Steve 0:00

You're listening to the HR Happy Hour Network sponsored by Workhuman. By some estimates, over 80% of AI projects fail because of bad data, but here's some good news for HR. When AI leverages the rich, authentic data of employee recognition, you get something truly unique. Human Intelligence from Workhuman, creators of the world's number-one recognition platform. Human Intelligence unlocks insights into performance and skills, culture and engagement, and it helps surface feel-good stories that illustrate the best of your company's culture. To learn more about Human Intelligence, go to workhuman.com that's W, O, R, K, H, U, M, A, N.com.

Steve 0:54

Welcome to the HR Happy Hour show. My name is Steve Boese. I am with Trish Steed, of course. Trish, what is happening?

Trish 1:02

Hi. I am so excited we're recording today. I've been looking forward to it all week so far, so I'm gonna predict highlight of the week. Just gonna go right?

Steve 1:11

I'm pretty excited, too. We're recording this on a Wednesday. It's mid day where I'm at. It's kind of smack dab in the middle of the week. But I feel good about it. Do you feel like coming back from a holiday week, which it was just the July 4 long weekend? Are you energized? Or are you like, oh my gosh, I'm not ready for this.

Trish 1:30

I'm energized. I actually went to Washington, D.C. for their big celebration. I've watched it on TV a number of years, and always thought like, I need to be there for that. So went up there with numerous family members, and we had a great time. It was really hot. But no, I've also learned about myself that I fly so much for work, and I'm used to working on a plane that when I fly with family, I'm sitting there making notes about like the 2026 trends, one of which I know is going to be recognition related. So I was actually energized to come back and get to do this episode.

Steve 2:05

Good segue, Trish, to talk about recognition. Our guest today is Sarah Whitman. She's the senior vice president of E commerce at Workhuman, we've been working alongside Workuman for a while now on the podcast. But Sarah, it's great to have you. My first question, Sarah, are you a working on the plane person, or are you gonna, like, watch something on Netflix and relax on the plane person?

Sarah Whitman 2:28

You know, I have, it has evolved over the course of my life. I have two young kids at home. They are now seven and 10, so I tend to see, especially when I'm flying for work, I tend to see flights as an opportunity for relaxation, so I'm more of a watch a movie; take a nap. My coworkers like to actually joke about how much I sleep. I'm a big sleeper, so anytime I can get a nap in, it's happening. So that's an important strategy.

Trish 2:58

You're what we strive to be, though, because I admit, I think when my kids were younger, I definitely was more of a need a nap, need to rejuvenate. Mine are both in college. Now. They're 21 twins, and so now it's like I'm trying to cram as much info into my little chunks of time before I see them, because then once I got off the plane, then I was seeing them, they both flew in from college, and so that's when we were able to really disconnect. But yeah, I appreciate a good nap as well.

Steve 3:29

Sarah, we've talked a lot in the last few years, really, on this show about recognition, about the importance of kind of recognition, how it drives engagement, how it helps the organization build culture, et cetera, et cetera. But what we've never talked about on the show is actually the second part of the conversation around recognition, particularly around how it works with folks who use Workhuman, which is around turning those recognition moments into rewards, and that's your kind of role at Workhuman, kind of keeping an eye on that. I'd love for you to talk a little bit about, that side of it, what you do at Workhuman. And then we'll get into sort of the really the maybe underrated importance of redemption, right in the recognition cycle.

Sarah Whitman 4:17

Yeah. Yeah. Great question. Yeah. I mean, I think from a recognition perspective, we talk a lot about the the thank you, right; the moment of gratitude, how that drives outcomes, how it helps engagement, retention, productivity, and how it helps to make work more human, as we like to say, the the element that as you're saying, people just don't really talk quite as much about is the redemption side of it. So when people are getting recognized through our platform, they are getting awards in the form of monetary value, in points that they can then spend on our platform. And this is the moment for the employee, for the end user, when the recognition just becomes much more tangible, and we talk a lot here about the flywheel of employee engagement, and the moment of being recognized is exciting. It's fun, it feels good. You know, it's this moment of positivity, and we want to extend that positivity, extend the value that our clients are getting from the spend of that award itself, and we want that when you come to this store to actually redeem your awards, that it's an exciting opportunity for you to do something meaningful with those moments that you had with your colleagues. So it could be anything from a new product that you've been coveting, a brand that you want to shop for, a gift card to shop at your favorite store. Could be taking your family to dinner, could be booking travel or some kind of an experience, right? So it's, it's this idea that when you're coming to the store itself, you're having this experience of kind of continued remembrance of the recognition moment and continued engagement with that moment, and then you're getting something for that moment that means something to you, and that then creates this lasting association with that recognition moment, and with the connections that you've made with your colleagues and the appreciation for the work that you're doing in your job. And so my role is really everything that happens after that recognition moment. Once you have awards in our platform, what can you do with those awards? And what does that entire experience, end to end look and feel like? What do we offer on the store? And then, how is that all? How is that? Is that end to end experience delivered for the for the employee and end user?

