



**Season Three Episode Six- released March 2023**

**A panel discussion chaired by Jeff Dewing, with Sheila Callaham, Simone Roche MBE and Nicola Smith**

The panel discuss how the Workplace of the Future is likely to adapt and what do employers and business leaders need to consider today, to make that possible and effective.

***Having the courage to change***

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Hi, and welcome to Doing the Opposite Business Disruptors, the podcast where you get to meet leaders who have swum against the tide, thrown out the rule book, and changed the way their sector does business. I'm Jeff Dewing, bestselling author, speaker, founder, and CEO of Cloudfm.*

*Before we dig into today's episode, just a reminder that you can now watch all episodes of Doing the Opposite on YouTube. You'll find all the links in the show notes.*

*Today, I'm joined by a brilliant panel of experts as we discuss another issue that's facing business, and that's the uncertainty around the future of the workplace.*

*Now, the workplace is a subject that I'm particularly passionate about. When you look at the way in which people behave in business and the way people want to behave in business, the people that try to understand the difference between work/life balance, the environment in which they all operate and work, and how they create the outcomes that also nourishes them and their lives.*

*This is a huge subject and it's a subject of which there are quite a varied set of viewpoints on what the future is or should be. So I'm fascinated to see how this conversation goes.*

*Joining me are three people who I know feel equally passionate about this subject. **Sheila Callaham** is co-founder and executive director of the **Age Equity Alliance**, an organisation which works globally with communities, organisations, and business leaders to ensure that age equity in the workplace.*

***Simone Roche MBE** is the founder of **Northern Power Women**, the largest organisation in Europe dedicated to accelerating gender equality. Simone is also the founder of the **Power Platform** and an honorary captain in the Royal Navy.*

*And **Nicola Smith** is the interim Chief Executive at **Timewise**, a flexible working consultancy and research hub who offer a range of services that help employers attract and keep talented staff by creating jobs with flexibility built in.*

*Welcome to all of you. I'm really, really excited to hear more about your expertise and ideas today. And I'd like to start by asking each of you, if you wouldn't mind telling me why you believe that a conversation about the workplace of the future is one that should be taking place in all organisations today. So Nicola, let me start with you.*

**Nicola Smith:**

Thanks very much Jeff, and really great to be here. Well, I think this conversation is absolutely vital, both to ensure that employers can meet their recruitment and retention needs, and to make sure that the sort of jobs we're offering are the sorts of jobs that we know people across our economy need.

We've had this huge disruption to our jobs market as a result of the pandemic. Many people suddenly working at home, we've now got a national conversation about flexible and hybrid working in a way we never had before but when you actually look at what's changing in the jobs market, maybe it's not as rapid as it needs to be. Only 12% of jobs across the economy are advertised as part-time. We've got huge untapped potential of very many people who want to be back in work or progressing in work and aren't able to because the sorts of flexibility they need isn't there. But we also know from our work at Timewise that there are hundreds of employers out there doing fabulous things to innovate and create new ways of offering jobs in creative different ways to people to make sure that they can get that job satisfaction and security that they need.

So, huge potential, but also huge challenges and a lot more to do.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Thanks, Nicola. Simone,*

**Simone Roche:**

Do you know what? It's so important to have this conversation. I think we've and great to be here as well. Really great to be here, but I think we've seen so much change in disruption as Nicola has just said over the last couple of years, and it, and equally looking forward, I can't see that changing. I feel like there's gonna be a constant 'innovation of disruption' if there is such a thing. And I think it's really important that we, there was a real sort of focus post coming through the pandemic that we need to go back, go back. That's, how do we build back better? How do we go back to normal? Well, I think that herein lies that the opportunity to build forward better, to really kind of unpick what the world of work is going forward, what does the work, the future workforce look like?

And so for me, it is more than, you know, so important that we're gathering today and bringing all our different perspectives on this because I think we need to pull it apart to see how we then put this together going forward.

