

The Future of Enterprise - Episode 2

Episode Title: How to Win in Business with Innovation and Change Management

Guest: Paula Whitfield

[00:00:00] You're listening to the enterprise podcast. And I'm your host. This show examines how disruptive forces, business and cultural shifts are altering how we live, and we're forcing businesses to compete and address these demand. Join us as we explore how to shift and compete to take advantage of these new opportunities while exploring the future of work, careers, business, and HR management and technology.

Today, we're speaking with Paula Woodfield, the COO and managing partner of hunter Burton consulting on Operations. We'll go through all you need to know about operations and how to use a variety of business strategies, technology, and core skills to develop solutions that fulfill performance and profit goals.

[00:01:00] So, thanks for joining us, Paula, how are you doing today? I'm doing great. Thank you for having me. I'm excited to have you on this. Operations is so critical. Especially in today's climate. And I know with your years of experience, you're gonna have a whole lot to share with our listening audience today.

Absolutely. Absolutely. I'm happy to be here. Um, you know, small business, medium business. We're just the core of this, uh, growth that's going on in this economy. So it's important to have the tools and resources that we need to be successful. So if I can share a couple of nuggets that help your, your, um, viewers, I'm excited about it.

So why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background? Okay, great. Um, I have been pretty much been an entrepreneur all my life so from the time that, uh, I was young and had a lawnmower business with my brothers and sold vegetables on the side of the road all the way up through, I've always, uh, had that interest, um, in entrepreneurship.

[00:02:00] Um, I went to Howard. And, uh, it's interesting that Howard, my mom had given me like this portable little, uh, water filter ended up selling water to some of my friends. So, uh, so I've always just had that knack for, uh, for business. And I've worked in corporate America for over 20 years. Um, and then, uh, and worked in areas of finance business intelligence.

Technology and, you know, technology solutions and seemed to always work at more of the C-suite level, just really helping the leaders to understand metrics, KPIs, and how they been work and, and picking the right KPIs to, to better, uh, forecast the business. Um, worked with dealers over for, for 10 years, helping them to improve their performance, putting together performance improvement programs for them.

[00:03:00] And. Just that helps me to really hone in on that more entrepreneurial portion of the. I'm very excited now that, uh, officially in 2016, I launched my consulting business. So

I've been working with, uh, businesses to help them just build capacity and, and, and help them with operations. Cause there's a lot of people out there have great ideas, but do not have that operational expertise to really launch a business, uh, sustain a business and, and to scale a business.

So. You know, just very excited that, um, I also own my own franchise as well. just, it a lot's happened through the, through the course of the past two years with COVID and everything. I've had health issues and, and those things, but, you know, with a strong family behind me, my husband, I have two boys, nine and 11.

[00:04:00] I was not only able to launch my franchise, but I finished my MBA at LSU Shreve. Concentrated on entrepreneurship and family enterprise, because that's kind of been, you know, the companies I worked for, they've been large companies, but they've been really family-centric companies. And so, it really kind of elevated my knowledge, honed my skills.

And so I really appreciate that experience. Well, that's awesome. You have, uh, just a, a wide breadth of experience. And I think, as you said, starting your own business gives you an opportunity to use all of your skills. Uh, to help your clients, regardless of the company size and then your franchise, you know, with what you're doing there.

So you're really building this really great, I think enterprise for yourself, right. You know what we always do for others. There's an opportunity now for you to walk through that door, to build that operations, that wealth for yourself. And so that's exciting and leaving a legacy. Or your family. And that was interesting.

[00:05:00] You were, you were sharing with us about finance business intelligence metrics. And one of the things that we're seeing a lot is introduction of AI and artificial intelligence and things like that. And I've seen a lot of various software's and technologies that are coming out. Where large enterprises are using it and really being able to take advantage of it.

And then there's starting to be even more introduction to smaller businesses. And so this whole business intelligence, having a really good understanding of what's happening in your business operations is critical, real time, real data, uh, KPIs and forecasting. So if you don't have a goal of where you're going.

[00:06:00] Definitely KPIs and forecasting are gonna be something that businesses are gonna wanna make sure, especially in this time, you know, that they have those things in place. And you mentioned you honed in on the entrepreneur. Uh, tell me a little bit about, or some examples of disruption where seeing these things in business in terms of trends.

