



USER FRIENDLY

Implementing a positive change

Hosts: Hanish Patel, User Friendly host and digital transformation leader, Deloitte Consulting LLP
Julia Silva, Diversity Program Specialist at Google
Sharon Harris, VP of Alliance Relationships for Google Marketing Platform at Deloitte

I'm Hanish Patel and this is "User Friendly," the show where we explore emerging trends in Tech, Media, and Telecom and how they impact business, operations, and the world around you.

Today we are discussing "Inclusion in a Workplace," specifically in tech companies and what individuals and businesses are doing to implement a positive change.

So, joining me again for part 2 of "Inclusion in a Workplace" is "Julia Silva, Diversity Program Specialist at Google" and "Sharon Harris, VP of Alliance Relationships for Google Marketing Platform at Deloitte."

Julia, Sharon, welcome back to the show.

Sharon Harris: Thanks for having us.

Julia Silva: Thank you.

Hanish Patel: One of the things I want to talk about is around experience and I'm about to throw in a technical term and I know we go against that in User Friendly, but "Intersectionality." And we hear a lot of that, right?

Sharon Harris: Yes.

Hanish Patel: I would love for you guys to help our listeners understand what that really means (0:1:00) and how that's talking about the experiences of individuals and so forth?

Sharon Harris: Certainly, "Intersectionality" is actually one of my favorite terms. The philosophy behind Intersectionality was developed by Dr. Kimberly Crenshaw at Columbia University and it really speaks to the idea that we are not a single identity. She started her research looking at the role of African-American women in society meaning, "Well, I'm a woman, I'm a black woman, my experience in the universe is very different, and particularly my experiences at work are different, but I'm not mutually excluding anything. I'm both things at the same time," and what Intersectionality does and particularly today, it's really critical because as we think about identity and how identity is constructed.

Whether it's when Julia talks about being Brazilian and Portuguese, where someone can say I'm African-American and I'm Latina, we are a combined set of experiences, we are the experiences of our gender (0:2:00), of our race, of our religion, of our ethnic beliefs, and all of those things come together, so when we think about how groups experience the workplace, how they experience the world you have to factor that in, no one is just one single thing. And I think what Intersectionality does is really highlight how we pursue certain issues.

Julia Silva: Yes, I mean you nailed it. I was only going to add this: it's the concept of we have multi-identity right, we have multiple identities that we can sort, like, self-identify as, and those different lanes can impact, like, your experience but also how you're perceived by others. And I think a little bit of, like, unconscious bias comes up as well, right?

So there is, these biases that we have to be mindful of and I think in Diversity and Inclusion where it's specifically Intersectionality is going to be huge and it's already something that we're thinking through, at least in the work that I do, is how can we make sure that when we're doing let's say a program for women (0:3:00), we're being very mindful of the experiences of women of color. And then within that the differences between a Black Woman, a Latina Woman, an Asian Woman, Indigenous Women,

we all have our own lived experiences and we have to be aware that they don't match and that we need to continue to develop programs to kind of build on those communities so that it's not all a women's issue. We need to look at the Intersectionality there as well to really make progress moving forward.

Hanish Patel: So just thinking about what you both said there, right, I mean obviously conscious bias has no space in the workplace wherever you are, right, and you touched upon unconscious bias, right, and we're all learning. We continue to learn how about ourselves and our own unconscious bias, but when do we get to the stage where we can truly be our authentic self at work, and I know that's somewhat of a philosophical question, but I say that because all organizations are saying "bring your authentic self."

Julia Silva: Yes.

Hanish Patel: (0:4:00) But with these biases, even the unconscious ones, it can be difficult to then still be successful . . .

Sharon Harris: That is a tough one, Hanish.

Julia Silva: That is a tough one.

Sharon Harris: That's a really tough one because I think it's a work in progress because we, when we think about unconscious bias and it's important for people to understand, everyone has unconscious bias. And if we didn't we wouldn't survive, we make decisions on autopilot every day, thousands of decisions, and they are driven by unconscious bias. And I think where we have to be really mindful is, there is a part of that that's important where we saw people, there are certain instincts that you have for a reason, but then there are others that you have to often be very mindful of them.

When it comes to bringing your "authentic self to work," I think it always goes back to you have to be true to who you are, but you also have to be respectful of the environments that you're in, because often I think people understood "be my authentic self" means doing whatever I want to do. That is not actually what it means, it really does (0:5:00) mean that you are respectful and you're trying to create a



community where everyone is empowered, everyone has a voice, and everyone feels respected.