So, you know, from the side of the employer, on the side of our ever-changing workforce you know, whether it's our, our workforce right at the start, our emerging talent, people at the the end of their careers, people who are going into more portfolio roles, people who are changing midway, you know, so for me it's, it's critical that we need to unpick this.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*That's brilliant. That's absolutely brilliant. Thanks Simone. And Sheila,*

**Sheila Callaham:**

Thanks for allowing me to be a part of this conversation and I absolutely agree with everything Nicola and Simone said, there is absolute urgency in having this conversation right now. And I imagine that some organisations are already doing so, but those companies who are not talking about this do not understand the risk they're taking in terms of jeopardising their future of work. Because here's the reality, COVID changed everything about the employer/employee relationship. So companies don't have any choice but to pivot and operate with talent intelligence. And they

need to not only understand the dynamics that have changed, why they've changed, but they need to understand there is no going back, at least not a hundred percent to what it was. I don't even think even 50%. But they also need to be one step ahead of the competition. And that means meeting employees and potential talent where they are. It means considering the wants and needs a priority for successful talent attraction and development and retention. And for that to happen, they've gotta ensure that everybody in the talent management process, including managers, people managers, have the tools they need to be successful.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And I guess listening to all three of you, again, I don't disagree with any of that. I think it's actually on point. I guess the bit that raises the questions for me is that when you look pre-covid and you look at the way we behaved in those days as employees and or, and or as employers, I look back at that and I think how constraining have we been ever the last 50 years in the way in which we engage people and knowing and watching how people when are truly working in the new environment, which is the new sort of freedom type environment, the new environment of relationship and the new environment of empowerment you see how much more people have to offer. It makes you realise how little by comparison we offered pre covid.*

*Because at the moment, we are getting people and businesses that are behaving in the future of the workplace and behaving in a way that truly brings people on. We are seeing them become powerhouses just because they realise the power of the people when, when treated in the right way.*

*So for me, the, the workplace is a huge, huge subject. And I guess the bit that frustrates me - I think it was Simone said it - it's where there are people and businesses, business leaders feeling that it's right and proper to go back to the old way. And I, and I just don't, I don't get it. That's, that's fear, that's insecurity for me. And it's a lack of seeing the world through other people's eyes.*

*I really wanna get a bit more granular. So let's start by talking about location, location, location!*

*Because of obviously the way in which, you know, leaders have always thought about this subject. So Covid has changed so much about the way we now all work. But what trends do you now see about working from a specific location. Is the future of the workplace in an office?*

**Simone Roche:**

Do you know what we, we did a survey last year. We love doing a quick poll out there to kind of sense check. And at the start of the pandemic, when you looked at the, the question and ask was, you know, what, 'where do you wanna work?' And people were like 'I wanna get back into the office, you know, I'm, you know, I don't wanna be working from home all the time'. And then when it sort of levelled out a bit, so we're talking probably, you know, a year ago we put the same survey out there. And what was really interesting was that it was - nobody wanted five days a week at home and nobody wanted zero days, you know, so it was, there was almost this average of like there's real desire of one to two. One to two days, but at, but then in the notes, when you went down into give us your other options, so what you really want, it was flexibility.

'I want the flexibility of being able to work from a coffee shop. I want the flexibility of being able to work from Portugal' or where, wherever you may be. 'I want the flexibility to kind of, you know, be able to bring that'. And I, I, I spoke to someone on my own podcast last week on the Northern Power Women one, and, and the question was her, I was talking to her about flexibility just coming back after her third child and she said, actually Covid has saved us. Has saved us as a family because it's brought that flexibility in it. So I think location, it could be wherever you want it to be, but you know, as long as you've got trust embedded into that, into the relationship with your employer and employees, then you can make it work.

