



BUILT FOR CHANGE: THE FUTURE OF WORK

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

0:00

MUS

Dom Price: Uh let's, let's be honest. It's a made-up job.

Elise: This is Dom Price. He's the resident "Work Futurist" at software company Atlassian.

Josh: And if you're raising your eyebrows right now, asking yourself, "What exactly is a Work Futurist" well, Dom's not surprised.

Dom Price: That's completely made up. Right? But it's a made-up job that's become very important.

Elise: Dom started his career at Atlassian almost a decade ago, with a pretty run-of-the-mill title: program manager. His job was to help solve problems as they came up...

Dom Price: When I started, I was like, this is a great job because I don't have to do anything. Teams are just functional and effective and everyone gets on and we collaborate.

Josh: But there weren't that many short-term problems to solve... And not having anything to do wasn't a great recipe for keeping Dom engaged in his job. So Dom had a chat with his boss.

Dom Price: My boss sat me down and said you are thinking about firefighting. You're thinking about waiting for things to go wrong and fixing them. Your job is to fire proof.

MUS OUT

Elise: The idea of looking ahead, anticipating problems that

01:00

Elise: were just peeking over the horizon to make the day-to-day work experience of his colleagues better? That lit him up.

Dom Price: It involves saying, how do we think about the future of work? So what it might look like in 5, 10, 15 years, so that we can make decisions today to directionally go there. That tickles me, that gets me excited, gets me out of bed every morning, wanting to improve how teams work.

MUS

Josh: So Dom started diving deep. He gave presentations about the problems he saw coming into focus— the challenges of remote work, new technologies that could help teams collaborate from anywhere and how to prepare for them... this was ALL before the pandemic by the way...

Elise: And his supervisors offered him an opportunity.

Dom Price: I'll be deady honest with you. It was an experiment.

Josh: They asked Dom if he'd consider a new full-time position putting what he'd been preaching into practice: making the future of



work a reality. But there was a catch. The job... didn't exist yet.

Dom Price: There's no role. There's no headcount. And by the way, if you do it and it fails, there's no job for you.

Elise: But that didn't faze Dom.

Dom Price: We're not performing heart surgery. No, one's gonna

02:00

Dom Price: die. Let's experiment. If I'm decent, there'll be a job for me, but if I don't try this, maybe I'll never know.

MUS OUT

THEME IN

Josh: Spoiler alert: the experiment worked! And that folks, is how Dom started shaping the future of all the teams around him.

Dom Price: If all we do is solve the problems people give us, that's not long-term success. It was just this moment of going "huh." It has made us successful, but it won't in the future.

Elise: And as the world of work continues to shift dramatically under our feet – Dom's vision for the future of work may be more important than ever before.

BEAT

Elise: I'm Elise Hu

Josh: And I'm Josh Klein

Elise: And this is Built for Change, a podcast from Accenture.

Josh: Elise, I feel like I've always primarily worked made-up jobs.

Elise: Why is that? How do you mean?

Josh: I always felt like there's gotta be something better than this and I'm gonna make it up and try it out. And sometimes it works.

Elise: Yep. Because the world

03:00

Elise: of work is shifting and has been shifting so quickly that you've gotta kind of experiment to keep up.

Josh: Yeah, I mean, we're having to throw away the old ways of working and companies are having to do it too, because it's what employees are demanding.

Elise: Yeah. Companies were already starting to really take employee wellbeing seriously. But then the great reshuffle happened and made those decisions about how we work even more top priority.

Josh: And it can be hard for leaders to keep up with those changes, not to mention the fact that then they have to turn around and like model all of that to their employees.

Elise: Right. So in this episode, we'll talk to leaders who are shaking up the status quo and embracing the future of work from the top down. They're fostering a sense of collaboration, trust and shared purpose to create work environments that actually elevate employees — not to mention businesses — to their full potential.

THEME OUT

MUS IN

Christie Smith: We're not just in a technology revolution. We are in a transformational reinvention of the way work gets done and where businesses need to be.

04:00

Elise: This is Christie Smith. She's the global



lead of Talent & Organization and Human Potential at Accenture. It's her job to keep her eyes trained ahead— on how the nature of work is changing, and what business leaders can do to keep employees engaged and secure. Which makes sense, because Christie actually started her career with a degree in Social Work.

Christie Smith: I remember when I was getting my doctoral degree and I was nearly finished with my dissertation and my advisor was telling me, you know, we're done. You're good. And about two weeks later, she came back to me and said, oh, we'd like you to rewrite this chapter... Now you can imagine I was a puddle on the floor.

