

Transcript | How to Lead Neuroinclusive Teams in Public Service

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00:00:17.750 --> 00:00:29.989

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Hello, everyone, and welcome to this panel event on how to lead neuroinclusive teams in public service. My name is Alana Moncton, and I'm a neurodiversity champion and the vice president of community growth here at Apolitical.

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00:00:30.700 --> 00:00:36.710

Oliver Matikainen: And I'm Oliver Matekeilen, I'm a Senior Learning Designer here at Abletical, and I will be co-moderating the event today with Alana.

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00:00:36.890 --> 00:00:59.309

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thanks, Oliver. It would be so great to hear from all of you joining us today, so please do post in the chat where you're joining us from, and if you're comfortable, what organization you work for. A quick technical note that your messages might come through to only our backstage team due to your Zoom's default settings, so be sure to select everyone from the blue drop-down if you wish in the Zoom chat, if you'd like to send message to all of us here.

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00:00:59.590 --> 00:01:19.579

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Today, we are looking at how public servants can lead teams more inclusively through everyday management habits, and we'll hear how leaders across government are creating working environments where people with different thinking and communication styles can contribute fully, through practical approaches, excuse me, practical approaches to delegation, meetings, feedback, and team culture.

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00:01:19.580 --> 00:01:29.160

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And for those of you who may be joining us for the very first time, a very warm welcome. AP Political is the world's largest online network of public servants with a mission to make governments smarter.

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00:01:29.160 --> 00:01:40.660

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: It is used by half a million public servants and policymakers across 170 countries, providing governments with the tools, skills, and networks they need to become more effective tech-enabled organizations.

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00:01:40.680 --> 00:01:58.619

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: NA Political is just a strategic partner to governments, helping them prepare their workforces for the future. We achieve this by upscaling government workforces through short online courses focused on government priorities, enabling them to find and share best practice through peer communities, and building innovative tools designed for and with governments.

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00:01:58.790 --> 00:02:07.069

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I can see lots of you introducing yourself in the chat, which is wonderful to see. Welcome, everyone. I see Laura from Portland.

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00:02:07.540 --> 00:02:17.770

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Sean from Scotland. I am usually joining from Edinburgh, Scotland. I'm down, just outside of London today, but, great to see you, Sean. Francine, good to see you. Hi.

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00:02:18.580 --> 00:02:28.929

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Lots and lots of folks, great to see you all, trying to keep up with the chat. Tanya in London, Ivy in New Brunswick, Canada, Audrey from Jersey.

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00:02:29.670 --> 00:02:34.850

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Someone from Ottawa, lots and lots of folks joining. Keep them coming, so great to see all of you.

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00:02:34.910 --> 00:02:59.889

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: We are also thrilled to extend an invitation to our Neurodiversity and public service community. It's an online community where you can share conversations, insights, and resources through connection and conversation with peers across government. And this space is open to everyone, so whether you bring lived experience, professional insight, or just simply curiosity and care, we would love to see you join us and 5,000 others, public servants around the world, joining in conversation there. The link is in

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00:02:59.890 --> 00:03:06.789

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: in the resources tab at the bottom of your screen, and my colleague is shortly just going to pop that in the chat as well, and we'd really, really love to see you there.

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00:03:07.000 --> 00:03:19.559

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'll also just get a few technical notes out of the way before we dive into today's conversation. So, first of all, this event is recorded for on-demand viewing on the AP Political website, so we ask that you please don't record it yourself.

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00:03:19.590 --> 00:03:28.910

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And any contact details for privacy concerns are in the apolitical homepage footer, and closed captions are available and can be toggled on or off in your screen settings.

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00:03:30.970 --> 00:03:46.980

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Before we introduce our speakers, we're just going to run a few quick polls today. So the first poll, is, what is your biggest pain point at work? This is a more general question. It doesn't necessarily relate just to today's topic, but is broader and is really important to help us

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00:03:46.980 --> 00:03:57.639

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Continue to design and host events that really meet your needs, and we won't share the results of this poll, and there's no right or wrong answer, so please let us know in the chat.

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00:04:00.330 --> 00:04:08.750

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I can see a few folks, sharing some answers already, which is great. I'll give everyone a moment just to dive into that, have a think.

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00:04:14.540 --> 00:04:19.079

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: While you're doing that, I can see lots of folks still introducing themselves. Welcome, it's great to see you all.

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00:04:19.529 --> 00:04:20.200

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Excellent.

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00:04:20.820 --> 00:04:22.120

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Ontario.

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00:04:22.270 --> 00:04:24.500

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Someone else from Edinburgh, wonderful.

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00:04:24.980 --> 00:04:30.370

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: the Netherlands Fantastic. Okay.

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00:04:30.560 --> 00:04:36.750

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Wow, nearly 100 answers on your biggest pain points already. Fantastic.

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00:04:38.360 --> 00:04:39.360

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Okay.

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00:04:42.370 --> 00:04:44.309

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'm gonna end that poll now.

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00:04:46.790 --> 00:04:47.980

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Fantastic.

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00:04:49.000 --> 00:04:58.479

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So, moving on to one more poll question, this time on the topic of neurodiversity. We'd love to know, what's your biggest challenge in leading neuro-inclusive teams?

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00:04:58.480 --> 00:05:17.739

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So is it understanding different needs and communication styles, perhaps adapting your management style to support different ways of working, creating psychological safety, easy for me to say today, for people to open up, championing neuro-inclusion and being an effective ally, or turning good intentions into practical actions?

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00:05:17.740 --> 00:05:21.270

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Have a moment to think about that and let us know what you think.

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00:05:22.130 --> 00:05:29.270

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: You can see, lots of votes coming in already as well. Again, fantastic. Really good insights here.

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00:05:44.540 --> 00:05:52.549

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Okay, so it looks like we're coming to a bit of a consensus here. We have,

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00:05:54.350 --> 00:06:12.399

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Great, lots of votes. Okay, so, it looks like most of you saying adapting your management style to support different ways of working. I can also see, lots of, folks saying turning good intentions into practical actions. Actually, about a third of you saying turning good intentions into practical actions.

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00:06:12.400 --> 00:06:18.750

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And, great, so adapting your management style and turning good intentions into practical actions. Perfect.

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00:06:20.950 --> 00:06:23.790

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So, that's great. Over to you, Oliver.

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00:06:24.180 --> 00:06:35.430

Oliver Matikainen: Thanks, Alana, and thanks, everyone, for taking part of the polls. I've been really excited to introduce our two speakers, because we have two brilliant speakers with us today. We have Starlene and Sancho joining us.