So as far as far as software and technology is concerned, there's more data out there than there ever has been. And a lot of these companies are smaller. Companies are maybe utilizing this data and the disruption occurs where, so for example, I work with surgeons practice that, uh, had a spot. Attached to it.

There's a lot of more single, um, they, they're seeing a trend where there's a lot of companies that are coming online that are doing one thing. They may be doing laser hair removal. They

may be doing, um, just one service, uh, as a part of it, instead of doing the conglomerate of services. And this is in, in various industries.

[00:07:00] And that's what the disruption is, is that these, uh, lower key players are coming in the market using data. Because, you know, there's consumer data everywhere. They're buying all this consumer data. And so they're having kind of the keys to the Casper, whoever has the data rules, the world. Okay. And so, um, a lot of the bigger companies have access to all this data to be able to make decisions about, you know, next steps, products, trends, and things of that nature, smaller companies, um, A lot of them don't have it.

And, and, and they, they do need it. So they understand where they're going. Um, I recommend that, uh, if there's an industry that you, that these companies are in a lot of these industries, their societies or their groups, Are getting all this data together and accessing that data to say, you know, what's going on in my specific industry, you know, am I on track to, you know, with the products and services that I'm offering?

[00:08:00] Am I on track for the next 10 years based on what they're forecasting or is there something that's coming on the market that I may need to shift in my business to move forward? Am I working in, what are all the segments within my industry? and where am I? Is my segment growing? Is it not growing? Do I need to bring in an expertise that may help me to grow in this new area?

That's gonna be. Exploding. So I definitely lead with data in with all of my clients, whether that's financial data, because of course we all know the financial markets now are changing. And right now, if you're trying to do something new in your business, expand your business now would be the time to make sure you secure whatever funding that you may need, because those interest rates are going up.

Um, and so all of this is strategic and works hand in hand, the data, how you utilize the data. How you forecast your business, how you make changes and how you disrupt your own business so that you can move forward and survive because decision making is happening fast. Right. And you mentioned something around data in, uh, having access to data.

And do you find that a lot of you mentioned larger companies having the keys to get access to that data and maybe having the resources I [00:09:00] would even add with personnel finances. To be able to analyze that data and put it in a way that will allow them to be able to strategically put things together, to move forward smaller businesses don't necessarily, I'm not even sure that some business owners really understand the importance of data and then how to access the data or the right data.

and I think those are maybe three things that small businesses really can leverage, which make a lot of sense to me, especially dealing with a lot of businesses on the HR end. Uh, data is definitely really important, but share with us a little bit about smaller businesses and then access to data. Because if you don't have the finances, maybe there's some, depending on the stage of the business.

[00:10:00] They may have more financial means to get access to that. But what are some maybe nuggets or things that you can share with the smaller business owners? Oh, sure, sure.

Uh, what I'd recommend for the smaller business owner is, as I mentioned previously, um, a lot of your industry, um, societies, or, um, that support your specific area.

So, so if you're in a software, um, area in your, let's say you have a Salesforce kind, I have a Salesforce partner and they're able to access their smaller company, but they're able to look to sales. To access data from Salesforce. Um, I have another partner, as I mentioned in more of the surgical area.

[00:11:00] There is specific MediSpa and aesthetics data that they can access from their industry partner. I have another, that is in IV hydration and things. There's, there's a partner that they have that help these industries pull down data, um, so that they would be able to access it. The issue comes in is having the personnel that's able to.

Articulate that data into the small business to say, Hey, this may be a direction that you wanna go. So one is networking. Okay. A lot of, um, entrepreneurs and business owners, don't like to leave their business because they're too busy working in their business. They're not working on their business. And so, networking and talking to and partnering with other business owners who are maybe doing the same thing that you're doing or in that industry and getting nuggets of information from them is helpful.

And, uh, and, and, and learning who in that industry could potentially help them also accessing a consultant is, is helpful and the right consultant that. The two, the, the, uh, competencies and, and that's understanding the that's getting into another area is what are the competencies that are required in your business?

[00:12:00] And what are the things that you currently have and what are your deficits, um, understanding what that is, and being able to access the people to do that. A lot of times I'll tell people, is that, what is it costing you not to have. Resource. Right. So competencies are knowledge, skills, abilities, yes. That you need to acquire in your personnel to be able to effectively do the things that you're absolutely.