Elise: Christie called up her sister for advice, and she said, "Tough luck! That's just the way PhD programs work." Christie re-wrote that chapter and finished her dissertation, but she stepped away thinking that this "norm" of making last-minute changes at the 11th hour, could be reimagined.

Christie Smith: While that's a dramatic personal story, I think it

05:00

Christie Smith: is exactly what is happening with CEOs. Is that this is the way I grew up and this is just the way we do it. And oh, by the way, I've been hugely successful with that.

MUS OUT

Christie Smith: Most CEOs grew up in a world where you checked your humanity at the door and you came in and ran through your list of what you had to get done during the day. Well, the definition of success has changed for a lot of employees.

MUS

Elise: Success no longer means working 16-hour days, never taking a vacation, and putting work before family time. Workers want jobs they

feel support their wellbeing. But it's taken a while for CEOs to catch up.

Christie Smith: We found that only 26% of CEOs are thinking differently when it comes to managing their people and organizations. And that's a very low number in my estimation.

Elise: But the solution? It's actually pretty simple.

Christie Smith: I think that leaders are not being curious enough about other

06:00

Christie Smith: ways of working. They're still resisting what I think is this tsunami that's hitting them.

Elise: Be curious. Face the tsunami head on, and dive under the waves. All of that starts with meeting workers where they're at, to reimagine the future of the company together.

Christie Smith: I give this advice to every CEO that I work with is, walk the halls, like do it spontaneously. And walking the halls could be physically walking the halls or virtually walking the halls. But it is critically important to understand what matters to your employees.

Elise: The simple act of listening to employee experience is key— maybe the new work-from-home plan isn't clear enough and that's causing frustration, or an employee is feeling stuck and bored in their current position...

Christie Smith: Leaders are, and CEOs in particular are looking at how do they build a culture of belonging. How do they lead with trust, empathy, transparency, and compassion

07:00

Christie Smith: in order to nurture a culture where their insides match their outsides.

MUS OUT



Elise: When employees feel that their values match the values of their company, Christie says that leads to a shared sense of purpose.

Christie Smith: Purpose is that place where I feel connected, valued, and heard by my organization. And that the actions that we're taking in the world is consistent to what we say our values are.

Elise: Christie says that this focus on connecting personal purpose with workplace purpose, can even extend to the hiring process — which, for a long time, focused on things like your degree or technical skills.

MUS

Christie: We've helped companies shift that interview to be: Tell us who you are, what it matters to you. What, what is your personal purpose? How do you define what thriving looks like for you in the workplace? That's a huge shift.

Elise: That shift means that you might hire someone based

08:00

Elise: solely on what really motivates them to grow their skillset, and perform at their best. Maybe their experiences working at a make-up counter show how much they love to help people out, and lead to fantastic client management skills. And that could count for a lot more than where they went to school.

Christie Smith: Sourcing talent has changed dramatically. We're really looking at matching skills to the work that we need to deliver for our clients. And those skills can be resident in a person who has a four-year degree or a master's degree or someone who has a two year degree or frankly, a high school degree only.

Elise: When employees see that their skillsets are seen and valued, that contributes to their overall wellbeing and helps them to thrive in their job. Which is great news for them, and for their

company.

Christie: I think that purpose is individual, but from an enterprise standpoint, you find the purpose in the behaviors, relationships and actions of every leader.

09:00

MUS OUT

Elise: Leaders shouldn't just encourage these values, they should model them as well.

Christie: I think CEOs and the C-suite are really being more open and transparent in terms of their own needs.

Elise: That transparency reinforces trust.

Christie: We often forget that our C-suite executives are the stewards of their organizations, but they too are humans so they have to take care of their own wellbeing.

Elise: For example, if leaders prioritize their own wellbeing by setting boundaries around their working hours, it'll be easier for employees to take care of themselves, too.

MUS

Christie: Very simple example: when a leader says that they're going on vacation and they're not going to be disturbed, but who really turn everything off and take vacation. And then, you know, they come back refreshed and they talk about that. That is such a massive shift.

10:00

Elise: We're all navigating this new world of work together. But CEOs and top-level leaders need to light the way forward, by leading with empathy to create a work environment where all employees can feel safe to voice their opinions, connect to their purpose, and thrive.



Christie: What leaders are now doing is meeting their employees where they are rather than the equation that has been in place for decades, that employees have to meet the organization where it is. We have such an obligation and an opportunity with the privilege that we have to change the world for the better for everyone.

MUS OUT

Josh: There really is a tsunami of change going on in the working world right now. If you dive in and get into it and actually get involved, then there's huge potential. It can be enormously positive, but it's also a little scary.

