

Transcript | What Exceptional Public Sector Leaders Do Differently

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00:00:21.410 --> 00:00:46.380

Lisa Witter: Hello, hi, everyone. Welcome to this session on what exceptional public sector leaders do differently. My name is Lisa Witter, I'm the co-founder of Apolitical and the CEO of our sister foundation, the Better Politics Foundation. These events bring me so much joy. It was one of the reasons I co-founded Apolitical, was to really spend time with extraordinary people, like you all, who have, joined us both as speakers

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Lisa Witter: speakers and who are calling in from around the world. And speaking from around the world, if you could go ahead and, put in the chat where you are coming from, where you're joining from, what organization you work for, what your role is. It's a good sense for Amanda, Roland and I, which we'll introduce in a moment, to see who's joining us today. So we have Lisa Marie. I'm a Lisa Marie, too, from Ireland.

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00:01:09.930 --> 00:01:13.420

Lisa Witter: here... here they come. South Africa! Hello, Sharifa!

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00:01:14.010 --> 00:01:16.360

Lisa Witter: Lois, my grandmother's name.

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00:01:16.470 --> 00:01:34.029

Lisa Witter: Olsen from Toronto, Canada, James, Cayman Islands, wow, Toronto, all around the world. Well, it's really, really good to hear from you. So today's session is about gaining insight into what helps public sector's leaders stay sharp.

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Lisa Witter: how they think, and what they pay attention to, and how they adapt over time. And I once... I recently heard that today is the slowest day of the rest of your life, and I think that's a lot of the container of which we are leading, not just in the public sector, but all over the world.

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00:01:49.340 --> 00:02:08.010

Lisa Witter: We'll explore how leaders shape culture, and I would say even norms, and what makes leadership transitions work. We know that this happens in government. Things change, governments change, and there's leadership transitions, and how to lead with impact, whether you're stepping into a new role, or a new organization, or driving change within, so the outside in or inside out.

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00:02:08.120 --> 00:02:33.090

Lisa Witter: And a special welcome for those of you joining for the first time. I'm really welcome to see this community growing. AP Political is the world's largest community for government. We're used by over a quarter million public servants and policymakers from more than 170 countries, so very happy to see so many people joining from around the world. Our mission, and it's very heartfelt from all of us, is to make governments smarter. I'm a public servant.

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00:02:33.090 --> 00:02:48.670

Lisa Witter: former public servant myself. We do this by equipping public servants worldwide with the knowledge, skills, and I would even say mindsets. I think we're going to hear from Roland and Amanda about that. Hi, Lisa, calling in from Ottawa, with the skills they need to really lead change.

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00:02:48.670 --> 00:03:04.930

Lisa Witter: So, we're also thrilled to extend an invitation to Apolitical's life in government community. This is a perfect online space to deepen your leadership practice through connections and conversations from peers across government. I'm a member of a bunch of these communities on apolitical.

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00:03:05.040 --> 00:03:21.159

Lisa Witter: really is a good pulse to hear what's going on, to hear from people kind of live as things are happening. And this space, again, is open to all, whether you consider yourself a leadership expert, or you're just starting to explore how to grow your influence and impact, as a leader and as a follower, too.

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00:03:21.180 --> 00:03:33.209

Lisa Witter: The link is in the resources tab at the bottom of your screen, and my colleague, lovely colleague Joel, is also posting a link in the chat. So we really love to see your voices, questions, ideas here.

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00:03:33.310 --> 00:03:53.279

Lisa Witter: I've got a few technical notes out, to get out of the way before we go into the conversation. So, the event is recorded for on-demand viewing. We know we don't... this isn't optimized for every time zone, so a lot of people, will, watch this on record, so please don't record it yourself. We'll do that for you.

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00:03:53.280 --> 00:04:00.560

Lisa Witter: Contact details for your privacy concerns are in a political's homepage footer. We take that very seriously.

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00:04:00.560 --> 00:04:05.610

Lisa Witter: And closed captions are available and can be toggled on and off your screen.

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00:04:05.720 --> 00:04:12.170

Lisa Witter: Okay, so I'm just gonna look at the chat if there's any more people to welcome. Everett from Maryland.

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00:04:12.610 --> 00:04:20.370

Lisa Witter: Kershwan from Grenad in the Caribbean, a fantastic, Grenada, sorry, Grenada in the Caribbean.

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00:04:20.570 --> 00:04:33.049

Lisa Witter: Ulma from, England in the UK, lots of great Yorkshire, Christine from South Africa, Plymouth, England, Kieran, really, really wonderful, to see all of you here.

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00:04:33.050 --> 00:04:52.470

Lisa Witter: If you've just joined, go ahead and introduce yourself in the chat. Okay, now we want to hear from you before we hear from our experts. It's a tradition here. And we're going to launch a few polls, to get a sense of, sort of, how you're entering this conversation. So, let's take a look at the first poll. It's going to come up.

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00:04:52.470 --> 00:04:57.870

Lisa Witter: So, are you currently in a leadership role, or are you an aspiring leader?

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00:04:58.070 --> 00:05:00.250

Lisa Witter: So we'll wait a second for those to come up.

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00:05:02.820 --> 00:05:08.020

Lisa Witter: Or something else. If it's something else, go ahead and put in the chat. Welcome, Judith, from Nassau.

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00:05:08.550 --> 00:05:16.179

Lisa Witter: Mohsen from Toronto, Waiting just a few more seconds...

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00:05:17.920 --> 00:05:22.639

Lisa Witter: Lisa from Texas. Welcome. Christina. Mark from Washington.

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00:05:24.440 --> 00:05:30.900

Lisa Witter: Okay... Joel, I'll let you pull the trigger on when we will put up the results.

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00:05:36.130 --> 00:05:38.369

Lisa Witter: I think he's waiting for a few more.

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00:05:40.460 --> 00:06:05.209

Lisa Witter: Okay, I'll go ahead and do a voiceover as that's happening. So, are you currently in a leadership role, or are you an aspiring leader? So, we currently have 51% are in current leadership roles, so over half, Amanda and Roland. We've got some experts here who can add to the conversation, and I think 46% said aspiring leader, so it's about 50-50. I would say anyone who said

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00:06:05.210 --> 00:06:14.899

Lisa Witter: that they're a leader, I'm sure that they're always looking to become better leaders. It is not a destination, it's a journey, something that I think about all the time, in my work.

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00:06:14.900 --> 00:06:17.930

Lisa Witter: Wonderful. Okay, we'll go to the next question.

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00:06:20.620 --> 00:06:35.339

Lisa Witter: Okay, poll number two. Which of these leadership habits do you do most when do... that you want to strengthen right now? So, which of these habits do you most want to strengthen at this moment? So, strategic thinking under pressure.

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00:06:35.700 --> 00:06:40.960

Lisa Witter: Navigating Political Complexity, Building resilient teams.

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00:06:41.310 --> 00:06:46.250

Lisa Witter: Communicating with clarity, Letting go of some legacy habits.

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00:06:46.350 --> 00:06:47.690

Lisa Witter: Or something else.

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00:06:50.890 --> 00:07:00.000

Lisa Witter: while you're filling that out, I... my background is in brain and behavioral science, so I've been doing some writing and thinking on how to prepare ourselves for,

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00:07:00.210 --> 00:07:17.660

Lisa Witter: leading and making decisions under uncertainty because... and pressure, because we know that actually changes your ability for your brain sometimes to have clarity. So, everything from deep breaths to taking a walk around the block. Margaret wants to know what a legacy habit is.

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00:07:17.870 --> 00:07:21.979

Lisa Witter: I don't know for me, Margaret, sometimes it's actually not really listening.

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00:07:22.170 --> 00:07:35.139

Lisa Witter: pretending that I'm listening, but actually not really listening. That can be a legacy habit that I've gotten over. Kelly says all of them. Okay, so we'll go ahead and share, the results to this

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00:07:35.730 --> 00:07:39.690

Lisa Witter: Paul, thanks everyone for being so quick. You're welcome, Margaret.

