



# ID, Empowered by Accenture - Research Panel: How Do We Tackle the Impact?

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

**Barbara:** Hi, everyone. It's Barbara Harvey here, Managing Director at Accenture research. And I've just had the pleasure of speaking about the impact that Covid-19 has had on equality across our workplaces. And we've seen that, it's a moment when for businesses and organisations everywhere, it's time to pull together to use that creative energy to build back a fairer and stronger workplace.

And that is the discussion that we're going to have over the next 45 minutes or so. And it is a real pleasure to be joined for this discussion by three great colleagues. And I'm just going to introduce you to them, so you get to know them a little bit.

So, say hello. Pritesh Gadhia, Accenture UK, and Ireland interactive lead. Give us a wave.

Hi, Pritesh, nice to have you here with us today.

Sam Olson, who's the CEO with movement to work. Say hello, Sam. Sam. Nice to have you here with us today, Sam.

And a senior managing strategy consultant at IBM. Say hi, Christina.

It's brilliant to have you all with me today. And before we kick off, I think it would be really nice to ask all our speakers to describe their own identities and what this means to them.

So, I'm going to go around the panel in turn, and I'm going to ask each of them to give us a one-minute story. No pressure. Okay. On your identity.

And I'm going to start with you Pritesh if I may.

**Pritesh:** Yeah. Listen, Barbara, thank you. And thank you for having me it's really a pleasure to join you and the team. Identity. Well, it's a really interesting question. So, I'm, the first-generation immigrant Barbara. I came over from Kenya. Back in the day, a while ago now and I want to give my age away, when the laws changed in Kenya and Asians were required to have work permits to trade and trade stalls. And unfortunately, it forced my parents to close a small convenience store they had, and lucky in education, we didn't see a future there. And so, we came over to the U.K as first-generation immigrants.

We moved to a working-class white area, started a new school, friends, etcetera. So, it was pretty challenging, pretty challenging time. And I think it was at that time, my age, that really formed my determination to kind of just get out and succeed and do something that would make my parents my parents proud. So, my identity is very much formed from that generation upbringing. And now for me, it's all about sharing the stories of what that formed in me and also growing up in an environment where mental health was a real challenge. But we didn't talk about it in the family. That really informed my understanding of how being open talking and transparent about problems, really is important.

And why this setting is important to me gives me the opportunity to participate in forums. Barbara, where I can talk about these things, share my experiences, my thoughts from the perspective, not just of Accenture, of the person.

**Barbara:** That's amazing. You know, I've known you for a while and I didn't know that story. Thank you so much for sharing that with us. It's lovely. Christina, how about you?

**Christina:** Difficult to act to follow. That was quite a compelling story, So I'm Christina Alexander. As you probably can tell from my accent, I'm American and have been working with IBM for just over seven years. But only two of which have been in London and I moved to London through work. And I think one of the things that I really love about identity is the fact that it is most special when shared. In other words, it's an element of yourself that is magnified via the fact that you're sharing it with other people. So as part of my identity, I would say I'm a thought leader in a target operating model. I am a female in the workplace. I am a proud former competitive athlete and you know, I'm very proud of the achievements that I have, but I think that I'm also very open to continuing to grow, to continuing to learn. And I would say that that's something that I'm very focused on within work is really always putting myself in environments where I'm continuing to learn about other people and hear about their identities. So, no doubt that will be a great opportunity today.

**Barbara:** Thank you, Christina. We want to hear more about that athlete's story later on.

**Christina:** Okay. Sure thing.

**Barbara:** And Sam, how about you?

**Sam:** No athlete stories, I What does identity mean to me? I think I'll bring in a bit of British identity here because nothing drives me up the wall more than a tick box exercise where I have to decide about English, Welsh or Scottish. So, I was born in Scotland. I grew up in Wales and I've lived all my adult life in England. So, I firmly am British - don't make me choose. Don't make me choose the team for the Six Nations. So that's a trivial point, isn't it? Of course, it's trivial. But actually, that is part of my identity of feeling very British and feeling very much then a global citizen because I've been fortunate enough to work in Hong Kong. I spent a lot of my career in Africa before we had children. So, all these pieces for me all to come together when thinking identity and when thinking identity when working with