**Nicola Smith:**

I think there's, there's so much in what you just said, it's hard to know where to start. But I mean, first off, yes, there's some fabulous innovation going on in terms of making hybrid working work well and for very many people, that has been a really big shift since the pandemic. And, you know, we've worked with employers across financial services firms across very big public service and private sector employers to help them think about both what are the principles they want to apply to make sure that hybrid working delivers effectively and what does that actually mean in practice, just so there's complete clarity, about expectations among employers and employees about the granular detail as well as the principles they're trying to achieve. You know, 'will anyone be fully remote? When are people expected to come in at short notice? What sort of ambitions does the organisation and the workforce have about when they want to work together and when they're happy to work separately and at home'.

And I think doing that well and making sure that those are co-created approaches that have everyone's buy-in across the workforce is still a really big challenge for very many employers. And many people that we work with welcome the support we're able to offer with that. But the bigger issue, I think is all those people who weren't working at home during the pandemic and the spotlight, that this discussion of hybrid working has rightly shone on the very many roles where there isn't necessarily the possibility of flexibility in where you work, but there should be and can be much more flexibility in how and when you work.

And that is, I think, a really exciting opportunity now that we'll probably come on to talk about more. Because for all those companies and businesses that have put in place and are developing really good practice hybrid working approaches, they've now got this big challenge of how to stop a two-tier approach opening up across their organisation where the people who aren't able to have flexibility in location don't feel as if they're missing out on all the opportunities that that improved flex can bring.

**Simone Roche:**

Just really to reinforce that. I remember having a conversation myself with a, it was a rail company about a year ago, and it was, it almost then comes into the leadership approach. She's like, 'I'm literally having to manage with two different styles'. You're trying to have that consistency, but when you've got 50% of your, or x percent of your workforce that have actually just cracked on as normal over lockdown, making the wheels or the tracks tick or whatever. And, and then on the other side you've got that other side of the workforce have been able to do - that was a real challenge, you know, and that, that's a, we really had to adapt and look at our own leadership style.

**Sheila Callaham:**

To Nicola's very relevant point that not everyone has can have that kind of, of flexibility just given the nature of their work. I think that companies can compensate for that by the policies and programmes and benefits that they offer. But over to what Simone said - absolutely agree. The key word here is flexibility. And just to dig a little deeper in that - you can't put people in chunks. You know, don't tell me that Gen X wants this and Gen Z wants that because I'm not gonna buy that crap. I mean, we are individuals and as individuals we have different motivations and, different

things that inspire us. And so I believe that what companies need to focus on is, you know, what motivates the employee? What will help the, the employee feel connected to the vision and, and the goals that an organisation is trying to accomplish.

What are their preferred communication styles, working styles? How do they prefer to be recognised for a job well done? And then on the employer side, I think that, you know, managers, let's be real here, managers need to be confident and they need to be flexible in their ability to successfully manage.

If you have a manager who is insecure and micro-managing, then it, the old adage that people don't leave organisations, they leave managers, it holds true again and again. So managers really do need to be competent and they have to have some level of emotional IQ and listening skills and empathy and all that good stuff to make it work.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*It's interesting because it's such a broad subject, and this is one question we could probably spend an hour and a half, two hours, three hours, four hours on because, you know, coming back to everything you've just said, you're absolute right. People join a business, they leave a boss. And, and the reality is where does, you know, do businesses invest the right amount of time and effort getting their managers to be good managers, right? Because that is a fundamental.*

*But coming back to the question, that's location, location, location. This is really interesting, I'm gonna be quite controversial here. When Covid first struck for us, we had 350 odd people and we sent them all home because we had to, right? Everybody did. And we sent a survey out to those 350 people. Generally the gist was 'how are you finding it? Do you like it?' And 95% said, 'we hate it, we just wanna get back to the office'. And my team around at the time said, 'told you Jeff <laugh>. And I said, and I was, I was just too disruptive. So I said, 'no, they're all wrong. They dunno what they don't know'. So anyway, we carried on cause we had no choice, right? It wasn't something that I was coming up with an idea. We all had to stay at home because of the law.*