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00:07:40.080 --> 00:07:55.750

Lisa Witter: So, 31% said, strategic thinking under pressure. That was topped, followed by communicating with clarity at 27%. I think communication is something all of us, are always working on.

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00:07:55.750 --> 00:08:00.809

Lisa Witter: Navigating political complexity was number 3, at 20%.

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00:08:00.850 --> 00:08:17.159

Lisa Witter: And then building resilient teams was 16%, and then letting go of some of these legacy habits. And for those of you who put letting go of those legacy habits, could you go ahead and pop that in the webinar chat so we can get a sense of mine? I've had to learn and practice listening.

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00:08:17.160 --> 00:08:23.959

Lisa Witter: I don't know what other people's habits have been. We're gonna hear from our speakers in the moment about some of their habits.

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00:08:25.750 --> 00:08:26.870

Lisa Witter: Okay.

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00:08:27.470 --> 00:08:34.709

Lisa Witter: Great, so thanks for making this interactive. This is for you, right? That we do these at Apolitical for the community, so thanks for...

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00:08:34.710 --> 00:08:58.759

Lisa Witter: For doing that right from the very beginning. So, now I want to move to our speakers. We're really lucky to have in the community really brilliant people who, are equal, I will call myself a geek, a government geek, and I'm also a leadership geek, who think about this stuff and live this stuff, day in and day out. So, we're fortunate to have these two brilliant guests, Roland Dillon and

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00:08:58.760 --> 00:09:02.660

Lisa Witter: Amanda May is joining, if you can give a wave, Roland and Amanda.

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00:09:02.700 --> 00:09:21.969

Lisa Witter: Roland is a partner at McKinsey & Company, where he leads leadership, talent, and operating model work across Asia-Pacific public and resource sectors, and sits on the board of McKinsey Center of Government. His recent work includes supporting government on disaster response, something we're seeing more and more of, public health recovery.

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00:09:21.970 --> 00:09:35.649

Lisa Witter: It's been a busy time the last decade on that, and expenditure reviews, we all know the state of public expenditure, so you're a busy guy, Roland. Prior to McKinsey, he worked as a lawyer and a policymaker at both the federal and state government levels.

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00:09:35.820 --> 00:09:54.749

Lisa Witter: And then we have Amanda, flying across the globe to another part of the world. She's a former strategic advisor for Hull and East Yorkshire Combined Authority, and has held senior leadership and advisory roles across several UK councils. She's a leading expert in organization design.

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00:09:54.750 --> 00:10:18.710

Lisa Witter: operational transformation and cultural change, and has a strong track record in leading culture change and this operational improvement. I'm really struck by... a lot of times, people think ideas don't work because it was a bad idea versus the execution and the culture and the teams we need. So, Amanda, I know you think about that a lot. Amanda holds a master's degree in strategic human resource management and is a CIPD fellow.

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00:10:18.800 --> 00:10:43.769

Lisa Witter: So, you can read the full bios by visiting that resource tab at the bottom of your Zoom screen and heading to the speakers section, so thanks very much. Just, Nicole talks about the legacy habit of doing what has always been done in situations rather than exploring new solutions. Very good. The hammer and nail kind of metaphor. And bad habit from Catherine, thanks for sharing. Doing it myself rather than delegating up again.

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00:10:43.770 --> 00:10:49.009

Lisa Witter: time pressures. I know I have a bad habit of not saying no, to a lot of things.

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00:10:49.010 --> 00:11:08.059

Lisa Witter: So, before we launch today's panel, we're going to hear a little bit, a quick icebreaker, since you have been so generous, the participants with yours. So, Roland and Amanda, I'll start first with you, Amanda. What's one leadership habit you swear by? Not that you've let go of, but you swear by, but rarely see others do? So, Amanda.

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00:11:08.330 --> 00:11:24.370

Amanda Mays: Thank you, Lisa, and good afternoon, everybody, or hello, everybody, depending on your time zone. So I've thought about this a lot. I've led teams for about 30 years, and I don't

know where that time's gone, but thinking about a legit habit that I am now more comfortable doing, and I rarely see in others.

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00:11:24.370 --> 00:11:36.759

Amanda Mays: is saying, I don't know. So, not pretending to have all the answers, but actually admitting you don't know, because I feel leaders feel pressure to have an answer, and by doing that, it can kill curiosity.

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00:11:36.760 --> 00:11:41.550

Amanda Mays: And can signal to your team that, you know, uncertainty is a weakness, so...

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00:11:41.770 --> 00:11:55.500

Amanda Mays: openly saying, I don't know, creates space for others to have ideas, shows learning is valued rather than pretending, and models the kind of humility that, you know, I want to see across my team and others.

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00:11:55.500 --> 00:12:10.910

Amanda Mays: And I think admitting I don't know has probably created more trust within my team than I've known before. So I think leaders don't inspire by being flawless, they inspire by being real. So that's... that's my answer this afternoon, Lisa, is saying I don't know.

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00:12:11.100 --> 00:12:25.829

Lisa Witter: I don't know, yes, something I've had to learn how to do, seeing as a strength, so thank you for that. It's really concrete, really, really, really concrete. Roland, over to you. What's your one leadership habit that you swear by, but you rarely see others do?

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00:12:26.130 --> 00:12:36.779

Roland Dillon: Well, thanks, Lisa, and great to be talking to all of you. I think it's a habit that I swear by, in that I know it's very valuable, but it's also something that I struggle to do, and I see many of the leaders that I work with struggle to do, is just disconnecting.

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00:12:36.780 --> 00:13:01.339

Roland Dillon: So taking time to actually get out of the kind of policy or delivery cycle, stepping back, putting the phone in a drawer, you know, being totally focused on time away from work, reflection, family, whatever it might be. I think this is an area where we frequently see people struggle to say, I'm offline, or I'm unable to help at that time, and I think that probably has persistent effects in the system, particularly through the kind of crisis period we've

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00:13:01.340 --> 00:13:07.450

Roland Dillon: found ourselves in recently. So that's something that I think is incredibly valuable, and I don't see it as hard to do, both for others, also for myself.

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00:13:08.360 --> 00:13:24.890

Lisa Witter: Thanks for admitting that and sharing that. I know for me, a big part of doing that, is being literally off-grid with no technology and in nature. So for me, nature is one of those places where that can really, rejuvenate you. So thanks for this very concrete

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00:13:24.890 --> 00:13:49.559

Lisa Witter: sort of fully offline, admitting when you don't know, and Subrata, mentioned, Amanda, in the chat here, that really appreciation of, humility. It's such an important quality, and it actually empowers others. So, thanks, that, that really resonated. So now we're going to go into some... two presentations where Roland and Amanda are going to share their... their expertise. So without further ado.

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00:13:49.560 --> 00:13:51.469

Lisa Witter: Roland, I'm going to send it over to you.

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Roland Dillon: Thanks, Lisa. Really great to be talking to everyone today. Maybe just a little bit of my background. I worked for several years in the Australian government as a lawyer for the Australian Government Solicitor. I worked for the Department of Environment, I worked for the EPA, so I think, you know, this is some of the most important work I've ever done, and I joined consulting in part because I think there was lots of exciting opportunities to both deliver work, but also to study the topics that we're going to be talking about today.

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Roland Dillon: Many of you will know McKinsey, but we're a management consulting firm, and we've been looking at the topic of what leaders do differently for decades, and in particular, we've looked in the private sector around what makes really great CEOs successful. And what we found as we looked at this was, there are certain practices and habits that stand out.

