



“I, TECHNOLOGIST” WITH DAVID HOLE

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Driving Digital Tech Trends

TOM LEHMANN: TOM LEHMANN: Welcome to Driving Digital in Biopharma and this byte sized episode focused on one of the trends identified in Accenture’s 2021 Technology Vision. For more than 20 years, Accenture has developed the Technology Vision as a methodical review across the enterprise to identify emerging technology trends that will have the greatest impact in the coming years.

Our 2021 vision survey revealed that leaders don’t sit back and wait for the “new normal.” They build it themselves. Big changes today require bold, innovative leadership that prioritizes technology. And it’s not just about fixing the business, but upending convention and creating a new vision for the future.

Each of the five trends:

1. Stack Strategically
2. Mirrored World
3. I, Technologist
4. Anywhere, Everywhere and
5. From Me to We are rooted in the disruptions and demands caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that set a high bar for life sciences companies—with many meeting or exceeding expectations.

Even with extreme levels of instability, 2020 shattered industry norms and showed what is possible when technology is driven by a

renewed sense of purpose, focus and commitment to patients, customers and the general population.

In this series of short episodes, I’ll talk with five Accenture Life Sciences leaders who helped shape our industry perspective of the Tech Vision to inspire life sciences companies to embrace a new mindset to shape a better future. Their thinking is backed by a survey of 100 biopharma business and IT executives across seven countries that helped identify the key issues and priorities for technology adoption and investment.

One of the key tech trends leaders must embrace to forge a better future is I, Technologist, which is the topic for this episode. I am joined today by David Hole, who is the Life Science Lead within Accenture's Talent and Organization and Human Potential practice.

Welcome, David, to Driving Digital in Biopharma.

DAVID HOLE: Hello there.

TOM: Thanks for joining us today.

TOM: So you spend your time with life sciences clients focused on the impact of talent, organizations and culture on business strategy and performance—and this past year has certainly been disruptive for any organization's talent on multiple levels and clearly change the priorities and focus. We're also seeing the continuation and in many aspects, the



acceleration of digital transformation, which has also brought a large talent component and been a recurring theme across this podcast.

So can you put the idea of “I, Technologist” in that context and also just share what is meant by “I, Technologist”?

DAVID: Yes, so first of all, I think you're right in saying that this has been a highly disruptive year. Indeed, there has been a level of disruption like no other that I can recall. And one of the consequences of that is the recognition by organizations that in order to change the ways of working going forward, they need to make technology accessible to all.

And so the focus is turning to build digital natives across the enterprise, connecting disciplines across the organization, enabling data exchange across a broader ecosystem, and activating creativity by accentuating and amplifying human ingenuity through technology. So to your question of, well, what is an “I, Technologist,” well really that's about bringing humans closer to technology and not just technology closer to humans.

In fact, when we looked at this issue and we talked to executives in biopharma, we found that 98%, an overwhelming majority, believed technology democratization is critical in their ability to ignite and drive innovation across the organization. So to give you one example, if we just look at the field of research and development, scientists' core disciplines have already been transformed by technology.

But now it's about connecting more diverse research teams via technology, allowing increasingly accessible technology to penetrate other areas of the operation. It's about aggressively facilitating the flow and exchange of data for clinical trials and approvals, all whilst ensuring data accuracy and data security. And so “I, Technologist,” really about bringing humans closer to technology as a core of how they operate.

TOM: And so does that then come along with an assumption that those humans that are getting closer to the tech...or the technology getting closer to those humans, as you said—do they themselves need to be just higher up the technology curve? Or is there something else that's happening differently to make it easier for them to do their jobs or to utilize that technology?

DAVID: So that's a very interesting question, because it really is about that technology equation and capability build. And so let me give you an example. We have been working with a leading biotechnology company which is investing in a strategic [inaudible] to encourage all its employees throughout the organization, both core value chain functions, but enterprise corporate functions as well, to become digital natives.

And they're doing that in a flexible and intuitive manner, balancing the need for transformation without creating additional burdens. Now, what do I mean by that? Well, it's really developing the solution that involves more than technology, to your question. It's also about a culture change built on cooperation, collaboration, agility and connectivity of teams.

And the teams are creating and engaging in virtual experiences by leveraging tools such as Miro and Pigeonhole, Menti, Whitespace and others. And the program is focused on deploying next generation learning methods, such as bite size and experiential learning, so that it doesn't feel like a heavy lift. It feels like a natural extension of that way of working.

TOM: So you mentioned an example of seeing that, this idea of the digital native—which is which is something we've discussed on previous episodes here, around the importance of talent as it relates broadly to the digital transformation.

Do you think across the industry there's a common understanding of what needs to get done, and therefore companies are well on that journey? Or in order to deliver this outcome,



similar to the example that you just described, there's still a pretty heavy lift that most organizations are still going through?

DAVID: That's a really interesting question. And I would characterize it as rather than a common understanding, an emerging understanding. So I think we are seeing that organizations are, if you will, at different stages, different points on perhaps a maturity scale. But where there is common ground is the realization that developing that digital native workforce is the goal. The question then becomes, where are people starting that journey from and how prepared are they to invest in the right way to get the right outcomes?

TOM: Okay. All right, well, let me come back to a comment you made before around that the democratization of technology... does that create then implicit in that, a self-service model where you don't need IT and therefore it just becomes a much more business enabled without the support of an IT group?