So, in bringing your authentic self to work you have to be mindful of other people because you're not doing this in isolation. But you should be comfortable in your own skin to share, to experience other people and be open to having those conversations because it is something that I always say "Diversity and Inclusion" actually begins at home. It's like "what are your lived experiences, who are your friends, what kind of neighborhoods do you live in and where do you go for dinner? Do you experience the broader world?" Because there are many people who don't for a variety of reasons namely, it's just comfortable, but when you come into the workplace and you're encountering people with different backgrounds, different interests, you now have to open yourself up. And I always challenge people to "take some of what you are doing at work and bring it home," because until you start to live that authenticity (0:6:00), it's not truly genuine. And it becomes really harder day in and day out, so I really try to bring those two things together.

Julia Silva: Yes, I love what you mentioned about kind of bringing it home and I think it's critical to think of it not just in the workplace, but also in your own personal life. And me, with the work that I do, it blends, it just has to, my profession and my personal, all is a mix, and I always say that there is a lot of almost there's this, like, emotional labor in the work that we do because I have so much empathy also. And I feel so passionate about making whatever influence that I can to help, again, empower someone or just bring mindfulness and awareness. So, the fact that this is going on because sometimes, again, it just blindfolds, people just don't want to look outside of the four walls and realize, like, "oh maybe I can make small adjustments to the way that I live, I can then kind of further the conversation." And I do think with that authentic self, as I always had a really hard time with that. I have a pretty big personality and when I was younger I was always told to (0:7:00) kind of tone it down, be more humble, just, like, "don't shine too bright." And so it stuck with me because I never felt that I could fully be myself and be expressive. I mean, look at me, I talk with my hands, I just, this is

how I am, until I went to Google. And honestly it's such a testament to the culture that they've been able to develop, because I feel that I show up every day at work and I'm my true self. I have people that I'm surrounded by that respect me, I think "respect is supercritical," and that respectful work that we do as an organization and that culture it's really, really powerful. And it's something that a lot of organizations should just do a quick check and say, like, "what kind of culture do we have, and what do we really want to build on" because you can still course-correct, right?

Sharon Harris: Yes, absolutely.

Julia Silva: You can still make adjustments and, again, I just think it's mindfulness, of being aware of the fact (0:8:00) that this is something we need to work on and just go and start making some change.

Hanish Patel: Let's talk about making some change and there are two very successful individuals sitting right in front of me. What would be your guidance that you'd give to someone who is starting off earlier on in their career. And I anchor on what you said earlier about "don't shine too bright," right, what would you both impart? I told you that they get tougher, didn't I?

Sharon Harris: It will get tougher as they go. You know for someone starting out in their career today, I think the most important thing is "Know What Your Value Is" because it can't be taken away from you, but you have to know what it is. You don't want it defined by someone else, and it speaks volumes. And I have watched, there's a lot of young people in our practice who are just getting started, and they're nervous and they're anxious, and they want to impress someone, and I always sit them down and I say let's go through what is that that you bring to this role. Because it's important that you understand your value, and once you do, it will help you once give voice (0:09:00) to what your skills and accomplishments are in a way that's authentic to you. Not everyone is a bragger; some people love to boast and love to brag. Other people don't, but you can find ways to express your accomplishments, the skills you bring to the table, and your personality.

I loved when you talked about "don't shine too bright." I'm a Southerner and southern women are somewhat genteel, but also a little bit "Chatty-Cathy," and I'm always the one that like, okay Sharon, you can stop talking now and I was, like, when I'm done I will. But you got to find a way to blend who you really are and where you come from in those experiences and make them work for you. You know, my "Chatty Cathy" behavior helps make friends with everyone. They are like, how do you know everyone here? And I was like because I talk to them all, you find your particular comfort zone, that sweet spot for you that makes you who you are and makes you comfortable. You're happy, but you're open (0:10:00) to all those new experiences, and I think that's really important.

I think also for people who are starting that in the workplace today, and we touched upon this, it's important to have mentors and sponsors, and it's important to understand the difference between the two. Because mentorship is really about people who help guide you, who provide coaching, who give you that sort of extra lens around here's what this workplace involves, here are the requirements, because you still have to perform.

Sponsors are people who are willing to put their necks on the line to say yes, this person should be on that project; this is a person we should consider for promotion; this is a person that I want to see in the spotlight. And it's important as you begin your career, you start to cultivate people and it's one thing that I always stress to people "don't look for mentors and sponsors that just look like you." Look for mentors and sponsors from all walks of your business, you know (0:11:00), people who are junior to you, people who are senior to you, but they don't have to look like you. But they do have to be open to who you are, and they have to be open to helping you. And sometimes you might go through a couple until you find the right fit but that's a really critical component as you're beginning your career.

Hanish Patel: Brilliant.

Julia Silva: I want to expand on what you said. I have the same advice. It's self-promote and "Know Your Value," "Control Your Narrative," and how you want to be perceived by others. And also know that those accomplishments, they don't necessarily speak for themselves.

