Hi, I'm Mauro Porcini, PepsiCo's Chief Design Officer.
Join me for our new series where we dive
into the minds of the greatest innovators of our time
with the goal of finding what drives them
in their professional journey and in their personal life.
Trying to uncover the universal truths that unite anyone
attempting to have a meaningful impact in the world.
This is In Your Shoes.
Design schools have a responsibility to recruit a diverse student population
and expose the students prior to declaring their majors
to just how valuable design is within the business community
as well as its viabilities as a career.
We also need teachers to expose school-level students
to the possibility of design as a career.
I am quoting our guest of today,
as one of the most renowned design recruiters in the world,
she helps leaders build and grow their businesses by identifying
and recruiting top creative talents for their organizations.
And by developing or instructing departments to improve creativity and innovation.
For nearly 30 years, her namesake global executive search
for a certain growth spectrum of disciplines and industries,
working with companies including Coach, Johnson & Johnson, Nike, Estee Lauder,
Virgin, Gap, Herman Miller, Levi Strauss, MAC Cosmetics, and PepsiCo.
And she's a frequent guest lecturer
with prestigious universities all over America.
But what makes her even more interesting is that she's also
an established artist with studios in New York and Arizona,
and her work has been exhibited in museums and galleries
across the United States and internationally,
including the Met in New York, the de Young Museum in San Francisco,
the Louvre in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and many more.
She holds a master's degree from the Rhode Island School of Design
and currently serves on the advisory board
of the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art
and on the advisory board
of the Venture Bay's Innovation Program at Arizona State University.
Michelle Stuhl, welcome to In Your Shoes.
Michelle, it's such a pleasure to have you with us today.
You and I met many years ago in 2011 when you contacted me
for a position in a wonderful company, by the way.
And the same day that PepsiCo contacted me for the position in PepsiCo.
I'd been talking with both companies,
both you and the recruiter of PepsiCo for a few months,
and then we know I went, but I really enjoyed so much
the experience with you in those months and your professionality
and your approach that then I decided to actually partner with you

in many, many more searches to find the talents in my team when I was in PepsiCo.

So today it's a pleasure to talk with you about talents, design, innovation.

Welcome again.

Thank you. Thank you. It's such a pleasure to be here with you.

We did have a great experience I think exploring that.

Of course I've read about you and known about your work prior,

and that opportunity I think gave us a chance to get to know each other.

And you do get to know each other a little bit differently

when you're exploring an opportunity with someone,

versus only when you're looking to recruit for their team,

so I think it gave us a little bit of a richer foundation for a relationship,

so I think it was great.

I guess I'm not being the only one that has been working with you

eventually for a position he was a candidate for,

and then he became also your client, right?

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's something like 75 or 80 percent of our clients,

and most of our most significant clients in terms of engagements

have been with folks that we have met,

people that we have met through the course of doing

and conducting other searches.

So that's been a big reward.

Really getting to know people in that way, so it was great.

Now I'm looking at what there is behind you.

You are right now in your studio upstate New York, right?

You're not just a recruiter.

You're also an artist.

You have a degree in design.

The fact that you are an artist, you are a designer.

How that helps you being a good recruiter?

Oh, it's a great question.

Well, there's a huge connection.

So when I started to recruit, it was very easy for me to understand

how to make fits in terms of visual aspects of design, right?

I had strong background in art history, analyzing imagery, comparing imagery.

So that part of it was very, very easy.

Art and design are not the same,

but we are all driven to communicate and share ideas, right?

So I think that there is a bit of a connection

and just in terms of intent and the way we pursue the work we do.

But also, I know what it feels like to put yourself out there, right?

We're presenting work, and

sometimes it's received well, and sometimes it's not.

So as a recruiter, I'm judging and evaluating work every day, you know?

Some candidates are chosen, and some are not.

So I think that it impacts my work in terms of

how I come to this from a very careful and sensitive place.

So for me, this is business, but it's also personal.

It's also personal as well.

What is your story?

You did study Ariste, and then you became a recruiter.

How did it happen?

It's an interesting trajectory.

So I grew up in Miami.

I was immersed in great design actually in a mid-century home.

So Herman Miller, Ames, Knoll, Bertoia, Saarinen.

These were the products that my home was filled with.