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00:06:35.550 --> 00:06:43.369

Oliver Matikainen: Stalene Maharaj-Lewis is a systems change strategist and Syndemic Coordinator for the Washington State Department of Health.

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00:06:43.540 --> 00:06:50.939

Oliver Matikainen: She designed a landmark statewide framework aligning HIV, hepatitis, STI, and substance use systems.

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00:06:51.600 --> 00:06:59.729

Oliver Matikainen: A specialist in adaptive leadership and new inclusive design, she transformed lived experience into equitable governance and lasting structural change.

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00:07:00.220 --> 00:07:04.950

Oliver Matikainen: Sandra Angelo is a Manager of Accessibility at Canadian Heritage.

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00:07:05.120 --> 00:07:18.860

Oliver Matikainen: A nationally recognized leader in accessibility, neuroinclusion, and privacy management. He's the proud founder and co-chair of Infinity, which is the Government of Canada's interdepartmental network for neurodivergent public servants.

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00:07:19.890 --> 00:07:26.840

Oliver Matikainen: And before we launch into today's panel, I thought we could start with a quick icebreaker, just to get us warmed up. So, Stylein Sancho.

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00:07:27.060 --> 00:07:32.829

Oliver Matikainen: What is one small leadership habit you've adopted that made your team work better?

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00:07:32.990 --> 00:07:43.250

Oliver Matikainen: And I'll give you just a moment to think about it, and in the meantime, I posed the same question to all of you attending the event today. I would love for you to share your answers in the chat.

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00:07:43.970 --> 00:07:50.860

Oliver Matikainen: So, Starline, if I can turn to you first, what is one small leadership habit you've adopted that made your team work better?

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00:07:53.150 --> 00:07:58.069

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Thank you for the question, Oliver, and thank you everyone for joining today.

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00:07:58.930 --> 00:08:07.680

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: When I think about a small shift that I've made in my habits that helped my team's work, better.

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00:08:07.920 --> 00:08:12.900

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: With more cohesion in my mind, I think about...

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00:08:13.620 --> 00:08:21.319

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I think about things that are basic, and so that... what that looks like, basic agendas, basic expectations, just that

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00:08:21.380 --> 00:08:36.140

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: foundational ground setting, or level setting. And so in, for example, in advance of meetings, I will send out a basic agenda with dot points, or some people call them bullet points underneath. So we'll have our topic.

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00:08:36.250 --> 00:08:50.709

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: the main points, on discussion, I will add in there, and then sometimes I'm also... I'll take notes in real time during the meetings, so that people can actually see what I'm writing. They may not be the best notes, I'll clean them out.

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00:08:50.710 --> 00:09:06.280

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And then send them out as meeting minutes after the meeting, but having those little pieces put into place before the meeting and during the meeting really allows different ways of knowing and being, and people having different experiences when they're trying to engage, be more involved.

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00:09:06.500 --> 00:09:22.699

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: This small shift for me has reduced ambiguity, it has improved participation with my teammates, and it's also allowed my team members who process information differently to prepare contributions, and or have that visual on hand during the meetings.

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00:09:24.810 --> 00:09:32.520

Oliver Matikainen: Thanks so much, Dalene, and it's so nice to hear how, when you want to make a difference and move forward, sometimes it really helps to go back to basics to begin with.

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00:09:33.290 --> 00:09:39.740

Oliver Matikainen: And Sancho, can I ask the same question to you? What is one small leadership habit that you've adopted that made your team work better?

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00:09:40.170 --> 00:09:48.750

Sancho Angulo: Absolutely, and for me, and I speak to this as someone who is autistic, who is a manager and also a manager, that

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00:09:49.840 --> 00:10:08.880

Sancho Angulo: one of the things that has been incredibly effective, whether it is managing my team here at work, or my incredible team at Infinity, shout out to those of you who are joining from Infinity today, is just asking people, can you unpack that for me? Because for a lot of neurodivergent people, the

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00:10:08.940 --> 00:10:25.050

Sancho Angulo: the driver behind... the drive to do something is, really driven by your ability to understand fully what the narrative is, and what, the reason why you're doing something. And so.

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00:10:25.750 --> 00:10:40.839

Sancho Angulo: when I ask people to unpack things for me, it is trying to get to that kernel of truth. Where is the friction? Where, can I address the underlying problem? Because if we don't know that underlying problem.

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00:10:41.010 --> 00:10:50.729

Sancho Angulo: There really isn't that motivation to do anything about it, or to understand why certain things have to be done in a certain way.

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00:10:50.910 --> 00:10:54.370

Sancho Angulo: And so, for me, it has been... Also.

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00:10:54.650 --> 00:11:00.480

Sancho Angulo: Important to take a step back and to be patient in explaining to people

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00:11:00.910 --> 00:11:12.350

Sancho Angulo: kind of how things work. Because for a lot of neurodivergent brains, we are huge systems thinkers, and trying to explain the interconnection between various things in

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00:11:12.440 --> 00:11:27.279

Sancho Angulo: things within an organization is important in giving context, and I think that context is so important for many autistic people, and just neurodivergent people in general in navigating the workplace, because without that.

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00:11:27.440 --> 00:11:46.179

Sancho Angulo: context, and without understanding the full story. And this is why I say to people that one of the best, tools in your arsenal as a public servant is to be a history buff, because, understanding kind of the roots of everything helps to really

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00:11:46.320 --> 00:11:54.799

Sancho Angulo: tease out how things are so interconnected. But taking that ability to analyze everything

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00:11:55.050 --> 00:11:58.679

Sancho Angulo: Really helps to give people a sense of

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00:11:58.880 --> 00:12:03.050

Sancho Angulo: you know, I'm being given information up front.

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00:12:03.300 --> 00:12:11.749

Sancho Angulo: my managers being transparent with me, and, a sense of trust. Because trust is something that,

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00:12:11.800 --> 00:12:28.870

Sancho Angulo: you know, is the lifeblood of any organization, any effective manager... management relationship. So I would say, just the simple question of, unpack that for me, and being able to respond honestly and transparently as a manager to questions employees have, because

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00:12:28.990 --> 00:12:33.550

Sancho Angulo: I know, as an autistic person, I have lots of questions, and

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00:12:33.660 --> 00:12:47.279

Sancho Angulo: You know, part of... part of me understand... managing other people who are neurodivergent and, you know, in various contexts means being open to responding to those questions and being as transparent as possible.

