

Take a Different Seat Debut episode

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HR tech, buyer perspective, vendor side, software adoption, AI impact, talent acquisition, business problems, customer experience, industry events, innovation speed, data governance, learning mindset, decision making, market trends, product implications

SPEAKERS

Joanna Clark, Steve, Chris Havrilla, Matthew Brown

Steve 00:01

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C

Chris Havrilla 01:00

What are you looking for at HR Tech Unleash or any of the host of vendor events that are coming this fall? Tis the season, and now we're here. I've been asked that question as a buyer, as a vendor, as an analyst, and same question though, and it comes from different people in different seats, and that tells me there's probably a better question lurking underneath, and I think we're going to take today and go find that. So welcome, welcome to take a different seat. I'm Chris Havrilla. The premise here is simple: where you sit changes what you see, and bringing those perspectives together sometimes can actually help us get to better questions, and you know, and in my mind, get there to make get a place to make better decisions. So, we have a question. We're going to poke around until a better question comes up. The goal is not consensus here. It's leaving with a better question than the one we came in with, or maybe a more real question. So, this is my debut episode, and it is kicking off just as the fall conference season is kicking off, and so I'm yeah I'm going to play with this question that I usually get to test out my my new podcast limbs. So the planned season arc for this new show starts with the next episode in November, but enjoy this one because we're about to get into it. So again, let's go through the question with fall event season underway. What are you looking for at these events? Each one means something different by it. Maybe a buyer wants to shortcut a buying decision or get to a short list. Maybe a vendor wants to know what will land in their messaging or in their announcements, and maybe an investor just wants to know where the market is heading, or you know some kind of prediction. But today, I want to explore what we're all actually trying to find out when we ask this question, and when we're expected to answer this question. And sometimes the best questions come with another question. So I've got two very special guests who have sat in one or maybe more of those seats, being buyer, seller, vendor, or vendor seller. Same thing. Maybe it's an investor, maybe it's a partner, maybe it's a service partner. But with that, I think it's a good time to introduce yourselves and whatever professional context you want to share and kick us off with this. So I'll start with you, Matthew. What seat are you sitting in today? And any previous seat, maybe that still shapes what and how you might see things would be great to hear as well.

M

Matthew Brown 04:08

That is a pretty big question to open the show.

C

Chris Havrilla 04:13

Not a resume, not a resume, my friend.

M**Matthew Brown 04:15**

I'll try to be quick with it. I I'm currently sitting in a seat vendor side, heading up customer experience at a software tech company in the HR tech space. But I have spent 22-23, years sitting at all the seats: buyer, seller, negotiator, support, bounce off, analyst, and more recently, analysts. Yes. So I've sat in all the seats, and what's been fascinating is my perspective has always been the same, regardless of the seat that I've sat in. I just keep adding a little more context, right? A little more nuance to it. But I've also been the we'll call maybe the less than normal buyer of software, and so that brings with it just a different lens to look through.

C**Chris Havrilla 05:08**

Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. All right, Joanna Clark.

J**Joanna Clark 05:14**

Yeah. Well, thank you. Well, i i have I have had the pleasure of sitting in in a consistent seat for really all of my career, and that is as a buyer. That certainly I have also sat in the seat when I knew that our budget wasn't there, and so I would say that I I then went as a TA nerd and future futurist, if you will, thinking about what could be. So I have been I have been to those events where we were specifically looking at products or or problem sets to solve, and then I've also been to those events where I knew we didn't have the budget, but but still felt like it was important for my company, a very large financial services company to be able to really think about what what is the future, what's coming, which we need to be paying attention to, and so forth. So it's been. I will admit that it is more fun the last couple years going going with problems to solve and budget to come with it. But but but definitely that's that's my background.

C**Chris Havrilla 06:24**

Yeah, I love it. You know, I'll I'll start with you too because I know you you actually just got back from one of the conferences, and I know we don't always go with our checkbooks in hand because to your point, we you know, are trying to figure out what are these new announcements. What impact is it going to have? You know, you know what the heck is going on. Even though everybody wants you to still have your checkbooks ready.