You're saying. Absolutely. Mm-hmm it's it, it it's it every, um, I go in and do strategy all the time and it all leads back to person. It, it always leads back to personnel system process, um, and having the competencies that you need. And, and, uh, and, and I, I'm just really a proponent of, you know, Hey, list out all your competencies based on what you, what, what do you, what do you need?

[00:13:00] And then let's create these job roles based on what you need. Say, and that goes to that building capacity that you mentioned? Yes. Yes. I mean building it, it always routes back to needing capacity because a lot of the owners are, like I say, working in their business, not on their business because they're like, okay, I can do this.

I can do that. But while you're doing these things, Opportunities are passing you by things that you know, you as a CEO should be looking ahead on. You can't do that. When you're looking in your business, you can't be out there networking, finding out what's the, what are, what is the trend? What's the next best thing?

[00:14:00] What is every, where, where is this thing going? And you find that out by networking, going to your industry meetings, um, and things of that nature. You, you have to make the investment to go because you learn so much to bring back to your own business, um, to move. yes. And, and one of the things that I always share with clients is that even for smaller businesses, because my company handles business and management consulting in the HR talent management arena, and a lot of the small business owners start businesses leave corporate America.

And they're really good at their functional job that technician partner, their job. and they don't have the skill set to be able to effectively do the full capacity or full life cycle of what it really means to own a business. Right. So they do one part really well, maybe not document in terms of knowledge management that you know, are in their head.

Right, right. To, to be able to, when they acquire personnel, let them know this is the way to do it. And, and, and I think all of that goes. Building capacity for those who don't understand what building capacity is, what is building capacity in a business? I always it's structure. Okay. It it's it's uh, you know, number one, do you have a good foundation?

[00:15:00] Okay first. And then once you have a good foundation means people process technology in your business, you have a good business development process, a way to bring in clients, put them through a sales funnel, potentially, uh, put them through a process of, you know, basically your whole customer success process.

Then from there. You want to build on that to increase your profitability, cause that's what you get into business for is to increase your profitability. And that's when we're talking about to scale or increase your capacity, meaning that, um, you may be ready, your, your business is increasing. Okay. Cause I have one business that I'm working with and they're just like.

If somebody else calls and wants to order give, give something, they can't handle it right now because they're at capacity they're, um, you know, developers are at capacity. They're their project, people are at capacity. And so what capacity means is bringing on more. Individuals headcount resources to be able to do the work, or it may be a, Hey I'm at capacity because I don't have the right technology or tools to do, to do the work I need to do.

[00:16:00] My processes are not where they need to be to handle the next level of work. So it could be it's people. It's the process. It's the technology. So, which is it that is affecting you being able to go to the next level or be able to take on more work or project. And I will tell you that that's not just something that is for small business.

As we debrief as an organization, uh, we do recruiting executive search. That is one of the themes that I see in the reports that come from my team. You know, as we say, what's happening, you know, why are people signing up for our networks? What, what are you hearing? And a lot of it is around capacity in the roles that these larger organizations really want to have all of this work done, but don't have the necessary infrastructure of people in place to really support these projects.

. [00:17:00] And I. Would like to make sure people understand as our listening audience, that if you work for a small business, we know that that's a challenge in your worker. And if you

work for a larger organization, that's a worker, but it all still leads back to the operations, to strategic operations component of the business.

And that really kinda leads to leadership. Uh, and so that kinda leads me to my next question. What are some maybe key takeaway. That companies or business leaders may use to overcome these drivers and challenges in the workplace. And I know some of the things that in your hunter Burton consultant, you guys deal with the environment, how to move the workplace forward.

[00:18:00] Can you share with us a little bit about what that looks. It it's and it's, every things are changing so rapidly, especially with this new gig economy, um, where, uh, people are like, oh, I don't have to come into an office or I can, you know, you have all these people with all of these skill sets that have left corporate America.

Okay, great skill sets that are doing work so that they can have the flexibility at home or flexibility to do what they they want to do. So I, I talk to my companies about you. You have to listen. First to your workforce and your people. And you have to be honest with them about what the needs of the company are from the standpoint of, of workforce.

[00:19:00] And so transparency from leadership becomes very important during these times, because if you're being transparent, people will gravitate towards you because there's a sense of loyalty. There's a sense of commitment that you're having to them because right now employees finding. Are just like me and just like you started your own company, they want some want, it's not for everyone.

