

The Future of Enterprise - Episode 2

Episode Title: How to Upskill and Reskill Your Career with Drone Education

Guest: Theo Nix, Jr

[00:00:00] You're listening to the future of enterprise podcast. I'm your host Fawn Hentrel. And I'm excited today to have with us our guest Theo Nix, Jr. He is an attorney, and the chairman and CEO of Drone Workforce Solutions and [DWS Drone School](#). I'm excited to have him here Theo, please introduce yourself to our audience.

Yes. Great. Well, thank you so much glad to be on the podcast and to talk to you about some exciting opportunities that I'm involved in. So, my background is I've been an attorney for over 40 years and graduated from the legendary Howard university school of law in Washington, DC. I'm a second generation, lawyer.

[00:01:00] My father was a lawyer as well. And, I've been working in corporate America. Well, most of my life, but I've also been an entrepreneur for most of my career as well. And I worked for billion dollar companies, family owned companies. And I've worked in the nonprofit sector and I've worked for fortune 500 company in a \$18 billion global buy space where I negotiated all kinds of deals and contracts around the world. I love being an entrepreneur and love being in the corporate world, so to speak.

You have a very rich history and background. You have really been able to take what you have learned over the years to really build something in a burgeoning industry and that is dealing with drones. One of the areas where I think there's a lot of opportunity for people who are looking to change careers, people who are looking to get into new careers.

[00:02:00] And why don't you share with our audience? What is it that you're seeing in terms of this new industry and how it is really taking shape. How is it being disruptive in the workforce?

Yeah, so, five years ago I was walking around talking about drones and trying to educate people about what I saw clearly was going to be a major force around the world in all kinds of industries.

And it was a lonely walk because only thing most people knew about drones was that drones were used in the military to kill, ISIS and Al-Qaeda and to a large stance, then that is correct. But, for every military use of things, there's also a commercial civil use. Eventually that works its way through society.

[00:03:00] And so five years later we see that drone technology is a hundred billion opportunity according to Goldman Sachs. What was your reason for starting the school? When I worked in corporate America and I'm gonna be real honest with your listeners. And

I, I think most of them would agree with me anyway, but what I can boldly say is that the American middle class today is broke and their kids are, are broker.

Um, we know that companies like mine, DuPont have been for the last couple decades. These companies have been sending jobs overseas. To workers to build and make things gidgets and gadgets and all of that. And they have created magnificent middle-class lifestyles for these countries. Now we all beat up on China because China's the big elephant in the room.

[00:04:00] And, and of course, China has created a magnificent middle class, uh, for its, its citizens. But if you look at. Cambodia Thailand, Brazil, India, to name a few. The Asian countries have had a GDP year over year of 8%. That is huge. Right? Obama said he could only get it up to about 2% and Americans should get used to that.

Right. Trump got it up to 3%, but these countries have, have it have had it at 8%. Now, when you look at that in dollars, these countries. Have a great middle class, the same kind of middle class that we used to have in the twenties and thirties when America was the thing, it country. And if the, the press got out of its way and went over to these countries and really dug down and saw what was going on, the American people would be angrier than they were on January 6th.

[00:05:00] And they've been angry for a long time. I think a lot of it is fear, uh, that turns to anger because the American people see what's going on. We see. When, when students go to college, they come out \$1.7 trillion worth of debt, and they can't even pay, uh, pay the debt. So, in my small way, what I wanted to do was to help the middle class be I don't wanna use great, right.

Cause it's overused, but to be where they were back in the day. Right. And so, I think technology is where it's. I think we know that manufacturing has been dead for a while. Coal steel, making furniture, all those kinds of things that Americans used to be able to make with a high school diploma and make six figures and live a fantastic lifestyle.

[00:06:00] The mother would stay home. The, the man would retire in their fifties with full pension, full healthcare and live a dynamic. Life that that's been dead for a long time. So, I wanted to a small, some small way start this company to educate, train and employ Americans in these technologies. And create another viable middle class once again.

And we have a number of strategic partners who believe the vision, who understand the vision, who wanna be part of the vision. And we have a lot of students who have gone through our schools and get it. And a number of them are thriving as well.