Trish 6:44

Sarah, thank you for explaining that. I have to admit, I've never, until we started planning this, really thought about that redemption element and how it it actually extends the relationship too, right? So it becomes not just a transaction. And I think anybody listening to this has probably been recognized at some point by someone, and it if you get a Starbucks card, for example, and just hand them out, well that's not as meaningful to every person. So I think first of all, when you're talking about that person getting to choose what the reward is, and maybe it is an experience or a meal or something more tangible. They're they're in it too. It's not just something that's happening to me, receiving it, right? That's part of it, but it's then, what am I doing with it? And I don't know about you, but I feel like even when I, whether I'm traveling or it has been a reward or recognition moment in my prior careers, I still value those because it was meaningful. Are you seeing that from your customers, or is it kind of hard to get them to understand? Don't just do blanket awards, right? Everybody gets the same reward or reward.

Sarah Whitman 7:55

Yeah. And that's a great question too, you know, I think, and you're right. You have this lasting Association. You have this lasting value associated with the the moments that you've had. And we all at Workhuman and across our clients, all have stories that are really meaningful, right? Like we all talk about, well, what is your best redemption moment? What is the thing that has meant the most to you, where, what is something that has really kind of connected your life, your personal life, and things that you're doing outside of work with those moments at work. And I would say, you know, we have extensive data around the value of monetary value awards being given in a in a points like environment like this, and the value that that drives well above and beyond things like one time bonuses or even small mini bonuses consistently in your paycheck, there's just this element of the entire end to end experience that brings it to life for people, and that really helps to drive home the value of the work that you're doing, the gratitude you're getting from your employer and from your colleagues, those connections that you're making. And then this element of it's not just money that's showing up in your paycheck that you're not really kind of even noticing, or that you you're excited about for a short period of time. It's this much more extended way of recognizing employees, kind of in smaller, regular increments that then you have many, many touch points along the way to show them how much you appreciate them. And that is so it's the combination of the recognition moments themselves and the messages contained within them, and then the value associated with those recognition moments that then enables you to do something special and memorable with those awards, that really drives the outcomes that our clients are looking for, things like employee engagement, decrease in turnover, etc. So, so I think to answer your question, yes, you know there, there are still. Leaders out there who need to be convinced and need to see the data and really need to understand the difference between putting money into one bucket versus another, but we actually see that it's a very kind of small overall percentage of payroll. Typically, our best practices around 1% of payroll. You put that into a recognition program and the value that you get on that the ROI is extended exponentially, versus if you were to put that just into bonus. And so it's the data and the history that we have and the richness of that with our existing customers that enables us to then tell the stories and showcase the ROI of this type of program to help then bring more clients, more companies, into the fold of understanding and really realizing the value of it.

Steve 10:50

Yeah, Sarah, thank you for sharing that. I feel like it's such a great kind of way to think about it, in terms of, yeah, okay, 1% of payroll is a guideline, right? And it doesn't really sound like much. And if you were to put that in a bonus, a quarterly bonus, or even a just bi weekly paycheck, it would just kind of disappear into the ether. It would just be right, it wouldn't be special, it wouldn't be memorable. It wouldn't have a lasting impact; but, if that 1% has translated into rewards that an employee maybe has earned throughout the course of a time, time period, and then can purchase themselves. I don't know, pick, pick your pick your reward. Golf Club. Say that's an example. If they're a person who likes to golf, and every single time they go out to play golf for the next who knows how long years potentially, they're going to remember, Oh, I I've got these great new golf clubs because of the wonderful work we did on Project XYZ, and my the great team that came together to do it, and how, you know, and my contribution to it as well. And that's so much more powerful than than, look, we're not talking about replacing a quarter of your payroll with this kind of thing, but just it's so much more meaningful than what that 1% would would really translate to. I find it's an easy argument. Yeah, I do. But maybe, you know, I'd love your thoughts on that just the lasting impact that some of these redemption stories have.