So they want to be with the company. So getting back to my companies, I am talking to them more so because we have a couple of roles at different companies that are becoming difficult to fill because people have many choices. As far as, as where, where they're going to go. I talked to them about, uh, making sure that benefits packages are, um, in place and, and not just for an individual, but for where you want to go in the future.

Cause I, I had a couple of companies that just, you know, put some things in place. They were smaller businesses. They're growing so fast and it's just, you've got to. Things in place that the employee needs having retreats, because I have several companies that are totally remote, but I mean, people always say they want have these remote jobs, but then they still need that water cooler connection with, uh, people.

[00:20:00] And so, um, how do you bring in, uh, maybe consultants that provide like emotional intelligence type of, uh, consulting to really, uh, Because, because I think this is a question of culture. Um, and the culture shift. And so how do you create a culture where people's voices are heard you accomplish what you need?

However, you're able to keep longer term employees because that's just not happening in this day and age. It's just those 20 and 30 year employees. They're, they're not there. And so you just have to be prepared of, of what, and then this also leads me to. When I was working on my MBA at LSU and thinking back on my career and positions that I had, I was always an entrepreneur.

[00:21:00] Okay in my job. And because I was an entrepreneur, I look back, I put in legacy systems in the company. I made radical change at the companies because I was more of a risk taker. Um, I thought outside of the box, um, that's my personality. I'm a E N T P. I'm an extrovert and, you know, into intuition and all of those Myers Briggs.

That's what I do. And I think these companies. There has to be a balance of you having these entrepreneurs in your business to grow your business and to see things that others won't see there needs to be a balance. And that's where that diversity of, uh, workforce comes in is how do I create not just a, um, ethnically diverse workforce, but how do I create this workforce?

That's diverse in talent and skills. everyone's needed that person that is needed. That's gonna just work nine to five and just do the day to day to day is needed. And then you also need those think outside of the boxers that are gonna just do that. And so I really work with my team on not trying to hire somebody that fits their current culture, but who fits your future culture.

[00:22:00] And, and, and that's it, cause you know, as we know, you hire people that are like your current culture and oh, they don't fit in the culture and no that's great that they don't cause you need to disrupt and shake things. Yes, that's definitely true. And when you started out talking, I started thinking about emotional intelligence.

So when you said that I'm like, yes, , that's what that is. Wrote an article on that. And, and I tell you that bringing people in how you bring them in giving them the opportunity to use their skills. Their knowledge and abilities to help your organization. Those KSAs, we call them, uh, competencies as well to really do what they do best.

[00:23:00] Right. Mm-hmm and, and a really good leader is not a micromanager. You're bringing in strong talent. You're bringing people who are experts at what they do. Expert technicians. and they want to be given the freedom to do their role at the level of excellence. Let's say that that they do their work and be able to position the company, uh, in a way to help it meet its goals.

And I think that part of the exit that we're seeing. Is that most people today realize that they can do better by themselves okay. On their own and not in a corporate environment with all of the constraints, all of the non really healthy work life balance things that happened there. So they would rather go out on their own and maybe take a little bit less money.

[00:24:00] But have peace of life, have the opportunity to work on smaller projects, potentially build their own capacity to do the things that they enjoy. Because regardless of what people say, we've always had disruptions in the workforce disruptions in business, but what we're seeing with COVID and these emergencies and disasters, the wars, and, you know, these things continue to grow.

There's gonna be these disruptions that take place and people are gonna have to decide what's most important for them. And for leaders in these organizations, business owners, um, for executive supervisors and managers, emotional intelligence is gonna be really key to having transparency. Honest conversations.

[00:25:00] And if people don't know what emotional intelligence is, I say, Hey, let Google that for you. Go, that's good there because you have have that. You can't be leading in a box. If you want to really have a hybrid workforce, you know, wanna have people work from home, you have blended teams, like you said, maybe you have.

A workforce that everyone is remote. How do you engage those individuals? How do you transfer knowledge? One of the things I was reading in your profile was that you deal a lot with learning and development of people. So transferring of knowledge, how can you get the best outta staff using L and D and trying to build capacity?

[00:26:00] Over my years of, uh, working, even in corporate America. I think when you find somebody who's willing to learn and, and somebody who's, who's hardworking, you can always train them on other functional areas, but that core at their core, if they have, uh, people still. That could move them into those higher level leadership positions, you know, based on, you know, maybe going through a Myers Briggs and you've, you know, figuring out, you know, what is their personality, what do they gravitate toward.