people and thinking about where they've come from and what their identity is, makes a huge impact on the strengths and weaknesses of individual teams. When I arrive at work in the morning, yes, I bring that identity, but I bring the fact that I'm a working mum. I bring the fact that I'm dyslexic. I bring the fact that I enjoy doing sports but tell myself, I don't have time to. Actually, I enjoy watching it, but don't always have time to do it. And we bring all that to work. But when I arrive at work, what people see, so I'm seconded from the civil service. So, people see a senior civil servant or people see a CEO of Movement to Work, and somehow, we've lost the ability to think of the identity. And we just think of that post. And I'd like to think post pandemic when we've all seen inside each other's homes quite so much. It's not hard to see how we're working moms out here. Is it that we will think more of that whole self that everyone brings to work and that identity?

**Barbara:** I love that I love that Sam there are some similarities there between you and me. When we were planning this, they said it was only fair that I did this to. So, here's mine. I was born in Northern Ireland, which always makes people gasp because they always go, where's your accent? Well, my accent was well and truly drummed out of me when I moved from Northern Ireland at the age of 13 to Jersey in the Channel Islands and went to a school where it was not acceptable to be different. You had to be one of the same. And basically I was followed around by a young person who will remain nameless, who copied my accent for about six weeks, to the point where my sister and I practiced speaking English on the bus - grass and bath became our language. Then I moved to England to university, and I've stayed in England. So, like you, Christina, Sam, I feel British. I don't feel like I've only lived in England in the last half of my life. From my other forms of identity is when I started work, I worked in a very male dominated environment, and I remember just feeling angry about the fact that my views were not listened to, that I felt in the minority, and I've never had that before. I've never been in a place where people didn't listen to me. My parents always listened to me and I was really angry, and I think that fuelled my passion for inclusion and diversity. And ultimately what I did in my research. And alongside that my younger daughter's experience of O.C.D. Brought me into the world of mental health and how important that is. And I think those are the things that I've sort of defined me over the

years, a passion for a hatred of, um, people being excluded, Bye for any reason that we all are who we are. And we should each have the right to be ourselves at work and to do our best. So, let's see how we can do more of that as we think about some of the some of the questions that we have here.

So, I'm going to move on and ask you some questions around this story. And I'm so looking forward to hearing to hearing what you've got to say. I'm going to start, so I'm going to start with a question I'm going to throw at you to begin with.

You know, when I look at my research and I look at where we what we've done in terms of looking at culture in the workplace, you know, I can see over and over again that when you create more inclusive cultures When you allow people to be themselves, they do better. They thrive. They advanced more. And actually, strangely enough, we get more innovation in our workplaces as well. Would you comment on that from your perspective, Sam?

**Sam:** Yes, I think I'll start quite broadly as opposed to specifically on the youth angle of this and say, maybe this is my angle that I bring with my dyslexia. There is such power as leaders in recruiting two teams' weaknesses as opposed to thinking. What is the skill said that we need? What's the skill set I've just lost from the person who's been promoted or who is moving to a different role, instead taking a step back and saying, what has this team got to deliver in the next 12 months? What's the strengths? What are the dynamics in the teams? But what has that team not got at the moment? Because by recruiting to the what not, what the team doesn't have is how you're really going to bring diversity of thought and diversity of thinking. I will find myself in teams and working in groups and looking around the room and saying, well, it's ticked all the diversity boxes. There's about half women. There's a good balance here across different backgrounds. But actually, I'm the only one in the room who didn't go to Oxbridge, which, like the group, thing that can emerge from that is just phenomenal. So, we have always got to be thinking about diversity, is about diversity of thought, recruiting to the weaknesses of the team. And, that, for me, is where youth employment and bringing in young people to organisations from disadvantaged backgrounds can add real power and strength.

**Barbara:** Absolutely. I don't know whether any of the others would like to, Christina or Pritesh, would like to comment on anything there?