Sarah Whitman 12:15

yeah, yeah. And you think about, I mean, I don't know. Let's say you're going to get a $1,000 bonus in your paycheck over the course of a year, at the end of the year, when typically, companies are giving year end bonus. If you take that, then that typically might come with a performance review. It might come with a thank you. It's typically just okay. Here's what you've earned for the year. Go enjoy the holidays, right? If you take that same $1,000 and spread that over 10 moments of $100 or 20 moments of $50 and with each individual moment you are taking the time to recognize and talk to the employee through our system about these are the types of things that you're doing that are very impactful. And thank you for your efforts here. And it gets much more specific and it gets much more intentional around those messages that are created that then lead up to maybe the same value that you would get, ultimately in the one time bonus. But it's those messages and the ways in which it's being delivered that brings so much more of that connectivity around the relationships that you're developing with your colleagues, your your pride in your work, your connection to your your employer, and as we pull that through in terms of the redemption stories, and again, we all have our great stories that we tell regularly here at Workhuman, I have quite a few of my own, and we're actually we just recently launched a new feature in our product called reward stories, which is meant to bring more of those stories to life. And it's been really fun as we've rolled this out to our customers to see how people are using it, because we anecdotally, have always talked about, oh, I took this trip, or I was able to, you know, get these headphones for my kid that they were wanting for their birthday. Or, you know, whatever it might be. It could be something small, it could be something really big. We all have historically talked about these in the office and with our colleagues, but to now, we have this opportunity to after you redeem and you check out on our store, we prompt you to tell a story about what have you done with your awards. And if you don't give it right away, we send you an email later and say, Tell us more about what you did with your awards. And then those stories, people are telling the stories of why they redeemed for something. They're uploading pictures and videos and really connect, making that connection to this is personally what matters to me, and amplifying that within their organization. And then those stories are actually part of our social news feed on the product itself. So when you come to the Workhuman cloud as an employee. Of one of our clients, you see all of the recent recognition moments. You now can also see all of the recent redemption moments, which again, just creates these moments of of learning more about people and what they care about and what really drives them and what they value. And that combined within the recognition moment, you just you feel so much more connected to the people that you work with, and you feel that much more inspired to both give and want to receive recognition.

Trish 15:32

I'm so glad that you told about the stories aspect of it, because not only is that a big differentiator for Workhuman, it reminded me, and maybe, maybe you haven't listened this, but long ago, there was a radio host called Paul Harvey, and he would give the rest of the story right to me. That's what you're describing, right? It's not that, that first recognition moment, it's the rest of the story. What happens when you actually play this out and get it's almost like gratitude, then comes back from the recipient, isn't it? It's like a full circle moment, yes, for the giver. And it's nice to give too, right? We love to give to other people, so to hear kind of like how they used it, I would think would be extra rewarding.

Sarah Whitman 16:18

Yeah, it 100% is and I think that, again, you learn so much about your colleagues. So then it creates this lasting moment of like I have this story of going on a cruise last year, and I took my we took our kids to to to Honduras, and we were able to go to this we I redeemed some points for an experience while we were there where we got to interact with sloths. And we have this really cool picture of each of us holding a sloth, literally snuggling with this beautiful, cuddly sloth. And it was such a fun, memorable moment. And this picture of me with the sloth has now been kind of plastered over all sorts of marketing for our experiences, offering and for reward stories.

Steve 17:09

We gotta find that picture for like, promoting this podcast.

Sarah Whitman 17:12

Yes, it's a gem, and it, you know, I'm happy to use it wherever, because everyone who sees it then wants to talk to me about, what was that experience like? Or, oh my gosh, it's my dream to hold a swath. Or my kid, would, you know, want that experience? And I think there's, it just creates even more moments of of that kind of human connection between people, so that you get this window into people's lives. And it's, again, it's just amplifying those those moments and the investments that companies are making into their employees. And we actually also just launched the ability to take your story or your award itself and and post that to LinkedIn. So you can post, you can choose to post it to your LinkedIn profile, which is takes it to a whole other level, right? Because then you're out there telling not just your colleagues but your entire network about the experiences you're having at work, the the types of of personal stories, of what that means to you, and what you're able to then do with those moments, and it's helping to not only amplify those individual stories, but your company's brand and your own personal brand, right? So it's it's been really exciting to bring this to life. It's something we've been talking about doing for years, and it's finally, it's in our product and something that we're seeing great reactions for from our clients.