DAVID: I think it's much more creating a partnership. So democratization of technology, in not only allows, it forces people to generate grassroots movements and experiment and create through the deployment of technology applications. And the change is not about making people more technology oriented. It's about making people aware of and comfortable with what's out there.

And there's a role for IT. IT really can function in two ways. One is it can be the curator of the art of the possible in terms of technology solutions. It can be the informed partner who's able to look at the working landscape and make recommendations of the technology enablement to support that.

And crucially, in terms of capability build, it can be the source of understanding the types of skills, competencies and knowledge that the employees would need in order then to move to more of a self-service approach. And so I see it very much as a partnership. I actually think it

amplifies the role of IT in the discussion.

TOM: Which is consistent, as I reflect on this with some of the previous conversations we've had, where it seems that IT is moving from, maybe in historical terms as more of a cost center off to the side as an enabler, moving much more into the center and much more of an enabler to this broader, longer term objective. And to your point, in order to actually deliver on that, having a workforce that is much more digitally savvy, technology oriented, is just going to become critical in order to actually get the value out of those technology investments.

DAVID: I that's right. And I would add to that, that I think it also requires IT to look at their capabilities from being... in order to be a strategic partner. There's a consulting capability, if you will, that IT needs to be able to build in order to fulfill that role with the employees and with the other business functions.

TOM: So what are you seeing just broadly across life sciences companies? What's happening these days as far as the types of changes in this space?

DAVID: So first and foremost, and it links to an earlier question you asked, we are absolutely seeing that the focus of learning and development strategies are absolutely in the field of developing "I, Technologist", in the field of developing those digital natives.

And so there's a pivot of investment from a development perspective in that direction. Secondly, we're beginning to see that it starts to inform the talent acquisition agenda.

Irrespective of business function, organizations, Life Science organizations, are now looking to bring in talent that have a grounding, if you will, in being a digital native; that they have that capability, or they have the potential to adapt and absorb that capability.

And then, of course, in terms of deployment and activation, we're seeing that across the value



chain. You can walk from R&D, operation, supply chain, into the commercial function, and see that ways of working are being transformed in terms of moving to a more hybrid business model, which amplifies, again, the need to be adept at the use of technology and digital tools for collaboration, innovation.

And so, it really is at the heart of changing—changing in a dramatic way—how organizations operate as they move forward.

TOM: Excellent. If I think about all three of those... Right, if you think from, again, with the talent that you have, with the learning it develops, with the acquisition of new talent, as you mentioned, again there is a continued war for talent, if you will, as you think about both the scientific capabilities as well as the digital or technology difficulties that you mentioned.

But then ultimately, how do you best deploy and activate that talent...that's how it all comes together. So certainly appreciate that run through there.

What's next then? What's on the horizon as companies think about this theme of "I, Technologist" and what will be on the next horizon?

DAVID: I think the next step is very much in that topic we touched on of the democratization of technology. I do believe that as you move forward and you become truly digital native, you're going to see a grassroots movement, if you will, where teams will come together, will form organically in order to deliver on a particular outcome.

So collaborative working, innovation hubs, which will be, as I say, self-forming, driving an outcome, nimble and agile because of the technology enablement and the comfort with the use of the technology. And that, I think, is going to have a significant impact on how life science organizations look at their traditional models of innovation and collaboration.

TOM: So, David, before we close, maybe a quick

question for you... as we look at the data that's out there, are organizations ready for what's ahead of them as it relates to this concept of "I, Technologist," and the associated talent.

DAVID: So that's the exciting thing, because the clear answer is yes. One of the data points we have is that 90% of the biopharma executives that we reached out to, have a view that their organization must train their people to think like technologists—and that's across the whole organization. So, again, to emphasize the point, we're not just talking about the core business functions, we're talking about the enabling functions.

We're talking across the enterprise, whether we're in R&D, whether we're in commercial, HR, legal, finance, it's across the enterprise. And the overwhelming appetite is the focus of training must be to have their people able to think and act like technologists.

TOM: So then as we as we do wrap this up, "I, Technologist" is not just the name of a science fiction movie. It is a trend that's here and now.

And we're seeing organizations understanding the need, ready for the change, acknowledging the fact that there's activity that needs to happen. And, as you just said, it's across the enterprise. So this is not isolated within one particular area. It is across the enterprise. And, probably to take one step further, and you can understand the value associated with it. This has been a big part of our conversation throughout the this whole podcast series, all of this technology and digital...why do it? What's the actual value associated with it? I think if you put all those pieces together, it's clear the industry gets it, understands it, change is underway. And again, it's not something out in the future. It's here and now and it's happening.

So, I do thank you for joining us today. Great run through and great talking with you today.

DAVID: Thank you.



[Add in recorded Outro]

I hope that you enjoyed this byte sized episode of Driving Digital in Biopharma. I encourage you to listen to the whole series of short episodes focused on the trends coming out of Accenture's 2021 Tech Vision, including the next one in our series where we will explore the tech trend of "Anywhere, Everywhere". The essence of that trend is with the nature of the workplace changing so dramatically, technology is the connector, the enabler and what has and will allow organizations and individuals to redefine the workplace of the future.

I thank you all again for listening to this episode. Please remember to like and subscribe to Driving Digital in Biopharma on your favorite podcast platforms so you don't miss an episode. And until next time this is Tom Lehmann, with Driving Digital in Biopharma.

Copyright © 2021 Accenture
All rights reserved.

Accenture and its logo
are registered trademarks
of Accenture.