So I knew what design was.

I was an only child.

I was raised by a single mom.

My father died when I was two, and my mother was a nurse,

and she had a master's degree also in Public Administration from NYU

and after my father passed away, decided to pursue

her childhood dream of becoming a doctor,

and so she started in med school when I was four.

So it was a very non-traditional upbringing.

At that time, the University of Miami, it's interesting,

was located in the stables of the Biltmore Hotel,

which at the time was a VA hospital.

It was in Coral Gables, actually not far from your office in Miami.

We did not have a lot of money. Med school was a struggle.

I think one of the important things to know in terms of just my experiences was

there was an extreme level of discrimination

that the four women in my mother's class were subjected to.

Overt and ugly level of harassment by professors

who were trying to get these women to quit and leave the program.

So I think part of it was the takeaway that I realized to be successful,

I would have to work harder in many cases than men

to achieve the same results and also to accept and expect obstacles.

I think one of the things that was interesting was that

even with all the challenges that she faced,

my mother was never a cup-half-empty person.

She was optimistic.

She was intense, and she was tough, and, she had to be.

But she was a kind and a compassionate person

whose commitment to caring for people really drove her.

And so what's interesting now is my firm,

in addition to fashion and beauty and consumer,

a lot of work that we do,

I'm doing a number of healthcare and technology engagements with companies.

And so it feels a little bit on that end of the recruiting side,

a little bit like coming home.

So I wish she was alive, that she could see

how much the work in this area kind of means to me,
but, there's a familiarity and a comfort level for me working with these folks,
I think, having grown up in med school.
And how did you become a recruiter?
How did it happen? How did you start?
Right.
A, you were like, "Okay, I'm going to be a recruiter."
All right. So, well, look, I didn't have an interest in science,
and I was not on the math team like my mom
who was incredibly bright in science and math and all of that.
Instead, I was creative.
So I decided to pursue a fine art career.
I started in sculpture.
I was at the University of Wisconsin in Madison for my undergraduate degree.
And working under a fantastic sculptor named Deborah Butterfield
who creates incredible life-sized horses out of junk metal and driftwood.
She's quite accomplished, very well known.
During the course of, my work there,
I started to build largescale installation pieces
using a lot of translucent materials.
Plexiglass and glass.
And discovered that the glass studio which was across campus
and part of the art department was led by
the founder of the American contemporary glass movement,
an artist named Harvey Littleton.
So I moved my work over to that studio and had an amazing experience.
I dedicated my work and began to focus at that time
relatively exclusively in glass and that material, the medium he studied.
And I experienced tremendous success.
My work was included in a number of significant exhibitions,
including a really prestigious group exhibition
that was organized by the Corning Museum of Glass.
But traveled nationally and internationally
to the Metropolitan Museum in New York,
to the de Young Museum in San Francisco, to the Louvre.
So I was young. This was an incredible experience.
Corning Museum actually owns the piece from that exhibition,
and it really launched my professional career.
So what happened was I decided as many artists do to move to New York,
and that included finding a full-time job.
So Paul Scholes, who's an industrial designer,
who was the VP of Design at Steuben Glass,
which was owned by Corning Glass Works.
We met through this exhibition
because I was in Corning for that opening and,
method designers and, folks that were working at the company.

And by the way, Paul was Chris Hacker's predecessor at Steuben.
So when Paul left his position,
it was Chris Hacker that ended up in that role, so it's interesting.
And Paul, he referred me to the Premier Design search firm
led by a brilliant and dynamic woman, RitaSue Siegel.
She was a pioneer.
She opened the first design recruiting company.
She also is an industrial designer who attended Pratt
and had been the Placement Director at Pratt.
So I had this sort of introduction by a client,
but of course, she could not place me.
I wasn't a designer.
I understood that.
And there was a person on her team
who spoke to me and, tried to, be polite.
a client referred me. I think it was a courtesy.
And she said, "Well, like, what kind of skills do you have?"
And I said, "Well, I was an admin, and my mother's a doctor.
I was an admin in her office."
And they said, "Ah, we have an open admin position."
So I literally moved to New York for that position.
And I grew up in the firm.
The firm worked in graphic and industrial design
and architecture and interior design,
and I worked my way up quickly to be an assistant to her.
And it was great.
I got to sit next to her while she interviewed the best designers.
I mean literally, literally at her side.
And I had a great experience working there, learned so much 'cause
there were so many other media
and design companies that she was working with.
And then also, the success of my work in fine art led me to being accepted
into the master's degree program at Rhode Island School of Design.
And it was in glass in Dale Chihuly's program.
He's a very famous glass artist, and this was a big deal.
So it was a difficult program to be accepted to, and I was very excited.
So I went to lunch with RitaSue planning to resign,
and she asked me what I was going to do in school,
and I said, I'm going to wait tables.
That's what artists, that's what we do, whatever it is.
And she smiled.
She offered me a remote position
recruiting freelance designers and illustrators 'cause
I had been doing that already at the agency.
She set me up with a home office, and really at that point,
I transitioned into this dual role of,