What I really like about your programs and your school is that it allows individuals who may not take your traditional tracks for high school going to college/university can really find another alternative. Even an alternative to attending a trade school, because how can we get people to work quickly is one of the key questions that we have to be able to answer.

You know, how do we look at the future work? What does that look like? And so many people are not wanting to.

[00:07:00] Get into that. And that's really being seen with where the economy is today, the low enrollment in the traditional institutions or people who have been going to these schools, taking out loans and not being able to get help with career services or really find jobs in the field. That they have signed up to go to these schools and get a degree.

DWS really presents another alternative for people to really get real world experience, not just the learning and education. And can you talk a little bit about your programs and really how people can get started in learning about drones or unmanned aerial system?

Yeah. To your point, Fawn we have a lot of training going on in America.

A lot of colleges went over 4,000 universities and colleges. And when everybody comes out, they come out with their certificate of completion, their, their degree. And they come to companies like my old companies and say, well, here I am. I got this X degree, and we will tell them, well, that's not what we wanted.

[00:08:00] That was done five years ago. Didn't your college tell you that the technology or whatever it is has changed? Well, no, now. They have to get a master's or get another, uh, bachelor's degree or get some other kind of training because they come with a degree or diploma, but that's not what industry wants.

And what I found was that they never, the college has never talked to industry. They never sit at the table and say, okay, what, what do you have planned in five years so that we can have a. For what is about to happen? Not what happened 10 years ago. They don't do that. And I've been at conferences speaking on behalf of my companies.

[00:09:00] And I would be maybe the only representative from a fortune 500 company at the table at these educational events, telling them, you know, you need to invite all of these companies to the table so that you can understand what they want. So our school is now at the table, right? We know what industry wants.

We can move quickly in this space. Most colleges can't because of bureaucracy. We have three courses far and, and what we're adding every day. And the first class is our drone technology class. So it's 70 contact hours. Which 48 hours is curriculum that we, uh, have developed ourselves using FAA, licensed commercial pilots who are also FAA flight instructors, and they write curriculum for the airline industry, and they are also licensed as FAA part 107 drone pilots as well. So, I would humbly say we may have one of the best drone curriculums out there. So we teach for the audience of people who may not be familiar with part 107, cause that's really, I think a game changer, you know, in the industry, in terms of your curriculum being proprietary.

[00:10:00] Can you share with those who are new to drones? I mean, UAS, UAV, what part? 107. Yeah. So, FAA part 1 0 7 is from the federal aviation administration and they have rules

and reg regulations and they say, okay, if you want to be a commercial, drone, pilot, and make money. Then you have to know the regulations, you know, need to know how to fly it.

You need to know what the, what the dangers are. It's almost like flying a plane only, not as, as complicated. Right. But there are a lot of similarities. So the FAA general aviation administration now has rules and regulations that you need to know before you can get a license and you have to be a licensed drone pilot.

[00:11:00] Yes. In order to fly out there. And so that's what we teach. Make sure that they can pass that exam and get at least a 70 on it. It's a multiple-choice exam and you, you get a license for two years, but we do more than that far. And we teach them how to be a good pilot in the industry. Right? Cause you can go for a buck 70, buck 40, buck 20, \$120 and go online.

You know, right. Study take a test, but you gotta come out and not, not know anything. Right? You get your license, but we also teach, we also teach you how to fly a drone, give you 18 hours in the field, flying a top-notch drone made by the largest manufacturer. Of small drones in the world and that drone has a 4k camera.

Best camera made today actually has two cameras on it. It has, uh, obstacle avoidance. So, if it senses, you're gonna run it into a building, a tree, a pole, a post, it will stop. You. And if it's way out there filming, and you don't hear the beeps and the gongs going on to say, hey, you're running outta battery life.

[00:12:00] It will cut the pilot off and come back and land where it took off a magnificent piece of machine. It can do all kinds of inspection services with it. And then we teach you how to edit the data. Right. Cause it's all data collection at the end of the day. Right. You're, you're videotaping. Let's say you're videotaping something, you take 30 minutes, and your client says, well, I just need 10 minutes, or you need to know how to edit all of that stuff out to put the good stuff in and edit the other stuff out.