J**Joanna Clark 06:52**

Right.

C

Chris Havrilla 06:53

haven't been to a vendor event or a HR tech event where where that wasn't the hope and and plan. But you did just come back from a vendor customer event. We don't have to say which one if you don't want to. But what did you go looking for, or what maybe are you still even thinking about, or still trying to understand?

J

Joanna Clark 07:15

Yeah, yeah, no. So I did go to Workday Rising this past week, and and I say that because that's one of the big ones. I mean, 24,000 people were there, which was really remarkable. By the way, 24 like 24,000 people talking about basically the same stuff. It's really a unique experience. You know, I am. I have never been a big proponent of of these these company specific events, but in the last couple of years, I've attended a couple of them because I do think that the TA space has really shifted. We're seeing a lot of consolidation in a material way, and so for me, shifting into these has been interesting. Certainly, you know there is the sales pitch portion of of the game. There's no two ways about that, and I try to be balanced with that. You know, like on one hand, I'm like, you've already gotten a check. Can you can you just talk? You know, but on the other hand, it also starts to talk about you know like they they they talked about the seven things that are going to be new in 2027 and one of the things that's interesting is whatever they think is going to be the impact usually I see something different or a string to pull on and and I think that that that's really you know in the end what I try to go to all of these events for is to understand the what kind of the underpinning of what some of these solutions will create, you know, and and of course when when you're standing on a stage and you're talking about what's new, it's all the great shiny pieces which are all true. I want to be super clear, but there are downstream implications to some of these things that we oftentimes don't get into on those stages, and I think that's that's a big portion of what what we have to talk about is, like for example, you know, Workday is is you know talked about their new you know single sign-on. You know, profile. Cool. I mean, and and if I'm applying for a job at a workday company, really cool. But then I've got questions because we've got you know really significant issues related to you know cyber intrusions and things like that that are coming from applicant candidates and and having their different CVs make that difficult. So, so while this is this is a good thing for candidates, there's no two ways about it. I do think companies like ours need to then take a look at what that what the implications are as we move forward. So those are the kinds of things that I do at at the user meeting. Certainly, you know they they put on a good show, and that's that's part of it for sure. Especially when you have to go to Las Vegas for it. But I do think that it it allows us to have conversations. I think most of the the user conferences give a good amount of time for for collaboration across companies. I think that's super critical, and I I also think that it's where like for us while we're you know talking about the future of our tech stack and and being a workday company, you you have to look at those solutions. You start to think about you know what are some eventualities? What are things that we can think about? You know, as as things continue to develop, and the reality is that technology. I mean, some of these things that Workday's talking about today, they couldn't have talked about a year ago. It's it's significantly changed because of some of the recent purchases that have happened. And so, heck, I wouldn't even be surprised if they started having more more events more frequently because of the speed of change that's happening.

C

Chris Havrilla 11:10

That's actually really a really good point. Well, I'm and Matthew, I mean, you can you can bring the vendor perspective, and and and certainly, I know this is that relates to you as well, but if I if I ask you to put that, you know, to be in the vendor seat first, what what do you hope buyers are looking for or asking when they reach your booth or get on the phone with you, or get in a meeting with you, and then what do they actually ask? Right.

M

Matthew Brown 11:47

Good, good question. I hope that they actually have a really solid understanding of the problem at hand to solve, right, and and and not just the performative surface level. We need to check the box for AI problem, but like we actually have a business problem, and we're ready to invest in doing what's necessary to change and move forward. What I usually hear is not that it is the right like the example that I use. I don't know why I always go back to it, but the example sounds something like, "Hi, I'm looking for X type of software. In specific, I'm looking for something that has a purple button I can push that makes this thing happen. Right, like they're they're they're speaking to something that's very familiar with with it, right? Known or unknown, and that's where the conversation starts. And to your right, to the the spirit of this podcast is right, asking different questions and finding the better question to ask, and we start there. And Joanna, I want to pick up on something you were talking about: the speed of innovation, right? It's affecting software. It's affecting businesses everywhere. It's affecting how we think about approaching getting the work done. Unfortunately, we made the same mistake that we have made with every other change that comes before it. This time, we just did it faster, and we did it under all types of pressures, right? Pressure to adopt, pressure to be in the conversation for today. A lot of organizations took on AI tooling.