working as an artist and as a designer recruiter.
So, I had an amazing opportunity.
She mentored me.
She provided the opportunity for me to work in this amazing industry.
And we stay in touch, and I'm forever grateful to her.
So, at RISD I worked in glass,
and I also began to work on largescale installation sculpture.
And began to build physical, experiential, and environmental works
incorporating sound and light that were largescale.
I made a conscious decision,
although I had this master's degree when I finished,
I could pursue a teaching career at a university level.
But I had already established myself within the firm,
was interested in staying in the design industry.
So I moved to upstate New York after I finished where my then-boyfriend,
now-husband who's a sculptor and a full-time sculptor.
I was planning on moving to Manhattan, and instead, I moved to the woods,
but this is what happened, and continued to work in both.
So the opportunity at RitaSue's also expanded.
I became able to work on more and more senior level positions
and eventually was promoted to Managing Principal at the company.
In addition, RitaSue hired a president for the company
from the global retained search firm Korn Ferry.
So this was very interesting because the firm had grown up as a contingency firm.
Very effective but, very fast paced.
Working on all kinds of things,
competing a lot on quality but also on speed 'cause
multiple recruiters would be, sending resumes at the same time.
And here was this approach of being
so much more strategic and so much more research driven.
This was for me a game changer.
This was amazing because I was so much more interested
in the depth of determining what the better fit was,
what the best candidate for the search was.
Not just who was looking for a job,
but how to research the best talent for a particular opportunity.
And so that was an amazing opportunity for me,
and the company transitioned from a contingency firm to a retain firm.
And it was a wonderful experience.
So eventually, I was ready to move on.
I'd been there for many years.
I did a short stint at another recruiting company,
which wasn't a good fit.
And then I decided to open my own firm.
This was sort of a shock.
- When was that? - My friends, my family, my husband.

I had never expressed interest in opening a business in Manhattan.
I'm an artist.
I'm living upstate, I'm traveling in and out of the city,
I'm balancing these things.
And it was a recession.
I didn't have a lot of money.
I just couldn't find the next right place to work.
I met with a number of other recruiting firms.
I just couldn't find the right place.
So I did it. I opened this company.
When was it? What year?
This is 1991. Really long time ago.
So it was the first of my fourth downturns, right?
So we're in the fourth one now, so...
But it was an interesting time.
I was mentored by another terrific woman,
a woman named Bonnie Alund who led a search firm.
She worked on really senior business-side searches and advertising.
So she would work on the CEO of a major advertising conglomerate like Omnicom.
So a powerhouse in her own right, amazingly successful.
She had built a beautiful office designed by Clodagh,
who's a wonderful interior designer.
And there were three other search firms in this office.
So Bonnie's, and then there was another search firm that placed advertising,
art directors, creative directors, and copyrighters.
And then another that placed PR.
So what was great was that
my practice brought design to this consortium office.
So it was a community.
It was, a great place to work.
And Bonnie was amazing.
She had a small office there to rent,
and then she had another one that was quite large,
so I wanted to rent the small one.
I was, just getting started. She refused.
She said, "I will not rent that office to you."
And I said, "Why? Like, why not? Why?"
She said, "I am sure that you will be successful.`
You will outgrow this office, and then you'll have to move out
'cause someone else will be in that space.
We want you to stay."
I could not afford it, and she actually insisted
and loaned me the rent to start the business.
I was very independent, so I was going to do this on my own.
She loaned me the money for the rent,
and this was on top of student loans