Trish 18:47

Yeah, I think what you're describing, too to me, seems like for maybe people who are less comfortable sharing if they got a $1,000 bonus, for example, like, I'm someone who I would never...

Steve 19:01

I'll interrupt you. No one would probably share that, right, honestly, right? I mean, it's kind of uncomfortable a little bit, even if it was, like, a big, you know, $20,000 bonus or something, you probably wouldn't rush to LinkedIn. Oh boy. I just got a big bonus. Like, that's not something you do, right?

Trish 19:17

But I think you would absolutely want to share, "I had this wonderful sloth experience," and it shows so much about the company's culture too. I mean, brand, yes, but also that culture, it might so one of the things I was really impressed with, I have to admit, when we were recently out with you at Workhuman Live, and we were talking about all of the various points of an employee's journey with your organization, and how recognition attaches to every single thing in a very direct and specific way. And I think the former HR lady in me was like trying to make sure that it did. I mean, this story alone, I think, shows you, it's not a it's not. Recognition over here on the side, like, oh, we do that once a quarter, once a year, right? It's an every single day of the interactions you're having with your team, with your colleagues, with your C suite, with your customers. What kind I know you have so many stories? Could you maybe, even if you have to anonymize it, what is one of maybe your favorite stories of a customer that came back to you and said, Hey, this really made a huge impact on our business.

Sarah Whitman 20:25

Oh, my goodness, wow. Probably have so many. We have. We have so many, and I'm trying to think of some of a good one right on the spot. I think, you know, we've, we one thing that's that's been a really tangible example is is one where we've worked with manufacturing companies to to implement targeted recognition programs within some of their facilities, where they're seeing really high rates of safety incidents. And so there, there are so many examples across many different industries, but this one is particularly interesting because it relates not just to the relationships that people are building at work, but it relates to how present people are at work, and how committed they are to living and driving the company values, which in this case, one of which was safety and and we so what the the kind of ending story is basically that they started to increase recognition for people within this manufacturing facility. And we've actually seen this multiple clients over similar types of trends in this manufacturing facility, and they saw a significant decrease in safety incidents and accidents that were happening within that facility. So it's, again, just a really tangible benefit. We've seen things like through COVID, some of our some of our pharma and biotech and and healthcare related companies. You know, people who were working on building the vaccine, people who were working nurses, who are working in in, you know, day in and day out in these hospitals, in these really challenging environments, and we see significant increases in engagement, significant decreases in in turnover or interest in in looking for another job, even with just a handful of recognition, moments that are meaningful and are developed in a way that is that feels personable, personal and feels really authentic. It's it doesn't take a whole lot in terms of those connective moments for people to really then bring an entirely different type of attitude and way of bringing energy into their work every day. And so it's, you know, it's both an amazing thing to do from a human perspective, but we see really direct outcomes in nearly every environment where we've seen this implemented, everything from a corporate office environment to a hospital to a manufacturing facility to truck drivers to an airline, right? People working at airports, people working, you know, flying and working on planes like there's just there, that the examples are endless, and we see very consistent results, no matter what type of company you're talking about or what type of environment that they're working in.

Steve 23:35

Yeah, that's pretty remarkable, Sarah, because what you know, what we've learned, certainly over the years of working with work human, is if you take that, say that again, that 1% that guideline, and you throw that into just the general salary and bonus pool, I'd argue that's going to do nothing. It's not going to impact your retention, your engagement, your performance, your productivity, anything you're not gonna do anything. You're not gonna notice it, other than you spent 1% more. But if you take that 1% directed into this, into recognition, rewards and redemption, all in all the benefits that accrue from that. You know, if it's 5x if it's 10x I don't know what the number is. It probably varies a little bit. Depending on the implementation of the circumstance, you will see so many wonderful positive returns from it. It's, it's, it's clear, right? We've seen that over and over again, as you said, and you see it over and over again across industries, which is, I think it's a great story, yeah, Sarah, the last thing I wanted to make sure we got with you, because we have you, and we don't get to talk about this stuff too much, right? We have talked a lot about recognition, and the value of recognition and the impact the organization. I'd love just for a minute to talk a little bit about the back end here, right? Because it would be easy for a company who wanted to invest some money in this type of thing, quote, unquote, to simply just pass out, you know, Visa or MasterCard cards with some some dollars on them, and hand those out or give some other credits to some big existing e commerce site, etc, etc, or for a company just to outsource the whole thing, right? I don't want to be involved in the complexities of catalogs and fulfillment and customer service. I'd love for you to talk a little bit about your guys approach, right to the actual nuts and bolts of redemption, fulfillment and customer service, and why you guys do it a little bit differently.