I think development of people. So people are who they are and their motivations are what they are. And so you quickly identify, okay, this person, you know, has a skill set where I could see them leading a group of people. Um, so functionally starting to identify those people and put them through trainings from a corporate perspective, you know, that's a, uh, that route would.

A little easier to do from a, uh, smaller business type of perspective, taking a look at what, what your needs are. We were, I get involved in some of the final interviews just to help with my business owners, with, you know, hiring, uh, people. They're just like, Hey, I'm about to hire this person. You know, I just want you to take a look at, talk to them, see what you think.

[00:27:00] And, um, you know, recently did that and saw that this person had like background and operational, uh, experience, and that's not the functional area that they were hired for, but. Where we're going is going to require somebody that has this functional and these, these core competencies. And so, um, so I. As a smaller business, um, looking beyond what you need right now to what you'll need in the future.

Um, and being able to say, what can I do to develop this person, um, to what I may need in the future? Because as a small business owner, your goal is to. How can I move to working on my business and be able to leave the business and maybe go on vacation? Who, you know, how, how do I get to that place where this business is on autopilot?

[00:28:00] And I am just really moving the needle on future development. And that is you. So what types of developing your staff are available to, um, to support small business, uh, with operations or businesses with operations, um, that may not have the. We're talking still a lot about capacity or resources in people.

Yeah. Uh, you know, um, being here in Houston, it it's really amazing. There's a lot of, uh, organizations. That are doing cohorts. And, um, I recommend that I'm, I'm in a, I'm actually in a cohort with waste management and they're bringing experts on to work with you monthly on different areas. So I recommend, uh, that going to the small business, uh, Um,

development centers and, you know, Hey, here's an area of op area that I'm not as strong in and are there some classes that I can take or, you know, I have a, an employee that I'm, you know, really excited about.

[00:29:00] But I think they need training in this area. Just think of how much they would, the employee would appreciate that and you know, how much you would benefit from it. And so going to the local community college, cause a lot of the community colleges have small business development programs or have core functional skills that can be developed in, in that way.

Um, if, if possible, um, bringing, um, a person, somebody in to do some, some work with, uh, um, you. I thought it was really, uh, on the retreat that, um, I recently attended with one of my teams. We had a, um, a, uh, HR professional come in and do the Myers Brigg assessment and really walk through it. And I think that really helped the team to understand why certain team members, uh, You know, gravitate towards certain things or in meetings, how I need to interact with people.

[00:30:00] And so, um, you know, that may be a little more expensive for those companies who are, you know, under a million in sales or things of things of that nature that are just in that growth stage. So I definitely think, um, small business development, um, these certification programs are really good because like I said, the certification programs force you to network.

And so as you're, as you're networking, so approaching them, I know that, uh, the Houston urban league is doing a lot with small business development here in Houston. And, uh, so there's just, there's a lot of grant money, a lot of programs out there that are being, being developed. And so I think getting out of your business to network, I know city of Houston.

Has a huge, uh, small business development center and they put on various programs. Your chamber is a great place to go as well. Uh, the chambers, um, just for the networking and, and finding other business owners who are doing what you're doing and, uh, you know, what are the training that they're bringing into their business and putting a budget in place for it.

[00:31:00] Um, and, and putting a budget in place for, Hey, here's how much I'm gonna spend on training for individuals. And here's how I. Do well, here's what I'm gonna do with my team. I may bring a consultant in just to, you know, share some information and knowledge with my team on, you know, change management cause I've, I've done pro I change management before.

And a lot of times people try to just throw change on their team and it's just like, are they prepared for this change? And that disrupts a lot when, when that we know this change needs to come, but that goes back to the leadership transparency, putting the process in place, putting the people in place to make sure that the transition, you know, at least goes 50%.

Well because we know, you know, it's never a hundred percent, but, um, right. But as it, it's just a difference between what a small business owner would do. And a larger company would do a larger company is just gonna bring emotional intelligence consultants in to work

directly with their group. They're gonna bring change management consultants in that can just, you know, work with their groups and get these things done.

[00:32:00] As a small business, you have to be a little bit more tactful as far as, you know, how can I at depending on what level of growth I am in my business, work with these local chapters and things to, to, to, uh, get some training and development. Yeah, and that's really good. I think in terms of consultants, uh, there, there are so many great tools.