Elise: Well, either way, we're all caught up in it, right? The collective experiences of the past few years have prompted so much change. Now it seems like we're bringing more of our authentic selves to work.

Josh: And that's an opportunity.

11:00

Josh: Sometimes big shakeups like this can really push us to start moving in a new direction.

Elise: True. But remember you can't just make a change all willy-nilly.

Josh: Mm-hmm?

Elise: You've also really gotta listen to your employees. So next we'll check back in to find out how Atlassian connects their teams through curiosity, and collaboration.

MUS

Dom Price: There's an element of curiosity I believe is in every human. And I think at some point in our childhood we get it trained out of us.

Elise: That's Dom Price again – Atlassian's resident Work Futurist.

Dom Price: We lose curiosity and we lose play,

both of which I think are vital to thriving business.

Elise: A lot of what Dom does as a Work Futurist, is tap into his curiosity around how the teams he manages are working together, even as the world of work continues to shift. And that's particularly important at Atlassian, because they're a software company that creates collaboration tools for their clients.

MUS OUT

Dom Price: Anything that a team needs to be effective in how they work together. That's what we do. Through actually giving them tools that enable them to be more productive

12:00

Dom Price: as a team.

MUS

Elise: Most of those clients are managing employees who work at a desk in an office, or remotely from their computers. For example, one of Dom's clients is a law firm. In the past, they were operating in a pretty traditional way. If someone needed an NDA signed, they'd walk up to their colleagues' desk and ask them to send an email to get the ball rolling. And maybe that colleague would do that task right then and there... or maybe they'd put it aside and forget about it. And that was just one of all kinds of little daily tasks that had to get done at some point, to keep the business running.

Dom Price: They had no way of tracking the work. They had no way of scaling up or down. They had no way of sharing lessons learned. We've all had to work where we're like, I just threw something over the fence. I've no idea when it's coming back.

Elise: Now, the law firm can track tasks like this through software on a computer or phone.

Dom Price: Now I can hold you accountable and



you can hold me accountable. We've got transparency in how we work.

MUS OUT

Elise: It's also part of Dom's job to cultivate that culture of collaboration and curiosity inside of Atlassian itself.

13:00

Elise: And that got pretty tricky during the pandemic.

MUS

Dom Price: I think our third biggest office before the pandemic was home.

Elise: Before the pandemic the company was experimenting with work-from-home options. When the pandemic hit, and remote work suddenly became the new norm, Dom had to figure out how to keep their collaborative office culture intact, with workers now scattered all over the globe.

Dom Price: In typical Atlassian fashion, we announced it before we had an execution plan. It's fine.

Elise: After some trial and error, they ended up creating a "work from anywhere" policy. That meant employees could work from anywhere, at any time. So Dom could be working in Australia at 5AM, while a co-worker was logging on from Alaska at 10PM. And you might think that would make working as a team MORE complicated. And it did require some finagling... but Dom discovered something pretty incredible in the process.

Dom Price: Here's the thing that really blew my mind. I heard from people I'd never heard from before.

Elise: Back when his teams had been working all together in the office, they'd have these team workshops where Dom would stand at a

14:00

Elise: whiteboard and steer a conversation around, say, a piece of software the team was developing. And of course, everyone would be in the room at the same time. But that wasn't possible anymore.

Dom Price: I'm literally going through all these schedules, trying to work out what's the time that I can get all these locations. And I'm like, it doesn't exist. There is not a time zone that exists that all these people can be on.

Elise: So, he decided to hold an asynchronous workshop. He worked with his team to create a one-sheet with content for the workshop and a proposed schedule. They used whiteboarding software to leave feedback and ideas over a 36-hour period, so everyone across every time zone could participate.

Dom Price: Here's how I want you to put ideas down and really, really diverge, right? Like go wild. Right? You get a prize for the craziest ideas. We did that. We voted and fed back. By the end of the week, we had an action plan for our top voted ideas. And we'd never been online at the same time.

Elise: Before, when these workshops were in-person, Dom would ask for feedback as he stood at the front of the room, whiteboard marker in-hand. But he'd often hear from the same people—

15:00

Elise: the loudest voices.

Elise: Now that everyone was remote and working on their own schedules, they had the confidence and space to speak up – with their wildest ideas – when they never had before.

Dom Price: In this environment they had a chance to read, to digest, to think, to ponder and then respond in a wonderfully concise and focused fashion. And I'm reading this stuff going, that idea is amazing. Like why have they not



said that before? And then I'm like, ah, the environment changed.

Elise: The environment changed, but in a way where Dom's colleagues helped to shape the change. Based on their availability and their ideas. They felt like their experience and their time were valued.

MUS OUT

Elise: It all leads back to the same idea: listening to employees and their individual experiences at all levels.