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00:12:48.910 --> 00:12:55.499

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Sancho, and thanks to everybody else who shared their answers in the chat.

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00:12:56.000 --> 00:13:10.100

Oliver Matikainen: I'm gonna take your advice, Sancho, and ask you both to unpack some things in this panel, so hopefully we can live up to your advice now. So, let's first start with the topic of leadership and change. So, Sancho, I'll come back to you to begin with.

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00:13:10.700 --> 00:13:16.970

Oliver Matikainen: You chair the Government of Canada's Infinity Network, which is one of the largest neurodiversity networks in public service.

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00:13:17.350 --> 00:13:25.109

Oliver Matikainen: From your perspective, what role do networks like these play in helping neurodivergent public servants feel supported and included?

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00:13:25.610 --> 00:13:40.479

Sancho Angulo: Absolutely, and you know, I like to say that belonging is built in repeated acts of welcome, and you find no other welcome than in having a community where you feel safe to be yourself, and

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00:13:40.810 --> 00:13:56.579

Sancho Angulo: I... you know, I've been in government for, nearly 6... I think 8 years. It... coming on 8 years now. And when I was coming out of, university, one of the first things I got from a hiring manager

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00:13:56.800 --> 00:13:58.930

Sancho Angulo: Was... was to tell me that

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00:13:59.040 --> 00:14:01.449

Sancho Angulo: I disclosed I was autistic on my CV.

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00:14:01.650 --> 00:14:07.410

Sancho Angulo: And she said to me, you would not be qualified to work in public policy.

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00:14:07.520 --> 00:14:14.009

Sancho Angulo: And I took that to heart, and by that time, I was already... I had already several years of experience in government.

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00:14:14.470 --> 00:14:16.379

Sancho Angulo: And I said to myself.

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00:14:16.830 --> 00:14:33.969

Sancho Angulo: the best thing I can do is... is not to wallow and to say, woe is me, I am... I am terrible, I'm not cut out for this, but I said, I'm going to build a community where people can feel that sense of empowerment, so that

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00:14:34.460 --> 00:14:49.170

Sancho Angulo: This is no longer said to other people, who have my lived experience, who, have gone through that. Because what neurodivergent people know a lot, especially in the professional space, is a lot of naysaying, and a lot of

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00:14:49.530 --> 00:14:53.729

Sancho Angulo: Underestimation. And that's to put it very lightly.

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00:14:53.780 --> 00:15:11.680

Sancho Angulo: Because I know a lot of people here have experienced, perhaps more sordid things. And so, community is so important, to us, and I was just... I've... I continue to be astonished by how quickly our community has grown.

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00:15:11.700 --> 00:15:22.809

Sancho Angulo: across government, we are 3,700 people strong across all 10 provinces, including many in the Canadian diplomatic Corps, worldwide. We are really...

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00:15:23.950 --> 00:15:33.119

Sancho Angulo: just there... just there to give people a sense of connection, and I think what I really value the most

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00:15:33.290 --> 00:15:41.790

Sancho Angulo: Is that... is the sense of trust that seems to exist across the community, being able to lean on people, and

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00:15:41.900 --> 00:15:58.200

Sancho Angulo: One of the extraordinary things about having a community of neurodivergent people is that, you just have people willing to reach out to you, help... help you navigate through a challenge, and we...

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00:15:58.510 --> 00:16:22.830

Sancho Angulo: have really done a good job in terms of listening to their community and giving people multiple spaces in which they can express themselves. We have an internal SharePoint in the Government of Canada, but we also have a Discord server with lots of people, where people play Jackbox games and just share stories, but also really seek advice and a sense of community that they're not alone, especially

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00:16:22.830 --> 00:16:37.210

Sancho Angulo: when you are the federal government for the second largest land mass on Earth, it is very important to find a sense of community, because we... I know we have members joining us from, from Acaluit, from St. John's, from Victoria, and

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00:16:37.250 --> 00:16:47.440

Sancho Angulo: And just having a community, all across the country is something so powerful, and also speaks to, just how neurodivergence

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00:16:47.580 --> 00:16:51.420

Sancho Angulo: As a concept was seen as so...

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00:16:52.200 --> 00:17:04.580

Sancho Angulo: I suppose out of irrelevant for so many years. It was seen as something that you resolved in childhood, or you'd talked to your therapist about outside of the workplace, and now...

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00:17:04.859 --> 00:17:14.720

Sancho Angulo: It's given people the space and also the empowerment to be able to talk about this more frankly, and that's kind of...

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00:17:15.040 --> 00:17:22.440

Sancho Angulo: Building culture, because culture really is the things that we do when people aren't looking, and...

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00:17:22.650 --> 00:17:36.740

Sancho Angulo: community... a community like this helps to drive that culture in a way where we're kind of question... we're kind of questioning how we organize things. We're, really asking why. And asking why has been

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00:17:37.140 --> 00:17:38.760

Sancho Angulo: So,

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00:17:39.180 --> 00:17:47.429

Sancho Angulo: effective of a tool for us in terms of driving that change across the organization. And so...

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00:17:47.950 --> 00:17:55.809

Sancho Angulo: I would say that really has been the huge value of community for, for driving change across the government of Canada, so...

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00:17:57.490 --> 00:18:07.479

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Sancho, and it's really inspiring to hear how you turned a rejection like that into a force for building community and a sense of belonging.

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00:18:07.620 --> 00:18:12.089

Oliver Matikainen: And, that's a really inspiring story, and it also touches on...

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00:18:12.310 --> 00:18:19.390

Oliver Matikainen: So, you know, creating this community where people can express themselves, as you said, and find that community of trust.

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00:18:19.630 --> 00:18:35.609

Oliver Matikainen: That brings me on to the next question for you, Starlene. Because you've managed neurodivergent team members and adapted your own leadership approach to different working styles. Could you share a practical example of how adjusting your management style helps someone on your team succeed?

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00:18:38.360 --> 00:18:47.929

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Yes, thank you. So... When I think about success, and team success, and individual engagement to promote team success.

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00:18:48.250 --> 00:18:53.930

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I go back to early... Earlier times in my current leadership work.

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00:18:54.040 --> 00:19:06.319

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I realize that many conflicts in teams are not actually interpersonal problems, they're structural problems, especially coming from that leadership and supervisory role.

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00:19:06.320 --> 00:19:20.860

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I think about how some members, they'll dominate the conversation, while others with deep expertise would speak less, and they'd be less engaged. So I noticed that uneven participation within these teams.