Um, we always advise some of our smaller companies around assessments of individuals that there's some really, if you can't afford a consultant, um, there's some really great tools online that businesses can purchase to have people do the assessments themselves and give you the. And give you information on where you need to coach the person just based off of how they respond to questions.

So there's a lot of really other great resources that based on this, the stage of your business, that companies, um, we always say can, can utilize. I mean, that's kind of our expertise from the HR coming from that perspective. There's also what we've been seeing too organizations coming to us to kinda almost stand in the gap.

[00:33:00] Where they may have people going out on long term leave, where we provide HR consultants to work with them so that they don't lose a level of skill or experience in their organization. There's no bumps or hiccups. It's a seamless transition from the person going out. So we have supplied consultants to work for a predetermined amount of time.

To really help them in their infrastructure. Tell me a little bit about, you know, are there roles that you've seen people maybe outsource as a business? To bring in that type of support, like the fractional COO. Yes. Yes. Um, and I think a lot of people don't know that exists, um, because a lot of, uh, businesses that I work with, you know, they're growing, they're doing great, but they may not be at the point where they could bring in a full time.

[00:34:00] Chief operations officer, somebody who's very strategic or chief marketing officer, because they need to pull together more of a marketing and branding positioning strategy. And so, uh, there, it's very valuable because, uh, what you're receiving is a lot of these people have come from corporate America and have been working with businesses, um, and using pretty much a fraction of their time.

And so they used to be full time in corporate America, but they may manage, you know, four to five businesses. Um, and that, that, uh, they come in and. And pretty much embed themselves into the business. And that's what we do. Um, I have a leadership position with several companies and so I'm on their leader.

[00:35:00] Committee and I'm functioning as more of a chief operations officer because they're all working in the business. They need somebody more strategic. That's being able to, Hey, take a look at opportunities. What are we doing on our team? If they're, they're being more strategic in that area or there's other positions that, um, that can come in as a director of operations director of that, that are fractional as well, that do more of the functional day to day and stand in the.

That you know, this person, you know, okay. I can't afford to bring in somebody that's a hundred thousand dollars, but Hey, I can afford somebody that's, uh, you know, embedding themselves in our business two days a week, if they need to be, you know, that may come in for \$30,000 a year, you know, and they're using a fraction of their time, but they are.

Um, and in this role, they're more hands on. It's not like a consultant coach that comes in and say, Hey, you guys do all. 25 things and I'll come back and check with you next week. This person actually has a job function, a job role where they're going in and working on bigger project rocks that need to get taken care of and, uh, and working in tandem with your team.

[00:36:00] So they, they become another team member. And so that's what that role is, is more fractional. It's, you know, cons consultative, but it's consultative in a way that they're more part of the team. So how does a, a, a company find a fractional. Support resource. So you can call me call hunter Burton. We can, um, we can definitely help you find this type of resource, um, to embed in your business.

It's a very new concept because from a larger company perspective, they're more familiar with it because they just use a consultant. They bring a consultant in for a project management position, they have a shortfall and they're like, okay, I don't know if this is a long term role, or if this is a short term role, we just need to bridge the gap.

We need to have this functional help. They bring that person in as a small business. Um, you can do the same. Um, and, uh, you know, there's, um, HR companies out there, I'm sure like yourself that can help them identify, um, individuals based on, you know, first thing. is before this, this occurs, is that look around, is there anybody in your business that can be groomed to go into that role?

[00:37:00] And so that's what I always say first, you know, before we go calling and bringing others in, you know, what are we, what are we looking at? Has your business changed? So that certain roles are not even required anymore because there's a system that has pretty much taken over this role, that that person could be shifted into something more, you know?

So let's take, and do you know, uh, an analysis. Of your staff, your roles do things need to change. And so once that changes, then go back to these, um, skill sets that that's needed. And what's what are, what are our deficits? What do we need? Then we can bring someone in because we know what we need at that point to bring that level of expertise in.

And then the question is, is that. Is this more of a longer term, or is this a short-term role? Is this a part-time role? Because there's a lot of people out there looking for part-time work and, and this would give your company, um, the edge because, um, you go out there and you're able to say, Hey, I need somebody that's gonna come into the office two days a week.

[00:38:00] You know, just think of who that would attract and the skillset that would attract, uh, cause you have these professional moms and dads who are like, okay, I need more time with my kids, but I do like the office. So it gives them that hybrid need that they have. So, um, I think it's, uh, you know, as you, as you well know fun, it's uh, being creative with what can I offer my staff and, and what can I do to get what I need for the, this future of change?