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00:14:37.790 --> 00:14:56.559

Roland Dillon: And what we also found was that this was an under-researched area in the public sector. And so, what we've done over the last, kind of, year or two is say, what is it that

characterizes the leaders who we see as being exceptional in the public sector? And what are the sorts of things that we can learn

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00:14:56.560 --> 00:14:59.990

Roland Dillon: in terms of what differentiates them. So I'm just going to bring up...

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Roland Dillon: And let me know if this is coming through clearly.

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00:15:03.760 --> 00:15:07.519

Roland Dillon: So we surveyed, hundreds of leaders from all over the world.

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00:15:07.760 --> 00:15:14.449

Roland Dillon: And we asked them about leaders that they admire, and what it was that made those leaders special. Is that coming through?

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00:15:15.790 --> 00:15:30.189

Roland Dillon: Great stuff. And again, this is not an easy thing to define in the public sector. We don't think there's a single algorithm. Obviously, this is just much easier to measure in the private sector, where you have more simple denominators around, you know, things like profit and loss statements, etc.

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Roland Dillon: But when we asked people what it was that the best leaders did, a pretty clear set of answers started to emerge.

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Roland Dillon: The first thing that came up so strongly was that they have a very clear purpose and vision for the organization they run. So, this setting of the direction became so important for a bunch of reasons I'll go into later on, and that came through really strongly, so that they could guide a complex set of stakeholders and a complex set of policies through that vision, incredibly important. The other thing was that they were respected for their character. So, it wasn't just what they got done, it was how

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00:16:02.800 --> 00:16:27.759

Roland Dillon: how they got things done. And that came through again and again in the interviews we did, and we would have spoken to probably more than 100 secretaries and CEOs over the last few years. And then finally, I think the last one I'll call out is this ability to get things done despite change. So, you know, in a very complicated environment where, for example, ministers' 10 years is getting shorter and shorter, you know, certainly we're seeing that in the UK and Australia recently, this ability to navigate complexity and deal with

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00:16:27.760 --> 00:16:33.069

Roland Dillon: you know, really complex settings, differentiated the best leaders. And so.

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Roland Dillon: This was something which told us a little bit about

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Roland Dillon: who they were, and why we... why we admired them. But what we also wanted to know is, what is it that they did every day? So what were the practices and habits that sort of differentiated the best leaders?

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00:16:47.650 --> 00:16:58.150

Roland Dillon: And what we found was that there were broadly, kind of six practices that the best leaders were masters of. And I won't go into all of these now, I think that's going to be a discussion for the whole day.

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Roland Dillon: But as I said before, just right at the top, that they had this ability to set the direction, and that meant that they could clearly articulate vision and purpose, strategy and policy, and then resource allocation. They were able to kind of put the resources, both personnel and dollars, where they were needed most. As one of the leaders we spoke to, who was a former, you know,

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00:17:17.119 --> 00:17:23.540

Roland Dillon: Fortune 50 CEO, but was also the secretary of a major federal US department.

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00:17:23.770 --> 00:17:42.980

Roland Dillon: I have 535 board members. It was referring to the, sort of, US Congress, so incredibly difficult to align those people. And secondly, I don't have stock options. I don't have

bonuses, I don't have any of the motivational ability that I have in the private sector, so I have to really anchor into vision, mission, and purpose.

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00:17:43.180 --> 00:17:53.459

Roland Dillon: As you look on the, right-hand side of this, you see the Navigating Government and Co-Creating with stakeholders, and this is really about people who've mastered the external environment.

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Roland Dillon: That they were... they were masters of the craft of navigation of cabinet government, that they understood institutional coordination, how decisions and decision-making and research and delivery happened.

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00:18:05.550 --> 00:18:17.930

Roland Dillon: And that, equally, they were able to co-create solutions with stakeholders. So whether those were citizens, beneficiaries, industry groups, and the media, they understood all of these different pieces of the puzzle, and they weren't overly focused to the exclusion of any one group.

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00:18:18.230 --> 00:18:20.269

Roland Dillon: If you look on the left-hand side.

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Roland Dillon: These were people who are very adept at departmental change and working through others. The level of complexity and the volume of demands on this group were so massive, and they were spending almost all of their time working through other people. And so they had to create a kind of performance and organisational environment, which allowed both their top team and their culture to, enable consistently all the things that needed to happen.

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00:18:44.500 --> 00:18:52.329

Roland Dillon: In a coordinated and coherent way, while recognizing they couldn't possibly be even in, you know, one-tenth of the detail of things that were happening.

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00:18:52.430 --> 00:19:02.999

Roland Dillon: And then finally, managing personal effectiveness. And this one really stuck with me, and this was a little bit why I talked about this idea of disconnecting, and I really liked Amanda's point before about humility and saying, I don't know.

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00:19:03.000 --> 00:19:27.270

Roland Dillon: one quote that really stuck with me was, you know, when you are most stressed psychologically or physically, that's the time when your action's going to be most consequential to the people that you're working with. That's when you'll set the strongest impression. And what we saw was this idea of managing personal effectiveness was incredibly important, to these most senior leaders, because everyone was looking at them all the time. And how they, how they maintained

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00:19:27.270 --> 00:19:37.749

Roland Dillon: Composure, how they maintained a cool head in these moments of challenge and crisis, was enormously powerful in terms of how much they could mobilize the organization around them to do incredible things.

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00:19:37.960 --> 00:19:50.329

Roland Dillon: And so this was, I think, a good starting framework, and we tested this with many different secretaries and CEOs. But when we did that, we said, look, this is interesting, and it's helpful, but it's definitely not the whole picture.

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00:19:50.780 --> 00:20:00.029

Roland Dillon: working in the public sector is different, and there's a famous, famous saying that, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, but she did it backwards and in high heels.

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Roland Dillon: There's this sense that people in the private sector had a very different set of political dynamics to do with. It's not to say their job is... has no politics, but that the level of politics in the public sector is obviously

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00:20:12.050 --> 00:20:14.360

Roland Dillon: Just such a completely different sport.

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00:20:14.670 --> 00:20:19.840

Roland Dillon: More than that, there were different abilities on resourcing in the public sector.

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00:20:19.840 --> 00:20:42.140

Roland Dillon: whether that meant their ability to change budgetary allocations in a given time period, whether that meant changing the composition or, you know, capability of the workforce, whether that was around external scrutiny and, you know, freedom of information. These were... and then finally on this idea of asymmetric incentives, this is where we mean a person in the

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00:20:42.350 --> 00:21:00.169

Roland Dillon: public sector, if they do something very well, there's not usually, compared to other sectors, the same degree of reward as you might find for a private sector CEO. So if you do something great, you might be recognized, but you won't really have the same level of personal benefit.

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Roland Dillon: However, if something goes wrong, the consequences are usually severe, and they are usually personal. They are public, and so this can, over time, lead to a real sense of unbalanced incentives around risk-taking, which, again, can lead to cautionary behaviour.

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00:21:15.270 --> 00:21:34.239

Roland Dillon: The final thing I'd say on external scrutiny is we talked to many leaders, and they said, you know, as a leader, I try and be vulnerable and share, you know, examples of when things are difficult, you know, to say I don't know, to learn from failure. I gave one of those speeches to, you know, an organization that I work with, and then that was subsequently a Freedom of Information request.

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00:21:34.240 --> 00:21:40.299

Roland Dillon: So your ability to be vulnerable with your organization and to tell home truths, it's just different in that environment.

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00:21:40.510 --> 00:21:56.879

Roland Dillon: So, taking all these points together, what we found is, the exceptional leaders were able to do these different practices, as I've shown here, but they did them in a political, structural context. So they were able to maintain this plan, think about the vision.

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00:21:56.880 --> 00:22:06.379

Roland Dillon: Navigate external factors, guide their internal department, and then have a strong kind of personal operating model, and they did it in a very specific political and structural context.

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00:22:06.610 --> 00:22:16.990

Roland Dillon: We've written a lot on this, and I'm looking forward to talking about it later. I guess the one other thing I would say is, it's never going to be, I think as you said, Lisa, this slow again.