C

Chris Havrilla 13:31

Right.

M

Matthew Brown 13:32

And we automated processes that were designed yesterday for yesterday's problems with yesterday's tools and right, like we just said, we're going to put today's tools on top of it, instead of ripping it open, rebuilding, reimagining the work, the people, the skills, the talents, the market changes and so we're we're kind of stuck in a very painful part of the change. That now that AI is slowing down a little, we'll speed up again. But I'm pretty certain we're going to have a whole bunch of questions coming out of this moment of pause. Too much information flying in too many different directions. And just as a as an aside, like when I when I show up to HR tech, historically, whether I'm a buyer or whether I'm a vendor, I'm looking for the same things again. Unique perspective. I go to look for what's changed in a meaningful way, and I have I love the opportunity to go to the provider deep dive events as an analyst. I really enjoyed that deeper look. The challenge is that every single one of them says 50% of the same stuff, and it's all our differentiator. And then I put myself in the buyer perspective and go, okay, now when I go look at the trade show floor, I see everybody's boots has exactly the same language, and I go ask questions. What does AI mean to you? What does AI mean to you in this process? For this business problem, and you start to realize so many different perspectives, but nobody's asking that question. The buyer's not ready to ask that question. Doesn't know to ask that question, and the providers generally have just banked on that.

C

Chris Havrilla 15:14

Yeah, absolutely.

J Joanna Clark 15:17

It's true. It's true. I'm sorry, Chris. If I could just tap on something that Matthew talked about. That question, you know, it is really interesting because over the last couple of years, what I'm trying to do is train the future of talent acquisition to go to these events for me, right? So I've been taking folks who are the next level, next couple levels down, and so one of the things that I do is is kind of walk the floor with them and talk about like like and and model like I just do me I do me on the floor if you will you know what I mean and every single time after the first kind of pass through the floor they're like you know that's not what I expected and I said, I hope so. Like I hope, I hope that's true because what I try to do is is learn. Like I like when when I walk up in if Matthew's at a at a booth and I walk up and I and I and I say hello, you know, I like I'm trying to understand their product not because I think I might buy it, although there are certainly times where I go up and I go, "Hey, I need to learn about your product because we're, you know, like so. But but it's about the idea of learning because for most companies, a single product doesn't solve everything. Like it just doesn't work that way, and so because we have slightly different business problems, so one of the things I spend a lot of times talking about Matthew with with teams that are you know folks that are coming up into the into the TA leadership space is stop asking for a solution and and and really spend time talking about the problem. I had a conversation just just about an hour ago with somebody who was like, you know, I think we might be able to use hired score for this, and I'm like, but that's not what hired scores for. Not that that like I you I think you've got a business problem. Let's let's tease that out. That is a real problem, but that is an automation problem. That is not. Let's figure out how this solution solves that, because it it and and I think honestly that's an epidemic in our space.

M Matthew Brown 17:35

Yes.

C Chris Havrilla 17:35

100%

M**Matthew Brown 17:37**

I the way I talk about it oftentimes, and I I said this, I'm going to say probably 20 times a day when I was an analyst to software providers. The buyer of most software is starting from a deficit to begin with, but if we go deeper into the HR space, by and large, I believe the HR buyer has long been the most uninformed, underinformed, undereducated about this. They are right inherent. The function is inherently built for people helping people, which means we don't typically see a strength in data and analysis. We don't see a strength in tech. Right in this moment of AI and requiring us to think about data governance and data integrity more holistically. That's not something that's really familiar and comfortable to HR. So, to your point, there it's it's been this problem of like I've got the hammer, let me find the nail. That's right. That's right.