I had taken out to attend, RISD for my master's program.
But I did it, and I paid her back the first month
and never had an issue making the rent again.
It was great. So this is steam for me.
It's strong women. My mom, RitaSue, Bonnie.
So I've seen that as really an amazing, amazing gift.
And I've encouraged many other people, not just women, but many other people,
who are questioning really whether to pursue their own businesses.
'Cause frankly, without someone in the industry who believed in me,
taking that leap would've been much more difficult.
this has been a wonderful career.
I'm so genuinely passionate about it.
It started out as a means to an end.
I joke with designers.
I could be doing this or flipping burgers, right?
Like, I could be waiting tables or doing something completely different.
This is so much better. I love this.
And it's developed really into a true love.
There's so much inspiration in the story and so many insight, so many learnings.
First of all, you say that this trend of few women that really impacted your life
and were your inspiration, but they were also your mentors, your sponsor.
You were open to receive, and they decided to give to you.
I think for all of us, for many of us that have eventually arrived
to a certain achievement in life during a certain position,
this is a reminder that we should always try to give back,
always try to help people that are at the beginning of their journey.
And that is a story of resilience, of optimism, of flexibility, of that ability,
as many of the characteristics of successful leaders.
Actually, about that, what defines a great leader?
What do you look for when you try to find a good leader?
What characteristics?
Well, I think for me, it starts with vision and passion.
But it really ultimately is framed by integrity.
For me, this is the key criteria really for everything, right?
So personally and professionally, everything's impacted by that,
but obviously leadership, authenticity,
humility I think is so important,
for them to be strategic, but also
and most importantly, for them to be courageous.
I think that a leader needs to be not adverse to risk
and being willing to bring people along with them
and can inspire those people to travel with them, to be with them, to join them.
Do they need to be able kind, nice people?
There are many leaders that are not,
especially in the design world, in the fashion world,
in any world actually, and they've been very successful.

But then there are others that are kind, that are beautiful to work with.
People that you trust naturally.
And do you think is an important characteristics or is not necessary?
Is just you can have them or eventually not?
I think it's very important.
I mean, I think that it's what kind of human are they, right?
Like, what are they made of?
So of course that's, for me, it keeps coming back to integrity, which for us,
is our leading criteria that shapes everything.
But I do believe that the ability to inspire
has to transcend so that people feel good about
who the leader is they are working with and for.
And I think it's crucial. I think it's imperative.
And what about the successful designer?
I'm sure he or she needs to have all of these characteristics.
What else, something more?
So I think it starts of course with the passion to share ideas.
I think that's where we have some of the common denominators in the arts.
And of course talent.
I think there's an inherent sort of talent that makes a difference.
But a great listener, a really effective communicator,
somebody who's compassionate and empathetic and can understand that,
a problem solver, again, willingness to take risks.
But I think that the drive to make a positive impact
in the world is what really differentiates,
I think, the designers that are the ones that their work resonates so much.
I think you sense that in their intent.
That sense of purpose.
Today, purpose is such a trendy word.
Also in the business community, you want to add purpose
to any brand is something any marketer talks about,
but is really what defines the creative community,
the sense of purpose in life on anything they do.
And so the other characteristic
that I always search in the people I recruit,
you know it very well, is the ability to work with each other.
For many, many years, I took it for granted.
I thought it was just, normal.
Obviously, you need that.
And I'd been very, very lucky in all these years
to be able to build my own teams.
I never arrived somewhere finding a team
that was already there and to find a way to work with a team.
So I've been in a unique situation, and that became also a blind spot for me
because I realized that something like this is not that common.
And when I had to be part of teams