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00:22:16.990 --> 00:22:37.309

Roland Dillon: We asked them what the future looks like, and over... around 80% said that the next 5 years will be more disrupted than the preceding decade, which is pretty incredible when you think about the level of disruption that we've faced in the preceding decade. So whether that's global public health crises, whether that's geopolitics, whether that's a huge volume of disruptive technology.

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00:22:37.310 --> 00:22:44.820

Roland Dillon: that we're absorbing, people... the majority of people see that going, faster and further in the future.

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00:22:44.840 --> 00:23:02.629

Roland Dillon: And to make that more specific, we said that there are going to be many things that are challenges for you today, and some things that are going to be more challenging in the next 5 years. And as you can see on this chart, budgetary constraints and expectations are an evergreen challenge of government, so that... no one feels like that's going away.

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00:23:03.100 --> 00:23:20.489

Roland Dillon: There is a sense that disruptive technologies, obviously, are going to become even more prevalent and significant to the work of government, and also these ideas of external perceptions of government, geopolitical risk, etc, that these will be even more relevant to the operations of government and leaders.

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00:23:20.760 --> 00:23:23.150

Roland Dillon: So I think the last thing I would say is,

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Roland Dillon: You know, this is a hard job.

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00:23:25.410 --> 00:23:36.450

Roland Dillon: it's a lonely job, it's getting harder, and it's getting more disrupted, and so I think, given all of that, you know, the work of government leaders around the world and the work of apolitical becomes even more important, because

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00:23:36.490 --> 00:23:46.989

Roland Dillon: there's such an incredible premium to getting this right, and for the vast majority of people, this stuff is not discussed enough. I'll just stop sharing there, and happy to hand back to you, Lisa.

114

00:23:47.230 --> 00:24:12.079

Lisa Witter: Roland, thank you so much. I find it so valuable to have the data and the frameworks right in front of you. Some of this stuff is you feel kind of instincts, and then you see it on paper, and you see the structural framework, and like, oh, that makes a lot of sense. So, a really important contribution, to the sector. I'm all struck by my life working and talking and meeting public service about how just intrinsically motivated they are to do the work. They're not looking for the credit.

115

00:24:12.080 --> 00:24:32.289

Lisa Witter: often, which is a good alignment, but it does get, a bit hard and lonely. And our work at the Foundation is to help prepare those people who come from politicians to ministers who may not have even thought about what it's like to run a department, and imagine, sort of, how challenging that can be for a leader. So I just really thanks for that contribution. We'll be sharing this report with everyone.

116

00:24:32.290 --> 00:24:51.189

Lisa Witter: And I just want to remind people to put any questions you have, there's no dumb questions, probing, pushing questions to Roland. This is a space to really learn with one another. So with that, we're going to go from the global perspective back into the personal. Amanda, I'm going to, hand it over to you. Thanks again, Roland.

117

00:24:51.540 --> 00:24:53.599

Amanda Mays: Thank you, Lisa. Thank you, Roland.

118

00:24:53.850 --> 00:25:05.709

Amanda Mays: Wow, that's great research, isn't it? And it does make you wonder, your point, Lisa, about who would ever volunteer, or who would ever apply to join and become a leader in the public service, when you see how many different

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00:25:05.710 --> 00:25:14.929

Amanda Mays: constraints they have to be successful, so really fascinating for the research. And as you say, Lisa, what I'm going to do now

120

00:25:14.930 --> 00:25:29.139

Amanda Mays: If I can get my, screen to work, so fingers crossed we can, is to show you, give you some examples of, of my experience, really, over the last, sort of, 30 years working in public service.

121

00:25:29.190 --> 00:25:45.769

Amanda Mays: in terms of just some case study examples about what makes exceptional public service leaders. And I'm just gonna... I think that should be showing okay now, hopefully it is. Yes, perfect. So, as, you know, a very brief introduction, Lisa already did a brilliant job.

122

00:25:45.770 --> 00:25:57.870

Amanda Mays: So I've worked in central and local governments over the past few years, so what I'm trying to do this afternoon is just give you an appreciation of perhaps putting into practice some of those ideas

123

00:25:57.870 --> 00:26:06.320

Amanda Mays: That Roland came up with. I'm going to focus on three areas. So, new leader joining an organization, so what made them brilliant.

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00:26:06.510 --> 00:26:12.869

Amanda Mays: how our leaders, and I'm thinking more officers rather than elected officials here, can support shaping the culture.

125

00:26:12.970 --> 00:26:27.760

Amanda Mays: And what's the difference? Is there a difference between being able to join an organization, make an impact as an intrapreneur versus an entrepreneur leader? And throughout thinking about navigating complexity and leading with excellence in those uncertain environments.

126

00:26:27.760 --> 00:26:41.530

Amanda Mays: And just some practical actions to sharpen leadership habits that hopefully will enable all of you to think about your own practice, you know, particularly as we said, aspiring and leaders already in place, and staying future ready.

127

00:26:41.650 --> 00:26:53.080

Amanda Mays: And against that backdrop that Rowan said, we know that public trust in government is decreasing, so how do we have excellence in leadership against that background and many others?

128

00:26:53.340 --> 00:27:00.840

Amanda Mays: So, in the first example is a new leader joining an organization. So, this was within a startup and a new chief executive.

129

00:27:01.020 --> 00:27:14.560

Amanda Mays: And really, you know, quite challenging to join a small organization that had quite a fixed organisational culture already. A new mayor had been elected, and it was about what made them successful when they landed on day one.

130

00:27:14.560 --> 00:27:26.139

Amanda Mays: So here's just quite practical examples, and unfortunately, they do align with Roland's research, so I'm... I think that's great, actually. Without seeing that research in detail, it does align.

131

00:27:26.300 --> 00:27:40.090

Amanda Mays: So, firstly, about, you know, really thinking about spending time when you join an organization to understand the political, social, and community context before making major changes. So, thinking about the legacy of the organization.

132

00:27:40.220 --> 00:27:56.429

Amanda Mays: And thinking about how do you engage with your stakeholders. So, linking back to that co-creation with stakeholders that Rowan was talking about, and what made this leader successful was really prioritising listening and engaging with stakeholders.

133

00:27:56.430 --> 00:28:06.809

Amanda Mays: But it's important to get that early credibility, and early credibility in this case was by being visible, accessible, transparent with colleagues and external partners.

134

00:28:06.810 --> 00:28:14.480

Amanda Mays: But also thinking about those early wins to show that you're there and can make a difference, and you've earned your stripes as the chief exec of an organization.

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00:28:15.400 --> 00:28:28.669

Amanda Mays: But thinking about that whilst you're respecting the legacy and strengths, our chief execs, our leaders in public service have been recruited for a reason, and that's to really make a difference within their communities.

136

00:28:28.820 --> 00:28:47.250

Amanda Mays: So, you know, it's about signalling areas for innovation and reform. And the way that this example, this case study, the leader did it in this small organization, was to think about three key phrases that respected the legacy, but made it their own. And they were harnessing the heft.

137

00:28:47.350 --> 00:29:04.469

Amanda Mays: moving at pace and taking people with us. And they mirrored the values already set within the organization, but they made the vision their own, and were able to balance that continuity, but with their own change. So thinking about how when you join an organization as a new leader.

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00:29:04.470 --> 00:29:08.950

Amanda Mays: In a public service organization, you can really make that difference.

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00:29:08.950 --> 00:29:15.540

Amanda Mays: By personalizing, telling stories, that narrative about what you're there to achieve, but taking people with you.

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00:29:15.900 --> 00:29:30.229

Amanda Mays: And then that clarity of purpose. So, you know, thinking about what is the broad public value here? What is the purpose of this organization? And more and more we're seeing, and back to Roland's slide as well about that co-creation, is that

141

00:29:30.790 --> 00:29:46.610

Amanda Mays: Working within the place, within the system, is more important than the importance of just one organization. It is about how do you work systemically with partner

organisations, with anchor organisations in a region, to be successful. So really thinking about what you're there to do.