J**Joanna Clark 18:36**

There's no doubt about that. Yeah, and I don't like unlike Chris, who has a background in AI, right? I don't have that. I I mean I've been in been in talent acquisition for a handful of years. I'll just say a handful. We'll not talk about how many handfals, but but nonetheless, you know I don't have that background. So honestly, at Workday Rising, I said I spent a good hour with one of their model guys, just learning the math of what they're what what they're doing, and and if all I went if all I did was say tell me more about this product, I couldn't do that. Like it's about learning, and I think that's a to me some somewhere probably like 10 years ago, that shifted in me. It's not. I'm not going to this event to to just learn about what does this product do or what does that product do, but rather like, what are how are you you know because even a lot of the the businesses don't really understand the implications of the products that they're producing, they understand what they what they built. I want to be clear; they do understand that, but they don't necessarily understand the implications to you know an enterprise company with 200,000 people because that's not who they are, and so so that. That dialog and that communication is so is vital. And by the way, I would argue it's a place like you can get on all the conference calls you want. You could have them come to your office all you want, but it's not the same dialog that you can get when you're standing next to a competitor or another another industry. You know where we're talking, we're talking with a vendor that's going to change the conversation, and you know, the things that we look for, for example, in high volume, are not the same as what you know, maybe somebody, you know, like a like a somebody who does significant high volume customer service roles, but what they're learning is certainly is certainly something for me to understand because they do volume that I can't understand, even though we do 60,000 hires a year. You know, you talk about like a Chipotle is a good example of a company that they do volume that we can't possibly understand in a bank. You know what I mean?

C

Chris Havrilla 21:00

You know the interesting thing. It's just, I mean, you know, the the truth bombs and insights in this, you know, are huge, right? Even what you guys have shared so far, like, even I mean, look, when I when I if I'm sitting in an analyst seat, one of the things we have to do is broker these conversations, right, between what is being built and what is being delivered, and to how it's being used and for what, and and and sometimes people are coming kind of kicking and screaming into that that conversation because they're not always approaching it with questions, like you said about learning. I know the solution. I know what we have to do. Here's my check. Let's go. How much? How much? Right. How much? Right. How quickly can I get? You give somebody a hammer, and it's a really good hammer. That doesn't mean they know how to build a house or the house that is necessary, right? Which is, and I love that you know that was brought up, right? Of the of the kind of the business problem and staying focused on what we're going to solve, we got to also stay focused on what matters, right? And how you solve that, and and you know when I was sitting in the vendor seat, I had and and financial institutions is a great example. I had many, and guess what? They all had a lot of the same problems, but guess what? How it was going to work there, how it was going to get solved there, is based on leadership. It's based on culture. It's based on mana structures. It's based on a lot regions, whatever. It's it's based on a lot of things. No two problems are like so. If we're not kind of keeping that in mind, and then asking questions, right? Coming at this with I don't have the answers. I'm trying to find them, and the ones that will work here is is huge. And one of the reasons, you know, to have even you know even a podcast like this, and and and and and if I'm even thinking of the investor seat, right? They have to figure out who they should be investing in, where they should be investing, where are the signals that say, you know, this is the right solution, and that's a hard one when a lot of it could be how do these solutions come together with the people that need to use it to you know to to achieve their objectives. So I think it's really really powerful insights. But I also have to kind of say you know if we go into kind of a round two of this you know I always like to say okay okay and then what so now what does what does that mean? We now know there are layers behind the conversations that maybe you know you might pose to me, Joanna, or you might pose to me, Matthew. You know, there's there's a lot of stuff underneath that, right? So so if I were to kind of say, and then what? Where do we go from here, right? So you've you've kind of given some of your you know the seat and what you're looking for, and I and I want to pick on, you know the the notion of of maybe what is behind that, what decision are you hoping that helps you, your colleagues, your team when you get back? Maybe you posed, you know, the question of what is, what are the new announcements? What are the new capabilities? How much do you step there and go? Okay, what decision is that going to help us make? What what we could deploy, what we should be thinking about, or maybe.

J

Joanna Clark 24:52

What we're not talking about.

C

Chris Havrilla 24:54

What impacts that might have. So we we kind of started round two anyway. But is there anything else? You know, and now even having kind of listened to each other, has anything changed? If you put your perspective, you know, bring these perspectives together, does it maybe help you tackle some decisions that you have to make? And and Matthew, I'll start with you know with you, just having kind of a that buyer perspective does that help you operate in a little bit of a different way or think of a different question?