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00:19:21.350 --> 00:19:26.099

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Rather than assuming individuals needing to speak up more in a space.

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00:19:26.540 --> 00:19:37.560

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I thought about a different question, and here's the question. What might our meeting structure be privileging, and how might it be privileging only certain communication styles?

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00:19:38.030 --> 00:19:50.539

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So instead of trying to change the person, the individual, I changed the leadership structure. And 3 simple changes made this difference. Again, coming from that foundational, basic application.

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00:19:50.780 --> 00:20:00.669

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: First, I normalize direct and indirect communication as a form of data collection that strengthens the collective decision-making. What does that mean?

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00:20:00.930 --> 00:20:17.129

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: direct and indirect, so all voices matter, and all perspectives matter, and I will take time to collect, those different perspectives, the different feedbacks, the different ideas, and so when we come into a meeting space, this is where we're going to discuss these.

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00:20:17.130 --> 00:20:29.809

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: further in detail, and garner that feedback from others, and build consensus. I move towards more, consensus building in my discussions, and being intentional about that. Intentionality is key.

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00:20:30.600 --> 00:20:34.389

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: That's first and foremost. So...

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00:20:35.060 --> 00:20:46.689

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: collective decision-making, and then second, I introduce pre-meeting agendas and documentation, so that everyone has that opportunity to process the information before discussion. Not everyone does it.

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00:20:46.690 --> 00:20:57.759

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: But there are people who do appreciate that. They like being able to see the materials beforehand, because they'll take more time, or they prefer having more time, to absorb the information.

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00:20:57.760 --> 00:21:04.959

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And that also translates into the meetings where I will allow space for people to be able to respond

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00:21:04.960 --> 00:21:14.150

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I don't look for immediate answers, necessarily. I will allow space, place, and time for people to either circle back to a question.

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00:21:14.420 --> 00:21:19.270

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Or respond after the meeting, which could be written communication.

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00:21:20.290 --> 00:21:25.389

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So everyone, in my mind, everyone in this way has that opportunity to process.

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00:21:25.610 --> 00:21:34.890

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: During the meeting, before the meeting. Written feedback, as I shared, is also collected, before meetings to relay to the full team in discussions.

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00:21:35.350 --> 00:21:46.049

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Third, we implemented elements of my distributed leadership model. Oliver touched upon that earlier in the introduction, so I created a model that really speaks to

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00:21:46.050 --> 00:21:58.759

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: how subject matter experts can lead discussions in their domains. And I, really pro... once promoting that, it led to different styles of communication, where

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00:21:58.820 --> 00:22:17.769

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: people speak to areas that they are naturally comfortable in. So really promoting that. Within months, that participation broadens significantly. And what I'm seeing now is that the lesson, to me was very clear. When we change that structure, we change who belongs in the conversation.

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00:22:21.380 --> 00:22:30.699

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Taline. I see a lot of love in the chat as well. I think your response resonated with a lot of people, and it was really nice to hear you talk about going from

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00:22:31.310 --> 00:22:37.809

Oliver Matikainen: Everyday events, or singular events, to trying to understand the structure behind them, why they end up being the way they are.

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00:22:38.120 --> 00:22:45.830

Oliver Matikainen: Another thing that might lie behind those everyday events is the mindset. So, Sanjay, I would like to ask you about that.

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00:22:46.200 --> 00:22:59.210

Oliver Matikainen: From your work building community and running training across government, what is one mindset... mindset shift you would wish more public service managers would make when leading teams with different working styles?

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00:23:04.470 --> 00:23:17.290

Sancho Angulo: I was on mute. You know, I honestly think there are way too many managers out there who still unconsciously equate the idea of merit or professionalism with one narrow style of

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00:23:17.380 --> 00:23:20.630

Sancho Angulo: communications, presence, or skills. And...

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00:23:20.630 --> 00:23:38.959

Sancho Angulo: they value the person who speaks, like, incredibly quickly, or someone who can thrive in ambiguity, or kind of read the tea leaves, when it comes to instructions. They want someone who's able to, show up confidently in a boardroom, kind of, and

135

00:23:38.960 --> 00:23:42.009

Sancho Angulo: While overlooking someone who has

136

00:23:42.090 --> 00:23:56.749

Sancho Angulo: deep strengths, deep, deep, you know, obsessive knowledge about areas, a knack for precision, you know, pattern recognition, or the ability to kind of tease out,

137

00:23:56.750 --> 00:24:04.860

Sancho Angulo: incredible insights from analyzing, analyzing research or other reports, and I think...

138

00:24:05.030 --> 00:24:18.400

Sancho Angulo: what the powerful mindset shift here is for us is moving from culture fit to culture add. Rather than asking, how does this person fit into

139

00:24:18.640 --> 00:24:35.850

Sancho Angulo: the ways in which our culture, our organizational culture, you know, works, thinks, does things, shows up for things. How does this person, with their skills, experiences, and interests, enrich, our organization while keeping

140

00:24:35.850 --> 00:24:51.499

Sancho Angulo: to the core values and goals of our organization, rather than focusing on, that old adage of, I want to hire someone, who's looking, who I could see myself going out for a beer with. I was recently at this one,

141

00:24:51.510 --> 00:25:03.480

Sancho Angulo: event, and there was a senator, I know she meant well, here, that was saying, you know, when I... when I'm hiring someone, I... I look for their soul, and so that means

142

00:25:03.480 --> 00:25:12.929

Sancho Angulo: they, you need to establish eye contact, you need to make sure that, you're not fidgeting, and I'm like, okay, so...

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00:25:12.930 --> 00:25:25.240

Sancho Angulo: I will have to talk to my priest, because apparently I don't have a soul. So, it is... it is things like that that can be quite annoying in terms of

144

00:25:25.580 --> 00:25:40.949

Sancho Angulo: under... shifting this mindset, right? And so, you know, inclusion isn't... really isn't about lowering standards here. It really is about being more precise about what actually matters to the workplace. Is the goal

145

00:25:40.990 --> 00:25:47.769

Sancho Angulo: someone who's able to talk up a storm? Is it someone who, or is the goal sound judgment? And...

146

00:25:47.850 --> 00:25:53.819

Sancho Angulo: You know, at a time where many governments around the world are being asked to do more with less.

147

00:25:55.020 --> 00:26:13.579

Sancho Angulo: you know, should we really be emphasizing someone's sociability or their ability to deliver high-quality work and trust? And so, once managers really start asking those questions, asking themselves, why am I doing this? The team changes. They start

148

00:26:13.580 --> 00:26:18.620

Sancho Angulo: designing for People's culture add, rather than their culture fit.

