Julie Sweet Unveils Digital Fluency Research on Wharton Business Radio

Radio Interview Transcript

Speakers: Group Chief Executive for North America, Julie Sweet and Wharton Business Radio hosts Nick Ashburn and Sherryl Kuhlman

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NICK ASHBURN: Welcome back. This is Dollars and Change on SiriusXM 111. I’m Nick Ashburn.

SHERRYL KUHLMAN: And I’m Sherryl Kuhlman co-hosting today.

NICK: She is Sherryl Kuhlman. She’s my boss, everyone. And you are listening to Dollars and Change on Business Radio Powered by the Wharton School on SiriusXM 111. We will be talking to Julie Sweet, who is the Chief Executive Officer – Officer of North America for Accenture. And if you want to join the conversation, call us at 1-844-WHARTON, that’s 1-844-942-7866 or you can shoot us an email, businessradio@siriusxm.com. We’re also on the Twitter sphere @bizradio111 or @whartonsocial.

JULIE SWEET: Great. Thanks a lot. Thanks for having me, Nick and Sherryl.

SHERRYL: We’re glad to have you on.

NICK: We are glad to have you and just two days ago now was International Women’s Day and we will be talking with you more about gender equality in the workplace. So why is this an issue for Accenture?
JULIE: Well, we have 370,000 people worldwide and what we bring to our clients is really our best people. So if you think about our size and what we do helping companies solve their hardest problems, talent is critical for us.

NICK: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

SHERRYL: Yes.

NICK: So I guess you just put out a report though on this issue. Walk us through I guess where – you know, why you were interested in looking at gender as an issue?

SHERRYL: And digital fluency specifically?

JULIE: Sure. So I think to give a little context, right, so at Accenture, we are very focused really what we do is help companies in the digital transformation, which you know, a lot of people talk about. And we are constantly talking to the C-Suite about the need for talent and how digital is really affecting all parts of the organization. So if you start from that context and you say, at Accenture our mission is to improve the way the world works and lives for our clients, our people and our communities. And in the context of International Women’s Day, we said we have a very unique perspective in being able to look at digital and look at how it affects men and women and particularly how it might be an opportunity for advancement from women. And so what we’re trying to do is to take our expertise and because we believe as a people led organization, where talent is important to our clients, where we think gender equality is critical to what we’re bringing to our clients in terms of diversity and then our responsibility in the community to make an impact, we said, let’s look at digital and people. So that’s – that’s where we started. That’s why we looked at it.

SHERRYL: And then – so when you’re talking about digital, can you – it’s – it’s broad, so was there a specific area or what specifically was the focus there?

JULIE: Right, so what our focus was on, a lot of people talk about needing, you know, great high tech skills and that’s very important and there’s a lot of discussion, you have great organizations like girls who code talk about more women in computer science. We took a different look. We were looking at the C-Suite about the need for talent and how digital is really affecting all parts of the organization. So if you start from that context and you say, at Accenture our mission is to improve the way the world works and lives for our clients, our people and our communities. And in the context of International Women’s Day, we said we have a very unique perspective in being able to look at digital and look at how it affects men and women and particularly how it might be an opportunity for advancement from women. And so what we’re trying to do is to take our expertise and because we believe as a people led organization, where talent is important to our clients, where we think gender equality is critical to what we’re bringing to our clients in terms of diversity and then our responsibility in the community to make an impact, we said, let’s look at digital and people. So that’s – that’s where we started. That’s why we looked at it.

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