outside of the design world with other functions,
I realized that was not that obvious.
This ability to work together, to really be there for each other,
help each other and work towards a vision.
How do you find people that have that kind of mindset?
It's so difficult.
in my case for instance, I have one hour to decide if somebody has it or doesn't.
Obviously, that's why then I work with people like you
that advise us on the right choices.
But how do you find those people?
But mostly, how do you recognize them?
People that can work with each other, team players.
I obviously think it's so important for the way
that individuals frame who they are, their experiences,
and the way those experiences or the accomplishments, occurred.
And the way that they tell a story,
the way that they describe those experiences informs us, right?
So I think that's the key piece.
Some are basic, that, if they refer to themselves of course versus their team.
But I think it's bigger and deeper than that, right?
Because when we're looking for leaders at a very senior level,
which we're doing regularly,
it's the broader sense of how they structure and their team's function
and the way they engage, respect, and collaborate,
not only internally in the organizations that they build but the stakeholders.
Because, the magic happens, right,
when the integration occurs with the business side,
the marketing side, manufacturing, engineering, all of those things, right?
So when you begin to hear those stories include those relationships,
I think that's the part that I think tells us more.
Yeah.
You mentioned the world of business and other functions having the engineering.
You've been hiring designers for many years now,
and in all those years, society has changed.
And the world of business has changed.
And design is probably more important than
ever in society and in the business world.
There are chief designer officer positions, there are entire times.
Look at the case of PepsiCo or as many.
What did it change in the past 30 years?
What's different today than few decades ago?
So I think that there's a recognition.
I mean, I think that design existed in the delivery
of so many products and services prior,
but I don't know that it was recognized and included in the same way.
Now beyond that, design has an opportunity to lead.

So we have now such an integrated sort of way
that we engage with products and services and experiences.
From our homes, communication, our devices,
our phones, our entertainment and media.
The way our cars function, right?
Like now there's a level of integration
that's occurring in our lives where there's a crossover.
And so I think that this is a key piece,
and this is a key differentiator because
it's touching us in so many ways in such deeper ways,
personally, professionally, that I believe, businesses recognize it.
Of course, the obvious easy example is Apple, right?
So, all of us who worked in design thought,
"Oh my goodness, it's the largest market cap company in the world."
Now every company will get the value here, right?
Like what more of a case does design need to make, right?
That it's contrived of the largest market cap company in the world.
And it was so interesting 'cause some companies got the memo,
and some companies didn't, you know?
Right, so there's still more pioneering to be done, right?
Like everything's not a complete done deal, so there's opportunities,
I think for designers to still carve out,
those situations where they can impact.
But I think also what's shifting is that
design is having more of a seat at the table,
and when they do successfully, of course,
it just prepares the land for more, right?
So I think that there's just this kind of overwhelming
quantity of touch points and designers stepping up to contribute
in a way across so many media that's shifted
what our expectations are in terms of what products or services
or experiences and how they deliver.
You say something was very fun and insightful.
Some companies got the memo about Apple
and the power of design in the business world, and some companies didn't.
For the ones that didn't, or eventually they got the memo,
but they're still trying to figure it out, it's in a language
that they don't really understand completely,
you need designers.
I mean, you need business leaders, I get it.
But if they don't, then you need designers
that are able to create awareness of all the value of design.
And at the end of the day, in the past many years,
I realized that essentially, that's design world too.
We are designing culture.
And you can apply design thinking, the idea of empathy,

strategy, and prototyping even to design culture.
Something as abstract as an organization culture, inside a company.
And you have been partnering with me to find
these kinds of talents and find these kinds of profiles.
And what I try to share every time with my own organization,
especially with the HR team
for instance, is that by itself, this is an innovation project.
By itself, this is really about creating,
shaping something that never existed before.
And therefore, there will be failures.
There will be mistakes. It's part of innovation.
If you don't have it, it means you're not really innovating.
So I guess you, as myself, in our journeys,
we have been making failures and mistakes.
How do you manage those failures and those mistakes when they happen?
When you innovate and they happen?
Do you mean on the hiring side?
It could be maybe, you were sure about a candidate, and it didn't work out.
Or you were sure about a specific kind of organization in a company,
you tried to, it didn't work out.
many, many different examples that can happen.
Of course. So I mean, we're fortunate that the vast majority,
I think maybe, a vast majority or percentages of things work out,
but to your point, all these organizations are new, right?
So they're developing cultures, right?
They're developing community,
and they're developing skill sets and structures.
So I think that does happen.
In terms of specific examples, so years ago, we placed a leader
to lead an innovation design capability in a major corporate team.
Candidate had significant experience, was really a great communicator
and leader and a wonderful person, inspiring person.
But for instance, the reality of the situation was that
his experience was, let's say, too academic, right?
Too maybe theoretical.
And the skills that were needed to lead initiatives to be executed
or to market successes were not demonstrated fast enough.
Maybe they were there, but the pacing of the candidate
and the pacing of the organization
and what the organization needed to validate sort of was not aligned well.
So, that was a fit that was really difficult.
It was, a huge initiative with a lot of investment, and that person,
the client, they made the decision to part ways.
But we don't make the final hiring decisions with our clients, right?
A client does.
We make presentations, and we present usually