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00:26:18.900 --> 00:26:20.570

Sancho Angulo: So that's what I'll have to say.

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00:26:22.390 --> 00:26:40.349

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you, Sancho. I think there are two things that really stood out to me. One of your last sentences that inclusion is not lowering standards. I think is such an important way to sum that up. And it ties in well with the other thing, is that rather than looking for a culture fit, you can look for culture at, and

151

00:26:40.350 --> 00:26:46.930

Oliver Matikainen: Rather than making someone fit into what already exists, there's so much to add and gain from that.

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00:26:47.010 --> 00:26:52.849

Oliver Matikainen: And who wouldn't want that? And, Stalene, I'm gonna turn to you now and ask you,

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00:26:53.320 --> 00:27:01.699

Oliver Matikainen: About managers, because we know that many managers and colleagues worry about getting it wrong, or not knowing what support someone might need.

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00:27:02.320 --> 00:27:09.739

Oliver Matikainen: How can they learn how colleagues work best and ask what support would help in a respectful way that doesn't make assumptions?

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00:27:11.890 --> 00:27:13.719

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Thank you, Oliver.

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00:27:14.560 --> 00:27:20.840

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So, as a manager, I often worry, also, about asking the wrong question.

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00:27:21.210 --> 00:27:40.410

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: with all my teammates, with all my members, all my direct reports. And what I think about is, for me, the key is to focus on the work preferences rather than the diagnoses, rather than the person behind the work.

158

00:27:41.860 --> 00:27:57.590

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So a really good example of this is something with my current team, something that they will share when they are presenting out in community with their community advisory boards, or even on national platforms, and something they shared about me

159

00:27:58.340 --> 00:28:06.420

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Which is very close to my heart, is my team has called me a steward to the people and a technical manager.

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00:28:07.140 --> 00:28:18.470

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So in these moments, I think, you know, I invite you to think of this as separating the person from the task at hand, as, in their minds, how they frame this.

161

00:28:19.710 --> 00:28:25.700

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So, in our teams, we ask questions. My technical manager role, you know.

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00:28:26.050 --> 00:28:31.030

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: We ask questions like, what helps you do your best work?

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00:28:31.480 --> 00:28:34.859

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: What does it look like? And how can I support that?

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00:28:35.350 --> 00:28:39.710

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: How do you prefer to give or receive feedback?

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00:28:39.970 --> 00:28:46.430

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So having these really, really centering those first two questions.

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00:28:46.560 --> 00:28:56.270

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: In these conversations, or in these, coaching meetings, supervisory meetings, the space, place, and time, you know, collective meetings.

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00:28:56.380 --> 00:29:07.230

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: This, it really helps set that foundation and that level of understanding. Then a third question, what makes the meetings productive for you?

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00:29:07.460 --> 00:29:20.620

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Is that video? Audio? Written? Experiential? Hands-on? Are you an external processor? You know, do you process internally? So having those exploratory conversations.

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00:29:20.720 --> 00:29:27.950

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: This approach is grounded, sorry, in universal design for learning principles.

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00:29:28.080 --> 00:29:36.460

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: It's actually something I've adapted from, K-12 education here in, North America, in Canada, in the United States.

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00:29:37.790 --> 00:29:44.780

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So it avoids putting pressure on people to disclose personal information or things that they might not be comfortable disclosing.

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00:29:45.280 --> 00:30:02.420

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: In my work, we use... we also use a tiered engagement approach. Again, I've taken... I've permanently borrowed it from... from the school systems, and it's similar to what's called the multi-tiered system of support. Tier 1 is what's called Universal Design.

173

00:30:02.540 --> 00:30:18.060

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: things that benefit everyone, and that includes things like the clear agendas, identifying meeting norms at the beginning of the meetings, written follow-up of notes, next steps, due dates, you know, use of color and imagery when I'm sending out minutes.

174

00:30:18.060 --> 00:30:36.700

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I know there are AI tools where you can craft something once you've got your notes ready, you can put it in there, and they put little, icons, really eye-catching icons, that help a reader follow along, and being able to break down, you know, all the information. Also, providing clear timelines. Very important.

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00:30:37.160 --> 00:30:52.170

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Tier 2 is targeted support, so when some people need more structure. And what that looks like is holding space for additional clarification meetings, adjusting roles to better align with the strengths.

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00:30:52.630 --> 00:30:58.660

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Right? Starting from that, that conversation, having those conversations. And structured check-ins.

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00:30:58.910 --> 00:31:10.359

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Being able to, especially for those who may not, prefer an exploratory style of a meeting or a check-in, being having more structure in place

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00:31:10.400 --> 00:31:20.349

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Where they understand and are aware of what's going to be discussed, so they're better able to prepare for those discussion pieces.

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00:31:21.230 --> 00:31:30.970

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And then also small group collaboration. So you're working with your peers to work through different challenges, struggles, concerns, tasks at hand.

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00:31:31.470 --> 00:31:46.760

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Tier 3 is intensive support. This is when team members experience conflict or overload. And what that looks like, it could look like mediation, workload adjustments, you know, more structured facilitation.

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00:31:47.100 --> 00:31:52.430

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Again, pulling from the education sector, there's something called the...

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00:31:52.590 --> 00:32:08.110

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: IEP, Individual Education Plan, and what I've come up with is I've shifted one of the words to IEP, meaning Individual Engagement Plan. And what does that look like? And so...

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00:32:08.890 --> 00:32:16.499

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: That might look like, you know, additional coaching, mentorship, accessibility accommodations, sometimes it's a matter of the stuff.

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00:32:16.630 --> 00:32:30.390

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: technical, the physical pieces. And so, again, you don't know what you don't know, and to know requires having that, that inter... you know, having the, interchange of ideas and conversation.

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00:32:30.470 --> 00:32:45.620

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So I think about co-creation, very important to me. Involving your team to construct supports creates that appreciation, as well as agreement, what's also quite, you know, known as buy-in, which leads to more success in my mind.

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00:32:45.690 --> 00:33:04.519

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Neuro-inclusive leadership is not about making special accommodations for a few people. It's about designing leadership systems where different kinds of minds can contribute to solving complex public problems. And when we do that well, we improve both access and performance in public service.

187

00:33:07.860 --> 00:33:23.150

Oliver Matikainen: Amazing. Thank you so much, Dalene. Such a treasure trove of practical advice here. I really like how we went from thinking about structures and mindsets to really practical advice, and Sanjay, I would like to ask you a question in the same vein.