142

00:29:46.860 --> 00:30:02.440

Amanda Mays: And this new leader, this chief exec, when they joined, didn't have an established senior leadership team, so they were able to think about how they recruited into their leadership team, because we know that to be successful as a leader, it is about

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00:30:02.800 --> 00:30:19.520

Amanda Mays: mobilizing your team, working with your senior leadership team, you cannot be successful just on your own. So they were able to use the values of the organization for values-based recruitment, thinking about engaging with stakeholders as part of the recruitment process.

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00:30:19.680 --> 00:30:28.460

Amanda Mays: but also thinking about diversity of thought, diversity of... of that leadership team to be most successful. So... so just some...

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00:30:28.550 --> 00:30:48.539

Amanda Mays: practical examples with a new leader joining an organization, and now, a year in, they, you know, the organization is flying. So I think it does link back to the research that Roland talked us through, but also thinking about what's your strategy for your first 100 days when you join an organization to be an excellent public service leader.

146

00:30:49.330 --> 00:30:59.520

Amanda Mays: The second case study, Conscious of Time, is about how a chief exec can successfully shape the culture of the organization. And we talk a lot about role modeling values.

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00:30:59.520 --> 00:31:09.929

Amanda Mays: But it's really important that, you know, we are what we see, and we, you know, we look to our leaders to demonstrate what is acceptable behaviours within the organization. So.

148

00:31:09.930 --> 00:31:22.420

Amanda Mays: And in this example, which was a central government organization, the chief exec reviewed publicly the values of the organization, and importantly didn't change them, but just made them come alive.

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00:31:22.420 --> 00:31:30.199

Amanda Mays: So really important that we think about how do we go, you know, create the culture that we want to see by role modeling values.

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00:31:30.250 --> 00:31:35.669

Amanda Mays: But also, how do we bring people with us as we do that within an organization?

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00:31:36.290 --> 00:31:44.620

Amanda Mays: But embedding accountability and learning is really important, and we can't forget that we have to get the basics right. Within public service.

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00:31:44.620 --> 00:31:57.210

Amanda Mays: In terms of being able to take our communities with them, with us, we have to get our basics right. There's no point in us thinking about innovation if people can't see that their basic services are not being delivered.

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00:31:57.210 --> 00:32:04.450

Amanda Mays: So really thinking about getting the basics right, but holding people to account in the organization. So this chief exec also

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00:32:04.450 --> 00:32:16.280

Amanda Mays: implemented a new performance review system for organization, and an individual performance review system for the first time in the government's history to have one performance review system individual.

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00:32:16.420 --> 00:32:26.859

Amanda Mays: appraisal system for everyone in the organization. And so I think that's... we can hold, like Lisa mentioned already about data, you need data within the organization, and

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00:32:26.860 --> 00:32:44.580

Amanda Mays: Having really strong performance review systems helps that, and also creates a safe-to-fail, safe-to-learn environment where you're able to surface some of the issues. So really thinking about the culture of an organization through using your data and your internal dialogue.

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00:32:45.000 --> 00:32:56.189

Amanda Mays: They also recognised and rewarded the desired behaviours by introducing an annual awards ceremony and a podcast where they were able to call it out. So really celebrating success.

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00:32:56.190 --> 00:33:06.400

Amanda Mays: within the organization, but celebrating success for the behaviours that you want to see. So not silo working, not individual success, but success of the organization.

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00:33:06.810 --> 00:33:09.599

Amanda Mays: We've already mentioned about inclusive leadership.

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00:33:09.660 --> 00:33:25.439

Amanda Mays: And I think it's really important, again, to think about how do you create your teams, and how do you think about those that are in your leadership team and throughout the organization that represent the communities that you serve. So really thinking about what are the actions you can take place

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00:33:25.440 --> 00:33:33.330

Amanda Mays: to think about leadership. And again, you know, recent studies have shown that most organizations want to grow their own talent.

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00:33:33.330 --> 00:33:50.039

Amanda Mays: Because back to the point that Roland was talking about reward, we can't offer massive salaries for people to join the public service, but what we can do is grow our own talent. So really think about how we can grow our own talent within an organization, which will increase retention, improve morale.

163

00:33:50.040 --> 00:33:54.980

Amanda Mays: And really think about growing our talent to represent what we want to see.

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00:33:55.060 --> 00:34:07.020

Amanda Mays: And storytelling the narrative, I mentioned it before with the chief exec in the new organization, but storytelling is so important as a leader to take your community with you, to take your workforce with you.

165

00:34:07.330 --> 00:34:13.469

Amanda Mays: And really make people understand the purpose and what you want to achieve within your organization.

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00:34:13.719 --> 00:34:28.779

Amanda Mays: And then this is just a really nice example that I wanted to give, and it's not... not all of us are fortunate enough in our careers in public service to be able to start, to grow an organization. The East Midlands Combine County Authority, now about 18 months in.

167

00:34:28.980 --> 00:34:40.869

Amanda Mays: When we started to design the organization, we started with the why, and I've just put a link... Simon Zinek, you might have heard of him, has done some really good work around purpose, purpose of organization, starting with the why.

168

00:34:41.040 --> 00:34:53.530

Amanda Mays: And what we did within these Midlands Combined County Authority was thought about what is it we are here to do? What is the mission? What does the Mayor want to achieve? What does the politicians want to achieve? And what do we need to achieve for our region?

169

00:34:53.670 --> 00:35:09.150

Amanda Mays: So even before the Mayor was elected, and we had a chief exec, we started with the why, and what was important for the organization to achieve, and came up with a set of values that inform recruitment, that inform investment decisions, that inform policies.

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00:35:09.150 --> 00:35:15.619

Amanda Mays: And it's really important, and even now, when people join the organization, they're recruited against those values.

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00:35:15.880 --> 00:35:30.939

Amanda Mays: And they know them. They're not just on a wall, they're not just on, you know, on your lanyard, but actually, they're really core to the organization. So I think if we're thinking about excellence in public service, think about the vision and the purpose for the organization.

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00:35:30.940 --> 00:35:38.680

Amanda Mays: and then make it come alive. I say much, much easier when you're in startup, but still not impossible when you're already within an organization.

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00:35:39.710 --> 00:35:49.389

Amanda Mays: And now we're thinking about some tips for public sector intrapreneurs and entrepreneur leaders, and I won't take very long on this, but just to say, for our intrapreneur leaders.

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00:35:49.810 --> 00:36:07.139

Amanda Mays: Really, Roland mentioned about, scrutiny and about the regulatory framework, so really take some time, if you're already in an organization and want to be really successful, is understanding your permission space. What is it you can have, you can push within the constraints of regulation and policy?

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00:36:07.140 --> 00:36:15.469

Amanda Mays: So, really make sure you understand your constitution and your scheme of delegation, which are sort of core parts of the organization, but really make sure you do that.

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00:36:15.850 --> 00:36:29.010

Amanda Mays: When you're thinking about new change and transformation, recognizing in that space we're in at the moment, which is continuous evolution, but really thinking about piloting, prototyping, proving value before massive rollouts of things.

177

00:36:29.010 --> 00:36:40.070

Amanda Mays: And making sure you build your coalition of the willing. Change is much, much easier with cross-departmental allies, with external partners, so spend time building your coalitions.

178

00:36:40.070 --> 00:36:55.530

Amanda Mays: And again, make sure you communicate in outcomes. So, what is it you're achieving? And make sure people know that you're framing your ideas around public value, efficiency, improved services, rather than just innovation for innovation's sake. We do hear that a lot.