Sarah Whitman 25:22

Yeah, so it's a that's a big question. And there's so much I could say there, you know, I think there are. I guess. What I would you know, first of all say is that we have employees on our platform, that it are are in over 180 countries across the globe. So you think about people who are in a wide range of cultures, of economic environments, of, you know, different stages in their lives, different race, different ethnicities, right? They're just, there's the degree to which the employees on our platform run the gamut is like, you can't get any more diverse than the wide range of employees that we have. And even within an ex, even within one company, right? We work with a lot of organizations that have 1000s and 1000s of employees, and so when you think about each individual, I mean, you even just think about three of us, Trish, what you might use $100 to redeem for is probably different from what Steve is going to use $100 to redeem for. And same with me, right? We all have different interests, different goals, different things that that cause that you know are valuable and meaningful to us. And so you amplify that toward to you know, 1000s of employees within an organization, and just handing out a Starbucks gift card or an Amazon gift card or even a prepaid card, right? It just it feels like this one size fits all approach that just doesn't work in a recognition environment. People who are recognized through our platform, they want to feel like they have the power of choice, the ability to do a wide range of things, right? Go back to the Starbucks. Example, I can't have caffeine. So, yes, sometimes I'll go to Starbucks and get, like a an herbal tea, but generally speaking, Starbucks is not going to get me excited. And so, you know, everybody's different. And again, in various cultures, everyone's different as well. And so, you know, I think what's really different about about e commerce within a recognition environment, and specifically for Workhuman at the highest level, there's just a very extensive, thoughtful and proven strategy behind our store in order to drive the outcomes that our clients care about the ROI in their programs, it takes a lot more than just having, you know, a few gift cards to offer. It goes way further than having even just the right assortment. And we have millions of options of what people can redeem for across merchandise, gift cards, charity donations, experiences, it runs the gamut, right? But our store itself, so having the assortment and being able to do that on a global scale is is one thing that's that kind of sets the foundation for having a great redemption experience, but the Workhuman store itself is actually designed to engage and impact your employees at every touch point. So we've talked about a few of those things, but what we have invested into and what we do better than anyone else in the recognition space is we've taken proven best practices from consumer e commerce and combined those with our own expertise in what drives employee engagement to create a really unique recognition based shopping experience that's really grounded and crafted to celebrate the employees achievements and enhance that emotional connection that's tied to recognition. And I think if you you know, you look at some of the other recognition platforms out there that have invested a lot less into this area, or that rely solely on third parties to deliver this type of experience. It's a much more transactional type of experience, right? You get to the store and it's kind of an afterthought. It's like, okay, now I have 1000s of items to choose from, and I have to just sort through this list and try to find something we've actually created a really engaging, memorable, fun shopping experience, and that is what drives that kind of connection between recognition and redemption. It can't be an afterthought. It's so critical to the value that employees ultimately place on recognition programs that it needs to be intentional and it needs to be grounded in both those best practices and those kind of understanding of theories around what drives great consumer experiences and what drives what drives an amazing recognition experience.

Trish 29:56

I appreciate the fact that you're you're really talking about the thought that goes into the Workhuman store, that really is a unique approach, because I think Steve and I as analysts, we see a lot of different companies who do recognition in some way, shape or form. But that's why, when we were offered the opportunity to partner with you all, it meant something to us, because we see that over time, you all have created an experience for your customers that is so unique, so personal and so different, and then it makes it easy for them to give that to their employees. I also just wanted to point out I appreciate the fact that you're doing this in 180 countries, and I think just in my own life experience in HR, I was always worried when we were trying to recognize people from different countries, because you don't want to do something that would be offensive and not intentional either, right? And so sometimes you could do that, or, as we were kind of talking about different kinds of, you know, gift cards or whatnot, you don't know even what someone's political affiliations are and what they might be offended if you gave them from a certain brand, right? So in a way, it's also a little bit protection for the employer to let the employee have some choice in the redemption moment, because they're they're not getting something that's going to offend anything about the way that they're living, or their values of their on their personal life, right?