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00:33:23.170 --> 00:33:27.920

Oliver Matikainen: Because you worked extensively on building community and awareness across government.

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00:33:28.100 --> 00:33:34.519

Oliver Matikainen: What are one or two practical ways managers can move from awareness to action in their own teams?

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00:33:36.020 --> 00:33:54.600

Sancho Angulo: I think on my end, there's a couple of things. So, you know, the simplest move from awareness to action is to just redesign the ordinary mechanics of work, and that might be challenging in bureaucratic systems, where they've been hard won and very rigid for some time, and, you know, a system that

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00:33:55.300 --> 00:34:01.829

Sancho Angulo: works, generally reinforces itself, but that can also be a bad thing.

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00:34:02.020 --> 00:34:08.210

Sancho Angulo: Inclusion, however, is rarely won in... or lost in grand gestures, like

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00:34:08.210 --> 00:34:22.179

Sancho Angulo: There's no... there's no pack up, let's go to... okay, oh, pack up, we're done, let's go to Cancun now, moment in which, you know, inclusion is done. It is a continuous exercise that all of us need to be involved in, and so...

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00:34:23.270 --> 00:34:42.080

Sancho Angulo: You know, it really is about how we adapt our routines and what we do, to be my... to be more inclusive, because the reality is that many managers, you know, cut their teeth many years ago with where neurodivergents did not

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00:34:42.520 --> 00:34:57.329

Sancho Angulo: really show up. It was vaccine, like I said earlier, as something that was a childhood thing, an education problem, or something for your psychiatrist. And so, really trying to be mindful that

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00:34:57.350 --> 00:35:05.350

Sancho Angulo: We have, you know, as, you know, at least in the white collar world of work, you know...

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00:35:05.560 --> 00:35:09.910

Sancho Angulo: appreciated cognitive... cognitive diversity.

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00:35:09.910 --> 00:35:34.760

Sancho Angulo: everyone was kind of forced into those... one of those, like, MBTI, like, Myers-Briggs tests sorts of meetings, where you're like, yeah, we... yeah, I have this, and yet are... are, you know, you know, shake at the very idea that someone can be autistic and is now... and might be stimming in their... in their meetings. So, there has, in some... some form, been that of appreciation for that

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00:35:34.760 --> 00:35:40.000

Sancho Angulo: But it really is... Just trying to... to recognize that.

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00:35:40.300 --> 00:35:54.939

Sancho Angulo: this is... this is how... how people, you know, have expressed... are expressing their needs, and it's important for us to kind of meet them where they are at. And so, you know, to return to explicit,

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00:35:55.250 --> 00:35:57.200

Sancho Angulo: Explicit actions that need to be

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00:35:57.260 --> 00:36:07.449

Sancho Angulo: taken. First is to really make your expectations explicit. Do not make people guess the rules of the game, because at the end of the day, the...

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00:36:07.480 --> 00:36:19.519

Sancho Angulo: ambiguity really benefits those who are already comfortable, and so what's obvious to a manager is often invisible to an employee, especially one that is coming out of the organization.

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00:36:19.600 --> 00:36:26.440

Sancho Angulo: you know, I live and work in Ottawa, and specifically, I'm in Gatineau, Quebec.

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00:36:26.540 --> 00:36:43.939

Sancho Angulo: And kind of shifting between... and for those of you who are kind of insiders to the Canadian federal government, certain departments are more francophone than others, and... or more Anglophone than others, and so understanding the different cultures between departments, where

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00:36:44.050 --> 00:36:57.050

Sancho Angulo: in my department, more meetings are Francophone by default in French by default compared to English. And so, getting people to kind of understand, that dynamic and how teams work.

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00:36:57.240 --> 00:37:01.340

Sancho Angulo: requires a lot of patience on the part of managers, and I'm...

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00:37:01.670 --> 00:37:19.210

Sancho Angulo: Similarly, normalizing multiple ways of contributing, and so nobody produces their best thinking on the spot in the meeting. I've had some bangers, I've had, like, 20 likes on a nice comment I've put in a Teams chat, so it's like my... that's my Oscar, you know? And managers...

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00:37:19.210 --> 00:37:26.759

Sancho Angulo: can circulate questions in advance, they can input... receive input afterwards, and... but they also have to...

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00:37:26.760 --> 00:37:44.580

Sancho Angulo: note that anything they receive, any asynchronous contributions are equally as valid, and... and a meeting is not a contest in verbal reflexes. That's... that's family feud. You know, the person who is most boisterous and,

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00:37:44.970 --> 00:37:47.109

Sancho Angulo: Should not be rewarded with

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00:37:47.160 --> 00:38:02.769

Sancho Angulo: By being... having the loudest form of participation. So, trying to, like, appreciate those quieter forms and teasing that out from people who are kind of too shy, often shy to... to share themselves is important, too. But also.

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00:38:02.770 --> 00:38:09.640

Sancho Angulo: As a manager, you kind of have a bird's eye view to how your team works, so looking at the meeting load, interruption, sensory environment.

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00:38:09.640 --> 00:38:24.589

Sancho Angulo: workload visibility and response time. And to go back to what Starlene said earlier, like, just asking your team what they need to be successful is so important, because inclusion lives or dies in the daily operating conditions that we have for our employees.

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00:38:24.590 --> 00:38:25.430

Sancho Angulo: And...

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00:38:25.600 --> 00:38:36.040

Sancho Angulo: At the end of the day, the culture that we proclaim ourselves is not, you know, in those motivational posters or in the company handbook, but rather

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00:38:36.140 --> 00:38:47.210

Sancho Angulo: in what we, but in what our routines really reward. And if our routines are rewarding, neurotypical, very, you know,

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00:38:47.670 --> 00:38:57.120

Sancho Angulo: or neurotypical thinking, they will continue to reinforce a cycle of exclusion. So, I think that's how I would frame things on my end.

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00:38:58.150 --> 00:39:07.790

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Sancho. I think this point about inclusion lives or... lives or dies in the routines of the... of everyday work is something that's really important.

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00:39:07.900 --> 00:39:20.589

Oliver Matikainen: And before we jump onto the Q&A, there's just one question I would like to answer... to ask you, Starlene, because we've received many questions on how to manage different or sometimes conflicting working habits within one team.

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00:39:20.740 --> 00:39:31.219

Oliver Matikainen: So, do you have one advice, one reflection on how managers can set team norms that are inclusive while still keeping work clear and efficient?