So, we teach that we teach you how to put music to it or narration or words on the screen. All of those are areas that you need to know. And also, those are areas where you can make money. To add to what you're going to charge to take film, the drone objects that you, that you want. And then I teach you the business part of it.

[00:13:00] How do you set up your own drone company? I believe one of the keys to generational wealth is to have your own business, because right now, if you're a w two. You are a servant. I like to say slave, because really that's what we all are. Right? Because they pay you just enough to go to work on Monday, but never enough to get wealthy.

So that's what a capitalist society is. I get it. I'm not mad at wealthy people. What I want to know is how do you do it so that I can do it for my family as well. So, we actually teach the business side of it, helped them to set. Their own business we discuss which kind of company is best for them. I give them all of the documents they need.

They don't have to pay somebody like me, a couple thousand dollars to, to file everything or set it up. They can get everything set up probably for about \$500, or less. And then we teach you 13 ways of how to finance it other than a bank or a credit union, which is what most people know. I've had the privilege of working for a 3 billion.

[00:14:00] Companies. And when you work for wealthy people, you learn this, the, the secrets of how they do things, right? And so, they shared it with me and I shared it with our students, 13 ways to finance it. Many of these ways I've used myself. Most people have no clue about it. So, you don't have to mortgage your, your, yourself, and this will help you then put it all.

That's the drone class, the virtual reality class is 1.2 trillion opportunity. And again, people don't know much about it, but it is bigger than even drone technology is. And basically, what you do is we teach you how we give your \$500 camera packet. You go into the building, you film the rooms, we do what you call stitch the photos together.

You will create a 3d model. And the roof and the walls are off the building. And with your goggles that you put on it's as if you are walking in the building and you are there when you're really not there, this is huge for real estate. My realtors have told me that during COVID they had a lot of sellers who wanted to sell their homes.

[00:15:00] The problem was the sellers didn't want people walking through their home because of COVID. So, the realtors are saying, well, how do I sell your home? Because people gotta see it. Well, if they hired my, my graduates, they would then gone into the house, do it, virtually, put it on their website and the people could have downloaded it and walked through the house as if they were there.

So, we have all of the, the evidence to show the, the proof of these, uh, technologies and the money that can be. In them. I lay out the different, uh, money makers, uh, in some of the industries and two of our biggest, uh, two of our graduates who only have a high school diploma. They were making six, six figures.

[00:16:00] They a high school diploma, no college. So, this is for, for those people who can't afford college, don't wanna go to college, don't know whether they went to do it's great for them and great for young folks, right? Because they're gamers. And so we, we have a couple initiatives which we can speak about. And then the last class is our ag agriculture class.

That is so agriculture is huge. Feeding the world today is more and more difficult and we're losing the battle. Defeat people. People go to bed hungry every day around the world, including in the United States, as quiet as it's kept. And we're losing the battle because we have too many people on the earth.

We used to have plagues that wiped out millions of people, but because of vaccines and pharmaceuticals, we can keep people here much longer, really longer than, than their body can stand to be here, right? Their body basically wears out. Right? So, there's a pressure point on the agriculture community.

[00:17:00] So, we are working with our strategic partners to create what we call data analytics for the ag industry, using drones. If we can increase crop yield four to 15% year over year, depending on the crop, that's a game changer globally. It is right. And your farmers will love to have you do these reports weekly to make sure that in real time they can what's called precision intervention.

They can do intervention based on the analytics that. Do for the farmers and create reports. You go on our site and see all of this, but we create reports for the farmers. They then can say, oh, I need more, uh, seed here. Um, it didn't take, or I have a pest infestation, or I have all these weeds in here or have insects eating us.

[00:18:00] And so then they can spray where it's needed and not spray everything, which is what it's being done now. Very waste. In agriculture. So now you get paid to do all the analytics and then you get paid to do the spraying of weed for weeds or dropping seeds from the sky using drones or spraying or, putting fertilizer in spaces that need it very big opportunity there to, to do that.

So those are our three beginnings classes is for those who are already in the field and want to take their career to the next.

Yes. And so, I think with your three programs that you offer today, one sounds like with the part 107, for everyone that's listening that you have an introductory course that people can take, some with more up to 70 hours or a bootcamp.