Dom Price: How do we invest in our people to help them to be the best for themselves, not just today, but tomorrow.

Elise: For Dom, that includes proactively supporting mental health.

Dom Price: If this thing's impacting how you turn up for work, is there anything I can

16:00

Dom Price: do to help? Is there any support I can give you?

MUS

Elise: Recently, one of Dom's team leaders came to him to say that a team member wasn't pulling their weight. Missing meetings, not delivering work on time. To the point where leadership was considering letting the employee go... But Dom was skeptical. Until recently, this person had been really engaged, delivering amazing work.

Dom Price: And so I was like, look, have you asked them and they were like, no.

Elise: So... they did what Dom suggested and actually talked to the team member about what was going on.

Dom Price: They're like, look, I'm going through

a really messy divorce right now. There's kids involved and it's quite volatile. So I will get a moment's notice that I've got the kids. And when I have, I can't turn up to meetings, so I don't turn up to them.

Elise: They came up with a plan: the team member would communicate about when they were waiting to hear about picking up their kids. And they wouldn't have to attend meetings during that time.

Dom Price: And so suddenly they're like, oh my God, I dunno what you did to him but he's becoming like an absolute multiplier. Like he's amazing now. And what we find is when you have those crucial conversations, you can find a balance for people where

17:00

Dom Price: everyone gets to be effective.

Elise: Because his company values curiosity about its employees and their personal experiences, Dom's been able to think one step ahead. Putting workers first. They're creating a workplace that's built to last.

Dom Price: How do I take the people I've got and help them to thrive? Let's not tell them how to thrive— ask them. What's the best environment for you to thrive? It sounds the same. It's a fundamentally different approach.

MUS OUT

Josh: Atlassian basically jumped into all of this, gave it a shot, and then they listened to employees about what worked.

Elise: Yeah. Yeah. Well, listening to employees is really key. A lot of us have these employers who are totally outta touch.

Josh: Yes.

Elise: Like. I'm on the west coast, there was a boss on the east coast and she refused to adjust



times, so when she would say like, Hey, can I call you at 4:00 PM? I would say, you know, do you mean 1:00 PM Pacific?

Josh: [Laughs]

Elise: And she would just say no. Consider all time to be Eastern.

Josh: Yeah. It's a lack of consideration that just really resonates.

Elise: It leads to a real feeling of disconnect.

Josh: And that's the last thing that

18:00

Josh: leaders want, right? As we've been hearing, in order for employees to thrive, you gotta feel like your work connects with your skills, and your values and, and in a real way.

Elise: Yep. And we've talked a lot in this episode about strategies leaders can take to build that sense of purpose.

Josh: Yeah. And strategies are great... but you also have to have the tools to implement them.

Elise: Good point. So next we'll learn about a company that's created a tangible tool that leaders can use to help workers connect with their purpose, opening doors for their employees, by uncovering the skills that make them unique.

MUS

Sean Hinton: I had seen purpose completely wrong for my entire career.

Elise: That's Sean Hinton, founder and CEO of a startup called SkyHive Technologies. But before he was a tech CEO, Sean worked in a different industry.

Sean Hinton: I was really perfectly happy doing what I was doing in my past life. I was president

and CEO of the world's largest waterpark company.

Elise: But even though working in waterparks was enjoyable for Sean, it wasn't fulfilling.

Sean Hinton: Obviously

19:00

Sean Hinton: water slides are a lot of fun and bring families a lot of joy. But that wasn't necessarily my idea of impact.

MUS OUT

Elise: Sean realized he wanted his life's work to serve a purpose that would drive real positive social change.

Sean Hinton: Really what I was focused on was what is this contribution I can make that may improve people's lives.

Elise: Sean was a waterpark CEO, not a medical doctor who could lend his talents to saving lives on an operating table, or a scientist who could come up with new treatments for diseases. But he did know a lot about one thing.

MUS

Sean Hinton: I spent 10 years as a labor economist before becoming a CEO.

Elise: Sean had seen a shift over the last decade: there was a huge demand for labor in certain fields like healthcare and tech, but companies were still having trouble hiring workers. And that's because companies were trying to hire based on the wrong criteria. They were looking for workers with the quote-unquote right job titles, credentials and degrees. And that led to a kind of miscommunication— workers didn't see

20:00

Elise: the jobs they thought they were qualified



for, and so employers weren't filling roles fast enough.

Sean Hinton: The modern future of work and beyond is not going to be satisfied by these models. How do the skills that you've acquired in your work experience, life experience, and educational experience- in other words, your unique skill DNA- relate to the changing nature of work and your desired career pathways?