**Pritesh:** If I may, sorry, Christina, I just interrupted you. That's the difficulty. And I do apologize, but that was that was that was that was fascinating. It actually reminds me as I reflect back on my career and Accenture and, particularly Accenture Interactive when we when we formed it in the early days in the in the sort of 2012/2014 sort of area, and O was a traditional Accenture person, and Accenture by the way, is not the Accenture your grandfather's know now right. But when we created the Accenture Interactive, it was a combination of different acquisitions. Were now 11 different brands. And that brings a whole diversity, different talent, different skills, both from the creative, technical, and branding side. And I remember when I first started interviewing for new people, if you like to Accenture Interactive, I was so drawn initially to those that fitted my consulting mode, and it was a real challenge for me to step out of that. I actually know if we're going to if we're going to define a creative culture, we need to look at people differently. We need to understand and for the skills and what they represent. Not do they fit the mould of all Accenture. So, I think diversity is incredibly important in the workforce across the spectrum, not just the ethnicity diversity, etc.

**Barbara:** And, Christina.

**Christina:** Yeah, I was just going to add on to what Sam was saying about how important it is to really make people feel included and active and how it can really be difficult if your background or your skill set doesn't match those of your peers. So maybe it's based on your education. Maybe it's based on your upbringing. Maybe it's based on you know how you learn, maybe your left brain, maybe your right brain. And I think what that really drives as a very important focus on who your mentors are and who your sponsors are and how actively you're really engaging with your corporation and how it's supporting you, too, because I definitely think, as we're all, particularly those new to the workforce, thrust into new projects thrust into new networking situations. We all come from different levels of fluency, if you will, with you know how to be socially savvy, how to be professionally savvy. And I think that it can at times disadvantage those who, you know, do come from a background that is perhaps different from that which is present in their corporation in droves.

And so, I think that it really shows support for our newer colleagues, but also for colleagues who are not the common. I mean, I hate to really even say that, but the colleagues that are perhaps not always as prevalent to really

focus on supporting, mentoring and sponsoring them, I think, goes a long way to making people feel not just welcome but vital to the organization's success.

**Barbara:** Christina if I can just follow on from that for a moment. So, like me, you're working in an industry which is very strongly technology led. Do you think there's anything specific about the technology industry that we can do more or better to really encourage more diversity?

**Christina:** So, I would say that I mean, even harkening on what Accenture is doing that I really love right now, which is a big focus on bringing women back into the workforce. Technology is one of those industries where, you know, five minutes later you're completely behind the eight ball. I'm constantly learning about new technologies, it is what I do with strategic tech adoption, and I think that's a really amazing element of it. But it's also a blessing and a curse because no time moves quicker than when you feel like you're quite behind. So, I think, focusing on making it, making people recognize for the base skills that they have, so that even if you know some of their core learning needs to be refreshed, they can still be appreciated and really celebrated in the workplace, which I think makes it easier for people to re-join a dynamic industry like Tech but also then focusing on career progression and using technology for good.

So, I know that we have a lot around AI, which has been a bit of a mixed bag. Candidly, as far as how we've gone, about being very unbiased and neutral in terms of recruitment and other things. But as we look carefully to use tech for good, I would say that would be in driving more gender equity, but also gender blind or, I guess, unbiased. Using the recruitment process itself and using tech to do that, potentially even using tech to make more transparent performance reviews as well as then compensation. So, I wouldn't claim to have all the answers. I'm confident that many of the talented individuals in Tech could definitely advance in those spaces and that that would be meaningful.

**Barbara:** I love some of your comments there, particularly around that kind of. How do you actually program out bias rather than relying on us being trained to be unbiased, which is always very, very challenging? Maybe I can ask you Pritesh to comment on that because leading Accenture Interactive, you're right at the heart of technology there. What's your view around the tech industry?