M

Matthew Brown 25:30

Yes and no. I like right to some degree it because I I have lived in this mindset regardless of the seat that I've sat in. It just I I open it up right 10 degrees more every time I switch seats, but I will say that I think the there was something Joanna that you said at the very beginning when you were answering first question that made my brain open just a little bit differently in a different direction, and it was I've said for years and years and years that there is a disconnect between buyer and seller. There always has been, right? You have a lot of really smart and talented people who can go build really incredible things. They can market incredible things. They can sell incredible things. They can support them, but they are doing it inside a closed system more often than not. Even with customer advisory boards and customer feedback loop. It's still people making decisions about how they think it should work, right? And then you have buyers like me, who will right. I'm an opportunistic buyer, and I will I will make every tool I have do everything it can do, even stuff the builders didn't think it could do. And right, I'm the best and worst case customer in that regard because I will test some things quite a bit. But I'm even more empathetic to the gap that exists, and I'm even more curious now to approach my line of questioning and getting more precise and not just like where is the gap and how do I how do I help customers better articulate what the gap is, what the reality is, and how do I help as a software provider my teams understand how to facilitate that and take action? Right, just a slight nuance, and it was just the way that you framed that operating reality. That combined with, I don't like the one size fits all world. It was never a world that worked for me. And right, it's it's it's here everywhere. It's software. It's school. It's it's all the experiences. And for buyers, the thing that I always challenge and hope they at some point get accustomed to thinking differently is just because a piece of software bears a certain label or is remanded to a certain category doesn't mean that it's apples to apples with everything in that category, right? Every ATS was not built to solve the same problem. It wasn't built with the same minds originating the ideas over time, what you started with is not what you ended with. Right now, in this moment where we're innovating at warp speed and we're we're actually trying to keep up with our own innovations, let alone buyers trying to keep up with it. There's just there's so much opportunity to really understand more.

C

Chris Havrilla 28:20

Yeah, I. You hit the nail on the head, right? That ability to we're hammer a nail today, aren't we? We're on fire. You know, getting to what that works.

J Joanna Clark 28:32
Have my tool belt right here, guys.

C Chris Havrilla 28:35
I you know, I do have a a very kind of Lens, let's just say, of what work is anymore, and and it, boy, with it changing so rapidly, I you know I keep coming back to the the notion of decisions, but to get to that, there are questions, so I'm going to pick on on you one more time, Matthew, because it's just because I love that you are now sitting in a customer success role. So this is a new role, a new approach. You know what Joanna and all the other buyers that are going to listen to this, you know, really maybe need to hear is you now sit in a really interesting seat, and that is the seat of inheriting what gets sold at events like this, right? Yes. And you, you know, you know because you've sat in the buyer's seat. You know, you can hear this with with Joanna. There's a lot behind, you know, the oh my god, what the now what right of of how do I even think about uptaking this? What do you wish people would ask? Before they sign, right? Before they sign.

M Matthew Brown 30:07
I big question. Got to think about strategically, like which HR I want to bring because some of it's in my strategy to drive forward new things.

C Chris Havrilla 30:16
Spoiler alert! Spoiler alert!

M Matthew Brown 30:21
No, in all in all fairness, I I feel like buyers in many cases, right? You don't know what you don't know.

C Chris Havrilla 30:29
Yeah.

M

Matthew Brown 30:30

And that's okay. But be fearless about asking questions and not letting the question well run dry. Sometimes we we feel uncomfortable because we've asked two questions or three questions, and we want to be right. Let's move on so you can spend time with someone else. What I hear often is we focus on pandering to the software provider's talking points. Right, they lead the conversation. They tell us, "Here's the four things we're here to talk about at the trade show or at whatever. Right, if we're on a call, here's what I'm here to talk about. I'm going to go down those points consistently, and at no point do we actually veer deeply into reality. We don't have the conversation to talk about the difference between what you showed me and what my day one is going to look like, and how much work I have to put in to make this thing work successfully. We sell right. I see providers selling software and continuing to ignore the gap that exists. Not every buyer shows up with strategy. Even the ones who show up with strategy maybe don't have the strategy. Strategy is going to make my piece of software the most successful? And there is a reluctance to ask or to push for like help me with that piece. So where you show people perfect world scenario, and we know as buyers of software, I have never set up a piece of software that works the way it was demoed, yeah, right, and and that's not for most buyers. That doesn't click until reality hits and they're trying this out in their day to day. So I wish they would just ask, right? Take the software provider where you need them to go.