Right, so this is a muscle, this is a skill that we need to build on so that it really sticks, and I did want to mention something because you said not everyone is a bragger. Well, here is a thing, it's not bragging if it's based on facts.

Sharon Harris: True.

Julia Silva: So, I always say that, right, because there is that social perception, it's like "oh if I'm talking about it myself, I'm coming off as bragging." Well, if you're sharing factual information it's not really bragging.

Sharon Harris: No, it's not. No, you always have to have the receipts.

Julia Silva: Exactly, exactly, and so my advice is, don't shy away from it (0:12:00). I never really liked to talk about my success until recently, because again there was that kind of stigma and that idea of "oh, I don't want to be bragging." But I do also think that another piece of advice that I'm thinking back to when I started working is that whatever your first job is out of college, it doesn't mean that that's what you are doing forever. It is a step to the next opportunity and just being open to what those opportunities can be is really critical. And kind of not just zoning in on one thing, but being open to, like, trying different things, trying different skills, trying different hobbies, different passion areas. That's where you're going to find your fit. When I first started, I started working in advertising, my first job was in marketing, and now I work in "Diversity and Inclusion" work. Like, it's a very different line of work that I do now. It's all related and it's all gotten me to where I need to be, and so take everything kind of as it is and don't stress too much (0:13:00). Because there is this idea of like "Oh my gosh, my first job it needs to be amazing, it needs to be perfect, I need to make sure I'm at the right company." It's okay, it will all work itself out. Again, it's just opening doors for you in the future.

Sharon Harris: Yes, no experience is ever wasted. None.

Julia Silva: Exactly.

Sharon Harris: None, none, and it's important, your career is a journey and there are going to be twists and turns, cliffs, oceans, hurricanes,

tornadoes. It's a journey but no experience is ever wasted, and I wouldn't trade . . . I've had numbers of different jobs, different industries, just interesting things in my life. But I wouldn't trade it for anything because it helps to make you who you are and it's important that you have different perspectives on the world.

Hanish Patel: Well, I appreciate both of you sharing that, and if I'm anchoring on something that both of you said literally in your opening statements about "Knowing Your Value," right, and let's think about Value for a second. Because if you're in the organization, your company is thinking about the Value that you will bring in and we're here, we're talking about (0:14:00) "Diversity and Inclusion." So, I'd love to kind of stitch that together in terms of and, Julia, you touched upon some of the impact that the boards that are much more diverse, much more inclusive, the business results, and the value that they bring. So, let's spend a moment and talk a bit about just the true, true benefits of Diversity and Inclusion and the business value that it brings, and it will be great if you got some examples around that, for sure.

Julia Silva: Yes, absolutely. So there is a great example of that I share often, about how just not having a Diverse Perspective at the table led to not creating the best product. So, at the beginning [of] YouTube(?) there was an article actually in the *New York Times* that talks about this instance. The developing team, they were working on the video uploads, and there was about a 10 percent error rate and they were thinking, "oh what's happening, what's going on?" The videos were being uploaded upside down. What they realized is everyone on the developer team was right-handed, so when you have a left-handed person who's filming a video, it's going to come upside down. That's a (0:15:00) perfect example of just not having a Diverse Perspective at that table. There could have resulted in no errors from the beginning. But it's showcasing how having a diverse group is so critical for you to, again, create better products for the users that you're servicing. And that can be diversity and experiences and cultures and race, sexual orientation, all of this matters. Because again, as Google is a global organization, we want to continue to innovate. The only way we're going to be able to innovate and continue to develop these phenomenal products that really are meant to

make lives easier, to make people's lives more efficient, to create access to education and knowledge and just information. How are we going to continue to build on that if we don't have the diverse perspectives at the table. And so, that's really something that we talk about a lot internally, is we just want to make sure (0:16:00) we're building great products. And so let's make sure we have everyone at the table that will be impacted. We actually have a team that's called, that focuses on product inclusion. They've developed a set of guidelines on how organizations can develop more inclusive products. And that can be for people with disabilities, you have to make sure that you are creating products that are going to be used for everyone, by everyone. So, yes, I think that's just a perfect example of, just again, not having that initial diverse perspective, you kind of miss out on opportunities.

Hanish Patel: Fantastic, so when I think about that, what's next for "Diversity and Inclusion" in the workplace? I mean, how can we, all of us as individuals, continue to grow and, as companies how we grow, and what does that mean within the tech industry that we're in?