Elise: A person's "skill DNA" could include soft skills like... resourcefulness, being a people person or a great communicator. Skills that might come from life experience rather than past work experience. So Sean combined his unique experience as a labor economist with a whole lot of data and computing power, and he founded SkyHive. It's essentially a giant search engine that matches the needs of employers to the skills and experience of workers.

Sean Hinton: Anything that's telling us about shifts in a labor economy, anywhere in the world: patent applications, annual reports, job descriptions, compensation

21:00

Sean Hinton: data. We're amassing all of this information.

Elise: Once employers can see that full snapshot of the labor market; the software also acts as a tool that leaders can use to ensure that their employees' skills are seen and valued within their company. Because with that big picture in view, they can not only match workers with jobs, but show them in real time what skills they need to develop in order to advance on their career journey and fulfill their sense of purpose.

Sean Hinton: Think of us as a GPS. So we're not the vehicle that's going to take a person on a journey from A to B in terms of reskilling. What we are is the GPS that's going to ensure that the direction and path that they take is the most efficient possible, and gets them there as quickly as they can. And if something changes, there's

an accident or an economic shock, that SkyHive recalibrates the direction to ensure that everyone is staying on the same path as efficiently as possible.

MUS OUT

Elise: They

22:00

Elise: illuminate the way forward. Take for example the number of jobs opening up in clean energy.

Sean Hinton: A customer service worker or cashier actually has a pretty high skill proximity to solar installers... you know, basic organizational ability, communications ability. They're able to work as a team.

Elise: Once skills are matched to potential employees, the company works with their clients to come up with a plan for training them, like in this example, teaching people how to install an EV charging unit, or solar panels.

Sean Hinton: How do we actually take those folks and re-skill them at scale to prepare them not to have to leave and take on other jobs, but to actually have advanced careers within their own organizations they're with today.

MUS

Elise: Workers can also create their own individual skill profiles, to see what kind of jobs— either inside or outside their organization— they might be a fit for. And it turns out that people often undervalue their own skill sets.

Sean Hinton: Let's say that I, you know, have a 15 year career. I worked as a maitre'd

23:00

Sean Hinton: in a restaurant when I was in college. I was, I don't know, a truck driver for a couple of years. And this technology goes out



and brings me all the skills that relate to those job titles. And immediately I'm seeing skills I would've never have even imagined that I had, I do have them but I hadn't actually thought about it.

Elise: And on the employer side, this visibility into untapped skills— made possible by the software— can change the way that companies seek out and get potential employees into their hiring process.

Sean Hinton: For the first time in the world's history, companies will apply to people. People will not apply to companies. So I don't actually think this is an industry thing. I think this is an overall labor economy shift.

MUS OUT

Elise: Sean's company helps leaders to uncover new paths for current AND potential employees to feel confident and connected to their work— whether you're an immigrant who just moved to a new country with great experience but no US diploma, or someone who has a real knack for programming but has never gotten their foot in the door at

24:00

Elise: a big name company to prove it.

THEME

Sean Hinton: At least every week, I get to hear a story whether it's from, you know, the boroughs of New York and low-income communities and how our technology's supporting, to work that we're doing right now, currently with supporting Ukrainian refugees into employment in the United States. And really that's the fire that gave me my purpose. To hear those things keeps me focused and energized.

Elise: When it comes down to it, Sean was able to connect his purpose and unique skills to his work, creating a tool for companies to help their workforce do the same.

Sean Hinton: From a business perspective, and it sounds cliched, but doing the right thing is good for business. Period.

MUS OUT

Josh: It's so beautiful that Sean did exactly what he built SkyHive for, right? Like he was a CEO of a water park and he built a platform so that his true purpose could be realized in helping other people realize theirs.

Elise: Right. He followed his purpose

25:00

Elise: to found SkyHive.

Josh: Which is critical. I mean, there's so many changes going on right now. That purpose is what guides us.

Elise: Yeah. Cause the future can feel pretty slippery.

Josh: So for leaders, it seems like the key is looking to your employees for guidance, you know, connecting them to purpose, centering their experience and modeling those values back to them.

Elise: Yeah, that's the way forward.

Josh: To learn more about the trends in today's episode, go to Accenture dot com slash Built For Change.

Elise: Big thanks to Accenture's Christie Smith.

Josh: And to Dom Price and Sean Hinton for talking to us!

Elise: Built For Change is a podcast from Accenture.

Josh: More episodes are coming soon. Follow, subscribe, and if you like what you hear, leave us a review.

25:39

Copyright © 2022 Accenture
All rights reserved.

Accenture and its logo
are registered trademarks
of Accenture.