C

Chris Havrilla 32:18

Yeah, I you know I wish that buyers would get more fearless to around the notion of of show me, don't just tell me. But but I'm kind of curious why people don't bring their own data and and enforce them to do just that. You know, outside of the demo data, outside of everything, I was going to give you an opportunity to to ask a different answer a different question to get to a better question, but I've got about 30 that have already popped for me. But you know, as a as a buyer, Joanna, would you feel comfortable and courageous enough to to come up with a data set? You know, either anonymized or fake or whatever, but your own demo data that would make sense and would show you what you need to do. Do you? Would you feel comfortable doing that? Would you feel courageous enough to ask your employer to come up with something like that.

J

Joanna Clark 33:27

Are you talking about at the event or just in general?

C

Chris Havrilla 33:31

Yeah, just in general. Look, I mean, to me, the that actually starts at the event. Would you be willing to? And then what time? What time after the event?

J

Joanna Clark 33:40

That's exactly the point I was going to make at the event. I think that there is a bit of a. I think the gap, Matthew, the gap you talk about. I feel it all the time, and I I might get a little gruff with people at times because I'm like, hang on, I'm trying to learn here. I don't need a sales pitch, and I don't need 38 emails Next week, from a company that I'm not going to proceed with, and so I do think that that that's what creates that little cycle of dysfunction. I'll just call it. You know what I mean? Is it that that that line between a good conversation and learning and transaction is very fine, and and I would argue needs to be different every time, right? Like some days, like you may go and talk to me, like let's say myself and one of my the people on my team are on the call. I would really like like why why should we both get the same emails? We're not the same people, and yet we do because your CRM gives it to you, and so I think we've got to we've got to talk about that. Like if if we treated those events less transactional. And more about like me learning, you learning than data. Would I bring data to the table? Yes, I mean obviously we'd have to, you know, like most companies, there'd be NDAs, there'd be all of that kind of stuff would go down. But yes, there are some companies that are worth digging deeper after those events. I got to be honest with you. If you look at like a like a trade like a floor like you know unleashed or or or HR tech, I'm talking about like maybe five total for for me coming out of a of an event where I would want to invest more time on. And I think it's okay by the way, like I have absolutely had conversations where you get an initial sales conversation going, and then they realize based on my answers that this is going nowhere. And the guy just says, like, it sounds to me like this is not a good fit. And I'm like, it's not solving any problems I'm trying to solve today. Great, let's shake hands. We'll go have an ice cream at the little ice cream place together, but let's be done with that. You don't have to send me 25 emails after the fact. And I think, I think if we were better and more conscious of that that transactional to let that learning to transactional line, both on on everybody's side, I think we'd all be happier on the end at the end.

C

Chris Havrilla 36:22

I think so too. If we would measure the right things, that might happen. We don't know what measure the right things. You know, how many conversations were had? How many? You know this, that. How many? Well, you know, batch.

M

Matthew Brown 36:34

We have the lead. Yeah, we've got the lead scanners, and we've got all those things. I there is a philosophy that I have subscribed to for a large part of my adult life, that I wish more people would lean into, or that we would talk about, because it it's sort of for me. If I write asking questions and digging to the root, as adults, we have problems letting go of things. Right, we are emotional. We are knowledge hoarders, and that's because of how the systems have set us up. Right? We go grade one, grade two, grade three, and it's and and and and. Right. Unlearning was the greatest thing I ever brought in in my life, and keeping a conscious, intentional movement in that direction. But right, like it's fundamentally all of the things that we're talking about are the same motions that we have been seeing and doing for 50 years. It is nothing has changed. It's over and over and over because it's what's comfortable. It's what's familiar. It's what right the software tooling was built for a rigid framework, and so we just keep going down that path. And and at some point, somebody has to challenge that and say this doesn't work anymore. It's so true.