Sarah Whitman 31:25

Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a great point Trish, and I think in addition to that, I would say that it's, it's both about ensuring that you're not offending people and that you have things that are relevant to them, but it's also that the experience is equitable across the globe, right? So if you have employees who are based in India, based in Mexico, based in Taiwan, based in the States, right? You want them to have a very similar type of experience. And I think that's another thing that you know, where we have invested over 25 years into building this, this platform and this e commerce experience, and have built it across 180 plus countries, we have, we have gotten to a place where we really are able to deliver that equitable experience, and everyone has choice, right? And I mentioned all those different countries, the experience that you're going to have in each of those countries is actually it's equitable, but it's different, and it's relevant to those individual markets. So the assortment that you see in Mexico is going to be different from the assortment that you see in India, and it's going to be culturally relevant, and it's going to be focused on the brands and the products and the categories that tend to be most popular in those regions. We have an extensive marketplace of suppliers that we partner with on the ground in each of these individual countries. We don't work with third party aggregators, like a lot of other folks in the recognition space. We partner directly with the retailers, with the distributors, with the brands in each individual country, and we do a ton of research into each individual market to say, what are people looking for, what is culturally relevant? We're often partnering with our clients, employees that are on the ground in these countries, and they're giving us a lot of feedback and input into what they want to see. And so it's a really intensive, very intentional process. And if you you you're not working with somebody who with a company that thinks that way. They just, it's hard to claim that they're truly doing things in a in a at a global scale, and and it's the assortment, plus also the experience of how we curate and develop a meaningful experience on the store itself with that assortment. So again, you go to Mexico and India, they have very different holidays, right? Different types of cultural celebrations that happen at different times of the year. So we're going to be putting together different types of collections and promotions and things that happen throughout the year that are really relevant to each of those individual cultures. And then on top of that, we're investing into personalization and AI so that is personalized, not just to you and your market, but also to you as an individual. So again, it's bringing all those best practices of e commerce, but doing it in a world where this is, we know this is bigger than just a shopping experience, right? This is an experience that is tied to recognition in a way that is meant to drive real outcomes for employers. And that is, that is, is just a critical kind of part of their overall people strategy. And so it has to be thoughtful, and it has to be intentional, and it has to be really robust in the ways that that, that your your recognition partner goes about it.

Steve 34:48

And Sarah, and I think that's why we kind of wanted to have this conversation today, right? Really spend some time on that side of the recognition kind of work transaction, passion flow or circle, right? Because it does matter, right, in the way you described the approach, right? It's you could have been saying, you could have been describing the approach of a global consumer retailer, right, and how they do market research, and how they are culturally relevant to the places that they're operating in, and they're, they're intentional about the goods and services that they're offering, that they're meaningful to the individuals in the specific markets that they're dealing with. That could have been a speech that any global retail head could have given to and would have made perfect sense. But yet, you're doing it for the purposes of helping employees, you know, continue that that recognition cycle and derive, you know, value from those recognition moments, which again, underscores why, if you're going to do this, you know you need to do it right, and you need to work with the right partner to do it right, especially on a global scale. So I thought it was a great, great way to kind of wrap the conversation today, and hopefully folks get a better idea right. It's not just oh, here's here's here's 20 points. Thank you for your help on project ABC today, right? There's a lot more to it, a lot more meaning that can come from it, a lot more value to the individual and the organization. And got a peek under the covers, a little bit about how some of that is done, which I think is awesome, too.

Sarah Whitman 36:16

Yeah, yeah. Thanks. I mean, there's just so much in the way that we've done this that is so differentiated versus anyone else. And I think it's just, you know, it's, it's exciting to be part of this world, of bringing these two kind of worlds of recognition and consumerism kind of together in a way that can really help make the world more human, right? And it's, it's, it's a it's a fun role. It's a fun job. I've been with the company for almost eight years now, and it's, it really is very inspiring every day to see the impact of what we do on humans across the entire globe.

