



DIGITAL WORKER – TRULY HUMAN

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

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Jason: Hi, I'm Jason Warnke, senior managing director and Accenture's global I.T. organization. I lead digital experience. On today's Digital Worker podcast, we're joined by Andrea Plamondon from our HR Performance Culture Team. And Bryan Asthma's from our global IT journey and Change Management Team. Today, we're going to be talking about how we're helping our digital workers find balance in this new way of working through an initiative we call Truly Human. Welcome, Andrew and Bryan.

Bryan: Thanks. Happy to be here.

Andrea: Hi, Jason and Bryan.

Jason: OK? Can you tell us where you are and what you're doing right now?

Andrea: Well, I'm at my house in St. Charles, but I'm doing barn chores at the moment.

Jason: Barn shores. Whoa. So it's mid-morning on a Wednesday. And you're what? Feeding animals?

Andrea: Yeah, it's been one of those new things that I've been able to kind of work into my schedule as we've been working from home lately.

Jason: That's super cool. And now that offices are starting to open and we're going to go back

to in-person work at some point soon, it's what who's going to feed the goats?

Andrea: Well, I'm still going to feed the goats. I work in a global role on a virtual team, and it gives me some flexibility to work from home on some days. But for the days that I'm working in the office, I've worked it out to be a very quick morning and evening routine. It's kind of a hybrid model working from home and now working from home, and the office has been a big change and it will continue to evolve, probably. But the goats will get fed, I promise.

Jason: There you go. You're right about all of that. And Accenture, we had hundreds of thousands of people going into Accenture and client offices daily, and then that came to a halt over the past year or so. It was certainly a drastic change. Bryan, how was the pandemic and working virtually or hybrid impacted how you and your team work? And how are other teams within global IT working?

Bryan: So the pandemic really increased the pace of a trend to adopt more flexibility with how we connect and collaborate. Organizations realize that making better use of tools like Microsoft Teams, the teams could be effective and productive without being physically present in the office. What we learn is that while people love the additional flexibility, though, that we don't fully understand the impact of employee culture and burnout based on feedback we've received, we know that not everyone has been impacted equally and it may not be sustainable for all of our people.



Jason: That's right. And Andrea, we know you're still going to be feeding the goats so everyone calm down. The goats are going to be fed post-pandemic. But what changes do you think we'll see as teams start working in-person or in hybrid teams where some people are in the office and some people remain at home?

Andrea: Well, the good news his barn chores are done, so I'm focused and ready. But before we talk about changes, can we consider what might stay the same?

Jason: Oh, that's good. We often talk about all the changes, but what we don't talk about is what stays the same. So absolutely, I'd love to hear that.

Andrea: All right. So at Accenture, we have an initiative that's called Truly Human. It's Truly Human, capital T and capital H and it's the way that we commit to caring for our body, mind, heart, and soul and fostering an environment for others to do the same. Where we can be successful both personally and professionally. There are lots of things to leverage on internal sites to give people the resources that they need to take for themselves to balance work and life. So when I think about what we've experienced with the pandemic, I think a lot of us went back to these aspects of managing body, mind, heart, and soul, both because of time and necessity. People took up meditation as a way to cope with the stress of lockdown. They started working out more or spending more time on their hobbies because they no longer had to commute. Before we jump back to the before the pandemic, I'd encourage people to really consider, what did they take and learn from these last couple months and what are the things that they want to really hold on to?

Jason: Interesting. The thing that I know I'll hold on to you mentioned new exercise regimes. I certainly, like many others, did the same and that is something I will most definitely hold on to. I'd say the other big one that I think a lot of people, as they are sitting more, that I'm going to do better at doing a mix of standing and sitting throughout the course of the day and then

stretching as we get older. It's really important that that you keep a really active, you know, regime in stretching. I think it's super important. So those are the things, as you talked about it, that I that I think that I'll hold on to. Bryan, what's it been like for you?

Bryan: Personally, I've had to shift my thinking about team culture and how we build community and engagement. It's taken a lot of ideating on new tactics and building new behaviors for myself to ensure that my team stays engaged and that I can personally maintain my own high level of engagement. Without fully realizing it, I relied heavily on face-to-face interactions to maintain engagement before the pandemic, and communities always been more than just about our shared location and hybrid team bonding as possible with a bit of creativity. So our team does synchronous team building activities that happen in real time, like lunches or Truly Human hours. We also do asynchronous team building activities that happen when the person chooses to participate in things like water cooler group chats.

Andrea: Those are great example, Bryan. And I love that you're fitting some new things too, Jason. Another thing that you might want to consider at Accenture, we have a great initiative called Thriving Mind, which provides ideas on taking care of your whole self as part of your Truly Human approach. Thriving Mind is essentially a self-guided mental wellbeing program developed in partnership with Thrive Global and Stanford Medicine to help you learn more about the science behind how your brains responds to stress. The course can be found on our internal, Truly Human site that we've set up for all of our Accenture people.

Jason: That's so cool. You know, I've actually been using that Thrive Reset app that actually has an integration right into Teams. So it's a good reminder I get the the things that pop up



Bryan: So you can make a few simple changes with how you use your day-to-day tools like Microsoft Teams or Outlook to improve both your overall experience and your teams. For example, keep your Outlook calendar updated to reflect your working schedule and honor the working hours of your team, which may be globally distributed. If you need to send a message outside of your team's working hours, I suggest using the delay send feature in Outlook so that you don't pressure your team to work outside of the normal hours. If you keep your status and Teams updated, if you need to leave home for an appointment or need to go into focused work mode and don't want to be disturbed, people know not to send you messages outside of your availability and also check out these Thrive Reset app that you mentioned, Jason, and use it to feel a little less stressed, more grounded, and ready to take on what's next. The Thrive Reset app is based on neuroscience and shows that we can course correct from stress in just 60 to 90 seconds. And the best part if you're working off mobile apps like I Am, Turn Off Outlook and Teams notifications when you're off the clock, so you don't have to get pinged when you're not working. Just remember to turn them back on when you're at work.

Jason: And that's great. Great advice. The one additional thing and you mentioned, you know, taking care not to send emails outside of your team's working hours. There's a new feature that I started to see show up in Outlook, which gives you an indication of that. It will. It knows the, you know, the location of the destination or that of the recipient. And then it gives you a notification right before you send it saying, Hey, you're sending this outside of some recipients normal working hours. Is it OK if we delay the send until it's their normal working hours? Which is kind of that next step of making that an automated thing a good reminder as you send those things out.

So those are the little types of things that that I think are helping us all, not just be truly human for ourselves, but also for those that we work with. I love those examples that keep showing up. Well, I'd like to thank Andrea and Bryan for a wonderful discussion today about how we can be more truly human using a digital worker tools that are at our fingertips. And I'd like to remind the listeners to check out Accenture dot com forward slash global I.T. to see all of our digital worker and Truly Human content. Thanks Andrea and Bryan. Appreciate you being here.

Andrea: Thanks, Jason.

Bryan: Thank you, Jason.

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