multiple candidates, and clients choose.
So together, we're probably pretty good.
We're 97 percent, whatever.
But sometimes things do not work out,
and the key piece is to work with the company
to determine what did we miss here,
what was not aligned, what do we need that's different?
Because sometimes in a new organization, you need to figure it out.
And you need to solve it.
It's in itself, that type of mix of skills and the approach and the speech
in which you pursue certain initiatives versus others.
You sort of need to figure out what's going to resonate here,
what's going to be successful here?
I mean, luckily in this situation, the client came back to us.
We had the opportunity to work with them again to find a leader
who had much clearer experience in commercialization,
had clear industry experience, clear commercialization experience.
And they're in place.
So look, we're retained.
So our placements are guaranteed, within a particular period of time.
But more importantly, because we work with,
I think 99 percent of our clients are repeat.
So we're often working with companies over time on multiple hires.
And we can say, okay, this is the learning.
We need to adjust here, and we need to be really, really clear.
So obviously, on that second search, the criteria of that, fast to market ability
to look short- and long-term initiatives were taken into account.
And I think with a better sense of clarity
both on our side as well as the client's side
on what needed to be there for this to work.
That's a collaboration.
That's a true collaboration between us and our client partners.
Yeah, you mentioned the word that is a keyword.
Partnership over time.
Again, as in innovation, when you launch a new product or a new brand,
imagine you launched a product, and then whatever.
You move onto the next project without understanding
if the product is doing well, is doing wrong, is failing.
And if it's failing, then there is so much to learn there
from the failure that you can extract.
That can become insight for your next project.
But if you are not engaged, and this is true for the relation between a company
and their recruiter and is also true for a design team working,
for instance, with a design agency or with any kind of partner.
If there is not a long-term partnership, it's very difficult to drive innovation.
You can't drive short-term projects.

Often will be successful, often won't be.
But the reality is that if you really want to change the game,
it's a long-term partnership that we need to put in place.
I am completely convinced of this.
You mentioned earlier at the beginning of our conversation
the role of your mother and then the struggle
that she found from a longer life when you was studying and beyond.
And then also your struggle in certain situations.
This is a problem that many minorities are having today.
It could be driven by gender, it could be driven by the color of your skin.
How important it is in your mind
the idea of diversity when you drive innovation?
When you have a team, when you try to
drive anything with creativity and with different point of views?
How important it is, and why do you think it's not happening?
Why?
there is not enough diversity in these organizations that we witness, that
we have in front of us every day.
Right. Well, first of all, I think it's incredibly important.
I mean, I think creating a team is like making a painting, right?
There's a palette of talent.
And so disparate points of view are important.
That enriches collaboration.
not approaching the mission in the same way can create better outcomes.
So I think that that's the crucial piece.
The challenge always is the timing of finding
a diversity candidate for a particular hire, right?
So the issue is always, do the candidates have the talent that we need?
Can we find the candidates that have the talent we need at the right time?
Not to say that they're not there.
And I'll answer the second part of that question in a minute
'cause I have ideas about how do we help address this.
So I think that there's a piece of it that because there's less options,
the industry overall doesn't have as diverse talent
as it needs and it requires to be effective.
As candidates present along the way, whether or not there's openings,
I think companies are now going to be
a lot more sensitive to the fact "I don't want to miss this person."
"I've got to make a place for them on my team because
I need what they can bring and their perspective and their point of view."
So I think the hiring situations will shift.
But I do think that talent still needs to lead,
and I think that that's the challenge
that we're facing as we're coming up.
I'm working on a number of searches currently
that diversity is a huge issue.