179

00:36:55.830 --> 00:37:12.570

Amanda Mays: And then for the entrepreneur leader, where do we start? Well, I gave you an example of where the East Midlands Combined County Authority started, but start with your citizen needs. What is it your place needs from its public service? So think about your anchoring innovation in tangible benefits to the public.

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00:37:12.740 --> 00:37:19.780

Amanda Mays: Navigate your political realities, anticipate scrutiny, accountability demands, and the need for transparency.

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00:37:20.650 --> 00:37:27.059

Amanda Mays: Build legitimacy by demonstrating alignment with policy goals, regulatory standards, and public trusts.

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00:37:27.210 --> 00:37:35.100

Amanda Mays: And think about your agility with accountability. So, innovate like a startup, but make sure you maintain your

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00:37:35.100 --> 00:37:51.060

Amanda Mays: basic, strong governance, and invest in your talent. We've mentioned talent a few times, Roland mentioned talent, but it is thinking about attracting people who can bridge the gap with public purpose and entrepreneurial thinking, so think about those skills that you're looking for in recruitment.

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00:37:51.580 --> 00:38:07.819

Amanda Mays: And then, I won't spend too long on this now, because I am conscious that we want to be taking some questions, but this will be part of the deck that will be shared with you, but a practical 8-point framework about what I believe, and hopefully align with the Roland's work.

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00:38:07.820 --> 00:38:22.930

Amanda Mays: but is about, you know, what are the areas we need to focus on? What do leaders do? And how does that translate and look in practice? So this might help you in the future to come back and think about how do we operate in this environment.

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00:38:23.020 --> 00:38:36.369

Amanda Mays: So I'm going to hopefully stop sharing, and, you know, hopefully that's given you some practical realities to the work that Roland talked through, and I'm going to hand back now to Lisa, and hopefully we'll take some questions.

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00:38:37.440 --> 00:39:02.080

Lisa Witter: Wonderful, thank you. Very practical things to do. Often when people talk about leadership, it's all up here, and what you brought it to is, like, exactly, you know, down to the work and how to make it happen. So, not surprisingly, the apolitical community did not leave you with just, as we say in America, softball questions. I don't know what that is in other countries, but, I love the saying, easy ones. Some of these are quite hard.

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00:39:02.200 --> 00:39:15.529

Lisa Witter: I play softball, so I feel like I can use that metaphor genuinely. So I'm gonna start with the first one. This is something I feel every day. What tips do you have to lead

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00:39:15.690 --> 00:39:18.409

Lisa Witter: Team members from different generations.

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00:39:20.110 --> 00:39:25.560

Lisa Witter: Did that show up at all, Roland, in your research? Amanda, you've come off mute, curious what you...

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00:39:25.760 --> 00:39:28.479

Lisa Witter: I have to say, this is the easy one, right? Very easy.

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00:39:29.720 --> 00:39:31.809

Amanda Mays: Roland, do you want to come in first with your.

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00:39:31.810 --> 00:39:34.769

Roland Dillon: You go for it, Amanda. I've got a thought, but we'd love to hear from you.

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00:39:35.470 --> 00:39:44.719

Amanda Mays: Great, thank you. So, I've looked a lot into this, and it is recognizing that we know, for example, Generation Z,

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00:39:44.950 --> 00:40:00.789

Amanda Mays: employees want a flatter hierarchy, they want more empowerment, they want real quick decisions and real-time feedback. So I think as leaders, we need to be able to design our policies and design the way we work.

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00:40:00.820 --> 00:40:04.940

Amanda Mays: That recognizing there is a difference, and it isn't one size fits all.

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00:40:04.940 --> 00:40:27.410

Amanda Mays: But really, my advice would be is always listening to your organization, so how do we get that real-time feedback? How do we get the feedback about how it's working for people? But I think that we do need to think about, you know, strategies that cover the different needs, and it might be quite uncomfortable for some of us that have been around a long time, but we do need to be able to recognise

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00:40:27.410 --> 00:40:34.809

Amanda Mays: But there are different ways of doing things that will make sure that we retain and attract talent within our organisations.

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00:40:35.600 --> 00:40:51.739

Lisa Witter: Well, Amanda, that's connected to the first question about what habits people might have to let go of, right? And if you have multi-generational or others, there might be ways of working that don't work anymore. So what a great opportunity to do new things. Roland, how about you? Do you have research on this, or you're...

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00:40:51.740 --> 00:41:10.769

Roland Dillon: Yeah, I mean, I've looked at this question more than once, and I think there's both the leaders' challenge and the institutional challenge, and it comes up... it becomes a flashpoint, particularly around ways of working. So hybrid was a really interesting example, where you had just very different preferences across the generations, and this came out, obviously, pretty significantly during COVID.

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00:41:10.770 --> 00:41:23.240

Roland Dillon: I think what our research showed was there were many consistent features across the generations in terms of why people got out of bed in the morning, why they wanted to work in government, and what they wanted to kind of learn and grow.

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00:41:23.470 --> 00:41:43.259

Roland Dillon: from a professional development point of view, I think in every generation, we're seeing probably an even stronger aversion to a lot of the things that are maybe a consistent feature of government. So, hierarchy, you know, bureaucracy, other things, that there's a sort of more strong aversion to that, in the, I guess, what you would call the younger generations.

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00:41:43.260 --> 00:41:52.259

Roland Dillon: I think the best leaders are ones who can actually identify, you know, each generational demographic will be able to bring different skills and preferences to the table.

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00:41:52.260 --> 00:41:57.790

Roland Dillon: And I think the, kind of, conscious conversation about what that looks like for different groups is important. So.

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00:41:57.790 --> 00:42:22.760

Roland Dillon: We looked at what hybrid, for example, does for different workplaces. We did not find in the locations that we looked at that it caused a change in performance. However, for younger members of the departments, we found that it was harder to form or kind of immerse people in the culture. Because if you'd been in the organization for, you know, 5 or 10 years, you had a large network, you had already well-established professional development pathways, whereas if you were in the organization

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00:42:22.760 --> 00:42:24.080

Roland Dillon: for a couple of years.

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00:42:24.080 --> 00:42:43.080

Roland Dillon: hybrid was actually more of a risk factor for you in terms of building culture and professional networks, which many people depended on to get things done in government. Not a one-size-fits-all answer, but just how and why people turn up, and then how and why people are, you know, developed and formed connections changes across generations.

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00:42:44.480 --> 00:42:46.190

Lisa Witter: Thank you,

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00:42:46.580 --> 00:43:01.210

Lisa Witter: Lots of layers to navigate and all of that. Another layer to navigate, this is a question from Everett, in terms of diversity. So we have age, different expectations, and experiences. So Everett's asking, how will leadership

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00:43:01.930 --> 00:43:06.910

Lisa Witter: with a big L, deal with the DEI controversy.

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00:43:07.410 --> 00:43:16.439

Lisa Witter: the world has shifted a bit in the last year or so. People have lots of feelings about this. What is your advice?

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00:43:17.130 --> 00:43:21.130

Lisa Witter: Roland or Amanda. Again, I told you that these weren't all easy questions.

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00:43:24.590 --> 00:43:31.419

Amanda Mays: Advice, from a... well, from an employer perspective, I think you have to be really clear

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00:43:33.320 --> 00:43:43.849

Amanda Mays: on what it is... so, having your standards clear within the organization. So, thinking about your EDI, EDI policies.

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00:43:44.490 --> 00:43:51.159

Amanda Mays: really thinking about, you know, those unconscious biases, those things that perhaps we aren't aware of. So.

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00:43:51.470 --> 00:43:56.349

Amanda Mays: I've already mentioned it before, but I think there's something about making sure when you're

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00:43:56.420 --> 00:44:00.409

Amanda Mays: Developing policy, when you're thinking about your goals and objectives.

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00:44:00.410 --> 00:44:21.969

Amanda Mays: is how do you engage with those different voices, so that inclusive leadership that we were talking about earlier, to make sure that you're not being inherently biased without even realising that you are, because it, you know, we know that that can happen. So that, you know, for me, it's about making sure you're always, as leaders, we're always listening to the organization, we're listening to our communities.