Right. And you had mentioned earlier, I still think community colleges are great ways. Great resource as well. In addition, like you mentioned the chamber and other small business development centers, even WBENC women business, enterprise, national council, national minority supplier, and diversity council.

[00:39:00] I mean, I can rattle these on and on all of these different groups, but they do provide some level of support and assistance resources. and if they don't know their great way to connect, to say, Hey, I've had, I've called them, uh, on a, several requests. They didn't have the services mm-hmm that I was looking for and the people internally, but they were able to connect me to another organization that was able to feel what it was that I was trying to find.

So even in the groups and associations, that you are a part of. your industry associations. It's still, even if you hear no, they still may be able to, like they did for us, make a referral to someone or some other organization to get you the answer that you need. To add to that. Um, those community colleges are amazing and the franchise that I own, I have a student in there working with me because I reached out to the community college.

And so you're able to give back and also, you know, get a student in there who's, you know, studying a certain field that may be beneficial to you that you could potentially hire once they get through their program. So, uh, being in touch with those community colleges is, or a college nearby is invaluable.

[00:40:00] Definitely. Definitely. And what, what do you think in terms of change management for companies that are working with teams, hybrid remote work teams, what does that look like today in terms of operations? Are there any maybe takeaways or things that you can give to them nuggets that you can provide? To help them be more successful in managing a, you know, diverse workforce.

I know. I, I mean, it, it is tough. It, it, it is because you're managing, who gets to stay, stay home, who gets to, based on the type of job and, and, oh, everybody just needs to come into the office. Uh, you know, because this one can't because their job function is, is that, and so I think it's, um, transparency number one is, is the key.

[00:41:00] With those work groups that are more hybrid, figuring out a way to bring everyone together in some way. I'm actually doing some research on that for one of my companies, because of, of this new change is, is, uh, how do we have those water cooler op moments? How do we, you know, make sure people can just pop into, because that was I always, when I worked in corporate America, I learned a lot more when I could just pop down and talk to someone about a project and I just popped into their office.

Hey, what's going on, talked about the weekend. And then I found out more information about the project than being informal meetings. And a lot of times, you know, I was just talking to one of my clients about that is that if you're calling someone or on zoom with them, you're calling them for something specific.

It's never a casual. Hey, what's going on conversation where you can get all of that information. And so I think one of the things is, uh, how do you put together clusters of

maybe two to three of your, your workers to say, Hey, you all are gonna cluster this month and just, you know, Have offline conversation about here's a list of topics and learn more about each other.

[00:42:00] And so you're gonna have to just pretty much facilitate that to help it to become part of your culture is how do I create those moments of casual conversation because offices are now designed for that. Uh, before we left them, where right? Social connection piece, the social connection. They're opening offices.

You know, everybody had a door used to have a door, no one has a door anymore. But now that the shift is we don't have a door, but we're at home, you know, how do you create that, that social aspect of it? And, and there's techno like, you know, I said, zoom has the technology and I was talking to 'em about that.

It's just, how do you just kind of maybe have everybody on zoom and then you kind of. Shift around, put everybody in the, the, the rooms together so that they're just chatting and talking and, and creating that. And so I think just using the technology, like the zoom, where people can just interact with each other and not ha and maybe given a list of time, because some people like me, I can talk off the cuff.

[00:43:00] Some people need to be prepared and understanding your workforce, and some people may not comfortable for them. And so that's a lot about that. So I think if you have a larger organization, Really, um, reinforcing and fortifying your HR team to include somebody that is a specialist on how can I improve this culture when I have a hybrid organization and then from the smaller organization talking, I potentially bring in a consultant to just really help me to make sure I have the culture because people leave.

Because they don't, you know, they're like, okay, this, this doesn't work for me. And how do you get in front of that and be able to be in touch. So I think it's important to have somebody who's responsible for making sure the culture, uh, meets the need of your future organization and meets the need so that you can retain employees.

[00:44:00] Thank you, Paula. That was really insightful. We actually have an audience question and it. How can companies apply the principles of innovation to manage change? So with, um, I mean, innovation does manage change. I mean, it, it goes hand in hand. I mean, that, that is, is how you, you manage change where I think number one is having that diverse.