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00:39:32.980 --> 00:39:34.349

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Thank you, Oliver!

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00:39:35.980 --> 00:39:47.589

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: This... this is a very multifaceted question, and so when I think of tools and practicalities, again, that technical manager piece, being able to

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00:39:47.640 --> 00:39:58.080

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: provide a response. I think about a concept that I've also been trained in, which is... that's influenced my thinking, and that's the idea of adaptive leadership.

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00:39:58.620 --> 00:40:01.879

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And so it means that the system is designed

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00:40:02.000 --> 00:40:20.570

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: this system is designed so that different ways of working can contribute to the shared goals, and understanding those differences, and applying those different... that lens of differences. And so, one of the most effective things managers can do to make their team norms more explicit, rather than assuming.

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00:40:20.570 --> 00:40:27.580

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: that everyone works the same way. I feel like this has been an ongoing theme as well throughout our conversations in our time together today.

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00:40:27.850 --> 00:40:41.119

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So in my experience, inclusive teams usually establish three types of norms. First are the clarity norms. These keep, you know, the work efficient. For example, setting those clear agendas and goals for the meetings.

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00:40:41.500 --> 00:40:54.790

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Sending it out beforehand. Defined roles during the discussions, and then also documented decisions and next steps. Due dates, people taking the lead, so identifying all those pieces.

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00:40:55.930 --> 00:41:03.889

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: These structures reduce confusion and help everyone stay aligned, including myself. Second are the participation norms.

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00:41:04.180 --> 00:41:22.630

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: These ensure that the different working styles can contribute. Some team members think best in real-time conversation. Others need more time to process. And so, I've created multiple ways to participate, including one little trick I'll use is when I ask a question, I will count to 6.

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00:41:22.840 --> 00:41:39.550

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Why 6? I don't know, but I'll count to 6 for... to give people time to respond. I have had feedback, some critical feedback on that as well, especially for those who are, external processors, and so they want to verbalize right away, and...

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00:41:40.000 --> 00:41:52.869

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: We'll also have conversations then on what it means to being okay with... with being okay and sitting in discomfort. For some people, 6 seconds will have them sitting in discomfort.

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00:41:53.630 --> 00:42:01.889

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: From this, though, I'm able to engage more people, and there's that shared, again, shared knowledge, shared power, shared understanding within my teams.

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00:42:02.040 --> 00:42:07.829

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So, that's gonna be, you know, the participation norms, what that looks like,

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00:42:08.530 --> 00:42:19.599

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: This really provides that opportunity for more people to be engaged. And then third are my communication norms, right? This helps the teams navigate intensity.

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00:42:19.750 --> 00:42:36.750

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: or conflict constructively. For example, in one collaborative planning group that I've been working with, we have a member who's very passionate about the work. They often speak frequently in meetings, and sometimes they express frustration strongly in their written communication.

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00:42:36.750 --> 00:42:41.770

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Some colleagues experience that as overwhelming, even though the concerns being raised

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00:42:41.770 --> 00:42:47.020

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: are often valid. And so rather than treating that as a personality issue.

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00:42:47.110 --> 00:43:03.829

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I encouraged everyone to approach it as a leadership opportunity amongst everyone, to strengthen the team norms. And from this, we ended up introducing three practices. Facilitated speaking rounds so that no one voice dominates during meeting times.

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00:43:03.850 --> 00:43:11.269

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: A pause rule, the 6 seconds, a pause rule for email discussions, verbal discussions, and then also with

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00:43:11.300 --> 00:43:27.480

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: email discussions when the conversations are getting heated. So, pause rule for email discussions are, 24 hours, and I learned that, actually, that little trick comes from my son playing sports, and the coaches

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00:43:27.570 --> 00:43:44.290

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: for the parents would, when we had our initial meetings, they would relay that information. If you have a concern or a challenge with your coach, wait 24 hours before engaging with them or contacting them, and so we have similar rules. When, if things start getting heated,

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00:43:44.720 --> 00:43:59.709

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Especially during emails, because people email at different times, and there's a pause rule for 24 hours. And then moving complex disagreements into facilitated conversations, rather than long message threads, so that mitigates some of that as well.

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00:43:59.710 --> 00:44:06.380

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Those norms help the team maintain efficiency while still respecting the different communication styles.

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00:44:12.490 --> 00:44:24.120

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Taline. This was, really lovely and great to hear, advice taken from teens and sport that can be applied in the world of, of adults and public service.

247

00:44:24.380 --> 00:44:34.119

Oliver Matikainen: This was the end of the panel. We now move into the Q&A. You can see there are lots of questions from the attendees. I will hand over to you, Ilana, for the Q&A.

248

00:44:34.120 --> 00:44:59.079

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Perfect. Thank you, Oliver, and thank you so much, Starlene and Sancho. Remember, you can also keep sharing any questions you have for today's speakers. We do have a lot of questions already. I would be delighted to continue the conversation for anything that we don't get to today in the neurodiversity and public service community, so we'll make sure to start a thread there with our speakers. Before we dive into your questions, I do also want to let you know that we've created

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00:44:59.080 --> 00:45:24.069

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: a great follow-on resource on today's topic that we think you will all find useful, or I hope. It's a sneak peek lesson from one of our popular short courses, exploring some of the key terms that every neuro-inclusive leader should know. And to receive your link to the course teaser, just head to the Neurodiversity in Public Service community. We'll pop a link in the chat now. You'll find a comment or a post pinned at the top of the page. Just drop a comment there.

250

00:45:24.070 --> 00:45:26.229

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And we'll send you a link after the chat.

251

00:45:26.240 --> 00:45:51.230

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: After the event. So, I'll go on to the Q&A, and I'm going to start with a question here. We had lots of really great questions here. For Sancho. There was a question in the Q&A, and that also came up in some of the pre-submitted questions that we had before the event, and it's on the theme of kind of interacting and kind of influencing leadership. So the question in the chat was, if we find that senior leadership

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00:45:51.230 --> 00:46:16.190

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: choices, approaches, or communication styles are maybe exclusionary and having an impact on those we manage. How can managers help mitigate this? And relatedly, I'll just note that there was a question just on how we can persuade senior leadership to embrace newer inclusive leadership, so a bit of both, right? How do you mitigate

leadership that is not neuro-inclusive, and how do you influence leadership to be more neuro-inclusive? A little bit of a two-parter.