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00:44:22.000 --> 00:44:34.630

Amanda Mays: And we're listening to what our public needs, and making sure then that what we're... how we're responding to that is fair and transparent. So being really clear on what our policies are, making sure that they're accessible.

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00:44:34.630 --> 00:44:45.399

Amanda Mays: That we're training our leaders and our managers so that they are aware of how, you know, what is... are the expected behaviors that we want to see from them.

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00:44:45.400 --> 00:44:59.459

Amanda Mays: And just making sure that we're constantly holding that mirror up, you know, thinking about how we're leading and how we're behaving. So, so for me, that, you know, even in large organizations, it's possible to make sure you're hearing that employee voice.

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00:44:59.460 --> 00:45:13.820

Amanda Mays: and community voices. You know, it's not just about our organisations as employers, but our organisations as providers of services. But how are we listening to our public, and how are we listening? And Roland brought it up in his,

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00:45:13.820 --> 00:45:32.779

Amanda Mays: the practice, but co-creation, and that's absolutely fundamental, is that co-creation point, is that we can't have a small number of leaders in a room working on this. It's about how do we co-create to try to avoid some of those practices that might not be as we want them to be.

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00:45:34.280 --> 00:45:46.420

Lisa Witter: Thanks, Amanda. That's a good bridge to another question, that Catherine has. So, she asked, Roland, was there any evidence that suggested any of those six

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00:45:46.450 --> 00:46:02.199

Lisa Witter: sectors to focus on gave, kind of, had better ROI than the others. Like, are they all equally weighted? And then I had a follow-up to that. We just heard Amanda say, you want to co-create, but I remember at the top of that diagram was to have a vision.

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00:46:02.200 --> 00:46:12.820

Lisa Witter: And so that can seem, attention. Like, whose vision is... do you co-create the way, or... or the end? So, yeah, over to you. Any ROI tips on any of these?

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00:46:13.340 --> 00:46:16.630

Roland Dillon: Yeah, so there is definitely, a clear...

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00:46:16.630 --> 00:46:40.119

Roland Dillon: favorite, I guess, in the research, and I have a page that I didn't share earlier, but I'm happy to bring it up if I can share screen. I'm not sure at the moment whether it's letting me do that, but effectively, by far the most important was the extent to which you could set the direction. And we asked this question both in terms of self-assessed importance and also self-assessed capability. So not all were equally important, set the direction was

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00:46:40.120 --> 00:46:43.290

Roland Dillon: By far, the most significant call-out.

230

00:46:43.290 --> 00:46:57.110

Roland Dillon: And I think that speaks to all of the different constraints that we talked about. So, in this context of changing political dynamics, limited ability for resourcing and incentivization, this kind of asymmetric incentives problem, and the external scrutiny.

231

00:46:57.230 --> 00:46:59.170

Roland Dillon: When that's in place.

232

00:46:59.200 --> 00:47:16.470

Roland Dillon: that's the foundation stone, or the... maybe the lighthouse, probably a more apt metaphor, around which other things can organize. When that's not in place, it doesn't really matter how effective your personal operating model is, because you're just rowing really fast in pretty much not the right direction, point number one. I think point number two,

233

00:47:16.480 --> 00:47:19.349

Roland Dillon: The people that... that were able to...

234

00:47:19.350 --> 00:47:42.579

Roland Dillon: manage the kind of constant, you know, headwinds, tailwinds, obstacles, all of these sorts of things, had a very strong sense of navigation, something that was enduring. You know, ministers, I think, on average, are spending less than two years in many kind of developed economies at the moment. That's just not enough time to deliver major policy reform,

and so you have to have, as a senior leader, something that endures beyond the political cycle, beyond the budgetary cycle.

235

00:47:42.580 --> 00:47:53.519

Roland Dillon: So I would say, I don't know whether you would make it as... I don't know whether you could make it as simple as ROI, but if that's in place, then many other things will flow and be enabled by it, and when it's not in place.

236

00:47:53.660 --> 00:47:58.840

Roland Dillon: The best versions of all of those other capabilities may still push you pretty fast, off course.

237

00:48:00.220 --> 00:48:19.969

Lisa Witter: It's a... it's a powerful reminder of that direction, and how, one, the leader has to set the direction, but where sometimes you need the scaffolding of tools to be able to remind people of that, and I'm struck listening to effective mayors around the world, the ones that can say, I have a dashboard, and the team sits around the table.

238

00:48:19.990 --> 00:48:44.759

Lisa Witter: once a week, and everyone's responsible for their number on the dashboard, which seems like a data play, but it's actually leadership and accountability in the sense of we're all in it together. Someone once told me from Game Theory that if you don't give people a game, they will play one, and so why don't we give them the game where we're all moving in the same direction? And I think we're seeing more of that happen in governments from Hawaii to Chile, sort of the use of technology to help guide that direction coming true.

239

00:48:44.830 --> 00:48:46.679

Lisa Witter: I have a question.

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00:48:47.060 --> 00:48:50.739

Lisa Witter: From Margaret. So...

241

00:48:51.060 --> 00:49:00.870

Lisa Witter: a lot of people are in government because they're intrinsically motivated, so she asked, highly empathetic and people-centered, inclusive leadership. I think, Amanda, what you were really talking about.

242

00:49:00.900 --> 00:49:17.109

Lisa Witter: is very, you know, rewarding and very impactful, but it also can be very emotionally draining, especially, in organizations where delivery and outputs are still really the outcome measured and sought, right? So it's just hard work every single day.

243

00:49:17.600 --> 00:49:30.999

Lisa Witter: How do you manage that? How do you protect yourself? I know Roland talked about turning off, going away, but you gotta come back, and you gotta do the one-on-ones, and how do you really carve that space to do that work without burning out or not being effective?

244

00:49:31.890 --> 00:49:40.960

Roland Dillon: And I can give two thoughts on this, in part because, as I said before, the thing that was most... ranked most important and self-assessed the highest was this setting the vision.

245

00:49:41.040 --> 00:50:06.009

Roland Dillon: the thing that was ranked less important and self-assessed as lowest capability was personal resilience. So I think you've already got evidence here that people, have a strong sense of the mission, and that one of the things that often is sacrificed on that altar is personal wellbeing, and particularly for people who are, you know, inclusive, authentic, vulnerable, and empathetic, that... that has to come from somewhere. That energy, you know, can be consumed, and so

246

00:50:06.010 --> 00:50:30.070

Roland Dillon: what we... when we talked to people about it, there were a couple things that came through. One was, that the best leaders are able to articulate and stick to, not just articulate, but really stick to boundaries, and so they have mechanisms by which they can recharge. They would have, either in their office or in their network, people who were effectively the barometer for their personal well-being, so that, you know, you can go in the red

247

00:50:30.070 --> 00:50:49.190

Roland Dillon: kind of on your personal dashboard one week, but if you're in the red, kind of three weeks in a row, something bad's about to happen, that it was external markers for that that were very powerful, and also just recognizing, if you want to be a great leader, but you can't have that time to renew or disconnect, you will eventually not be able to be an effective leader, and so...

248

00:50:49.340 --> 00:51:10.989

Roland Dillon: the person who was most committed to the mission was still able to set the boundary, because it was a necessary part of being the leader. I think the other thing that I would say is, this is something where this conversation, I think, is changing. You started on this question, Lisa, about how different generations manifest this. I think there is a far more developed conversation in younger generations about personal boundaries.

249

00:51:10.990 --> 00:51:26.890

Roland Dillon: health and wellbeing, and a much... not just acceptance of it, but expectation of it. That's very challenging for some of the senior leaders that we talked about, who went through a very, stiff upper lip culture, and so I think that is... that is a real mental shift. Yeah.