**Pritesh:** Yeah, really great answers there. And I think, I actually think about less about applying the technology, but actually, with the growth of the technology industry, how do we create more and greater opportunity? And look, we have a real challenge. It's interesting about this statistic I read the other day that 50% 50% of women who take roles in technology drop out of the age of 35. So, we have a real challenge, right? And people in positions of leadership like you guys that can affect a lot of change. But look, let's think about you know, some of the things we can do, I think, within the technology industry, the diversity is actually growing, but we have to really embrace that and be bold. I'm really proud that Accenture interactive leadership team has a great level of diversity because that encourages people, gives them a platform to aspire to. I'm not a big fan of a target driven culture, but I have to say in this environment we do need to be open and transparent about our targets around diversity and how we're doing towards them right and actually making leadership commitment to them. You know, the Accenture board is very visible and committed to our targets around gender inequality. But as Cristina really pointed out already, let's be bold in terms of our internal practices. Let's not go to the same establishments. Let's look at different educational institutions and communities that we can. We can find talented people and things like apprentices, right to bring in different cultural backgrounds, particularly a massive difference. And, you know, at Accenture we put people on projects through roles So I like to take positively selective in terms of giving people opportunity to go on roles where they're really going to develop and sort of challenge the status quo a bit. And then in terms of applying the technology. Barbara one of the things I'm really proud of is that Accenture have participated in something called mobilise.

We partnered with MOBOs to develop the mobilise digital platform right, music of black origin, but what that platform does is it gives people from an African Caribbean background access to whole network, a whole set of opportunities in the tech industry to really see to really see where they can find opportunity. And I think the final point, I would add is that let's use technology as you need to help people that don't have access to everything that can't get to conferences or training because of parent and care commitments. I do hope that the environments like this, where we can do zoom meeting, zoom training, etcetera continues, because it just makes it more

accessible that we can all participate and learn and educate each other. Barbara,

**Barbara:** I so agree. And I think your comment about targets is really interesting and, you know, it's where I've changed. You know, when I look back, I was really against targets in my early days, thought it was really unfair. And now I think it is the only way to drive change. So, it's interesting to hear you speak about that. Perhaps a little bit about the young people and, you know, I spoke about this when I was doing the presentation a little bit earlier, and about how this pandemic has been so brutal on the young and Sam, you know, you have so much experience of working with this group. What do you think businesses like ours need to do to help these young people who have been so badly affected over the last year or so?

**Sam:** Well, I think the first step Barbara, is to just acknowledge how badly they've been affected. I can't remember who said it right at the beginning of the pandemic, but they were quickly disproved this concept that the pandemic was going to be a leveller. I mean, it's been far from a leveller. Nothing could be further from the truth. All it's really done is exaggerated, some of the inequalities we've got in our society. So, there is a real danger in the youth employment space that we now have so many young people who would normally have left a HEFE, left university skipping out with their degree in hand and would have gone into jobs quite quickly. Those jobs aren't there at the moment. So, what we're seeing happen is those young people are taking the jobs that would historically have been taken by young people further from the workplace. And so all that is happening is these young people are being pushed further from the labour market, and these are the young people who face barriers and disadvantages pre Covid. So that's where our real concerns lie at the moment because fantastic, that the 20 years plus younger version of me with their maths degree is getting experience over the summer by going to work in Sainsbury's going to work in Tesco. But look this time last year before the pandemic and what's happening to their work experience. So, we're working with businesses at the moment and Accenture are at the forefront of this I'm pleased to be able to say, and Marks and Spencer's are a real gold light of ensuring that in their programmes that they're running for young people. They are really leaning into those cohorts of young people who were furthest from the labour market in the first place. Because if we don't

capture them now, they really run the risk of a lifetime of being unemployed and unemployable. And I think specifically then linking to the tech industry and is do not underestimate as businesses how untech savvy, actually young people are. We think of them being the digital natives. Well, I'm really sorry they are not. They are brilliant at communicating with each other they're fantastic, are being able to build relationships, all things that we all need to learn and need in our organisations. By the way, however, don't think that they know how to use to teams. Don't think they have any idea how to manage an inbox. All these things that we see as quite basic levels before you get into a coding space. Actually, we find young people are not used to this, actually. So, what can businesses do? They need to think about running more youth employment programs that give young people experiences of what the workplace is about, and they need to do those face to face. By the way, once we can do it, face to face online is not good enough by itself. And they need to acknowledge the value young people can bring, but also the support and training that young people need. And don't just do the easy thing and think this is an opportunity to grab groups of grads that you might not have been able to before. That's not your answer. You'll just end up with the inclusion and diversity problem 12 months down the line,

**Barbara:** I could see Christina nodding along very big loyalty to some of the comments that you made that. So maybe Christina, you'd like to comment on this one from a from a business perspective.