C

Chris Havrilla 37:45

It's so true. Well, I I will say this: I'm I am bummed that we didn't get to play my my seat swap game. I really wanted to roll that out here, but I will tell you that there's been a lot of amazing stuff here, so I'm gonna just start to wrap this up because we've already gone longer, and I could do this all day. Did either of you walk away with a better question that you would take to your next conversation with you know with your partners with your you know vendors you know Matthew you with your teams you know you know back at at your organization or you know when you're talking to the next customer who just who just bought and you've you know inherited what the the sales are. Do you have a question that you're going to walk away with?

M

Matthew Brown 38:47

I do. It's it's a very it's kind of a jumble in my head of how I construct it into something that's a little more understandable on the receiving end. But essentially, it is a question about the questions that I'm not asking.

C

Chris Havrilla 39:01

Yeah, right.

M

Matthew Brown 39:02

Like I need to lean in as as somebody on the seller side, on the provider side. I know my organization, I know my product, I know our intention, I know what the internet tells me about your company and what our interactions have told me so far. But what else am I not asking? And creating some safe space to hopefully open that up.

C

Chris Havrilla 39:23

Yeah, I love it. How about you, Joanna?

J

Joanna Clark 39:26

So it's interesting. This has been a really interesting conversation. Thinking about something that's like like breathing for us all, right? Right. For the three of us. So I I actually think I might instead of asking like, "What are you here to? What are you here to to to see? or that variation of that question. I think I think I'm going to start asking, "What do you need to learn more about? Because I think, especially when you see the the industry shifting so quickly. You know, there was a time where I think as TA leaders, we were kind of judged how much information was in our brain, right? Now it doesn't even matter how much is in my brain; it's how much am I willing to learn? Yeah. And and to me, the vendors have to do the same thing. You know what I mean? Because because it's not a static. You know, think about it. We talked about mobile for like 10 years at every conference, and now and now I can't. I can't even imagine that being the case because while we might be talking about AI, we're talking about different types of AI every single conference, and so I think that's that's where I'm shifting to. Is what do you need to learn more about?

M

Matthew Brown 40:44

I love that. I'm going to steal that one too.

C

Chris Havrilla 40:46

I I did too. I changed my answer. I kind of came in. I kind of came in thinking that that the better question is, you know, how do we broker more of these conversations, you know, because it really is about what Joanna and her organization are trying to solve and why. By the way, I came in, you know, kind of as we were doing it, but I would double, I would double down on that on that why like what what else is is behind this you know and what are those downstream impacts what what if I were to do this right now how would it impact you what are the other impacts not just what the promises but what would that impact be? And I think you know, even even on on both sides, I think you know, looking for that impact, knowing the impact, right? You know, as you're doing it, is huge. Look, I think, I hope, I hope we get a huge audience for this because this was incredible. You know, just to kind of unpack this and the willingness to have this conversation with each other, and and so you know, kind of transparently, but in a way that helps you both is amazing. We didn't even have to do seat swapped to build that kind of empathetic rapport, and honestly, I think these are the conversations that we should have around adoption. You know, we should even be thinking about that in the actual exploration and sales cycle. Right? Is is all of that? So I love I love that, and I want to thank you both for bringing your your seats and your passion and your questions and your better questions because I know that'll be super informative. I'm going to be at HR Tech. I am absolutely dying that I'm missing Unleash. I I just want to cry that it's all in the same week, and there's about five other vendor events that I'll be at. I'm you know look, I talked a lot about this question in a Substack essay. I will repost that on Monday with a vendor kit for people to start to think about some of these better questions. And I have some updates. I've already started it. Some updates already. So thank you guys. You know we will have a new episode towards the end of November. I'll be posting more and more about that. Until then, I want to say thank you and good luck at fall season events. Thanks, everyone.

M

Matthew Brown 43:48

Thank you.

J

Joanna Clark 43:49

Thank you.