Culture of workforce diversity of, or ethnic diversity, as well as skillset diversity on your team and understanding how that works, not just doing it to do it, but doing it intentionally. Um, it is, is how to do that. Innovation is a culture. Innovation is. Is the way you do things and the way those, the way people work and the way that their ideas are received.

Okay. And, uh, received at all levels. Um, some people, it doesn't mean much for their innovation to receive by just their manager, but to be received by leadership and, uh, and acknowledged by leadership. And so I think creating a culture where, how are, how this innovation rise to the. To so that these ideas are heard.

[00:45:00] And how do you give people? Cause I know at Google they had it where Hey, 20% of your work time should be. On, you know, just your ideas, what you wanna do. They had been successful at creating various different programs and software's for Google that wouldn't have been done if they were just going about their day to day and doing, Hey, here's what leadership's focus is.

Let's do it. But giving people that space and it being a stated space of, Hey, here's where I want you to innovate, you know, and, and, and come together. Let's put some cluster teams. I remember I was with a, a company. We had to, I was in business intelligence, and we had these dashboard competitions where we had to create KPI dashboards.

And a lot of that, the, um, you know, we put some of the McKenzie out of business. doing these dashboards because you know, the leadership, they really loved them. And it was able, they were able to just see things in different ways and see perspectives. And it gave your team. Access to leadership to be able to, to get that recognition as well.

[00:46:00] So I think, um, creating a, uh, so diverse of people, I think, diverse of culture and then a way, uh, a way for the company to see. Receive the innovation that's occurring. Is there a, uh, annual, is there a competition annually? Is there a, uh, a program to that you can put in place for innovation at your company so that people can let their ideas be heard?

So, I think it's just, uh, putting together a system of innovation in a way to display the innovation would be great. All right. Well that definitely gives our listening audience an opportunity. Put some resources and things in place from the bottom, all the way to the top to help drive innovation in the organization.

[00:47:00] That's really something that I think companies can do more of doing a lot of listening walks and in hearing, because I can tell you, I work for entertainment, media company, and they use their receptionist. The organization up show and it was really successful. We,

I, I'm excited about all you in reference to operations and how people can really look at managing the disruptions, the challenges, and trends. Are affecting businesses today, regardless of their size from small startup organizations, small businesses, medium, large, uh, size enterprises. Uh, can you share with us some final thoughts and let a audience know how they can get in touch with you?

[00:48:00] Thank you so much fawn for, um, inviting me onto the program. And, uh, my passion is entrepreneurs, um, and operations, uh, because I understand that a lot of times, um, As, as a consultant, it takes more than giving, uh, an owner or a leader, a checklist. It's, it's a little, it takes a little further than that because typically when I go back, it's never done so, um, I find that, uh, that.

If you're able to, from a corporate level, or even from a, uh, smaller business level, have a thought partner, a consultant come in to really help you to see the things that you as you're working in your business and not on your business, don't have time to see that it, it is valuable. It costs you not to have.

[00:49:00] A thought partner in place. If let's say that you're a solo entrepreneur and don't have that level of person in your business, that you bring that consultant in just fractionally part-time just to say, Hey, here's how many, here's a set out many hours a week, a month that I want you come in. And you know, let's put some plans in place of what we can work on.

Um, if you're that larger business that has the resources, um, bringing in those resources to really. Sort of help your business to move into the future because where it is right now, it will be different gig economy, culture. Uh, it it's all changing everything. Um, if you're gonna have innovation, you need a structure to be able to receive that innovation and have that diverse population within your business to be able to.

Give you those ideas and move you to the future, but you can reach me. I'd be loved. I would love to help any of the, uh, callers, um, who are listening right now, um, to help them in their business. I can be reached at [www dot hunter Burton, inc.com](http://www.hunterburton.com). We are hunter Burton consulting and, uh, we do fractional, um, uh, work with, with companies.

[00:50:00] As we insert ourselves into your business, we can do some small group training. With your, your teams to just, you know, move and build capacity. That's really my sweet spot. So I, I look forward to hearing from you soon. Yes, that's great information. And we also on the enterprise website page and you'll able to connect with her there as well.

So that's all for this episode of the future of enterprise. I'd like to thank. Our guest Paula Whitfield with [Hunter Burton Consulting](http://HunterBurtonConsulting.com). Hunter Burton Consulting is headquartered in Houston, Texas hunter Burton consulting is available to assist businesses anywhere regardless of your location. Be sure to sign up to our email list @ accendigroup.com/podcast.

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