**Christina:** I have to say I have never learned more than from some of the interns that work for me and who are extremely tech savvy. So, I have to say there may be two sides to that coin because I'm constantly blown away by their power point presentation skills and all that. But I think we strike on an interesting point, which is, can we be a little bit more open minded as to how we vet people's experiences? Be an internship, be it education, be it you know, a side hustle that they're now cultivating. How can we be more proactive and really looking at what someone's CV is saying to us as opposed to, you know? Yes, I worked for Barclays or yes, I worked for HSBC. What does it mean to have started, you know, an online business, etc. So I think being a bit more open minded and how we are actually rating and qualifying people's experience may well help people in the job market that have to do a job of, you know, necessity right now to put money on the table, whatever it may be, or

to cover costs of university that they've been displaced from. But I would also then say, being you made a really good point Sam around what we can do to mentor, but also to coach people that may need more support. And I think IBM does a good job of really pushing corporate give back whether it's in the form of STEM targeted programmes at universities or even at schools or other levels and going out there and really making visible these careers. Because again, I think some people now feel...look, my life, maybe over... And I know that sounds dramatic, but honestly, when you've had you've been robbed of so many quality, informative years now, now that we're really in years plural unfortunately of this, you really do benefit from someone saying, Look, we still value you. We still are flexible with understanding this gap in whatever your CVS or whatever other job you may have taken, and we are willing to work with you on that. So I think if employers can be proactive in reigniting the realm of possibility, let's say and really reinforcing that they are still valued in the marketplace, even if they did not yet have the chance to go to Oxford or whatever they may have gone, I think will really go a long way towards reinforcing those who may have dropped into a bit of self-doubt. As I'm sure, no doubt that is the percentage of individuals. Gosh, I myself occasionally feel that with how slow things are moving and with how you know, we want some certainty with promotions and other things, right? So, I think that does go a bit of a distance in that.

**Barbara:** I love that concept of restoring their kind of sense of wellbeing, their sense of being grounded, their sense of opportunity, actually, that that has been taken away from them. Thank you. I'm going to change the subject and Pritesh I want to come to you on this one. When I was looking at the research for this, one of the figures that absolutely makes you stop in your tracks is one that says that there are no black CEOs in the UK FTSE100 at the moment. I mean, it's just you just can't imagine it. What's your view on how we can build back fairer and really create a workplace where all minorities, all ethnic minorities, can feel they've got a brilliant part to play? And we can tackle this absolute dearth of leadership that we see in our workplaces right now? Pritesh? What's your view around that?

**Pritesh:** That Barbara is a deep question, right? And I wish I had had the silver bullet to it, right. And I think, you know, we saw some real focus I think off the back of last year off the back of the whole, you know, really important black lives matter. But I do think you

know, events like that, whilst important, make us think about actually, how do we bring around a vision or a story that's more aspirational in its stand? So, everybody understands that leader from wherever they come from whether they're, black, white, female, etc. all have all have a part to play and that we really move from a standard of thinking. You know, this is a moment in time to ask your movement that we all have to act after act positively around. And I do think people in positions of leadership are the ones unfortunately are going to have to drive that change. But until we encourage and support people from all backgrounds to step in those positions of leadership through the right, coaching through the right training and actually thinking about how we can support them in the career to go to those CEO type positions, we're not going to be able to affect the change broader down. So, I think we're going to have to do things tactically, progressively focus on our targets and think about actually, how do we positively impact the statistics you just talked about right? And until we get to that place, I don't think systematically it's going to change Barbara. So no, I think you think all of us as leaders to actively paint really a positive, a positive vision of movement around, why we think it benefits us all and what we talked about it at the beginning. When you have a diverse leadership team or a diverse workforce, it all leads to more challenging and interesting problems we can work and solve together, and also helps to make society a different place resort. Right?