*Four months later, we sent the same survey out and 90% said they loved it because they'd learnt to adapt, right? They'd learnt to manage it. And they also suddenly started challenging the fact that they had this ability to spend not just so much more time with the family. I guess there was some people that, that would've died to get back <laugh> to the office away from the family. But the gist was they had control. They could decide, right? They had that flexibility.*

*And then of course I'll watch people, companies around me and they say, oh, we, we are looking at the four day week. And I'm going, it doesn't matter if it's a one day, week, four day, week, five day week, it's a constrained environment. If you give people the choice and the freedom of choice and they understand the outcomes, they will not let you down.*

*And then coming onto the other piece that Nicola talked about, which is a very, very, very powerful subject. And that is about flexibility across the broad range. Because in my business, again, I've got people that work in the office as most companies have, but I've got engineers in vans that have to drive to somewhere to fix something. So they don't get that same level of flexibility or do they, because it all comes down to the employer's attitude. And that comes back to empowerment. So despite the fact that it seems relatively easy to give people flexibility on an office environment or an admin environment or an environment where they can be anywhere. At the same time, if you're empowering a group of engineers, 5, 10, 15, 20 of them, whatever, and say, 'you know what we have to achieve, if you wanna work out how you wanna cover each other for doing different things, we're empowering you to make that decision'. So you drive a flexible environment into that environment as well. But it all starts with the attitude of the employer. And I think, you know, there is, there are no boundaries we can't overcome. It only comes down to our own mindset and our own courage to try new things.*

**Nicola Smith:**

And I think, Jeff, it's interesting that the, the, the scale of innovation that had to happen as a result of the awful circumstances around the pandemic has now driven employers and their workforces into some quite new ways of working. And there's some recent evidence that came out about the flexible furlough scheme and it showed that of the employers that offered part-time furlough - so they suddenly went to having a much higher part-time workforce than they used to - over 40% of them now say that they would be more open to trialling part-time working as a result of it, as a result of just having to do it. And I think one lesson that's in there is that actually sometimes piloting, giving it a go, thinking about a different way of offering flexibility and where, when, or how somebody is working it, it's worth trying because the results can be surprising and positive and can deliver like, like you've clearly found a return on investment for your business as well as helping your employees.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And I guess just to add another quick point to that before we go into the next question, I guess the, the other thing I want share is that I was a typical leader, manager, owner, whatever that said, and our offices are based in Colchester in Essex. And people come and say, we've got this, this person, they, they live in Birmingham. I go, that's no good. They've gotta live in Colchester, because you naturally understand the cost of getting to and from an office, right? And so I was in that environment until Covid forced us to try new things, which was great in that regard. And then now I find that we've got employer, I obviously work and run the business from Portugal. We've got employees in Spain most of which are British. And we've employed someone six months ago that lives in Columbia on a different time zone. We have no fear. Whereas the thought of that, I'd have lost sleep thinking about that, you know, a few, a few years ago. So it does show you that, as you say, the innovation of technology is, is absolutely, is absolutely on point. And it is about being courageous and trying new things and, and, and having no fear.*

*And I think the other thing that the final point I wanted to pick up was, was something Sheila said where I love, I love Sheila's boldness as well that said, 'I don't take that crap. It's, people are different, right? So they have different needs, different wants and so on'. And of course that's true, but I also am a bit controversial in saying, but there is one thing they've all got in common. They all want to influence or control their destiny. And that is the key. If you can address that issue, you'll address all the variants and various types of needs and wants of, of most individuals. But it is about having the courage.*

*But anyway, let's move on because again, it's a subject we can go down a million rabbit holes! I want to talk about the broader picture of the relationship between the actual workforce of the future, that might be the Gen-Z for instance. And their work. I mean, are we gonna see a shift in attitude towards what constitutes work or work-life balance? So I'm gonna start with you, Simone.*