And for those who want to get it done fairly quickly, can take their part 107 and get their certification to be a remote pilot. And then from there, continue on into one or both of your other vertical trainings to give them real-world hands-on experience. So that they can either go out and become an entrepreneur themselves or go work with an organization or in their organization to utilize their newfound skills and training.

[00:19:00] And what I love about what you're doing is that it's something that anyone can do, whether they're a recent grad or maybe they're a baby boomer, who's looking for a new career, your school really addresses everyone, and it gives them an opportunity to up skill or reskill. One of the things that you mentioned was around generational wealth and beoming an entrepreneur positions people to be able to become independent or become, or have an ability to create wealth for themselves and their families.

And one of the things that people may or may not be aware because it is such a burgeoning industry is that financially the operators are making more than typical, well, definitely more than the living wage for most states. Even people who may be lower income or lower socioeconomic backgrounds, this opportunity gives everyone a level playing field.

[00:20:00] And can you talk a little bit about what you're seeing in terms of compensation for these drone careers?

Yes. Yes. On my website, I do an informational, video and I lay it all out. So, let's take cell towers. We know that the country is going to 5g, right? So, there are about a million cell towers around the country.

Most people don't even know, look up and, and see them. But once you become a drone operator, you'll know where they all are. Right? So, cell towers, the owners of cell towers, Comcast, Direct TV, some of the private owners need to know before they put satellites on the cell towers for 5g, they need to see what's on our cell towers. It's been decades since, we we've had them up. What do we have on them? Some cell towers still have 2G on them. Some cell towers are inundated with, uh, bird nest, eagerness, uh, for example. And so now the industry wants to hire drone operators to inspect the cell tower.

[00:21:00] They don't have enough inspectors for that. So, they called our school and said, hey, listen, we know that you, you have a training program. Would some of your graduates be interested in doing cell tower inspections? So, we worked with, a company that had a big contract to get involved with inspections of 25,000 cell towers to start in the Northeast.

So, these cell tower operators were making between \$65 and \$135 per cell tower. They do an average of five cell towers a day. Now, when you do the math between 65 and 125, you know, that's big money. Some, some of the operators were doing as many as 12, a weekday, and that's six figures, right? Because they learn how to do it quickly and more efficiently. So that that's one, one area of opportunity.

[00:22:00] Another low hanging fruit is in real estate. So the average cost to do a house, uh, charge to a, a realtor is, uh, between 300 and \$350. If you take \$300 for about an hour, hour and a half worth to work, uh, a day that's about. \$78,000 or so if you did two houses a day for about three hours' worth of work, do nothing else after that, every weekday that's about a hundred, I think 44,000, something like that.

[00:23:00] So a lot of these industries that I lay out for opportunities are in the six figures. And so in our school in Delaware, where we're approved by the Delaware department of education, Jersey, Georgia, Tennessee, Illinois, all of our schools are approved to operate in all of these states. We're also opening up two schools in Kenya, Africa.

Those of you who want to travel the world, see the world, make a ton of money on the way this is, uh, this may be an op opportunity, uh, for you. So that's great. So, for people who are actually looking for careers, new careers, like I said, upskilling, re reskilling, how does DWS partner with institutions? What ways do you guys work with colleges and universities?

[00:24:00] Or you can work with them. Yeah. So, what's really interesting about colleges, and universities. I teach generational wealth classes. I have CDs, tapes and booklets and all that. And I've done some research on colleges and universities before COVID colleges and universities. There are about 4,000 of them all are competing for the same student.

They don't wanna share, they don't wanna partner. They don't wanna collaborate. They all wanna own the space. And so, they didn't want to talk to us because they're like, ah, we can

do it ourselves. The problem they found was that they could not move fast enough in the technology to be viable after COVID.

People started looking at colleges very differently. They're like, well, why should I pay 12,000 a year for room and board? Why, what is college really doing for me? Why should I come outta debt? Six figures. And I have to live at home for 10 years, uh, because I can't even afford to pay the, the student loan.