**Barbara:** I think it perfectly takes us right back to the start, as you say, back to the culture and the way we the way we run our workplaces and make them places where everyone can thrive. So, thank you so much for that. I'm going to ask you each one last very quick question. And that is that, you know, if you could... Is the pandemic going to change everything dramatically or are we all going to go back to exactly the same? We've heard this debate over and over again. But if you could wave your magic wand and make one change to the workplace after the pandemic as we go back, what would your one change be? And I'll throw mine out first just to get us going. And mine would be that we have workplaces that create a really positive impact on mental health. I've always imagining that workplaces take something like a Hippocratic oath, which means do no harm and prioritize prevention, over treatment. So that's my wish. Pritesh, what would yours be?

**Pritesh:** Gosh, I'd like to see more pets in the office. I mean, dogs, cats, and rabbits as you've seen on Zoom. I made you smile. A more serious note, although I would like that is very vital. I very much doubt that. But a more serious note. Look, I hope that the move abolishes back to the office. We abolished presentism and embrace flexibility, flexible working so that we can support people who can't always be on at the time you're on, right.

**Barbara:** Thank you. And Sam, how about you? What's your one change?

**Sam:** My one change. All hundreds of people who are on this call can do. And that's that every day on the first conversations you have with the first people that you meet, either by zoom or face to face in an office, she says hopefully, you think about their whole selves that walked in the door. And you think about how disempowering it has been for the person to battle with the tube in a wheelchair. Or you think about the fact that the person in front of you, you know, the carer or you just think about them as an individual and that actually you don't know much about them, and what is their whole self they're bringing to you and their team? And you think about that for at least the first two people that you see at the beginning of every day.

**Barbara:** Thank you. And Christina, what about you?

Christina: I would say I don't have a pet, but I have to say, I've never wanted to pet more than right now. I would say that it's actually to continue, as opposed to change its to continue something that I've seen, which is there's a new-found reinvigoration around treating diversity and gender equity as vital to the success of a business, not just at parody level. So I think more than really being committed to continuing the conversation, a commitment to continued accountability, not just acknowledgement, is going to be very worthwhile because it's going to get all too easy for us to be siphoned back down into the little, you know, rabbit holes that we all live in once we're in the office, once we are with the colleagues that we already know and have networked with. So I think a very active focus on treating the progress that we have made in the discussion of these topics into action will be very vital not just for next year, this year, but really, frankly, for the next many decades. Thank you so, so much.

Barbara: Thank you, you now it's amazing. So why don't we move to some questions from the audience that is listening in and those of you that are listening? We love to see your

questions, and I'm looking at some of them now. I'm going to pick a couple to begin with, and the first one I'm going to talk about the first one I'm going to ask about is about recruitment. So, we've talked about what happens in the workplace. We talked about the culture within the workplace. We've talked about how we change the workplace itself, but let's think a little bit about bringing people in. And maybe Sam, I'm going to start with you and I mentioned in my presentation that, you know, if you have an algorithm in your recruitment process that says you're screening out people who have a year's gap in their CV, then that's going to screen out anyone who's like a working mother. That may have left last year. How do you think we can change the way we recruit to attract, for example, people with dyslexia or young people who maybe come into the workplace who don't have the kind of requisite a levels and qualifications? What more can we do to tap into that more diverse pool?

**Sam:** I think it starts by looking internally first and thinking about what are you actually looking for and what skills and what attitudes are you really looking for in your workplace? I've been challenging the banking industry recently because they have an obsession with GCSE maths. Now I'm a mathematician. I love maths, but I've had young people work for me who are care leavers who do not have GCSE maths because they lived in a very chaotic space at the point at which there GCSEs were. But they can run a budget within a percentage point because they grew up having to manage their family finances. I've also worked with too many people with a BCG CSE maths. You don't know what the percentages. So, what you've got to think about first of all before you begin the recruitment process is what as leaders is your minimum entry requirement. And why is it there and really challenge yourself? And when you look at... we did an exercise recently with one of the consultancy firms that started to look for one of their clients at why they were really struggling with their recruitment in the middle management space. If you're really struggling to find middle managers in a particular part of the country, ask yourself why that role is in the particular part of the country, but also why you need the middle managers. Are you not better creating more roles that are entry level roles? Then you're thinking of your talent pipeline of future managers over the next 5 to 10 years?