**Simone Roche:**

Do you know what, again, another survey and we put after we had our conversation a few weeks ago, we put out two surveys. We put one to our specific demographic that is more Gen Z, Millennial, our power collective audience. And then we put a, a similar same survey actually same language to our Northern Power Women community. And we asked, 'what does good look like for you? You

know, when you are, when you are, you're, you're looking at work and we look, gave the options of flexibility, money, progression or purpose. You talked at the start you know about the whole, everyone's just assumed it's just Gen Z and millennial. They're all purpose-driven. Everyone else, it's power of money kind of thing, you know?

And actually it's not. It came out 51% versus 53%. And that is the, from gender to more gender to Gen Z, if you like, 51% was purpose, The second one was 20 or 9% versus 31% versus on flexibility, right at the bottom was the dollars. Dollar bills, you know? So that for me was really interesting. And it, you know, and it, there is this assumption that our workforce of the future and Sheila called this out - 'our workforce of the future. It's all about purpose-driven. It's all about this'. Well what about our workforce of now? What about our workforce that are portfolio? Actually purpose matters across us all. We're just having an opportunity now to reconfigure how we work. We've got an opportunity right now to kind of disrupt and influence and manage up and out and, you know, and, and I think that's and role model actually.

And that's what Nicola does. Nicola and everything that you do across Timewise and you know, sort of showcasing and you know, what you do the, you know, the four day week, part-time power list, all that kind of stuff. It, it is brilliant. But it just really interesting for me, we label people and go, the young-uns want this, and the people who, who do this, well actually our survey, not that our survey is, we're not quite McKinsey out there, but you know, that's, it's, it's really important that we don't just, like you say it is labelled, but that purpose factor, it has changed. And again, it's something else that we looked at, I think pre covid the whole piece about how and what you, how and why you wanted to work. Money was up there. Money was up there, that was the number one driver and promotion and all that kind of thing. Purpose or kind of flexibility was way down. And then it switched

**Jeff Dewing:**

*So I just wanna pick up on the point you said there because there'll be lots of managers, leaders, owners, directors that will say, look, I get all that fluffy survey stuff, right? But I'm telling you now my staff only want pay. And that's because they've got a lack of understanding and humility, right? The pay is a sticky plaster over a bigger problem, right? And I think until employers show the humility to sort of have this broad thing and have the art of listening and understanding that you know, the dollar check, the dollar the paycheck is, is simply addressing something that they think the employee thinks will solve the bigger problem they have, which is their culture, their working*

*environment, they're bullying, they're whatever they, whatever the things are. And it's just a sticky plaster. And of course one of the other things is also important is career progression. People don't just want purpose. It's one of the things, but it's also about 'what is my future?'*

**Sheila Callaham:**

Well, there's never been a greater blurring of the lines between work and life than during covid when everyone was sent home. And I think that at the time that that occurred, a lot of, of leaders and organisations thought, 'oh, well, you know, this is temporary, we're just gonna come back'. And so when we think about the work of the future and what younger workers are going to expect, I think that we have to think about the power of no. And that's what organisations heard during the great resignation. People were just saying no. And so it, it boils down to what is the mass? What is the impact of what the majority of people expect in the employee/employer relationship, and how much of that is going to be negotiated? And so I think that it's going to be interesting to watch, but I do believe that we are still, I mean, COVID was the beginning of what I believe is just a massive transition in the way we are working. And all I can say is I'm, I'm watching this space with great curiosity,

**Jeff Dewing:**

*<Laugh>, that's brilliant. Of course, I think we all are. And Nicola, over to you.*

**Nicola Smith:**

I think I've got a mixed view on, on this one, Jeff. I mean, I think ultimately we know that people at work want therapy and they want to be treated well and with respect. Is that just about the paycheck? Absolutely not. I think what this debate and discussion and what recent labour market trends have shown us is that actually, whether it's young people, whether it's older workers, everybody now has a much greater expectation of having some autonomy and control over where and when and how they work. So that might mean for younger people coming into the jobs market that they want flexibility to balance a job with studying, with a business they might be starting, that they want to try several jobs at once. It might mean for older workers that they want to phase towards retirement and to move to part-time hours or to reduced hours. For many people, it means they want time to take caring responsibilities outside of work seriously. But that's not just mums, it's also dads and it's also older people supporting a partner or a family member with, with a health

condition or indeed people who are managing disabilities and health conditions themselves, but also very much still want to work.