Julia Silva: So, I personally, I thought about this, and I think it's really important to have your short-term goals. But really looking at the long-term strategy and something that we've (0:17:00) talked about recently on my team is how are we supporting those individuals and those leaders 10, 15 years from now? Because there is only so big of a talent pool right now in the sense that we're all these tech companies, everyone's trying to solve this problem, right? It's Diversity and Inclusion is the hot topic, so we're all trying to kind of go after the same tech talent to make sure that we are again representative of the communities that we are servicing. But that is a limited pool, so let's take a step back. Let's see, well, why is it that there is a limited pool in terms of computer science education? And let's look at the schools. Are there equitable computer science opportunities for kids across all schools? Right now, not necessarily, and there is a big program at Google where we're actually working with students so that we can encourage students from diverse backgrounds who want to pursue a career in computer science. But you have to give them the access to that (0:18:00). And so I think long term, it's like we need to look

from the beginning, make sure that we are supporting those future technologists, providing the opportunity for education for girls. There is a stigma, still, on, like, becoming an engineer, like, how do we change that stigma? We launched "Made with Code" in 2014, which is focusing on showing girls how coding can be fun, it can be creative, you can build amazing products. Because we know that we want to support those girls from the youngest age, so that they are future technologists that we can then bring to the table.

So, I do think short-term goals are really important and we want to continue to build on this work. But for true, true impact, there has to be that longer-term strategy, and I think as an industry we need to look at this collectively. Because we don't want it to be one tech company is kind of poaching from the other or pulling talent from the other, because we're trying to fix our problem. It's like, no, how as an industry are we going to fix this problem? So that's just one of the things I know (0:19:00). At least Google is really working hard toward providing those opportunities and providing funding toward, like, CS Education and it's really, it's phenomenal to see, and I think that it will have huge impacts five, ten years from now.

Sharon Harris: You know, when I think about what comes next, I have the great privilege of working with Google, and I see all of the innovation. I see the efforts that they're making around Diversity and Inclusion, and being at Deloitte, it's a topic that I'm incredibly passionate about. And when I think about

what comes next, I think it's one continued commitment on this journey, because it is a journey, and it's about how we create those inclusive cultures? How we foster inclusion through everything we do, all of our consulting teams, the pods, the products that we build, the conferences that we attend. But I think also a part of what comes next is really that next step, where we talk about how do we help people (0:20:00) take all of these great ideas and principles home, home to their children, to the future generations, and it starts very young.

It starts when kids are one or two years old. What are the images that we're showing to them, how are we teaching them to interact with other children who may not look like them or who have disabilities or are visually impaired? Are we building the next generations up, so that we can start to really have true solutions and have environments that are truly inclusive from the beginning? Where it's just an "understood." That's really what comes next for me.

Julia Silva: I wanted to mention one more thing as you were talking about, like, the support at Deloitte. I think what's also really important next is just accountability from leaders across organizations. If we're really going to have an impact that an organization wanting to make change in "Diversity and Inclusion," it has to come from the top down. There are so many grassroots efforts, of course (0:21:00), but I noticed the shift when, like, our executive team said this is business-critical, we need to really focus on this. We have teams dedicated to

this, we have so many resources. And as soon as there was that kind of "leadership stake in it, and that accountability," there was a shift in the environment and how people see this topic. And now it's just like full steam ahead. So I think that accountability is something that companies, if you're looking to kind of address this now, is to hold your leaders accountable, hold your hiring managers accountable, the people that are influencing who the talent pool is. Accountability is going to be critical.

Sharon Harris:

I couldn't agree more. You have to have a plan for success, you have to have that accountability, and the metrics behind it. Because that's what's really going to move the needle.

Hanish Patel: With that I absolutely want to thank both of you Julia, Sharon. Thank you for joining me today on such an important topic and one that everyone needs to have on their radar. And not just because (0:22:00) it's hot, it's now, but it's, that's the way we should be and the way that we work. So, thank you ever so much and until next time, happy listening.

Sharon Harris: Thank you.

Julia Silva: Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Thanks for listening to "User Friendly." To subscribe or to listen to more episodes, search for Deloitte User Friendly in your favorite pod-catcher or find us online at userfriendly.deloitte.com.

The opinions expressed by guests on this podcast belong to them, and do not necessarily reflect those of Deloitte (0:22:33).

This podcast contains general information only and Deloitte is not, by means of this podcast, rendering accounting, business, financial, investment, legal, tax, or other professional advice or services. This podcast is not a substitute for such professional advice or services, nor should it be used as a basis for any decision or action that may affect your business. Before making any decision or taking any action that may affect your business, you should consult a qualified professional advisor. Deloitte shall not be responsible for any loss sustained by any person who relies on this podcast.

About Deloitte

Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee ("DTTL"), its network of member firms, and their related entities. DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL (also referred to as "Deloitte Global") does not provide services to clients. In the United States, Deloitte refers to one or more of the US member firms of DTTL, their related entities that operate using the "Deloitte" name in the United States, and their respective affiliates. Certain services may not be available to attest clients under the rules and regulations of public accounting. Please see www.deloitte.com/about to learn more about our global network of member firms.