**Barbara:** Would anyone, um, Christina or Pritesh? Would you want to add anything to

that around young about that recruitment story?

**Christina:** Just add also to think about where you're sourcing your talent. So, while it seems like a no brainer that were going on, LinkedIn you know to echo and perhaps build on what you've said Sam thinking creatively around where you're finding the talent that you have. So, you know, often in these spaces we are referring people, which often means that you're referring someone who is similar to you in some way. Otherwise, how would you be connected with them, which can then at times, make it that much easier to continue the makeup that we see within our corporations? Right? So, I think, thinking through how you are actually sourcing the talent being careful and intentional about the mentoring programmes and the tutoring programmes that you and your corporation are sponsoring. Thinking about other ways to get involved via philanthropy or other ways to really ignite in the community. Because I think people, to the point about identity, perhaps they have an affiliation that's religious. Maybe they're really passionate about sports. I mean, there's so many ways to uncover talent through what I guess I would call smarter networking and smarter, more proactive networking. And if leaders really embraced, you know, having their hiring managers think outside of the box instead of really being a passive recipient of LinkedIn inquiries, but rather proactively engaging with different communities in different areas in different schools. Even I think it would be a bit more approachable for a lot of individuals who may be discount themselves and or don't match the job description on paper.

**Sam:** Accenture have had some amazing success with this in terms of shifting the dial on the diversity of your own apprenticeship programme by using things like movement to work, work placements, really thinking differently about... do you put everyone through the same assessment programme? Or instead, do you reach into those harder to reach communities, bring them into your organisation, give them work, experience. And at the end of the work experience you know, if they're a good fit for your apprenticeship programme, don't you think much better than any one-day assessment programme?

**Barbara:** I so agree. Yes, thank you. Thank you both. Pritesh I am going to ask you the next one. So, there's a question thing. How do I support my people? So here we are in the organization, you know, your leader of a big piece of our business. How do you advise us

to support our people as they go into this next phase of the pandemic?

**Pritesh:** Thank you, Barbara. It's a great question, and I think it's never been more important really than today to look after our people, and I think about it kind of just making them feel saying make them feel seen safe and connected, right? That is a phrase we talk about at Accenture and particularly, I think when we think about diverse workforce, if I made those that we're trying to support and help as part of part of today, I think we've really got to help them build their confidence to know that even as they transition back to whatever the new normal is that you know, they have a voice and it's okay to have an opinion. And you got to remember that we're talking about a minority that's in the majority, right? And I think, or if particularly this current environment, if they don't feel heard, if they don't feel trusted or invalidated doubt starts to creep in. And I think we all feel an element of that in the current environment. And we don't want that because what happens when self-doubt creeps in right and one of one of two things happen right? You lose confidence and you go small right, or you kind of over compensate, you lose authenticity, and I think therefore it's never been more important to show make time to really support everybody, made them feel positive, valued and nurture them back to confidence. And I think we all need to take a positive stance on that and look as leaders. It takes time. And we're all sadly time for at the moment. But if there's one place we should invest time, it's in our people. Because as they grow, we all grow and everybody kind of, you know, everybody moves forward, right?

**Barbara:** that's so true and I think your point about, you know, taking time and being with individuals. If this is going to vary from individual to individual, so and that takes time. And it's back to that point about its micro culture individual, you know, we really have to be thinking about how we're going to help everybody thrive going forward. I would like to talk to you all literally all day. Thank you so much for being with me and sharing your views with all of us today. It's been an absolute pleasure, Christina. Thank you so much Sam. Thank you so much. Continue the wonderful work you're doing with the movement to work and Pritesh thank you so much for being an incredible, authentic, and wonderful leader and colleague here at Accenture.

Thanks, Everybody Lots more good stuff to come.



I think we're taking a 10- minute break  
now and we'll be back with you very soon.  
Bye, everyone.

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