And I think it will participate in shifting businesses.
So for instance, 60 to 70 percent of all board searches now in the United States
are pursuing women and diversity on their boards.
So this is a very big shift.
The second piece is how do we identify and hopefully cultivate more talent?
This has to start. This is before college.
This is on a high school level.
So that the education, the foundation of education
and exposure to design and innovation, creative industries,
as true careers, rewarding and careers that people could make a good living.
they're educated, highly educated.
That these careers exist and to attract a candidate base across the board.
And I think that you can try to sort of make it up later.
But I think the only true transformation will occur if we can reach, smart and
talented people before they make
their education decisions at the university level.
I think this is a key piece of the schools
and the outreach that's happening.
I have a relationship with art center.
Chris is there.
I've had a relationship with the school over the years.
But of course Chris Hacker, who used to be the Chief Design Officer at J&J
and a partner of ours, we've done many, many searches with him,
is now the Dean of Industrial Design,
and they're working for instance on outreach programs,
and I think it's across the board
that universities are recognizing that they need
to recruit the talent for their programs at an earlier juncture.
Some schools, I have a relationship with Arizona State University as well,
and they have a very diverse student population
primarily because it's international, right?
So it's happening, but it needs to happen
in a more comprehensive way for it to truly achieve
what we're looking for it to achieve, which is rich and diverse teams
that are not difficult to build, but, common, that it's not a unique thing,
but it's an integrated thing in our business and studios.
Every company should just understand that this is, before anything else,
an amazing opportunity to drive different point of views
to any kind of issue and problem.
They're so important to again create value for the company,
to drive innovation, to really drive new ideas inside the organization.
That should be the starting point.
Then on top of it, we also have the ethical responsibility as a company, the
big ones especially, to help this community accelerating that journey
that starts already with the schools, with high schools and before,
building awareness about the opportunities

that there are and helping them,
growing them out of the constraints
that they may have in their society and their different situations.
You talk about the value, the importance of the candidates that need to step up.
they have a very active role in all of this obviously.
And today, we live in a world where our lives
are on stage in social media, in many different ways.
Even if it's not in our own social media,
it could be in the ones of others.
And social media could be a wonderful opportunity
to leverage as a candidate, as a talent,
or it could be also a problem to manage or a trap if you don't do it right.
And again, if you decide not to do it,
it's a lever that you are not really leveraging once again.
How important it is, personal branding
and the role of social media for a candidate today?
Any time we review a candidate,
we can easily go online and find so much about that person.
So how important is for each of us,
the idea of personal branding managed on this new social media platform?
Yeah, well, I think it's very important.
It's very interesting, and it does start.
We encourage students.
And I can mention too, I do some programs in schools really as giveback.
And I can talk to you a little bit about what that is about,
which is on a different topic, which is about researching
and strategizing career moves and modeling your career
based on where you want to go, right?
You're so strategic in your creative work.
How can you be more strategic in your career, right?
So what part of that is also to make a decision about that personal branding
and the use of social media because as you know, it's all over the place, right?
So I do believe that people should have clear, really well framed information,
especially on a professional site like LinkedIn.
I mean, I think this is so basic.
It's such a tool. It's amazing to me
how many professionals still are not sort of paying
as much attention as they could or should in terms of the access.
'Cause it's really a portal into the world.
you had me talk about dates, so I began to work
before we had the advantage of LinkedIn.
It was a lot of different kind of research.
This is so helpful, right?
To find out who people are and to really be able to clearly establish that.
I encourage people to also consider, depending on what they want to include,
to have a very private close friend and family platform

versus a more public and professional one,
to really help to create a divide.
So if there's, especially for younger talent so that they don't end up with things
that they'll regret when the HR reference checking occurs on social media.
But more importantly, this is an opportunity to continue to reframe yourself.
And to take a stand, to show what you're looking at, to show what you respect.
so it's this ongoing thread that helps to complete us.
Because we can talk about topics with so many people,
in such an immediate way and respond and engage.
So I definitely encourage it.
I mean, I don't think it's mandatory.
Some incredible folks are not participating in it.
I don't think it's a requirement, but I do think being thoughtful
is a really, really important piece of it,
and I think more and more, will be more and more necessary.
Michelle, I could go on and on and on for hours and talk with you.
But we have to close, to wrap up.
So I want to thank you for the insights and the information
and the advice that you shared with us today.
Very inspirational, thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. It was a pleasure being here.
Thank you, Mauro.
Thank you.