said, the disruption just drove us into virtual everything, overnight, almost literally. We had to deliver all of our classes virtually like so many learning organizations did, but in addition to the obvious part, nobody's in the office doing it that way, some less obvious things then happen, wait a minute, if we're doing this virtually, we don't have to do eight hours a day, five days a week classes, we can do three hours on Monday and two on Wednesday and so on, and if we're going to do that, we could put an asynchronous part in with the synchronous part and shrink this other thing. Although a lot of structure that you're used to falls away, and you have a lot of freedom in that, and we're starting to exploit it now and I'm excited about it, and I think it's really powerful. It's not hard to see learning becoming more integrated with work, have it be more engaging because it's done in smaller bites and delivered in the way that makes sense? We humans are lazy fundamentally and if we're used to delivering things in a classroom, that's what we've always done. The lazy brain will say, well, let's keep doing that and this disruption forced us to get unlazy and do things in a different way, that's a little scratchy. We had some difficult conversations about it, but the power of it is becoming obvious and I think it's an exciting time.

Jackie: Yeah, I would agree with you. I mean, we're stepping back ourselves and thinking about how much more powerful time together can be as it relates to building communities, creating opportunities, collaborate to sort of drive people to sort of think bigger and broader, and so it feels like when we come out of this, when we start to think about what we're going to do next, it's all going to be about getting together with much more purpose and intent and frankly, we're all going to value that time in a way that we probably didn't in the past. I think that's going to have some really great attributes that we can bring to the learning world.

Jim: That's been flipped on its head also. We talk about learning being flipped on its head, where it used to be the classroom, could we possibly do it virtual now? We'd decide what, meeting in person has been flipped on its head for all kinds of firms. It's no longer we come to the office, few people can telework if that's okay, we've changed it to, okay, everyone's teleworking, why do we have to come into the office? And everything's going to change? And there's a lot of power in that too that I think is exciting.

Amy: You touched on it totally which is change and with change, there's always skeptics, so there's, as we said, well work before, let's go back to it. How are you going to measure success? How are you measuring success of this new, the flexible, the agile, where we have virtual, we're seeing so many benefits. Can you talk a little bit about that because particularly in government, people will want to know why is this successful and how are you measuring it?

Jim: We're using the same tools we've always used to measure success, but in different ways. First of all, we look at we look at student citations, but for this, we started doing everything virtually and have them come back as our faculty members figured out how to do virtual and make it compelling and make it more interesting. We are tracking cost per dollar or dollars per hour of training delivered. You can imagine how, we pay actually for people to fly to class and stay in hotels. You can imagine what virtual learning is doing for that and then the ultimate measures, which we're struggling with and all learning organizations do. We are doing some interesting work here trying to show the effect of learning on performance of the organization. That's what we're all about is trying to make our organizations better and that doesn't really change in virtual world or that's not about the tools, that's about outcomes. So, we're making sure the new tools are working as well as the old ones or better. We're harvesting the savings we are getting from that and the department of defense has some tough budget times lately. So that's been really important and then we have to get back to the same things about how to measure outcomes for the organization at large and we haven't cracked that nut yet. So don't ask me what measures we're using. We're working hard on that.

Jackie: Excellent. So if you were to say these are the next steps that are really important to move forward, really utilizing what we see as the benefits that have come out of a very difficult time, what do you think are the key steps to take?

Jim: For learning and at DAU particularly, we've actually changed the way we think about DAU. We're talking about DAU now as a platform rather than a schoolhouse. Schoolhouse does give the right image, right? It's amazing that here we are today and we bring 28 students into the class, you sit them at their desks and stand in the front of the room and lecture. That's sort of the model we've all been using still to a platform idea where our job is to make connections and connect the people who know stuff to the people who need to know this stuff and building the user experience to make it frictionless and to make it engaging is a big part of that. So if this is going to work, the big step is going to make it easy to find what I need and make it what I find powerful, efficient, as short as possible that I can get at my desk, so

that user experience part is really critical to the move forward and learning. Learning has always been optional, right? Even if you make it required, whether people really do it or not as optional, whether they really pay attention. So, it's put a new emphasis on what we should have been doing all along in my view, which is making sure that it really meets the user's needs in the best possible way. Then for organizations, the virtual world has got tremendous power, that's going to be a competitive advantage whether you're a learning group or a bigger organization. If you can be a hundred percent distributed, you can now hire people from anywhere that increases your talent pool whenever you have to fill a particular job, that's an advantage to you as a firm, you're no longer limited to who's in the Rosslyn area for a particular job that's in Rosslyn, you can hire from all over the country. If you can deal with the time zone problems all over the world, huge advantage. You have happier employees, which is one of the best possible advantages. They can work their lives a lot better if you're distributed, you're obviously going to save money in facilities and all the things that go with having offices. The thing is that there's something lost in not meeting in person. So, organizations that can live in virtual world and capture some of the things lost in physical space are really going to have an advantage and learning can really lead the way there by example, by looking for best practices and tools, and give organizations an advantage. So for learning, we got to make the experience easy and fast and intuitive, so that people will choose it even if it's not required, and for organizations make distributed work great will really be an advantage going forward.

Jackie: That is great. You have painted a very vivid picture for us Jim of this distributed work from everywhere model where you have got a whole universe of professionals with different backgrounds and different experiences, connected by this platform as you describe it for DAU. That provides not only learning, but it sounds like sort of an enrichment experience, that experience focus that you keep emphasizing I think is really important. So as we come to the end of the conversation, I would love for you to share a little bit thoughts on how long does all of this take. Like how ambitious, how realistic do leaders need to be as they sort of embark on this, taking advantage of this time, but also building something that is really sustainable for the long run.

Jim: There is a whole spectrum of answers, one part of the answer is 'right away,' and the other part of the answer is 'never.' Right away meaning, we need to be learning new things and are learning new things every day about how to deliver things better. Every learning asset that's shrunk from eight hours of classroom down to two hours of virtual, plus three hours of async, and that is a win. We are doing those things every day. The platform will take longer, it takes a long time to redesign your website and integrate in LXP and do all those things. You are looking for us in the year to two-year frame to make that happen. But when I say never it sounds cliché, but the technology and the world keep moving the cheese. No matter what we do we are going to have to do more to keep up with the pace of this, but it is advantage for our firms, and in my case, it is advantage for the Department of Defense and therefore the war fighter and the country. So we are really motivated to be as powerful as we can be to give the country that advantage and all firms are going to need and want to do the same thing.

Jackie: Totally agree. Well said. Fantastic. Thank you so much. Thank you for joining us today. I really appreciate you making the time to dive into this topic. We've peaked a lot of folks' interest, and those for those of you out there who've tuned in today, we hope you enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about this approach that DAU is taking and that Jim Woolsey is leading to create sort of this optional environment that promotes a stronger culture and a better experience for learning in organizations and government. So please feel free to use our event hashtags, #MovingTheNeedle and

#DeloitteLearningSeries on LinkedIn and Twitter, to follow along and stay connected. We look forward to everyone that is tuning in to join us on our next webinar which will be in early 2021. Keep an eye out for registration details online. Thank you all and have a great day.