[00:25:00] So now colleges are in trouble, as quiet as it's kept. And so now they're looking at ways to bring money. And they're tied to old methodologies, old professors, old, um, curriculums that aren't going to do anything. Uh, not much for people, right? So, so people are now looking at things different. So, colleges now wanna talk to us because as one provost told me, well, Mr. Nix's, if we get you into our school first, then you will bring our students who never knew our school existed or didn't wanna deal with our school. And we think once they start taking your courses at our college, then while they're there, they might say, oh, well, while I'm here, let me take a business course.

So let me take a photography course. So let me take whatever course they want and they can bring a new generation of students here. So we're in negotiations now to talk to colleges about, uh, bringing our technology, our school or training, uh, our relationships, uh, employment opportunities, workforce development opportunities these colleges and the colleges that want to.

[00:26:00] Partner early will get most of the benefit. Those who still don't wanna partner, then they, they, they will, they will pay the price. Yes. And I think that colleges and universities have to shift and do something different. And when you think about how to be fluid to rapidly adjust to the changing needs of the market or the, what we say the future of.

We have to look at how can you create those strategic partners to help you get that done? And if there's organizations like your school that can come in, set up, bring that curriculum. It's a win-win as far as I'm concerned for everyone. And it actually will bring in those students and allows you to collaborate with those universities to take advantage of, you know, the Pell grants and all those other things.

[00:27:00] That people may want to utilize if they're going down those, the traditional track. And to me, that's very disruptive because schools are gonna have to find another way to outreach and to get to the millennials, to the generation Z, to people who are just wanting go straight into the workforce. This is a great opportunity for.

Partnerships for schools. And I think even organizations who are looking at how can we bring these disruptive technologies into our company? Mm-hmm, great partner for them as well. And it's also, I would also say it's, it's not relegated just to colleges now. Now we're talking to principals in high school.

Okay. We have, we have middle school principals reaching out. So, one of the things that, that I saw and troubled me greatly was what was going on with our teenagers, our youth. I

believe that we're losing a whole generation of youth that are lost, that are bored with what we're teaching them. And the world is much bigger for them now than just where they come from.

Cause the cell internet of things have shown them a world that they didn't even know existed before. So, when you're teaching old stuff to them, they're looking too, like what? We decide, I talked to our strategic partners and said, listen, what can we do for the youth? So, we created maybe one of the first of its kind in the country, the national drone and virtual reality tech, uh, team technology initiative.

[00:29:00] Whose purpose is to educate, train, created internship and eventual opportunities to, to, to make money in this space for 10,000 teen and youth around the country from 16 years old, which is what the FAA federal aviation administration says is the minimum age to get your license 16 all the way up to 26 for this initiative.

We went to the mayor in Wilmington, Delaware who has record shootings and killings, uh, among our urban teens. And he jumped all over it and, and financed 10 urban kids, uh, from Wilmington in drone technology and 10 in virtual reality technology, we've been working with a, uh, an American made drone company.

A billion-dollar company whose CEO is, is, is happy to be a part, a part of this, uh, initiative. And when we went around to the city of Wilmington, to the schools and presented this, and, and sometimes in PowerPoint, we brought our drones, uh, just stood in the cafeteria. It was like moth to a light. Kids just ate this up.

[00:30:00] They were all over the drones. Oh wow. So fast forward, the mayor wanted 20. We had 500 kids from Wilmington alone while new castle county alone, Delaware on the waiting list for this, for these technologies, it just, it, the principal was shocked. The case workers were shocked. The coaches were shocked. I was shock.

And parents had been called in us saying that they had not seen their kids so excited about anything since they became a teenager and they, and the team was telling their parent, you called DWS drone school and see if we got accepted. So we're now working with, uh, other strategic partners to try to expand on this quickly because we now know we have something special. And the kids went in.

[00:31:00] When we talk about that and being in the HR talent management space, I always say, how do we build these career pathways? What does that look like? And it doesn't start when the person is in college. It doesn't even start their senior year. It starts really in middle school, getting these students exposed to these new industries and careers. It's just as simple as some of the things that you're doing with your initiative exposes these students and then gives them real world experience because they're getting to film the different sporting events and maybe share with the audience, what types of things the students are able to do as they're coming through the program?