250

00:51:28.250 --> 00:51:32.030

Amanda Mays: And if I can add... Elisa, you're on mute.

251

00:51:32.030 --> 00:51:49.809

Lisa Witter: Yeah, yeah. Did I jump to another question? Because there's a few more that I want to make sure we get. Amanda, I will throw this one to you, if it's okay. Just thinking about what you can do when you are a new leader in an organization, but not at the most senior level. Happens to a lot of people, you're new, you go in.

252

00:51:49.810 --> 00:52:03.439

Lisa Witter: Sometimes culture is so ingrained that I, this is the person who wrote this, feel incumbents just said that becoming part of the problem, right? You get sidelined, or you get pushed out, or you become part of the norm, and things don't change, even if you want to.

253

00:52:03.440 --> 00:52:16.259

Lisa Witter: So not having aligned leadership feels harmful to the rest of the organization, too, but change is needed. So what do you do? You're that new person in, you can see that things aren't going the right direction, but you don't actually have authority. Any tips, Amanda?

254

00:52:17.190 --> 00:52:26.329

Amanda Mays: That's a really good question. I mean, yes, it's... I think we've probably all felt that, haven't we, over the years in our careers? I think partly it's...

255

00:52:26.990 --> 00:52:44.979

Amanda Mays: about being aware, what is it that you need to achieve? So, what is it that you've been brought in to do? So, first of all, being clear on your own boundaries, so your own, you know, what are the performance achievements that I need to set? What am I, you know, how am I being assessed against them?

256

00:52:44.980 --> 00:52:52.659

Amanda Mays: So that you can be really clear that, actually, within your own world, that you know you're doing a good job, and that you know you're doing what needs to be done.

257

00:52:52.800 --> 00:53:00.919

Amanda Mays: In terms, then, of being able to influence the wider organization, I think sometimes it's about taking those opportunities

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00:53:00.920 --> 00:53:20.990

Amanda Mays: to think about how you can do work that perhaps crosses departments. So, are there projects that you can do that, you know, you can start to grow networks within other organizations? Do you have, you know, a technology like Yammer or, you know, Slack that you can start to... to create more networks, create people that you know outside of your own team?

259

00:53:20.990 --> 00:53:30.769

Amanda Mays: Because maybe being in your own team doesn't feel very comfortable. So I think there's something about getting to know the wider organization, getting to know wider people in the organization.

260

00:53:30.770 --> 00:53:44.410

Amanda Mays: And if there are opportunities to perhaps give, you know, feedback, either through, you know, employee surveys or check, you know, check-ins, being able to do that in an anonymous way, but not do it in a way that's seen as, as,

261

00:53:44.580 --> 00:54:01.729

Amanda Mays: destructive, but what are the constructive things? What's the constructive advice that you can offer that will perhaps... perhaps to start nudge the culture of the organization? But first of all, I think be... be comfortable in your own environment, and then start to think, how can I build my network across the wider organization?

262

00:54:02.550 --> 00:54:19.160

Lisa Witter: Super one last question. As a woman of color, I find it difficult to climb the leadership ladder, let alone lead a majority white Caucasian team in government, in a very hierarchical structure. What are your thoughts on how to lead in such circumstances?

263

00:54:23.290 --> 00:54:24.499

Lisa Witter: Either of you?

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00:54:26.400 --> 00:54:38.280

Amanda Mays: I'm happy to come in again. I think there's, you know, are there opportunities to grow your leadership skills? So, are there development programs that you can ask to be signed up to?

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00:54:38.280 --> 00:54:46.729

Amanda Mays: Are there opportunities that you can look for a mentor within your organization, that, you know, you can start to learn from

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00:54:47.150 --> 00:54:54.309

Amanda Mays: they can learn from you, and you can learn from them. I'm really passionate about mentoring and reverse mentoring, about how you can work together.

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00:54:54.450 --> 00:55:13.790

Amanda Mays: I think there's also opportunities to look, you know, can you volunteer to do work that's wider than your own? So you can, you know, again, back to my earlier point, really, about growing your network wider. Are there people that you can look up to that are perhaps similar to you in characteristics, so you can think, how have they got where they've got, and how can I follow that?

268

00:55:13.870 --> 00:55:26.879

Amanda Mays: But certainly look to see how you can, you know, develop your own leadership skills, perhaps through more formalized training, if not formalized through informal mentoring. Look for a coach, you know, see if your organization offers that.

269

00:55:26.880 --> 00:55:39.400

Amanda Mays: And then just take any opportunity you can to grow your skills that are, you know, do your job and do your basics brilliantly, but are there opportunities to grow your skills in other teams and more company-wide projects, too?

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00:55:39.940 --> 00:55:42.559

Lisa Witter: Yeah, that peer-to-peer mentoring, the...

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00:55:42.920 --> 00:55:57.990

Lisa Witter: sharing is so important for everyone. So as we wrap up, thank you, everyone, for your questions. I'm sorry we didn't get to all of them. They were very rich, some tough questions about the future and entrepreneurship and retaining talent, and tough situations.

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00:55:57.990 --> 00:56:17.830

Lisa Witter: But I really want to thank and ask everyone to give a virtual round of applause to Roland and Amanda for their wisdom and their data, right? It was very data-driven, experience-driven, and we will be sharing their presentations. You're seeing the round of applause in some hearts, Amanda and Roland. And thanks to everyone who also was contributing, their habits, bad habits, good habits.

273

00:56:17.830 --> 00:56:20.979

Lisa Witter: into the chat. Now, we're gonna put up...

274

00:56:20.980 --> 00:56:40.259

Lisa Witter: The team's gonna put up a quick poll to find out how you, the participants, felt about today. On a scale of 1 to 10, rank your agreement with this statement. This event was valuable, and a use of our time. We really pride ourselves in growth mindset, so we're always trying to learn. It's a valuable hour for the citizens that you work for.

275

00:56:40.270 --> 00:56:45.389

Lisa Witter: Stu, to spend your time, so thank you very much for giving us that feedback.

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00:56:45.390 --> 00:57:09.219

Lisa Witter: And while that's responding to the poll, I want to share a few more, events that you can register to join us again, soon. Remember, if you're not available to join live, all of these things are, you can register, and then you can get the recording sent to you, so whatever suits you on your own, on your own time. We have the first in our new AI Skills Lab series next Tuesday, AI for Analyzing Data.

277

00:57:09.220 --> 00:57:19.400

Lisa Witter: Which is a 30-minute session on, how to get smarter with AI. If you handle any data on your... in your role, this is going to be really useful. Quick, really practical.

278

00:57:19.400 --> 00:57:44.349

Lisa Witter: Then we have Turning Your Writing from Bland to Brilliant is later next week on Thursday, offering techniques for clear, concise, audience-aware writing that saves time and builds influence. Roland, we saw one of your sectors was communications, how important that is. It's evergreen, I think. And then, to start off October, we will have Reclaiming Your Focus When Everything is urgent. So in that Eisenhower Principle, everything is urgent and

279

00:57:44.350 --> 00:57:46.470

Lisa Witter: important. How do you make decisions?

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00:57:46.470 --> 00:58:00.419

Lisa Witter: Which will help you prioritize and remain strategic. So we're going to put those into the chat. Thank you for the feedback poll. We're always looking for ways to improve. We're really grateful for

281

00:58:00.750 --> 00:58:17.919

Lisa Witter: You've chosen to spend your life as a public servant in this moment, and Roland for being up late, and Australia, and Amanda, for joining us. Really, thank you for your wisdom, really appreciated it. Fortunately, that's all we have time for, but keep an eye out for your email, share this with colleagues.

282

00:58:17.920 --> 00:58:21.929

Lisa Witter: And we always love feedback. So thanks, everyone. Really, really appreciate it. We can wave.

283

00:58:22.340 --> 00:58:26.010

Lisa Witter: to everyone, And see you in the next one!