So I think there is huge opportunity now to recognise that part of a good offer from a good employer to their workforce is to make sure that they have got access to good secure jobs with good flexibility around them. And you know, we're seeing that across employers that we work with in really unexpected settings.

Just recently finished some work on a construction site where we've got all sorts of people who are site-based, not just office-based roles, really positive about having extra flexibilities to finish early on a Friday, about being able to pick their kids up from school about the real transformative impact, even small changes in working patterns have had for them, and how important they are for those families in their households and how much they value their job now as a result of it.

So I think it's something that's for everybody and there's a really welcome positive recognition of how important that sort of flexibility can be.

**Sheila Callaham:**

You guys might have seen this, but the OECD released a report in January this year about retaining all aged workers. And one of the points that they make is there, if we're talking about employee retention, there is a close link between higher pay and employee retention. Obviously, right? And then they said if you take the top 20% of the, the highest paying companies and then you take the lowest 20% in the industry of how they pay, then there's a difference of 50% between the higher and the lower. So, so that's obvious, but what I would say is that just because someone is making more money does not mean that they're actually being more productive because there's so much more about workplace culture that contributes to an employee feeling like they belong, that they're actually productive, that they're loyal to their employer.

There's this whole thing about, you know, we've talked about it. The report talked about wages aren't everything. There's also this thing about flexibility and working conditions and having, here's a big one family caring responsibility. So in a lot of organisations, family care is only offered to people who are of childbearing age, and someone older might not have that same benefit, but they may be taking care of grandchildren or they may be taking care of their parents or another spouse. So there's so many things that have to be factored in to what is going to make the ideal workplace of the future.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Yep. And I, I don't disagree with any of that. And again, I would add to that just from my own personal experience and passion, that as much as there's all these moving parts that we talk about is, for me, it still comes down to one thing. And that is - how do you make people feel? Because that's how they make their decisions. They don't make their decisions with their logic brain. They make their decisions on their emotional brain, how they feel, how do you make them feel? And if people feel they're being treated fairly and equally all the time, they will by default not wanna move. And of course one of the things that is when you hear me say, and other people say, and some of you have said it, 'it's not all about money'. We do need to recognise that 'no, it's not about money, but it is about the fact that you have to take money off the table'. In other words, you have to pay the people the right amount of money for the job that they're doing to enable them to not worry about that element. And then you can address the real problem .*

*Listen, that's again great to every subject. We could go on and on and on that cause we've clearly got some really aligned views on this process. It, it just comes down to behaviour and, and and I guess the, the ability to be courageous in trying something new and realising that it isn't about people sitting in pigeonholed boxes all the time. Anyway, let's wrap things up today. I guess I'd like a final comment from each of you. We started this discussion with each of you laying out why this conversation about the workplace of the future is so important. And I'd like to close now by asking each of you, what is the one thing that organisations should or could do today to get themselves prepared for all the things that we've discussed today? And I'm gonna come to you first, Simone.*

**Simone Roche:**

I think it's about constant listening, constant listening to your workforce, constant listening to your customers. And I think it's been intentional. It's not about following what another competitor does or what someone else has done. It's got to work for you. It's gotta work for your business. Because a business is there to make money, right? You need the money to pay the teams, but it, it's gotta be that for me, it has to be that conscious listening. And then what you do with that to innovate. How do you make the workplace? And that we talk about workplace and we talk about workforce. But actually how do we really kind of, I suppose it's almost repurposing the workplace. You know, how do we make that a real purpose for being there and, and, and, unlock that competitive advantage? But for me, the, the, the real leaders and the trailblazers of the futures will be listening, listening more and taking action.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Brilliant.*