Yes, so now drones are moving from being an operator. Learning how to fly, to coding the drone that the software allows you to code the drone into what you want the drone to do. And the drone does it while you have a soda watching it, take the films, take the photos, and then come back and give the work to you.

[00:32:00] There's so much work that they can do. The problem is we don't have enough, highly trained. Drone or virtual reality operators. We have people with licenses, but just having a license doesn't mean you're gonna be a good drone operator. So you can go online, get a quick license. But what we're finding is, you know, people have to come to our school because they don't have the rest of the package.

We give you the whole package and you are part of a family because it's all one ecosystem training education. Internship and employment. That's, that's the goal, but here's the thing the FAA that I really wanna impress upon your listeners taking these courses does not mean you can't do anything else. This is a way to supplement your income.

[00:33:00] This is a way to do something different. This is a way to make a transformational difference in your community where before you're just pushing papers or working for somebody for a job. And so, you control your own destiny, you control your own fate. One of the keys for generational wealth creation is that you're not exchanging hours for dollars.

Everybody who does that, most folks will never get wealthy, right? Because you don't get paid unless you work. And if you don't work, you don't get paid. So, you have to clock into work day after day for 40 years to get paid. But what if you were able to create a situation for yourself where somebody calls you and says, hey, we have 10 cell towers.

[00:34:00] We'd like you to. Well, where is it? It's in Hawaii. I'll take that job. We have another 10 that's in the dead winner in, in Chicago. I don't want that. So, what I'm saying is we're giving you an opportunity where you can create the wealth that you want. If you wanna buy a house, you can call me and say, well, Mr.Nix, I want to buy a house. But let's say, you say, you know what? I like my job, but I wanna work on weekends or I wanna do film or a wedding on a weekend, or I wanna work, uh, at night or, or after hours or after my job, you can do that too.

You don't, you don't get fired. So, jobs come to you, and you decide whether you wanna do them or not. So, you control your own destiny instead of somebody else controlling your destiny for you, that flexibility having the options to work, how you wanna work. And I think one of the, the trends that we're continuing to hear is that there's not enough people in the workforce where have the workers gone.

You know, there, we, we have a shortage of talent and I think a lot of people have determined. It's better for them to kind of go off on their own. And they're working rather than come back into the traditional way of doing things because they're not allowed the flexibility. And so this really gives you a lot of other flexibility in your ecosystem.

[00:35:00] Actually gives them an opportunity to go to work, how they like to go to work and then also to learn how to do things for themselves. So, for those who are entrepreneurial and spirit, your organization ecosystem with the career center component, as well as the education component. It gives them an opportunity to really have a well-rounded experience.

So how do people get in touch with DWS drone school? What's the best place for them to learn more about your institution?

[00:36:00] Yes, so I would suggest that they go first go online to dwsdroneschool.com and look at all that we're doing. Take a look at our strategic partnerships, our courses there, the cost of the courses, our schedules there, uh, all of our locations there, what we're doing for veterans, for example, we're the only school approved by the United States department of veteran affairs to train 18.5 million vets through the GI bill. And we've We love our vets. We love what they've done. We're honored to be able to be the only school to be approved by the government to do that.

You can also connect with us at info@dwsdroneschool.com. And we will reach back out to you. You can also go on our website and look at our information. I lay the whole thing out about the company, about the vision, about the opportunities about what's going on in the space, the various industries. I think it'll show exactly what we're talking about.

[00:37:00] Virtual reality. You can click that box and look around there. We have a number of videos of what that's all about and feel free to contact us, so we can have a conversation. And get you in one of these classes.

Yes. And your website had a chance to visit it and, I've worked with you., so I think for anyone that's listening, whether you are looking for another education opportunity or alternative, or you're a business or an institution that's looking for a strategic partner to help you increase your enrollment, DWS website offers a plethora of information for you to review and also get in touch.

[00:38:00] I'd like to thank you Theo for your time today in sharing with our listening audience. And this is all for our episode of The Future Enterprise podcast. I encourage all of you to learn about our future episodes by visiting accendigroup.com [podcast page](#) and sign up, so you never miss a new episode. Until we meet again, I'm your host Fawn Hentrel, thank you for listening.

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