Trish 36:56

Well, I'm so glad that you joined Workhuman because, Steve, I won't speak from you. I know the last the first time I heard your CEO, Eric Mosley, speak was in 2010 and as a practitioner, what he was describing he was hoping to achieve and be able to offer the world, I feel like you all now have fully operationalized his vision that he was having back then, and if I were still in a buyer's chair, I would be absolutely trying to connect with you all. Because the other thing I just want to point out that I still find very unique is you all are also your own customers, right? You don't just build something and have other people use it. You all believe it enough that it works and that it's critical for all of these connections throughout an employee's journey. And I think that's very unique, too. So I just wanna make sure the listeners understand that as well.

Sarah Whitman 37:52

Yeah, yeah. We are hyper users of our own platform, and we are always customer zero with any kind of new functionality, new product, anything that launches. So we got this, the most recent Human Intelligence launch before anyone else. We've all been so thrilled to get our hands on it, start to play around with it, see what kind of insights it drives for us. So that's just one example.

Steve 38:17

We didn't get a chance to talk about that, Sarah. You brought up Human Intelligence. We didn't get a chance to talk about that today. But the show we the show we did recently with Tom libretto, we dove into that in some detail, church that we recorded at Workhuman Live. So I'd encourage folks to go back, you know, a few shows back in the archive, and listen to that again. We dive into that in some some detail, but hugely important for organizations to derive even more value, right? And more insight from their recognition programs, a great, great innovation that it's so wonderful to see it like the because this recognition data is so it's so unique, right, in the organization, right? You really learn about who's working on, what, who's making an impact, what, how are teams working together? Who's really having influence in the organization, outside of, say, just the org chart, what that might suggest, right? Just, yeah, using AI to really extract value from there is really, really cool stuff.

Sarah Whitman 39:17

Yeah, yeah. It's been really groundbreaking, coming to understand and evaluate the the the fascinating data that exists in in recognition, recognition messages, right? I don't think it's something intuitively that people would think of, but especially within our platform, where we're coaching people to give really rich, authentic and detailed messages. It tells so much about how things are getting done within an organization. And so now we're giving that that data back to our clients in a way that then they're able to leverage that data for insights through our AI tool, Human Intelligence. And yeah, it's been a really, really exciting past few months, launching that, seeing the reaction to it, and now starting to see how our clients, and even internally, were starting to use it. The future is exciting around AI, but it really comes down to the data that you have available, right? And how great, how good is that data, and what can it actually tell you?

Steve 40:21

Yeah, all right, good stuff, Sarah. This was a great conversation. Thank you so much. Send us that picture of you holding the sloth, though, for real, we will want to use that in the show promos. But thank you, Sarah Whitman, senior vice president e commerce at Workhuman, thanks for letting us learn more about how this really all works in the and how important it is to do this, right? I love this conversation. I could probably talk about like e commerce and fulfillment and shipping and supply chain all day long. But thank you again. It's been great to learn more.

Sarah Whitman 40:53

Yeah, great to meet both of you, and thanks for having me.

Trish 40:58

Thank you.

Steve 41:00

Great stuff. Trish, I loved it. I love this stuff, so I'm glad we got a chance to dive into it a little bit.

Trish 41:05

I am too, because, like we said at the top of the show, it's, you know, we think of recognition. We're not always seeing the redemption piece, and it's super important. So I think if I'm an HR listener on the show, I would want to know where, where is the best place for us to reach you, Sarah and where? Where can they check out? More about working with the Workhuman store and getting getting that themselves.

Sarah Whitman 41:31

Yeah, well, you can always check us out at Workhuman.com, there are forms there to fill out for any kind of demo, any more information; again, my name is Sarah Whitman, and you can find me on LinkedIn. Feel free to send me a message. There any way you want to reach out. We are always excited to talk to HR and business leaders and and be able to share more about the impact that that our programs can have on your organization.

Trish 42:00

Thank you so much.

Steve 42:03

Great stuff. So okay, thanks again to Sarah, thanks Trish. Thanks to our friends at Workhuman, of course. And thanks for tuning in to the HR Happy Hour show. We appreciate you being with us. Remember to subscribe wherever you get your podcast. Go to hrhappyhour.net for all the archives. Check us out on our YouTube channel is blowing up as well. Thanks again for listening, everyone. We'll see you next time, and bye for now.

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