*And one message from you, Nicola.*

**Nicola Smith:**

Well, I think employers recognise we've got candidate shortages across the economy. Our workforce is changing. We've got more people with caring responsibilities, more people with expectations of good flexibility and how they do their roles. So the change that I would really like to see is more employers take this opportunity and advertise all of their roles with clarity about what sort of flexibility and how, where, when people work there will be, take the chance, think through how your jobs are designed and what you could do differently. Don't be afraid to seek help if you need it to get you on that journey. But actually there's huge benefits as we've seen across pilots that we've done in terms of reduced employee sickness, absence, improved retention, improved employee wellbeing. And you know, the reality is that it's the world of work of the future. The faster you get there, the quicker you're going to benefit from the gains.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Reap the rewards, yeah.*

*And finally, Sheila, what one message?*

**Sheila Callaham:**

Well, I absolutely agree with what Simone and Nicola said. Absolutely. I would, I would just add that employers need to be so careful not to make assumptions about what their employees want. And that goes across the age spectrum. You can't assume that because someone's young, that younger, they're gonna want this. Or because someone has been in, in, you know, in the industry 30 years, they're gonna want that. It goes back to what Simone said - you have to listen. And that means you have to ask them what they want. And when you hear the answers, you need to be open and willing and flexible enough to pivot and change the way things have traditionally been done and think outside of the box.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*That's absolutely brilliant. And again, words of wisdom from all directions. So I've really enjoyed it and I wish we could go on for another two hours because it's a great subject to talk about. It's been a fantastic discussion, a fantastic discussion about something I'm, we can, you know, we're all passionate about. Clearly you are.*

*And it's something that's fascinating because of it's people, right? I mean, we, we, we can, we can run projects, we can build buildings, but managing and understanding people is a big task. And and if we're gonna succeed, we need to realise how important it's to understand people. So thank you very much. I really appreciate your time and effort and I look forward to the next time we get to have a discussion as powerful as this. Thank you very much.*

*Well wow, wow, wow! A big thanks again to Simone Roche, Nicola Smith and Sheila Callaham for joining me in this in incredible debate. There was so much stuff there. There's so much wisdom from some very passionate people, but very wise people. People that demonstrated that the most important values any employers going to have to have for the future is that integrity and that humility and that power of listening.*

*And the power of empathy, the power of truly understanding what people want and need if they're gonna create an unstoppable workforce and a retained workforce. There were so many elements to that debate. It's not just about the office, it's not just about working from home. It's about the way in which we engage with our teams, with our people, with our staff. It's the effort we put into ensuring that throughout the spine of our organisation, that everybody's behaving in a caring way, that we put other people before ourselves.*

*That our job is to help the people around us grow. Not to say 'what about me' and the investment in training, the investment in managers to behave in a way that brings their people on is one of the key ingredients for retention because of that cliché of people join a company and they leave a boss. So, fascinating subject, and I can't wait for take two, which will definitely come along because the subject is so huge. It simply has to!*

*If you haven't yet heard it, please do listen back to other discussions in this season from neurodiversity in the workplace to ESG - Environment, Social and Governance.*

*I'm Jeff Dewing, bestselling author of **book Doing the Opposite**, and CEO of **Cloudfm**. You can also find out more about the podcast and my incredible guests by heading to [jeffdewing.co.uk](http://jeffdewing.co.uk) and clicking on podcast. And you can also watch these conversations now on YouTube. All links are in the notes to this episode. A big thank you to my team, Nichola Crawshaw at Cloudfm, Thinking Hat PR, and of course my production team What Goes On Media.*

*Thanks for listening.*