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00:46:17.560 --> 00:46:33.249

Sancho Angulo: You know, the challenge in organizations is that often what is tolerated at the top becomes the norm at the bottom, and the... and for a lot of us in middle management, it is a question of managing both up and down.

254

00:46:33.340 --> 00:46:52.549

Sancho Angulo: And for... for me, it has been a... it is important for... for us to shield our employees from conversations that they don't need to have. I... I... they don't need to be engaged in or involved in, but also trying to focus on... narrowly on what the task at hand is.

255

00:46:52.560 --> 00:46:56.500

Sancho Angulo: You know, the task and the mandate that we have is. But...

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00:46:56.950 --> 00:47:00.119

Sancho Angulo: Doing what we can within... within...

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00:47:00.750 --> 00:47:19.129

Sancho Angulo: with the power that we have to make sure that we can live out those neuro-inclusive kind of practices, making sure that we have... we're flexible, and then... and ensuring that our employees are heard when they have these concerns. I have all...

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00:47:19.180 --> 00:47:23.640

Sancho Angulo: I've often made it a point to...

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00:47:23.810 --> 00:47:30.999

Sancho Angulo: Try to be as transparent as possible, and try to rationalize as to why certain decisions were made, but...

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00:47:31.200 --> 00:47:44.700

Sancho Angulo: To explain that... explaining the context and being transparent, I think, has been, more helpful than not in terms of getting people on-site and understanding

261

00:47:44.990 --> 00:48:01.910

Sancho Angulo: and helping them navigate through this, because at the end of the day, it is you, and it is us together versus the problem, rather than, you know, you know, an adversarial, you versus me, and the problem is kind of the water that we're swimming in. So, it is...

262

00:48:02.040 --> 00:48:05.159

Sancho Angulo: For me, just very important that we're...

263

00:48:06.200 --> 00:48:23.509

Sancho Angulo: trying to give our employees the space to thrive, and really, the manager... a manager's first task is to make good work easy to do. And if... if we have to kind of bear that on our backs, to ensure that the employee is not embroiled in, you know.

264

00:48:23.650 --> 00:48:30.869

Sancho Angulo: office pol... like, unnecessary office politics. It... an astute manager will ensure that employees

265

00:48:31.090 --> 00:48:35.160

Sancho Angulo: Don't get thrown into that unnecessarily, so...

266

00:48:36.900 --> 00:48:54.229

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you, Sancho. I really loved that, kind of quote you started with, just about what is tolerated at the top becomes the norm at the bottom, and I think some of the kind of practical tips that you gave there were really, really helpful. Thank you. Starlene, I'm going to come to you next, on the theme of practical tips.

267

00:48:54.230 --> 00:49:19.199

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So, you spoke earlier at the beginning of the session, about asking questions about how someone does their best work, and Sancho, you spoke about, you know, a manager's job is, you know, to make good work easy to do. So, we had a pre-submitted question that was in that vein, and it's, how do I remember, you know, the answers to that, basically? How do I remember those things day to day?

268

00:49:19.200 --> 00:49:26.149

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: and integrate them into workplace practices. So if someone tells you what they need to do their best work, how do you remember that and integrate that into daily practice?

269

00:49:33.520 --> 00:49:43.589

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: I'm trying to think... how do I... so, just from my understanding, how do I remember how to integrate,

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00:49:43.880 --> 00:49:50.710

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Say, a member or a direct report, needing certain tools for them to be successful.

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00:49:51.050 --> 00:49:57.970

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Yeah, that's right. I think it's about the kind of adapting your management style based on that information, and making sure that you can then practically support them.

272

00:49:59.640 --> 00:50:12.469

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So, there's multiple levels of that, and it really needs to... there's some... there's another model. I really love... I don't create things when things already... models and pieces already exist out there.

273

00:50:12.630 --> 00:50:19.160

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And so, this really resonates with me in thinking about,

274

00:50:19.670 --> 00:50:32.349

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: The model and... oh, gosh. The model and the frame... I'll come back to the model and the framework. So when I think about different ways of being able to support, support a person in being able to do their best work.

275

00:50:33.010 --> 00:50:36.670

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: It's having those conversa... well, first, it starts with trust.

276

00:50:37.100 --> 00:50:42.780

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And it's moving along at the speed of trust, because that person, when they're coming to me and opening up.

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00:50:42.900 --> 00:50:52.350

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: First of all, I'm making some assumptions here, where they are opening up to me, and I'm not guessing at this point in time, what people might need

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00:50:52.680 --> 00:50:56.210

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: But that would be starting with respect and trust.

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00:50:56.400 --> 00:51:01.150

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Coming to me and asking for those different different needs.

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00:51:03.070 --> 00:51:21.409

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And what that would look... there's several forms, so at work, we have our performance development plans that's done on an annual basis, where we co-create. That's the other piece of it, is co-creation, so working through that together on what people might need. And that's really large level, because that is, you know, that's over the span of a year.

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00:51:22.580 --> 00:51:27.650

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: So, in the co-creation is really going through each question

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00:51:28.640 --> 00:51:32.070

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: In a manner that most reflects

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00:51:32.570 --> 00:51:42.190

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: the working style of that team person. I'm trying to choose my words carefully on this, because everyone is really different, and going through all the different people I've worked with.

284

00:51:42.340 --> 00:51:47.270

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: That also looks different. It could be a matter of,

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00:51:47.510 --> 00:52:02.319

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: a person who prefers written communication, so that would mean giving them that... those questions for them to fill out, and then we come back together and discuss them on what that looks like, and what are things that would be short-term goal, mid-term goal, you know, long-term goals.

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00:52:02.980 --> 00:52:06.099

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: When it comes to technical support, people needing

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00:52:06.260 --> 00:52:09.400

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: pieces, and how would I incorporate that?

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00:52:09.860 --> 00:52:17.690

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: it would be based on the person's preference. Something that they need to be comfortable with.

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00:52:18.670 --> 00:52:28.140

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: and that translates into due dates, timelines, you know, should you receive this tool? I'm... honestly, I'm thinking about one member who...

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00:52:28.140 --> 00:52:40.740

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Was unable to appropriately, or, at least in their minds, appropriately engage, because they had a headset that was not noise-canceling, and so was constantly distracted.

291

00:52:40.740 --> 00:52:58.799

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And when I found out about that, and this was just a comment that ended up just being made offhand, and when I learned that from this person right away, we went out and we procured noise-canceling headsets so they'd be able to engage more effectively. And they were...

292

00:52:59.690 --> 00:53:04.809

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: They were so pleased with that, in their minds, it was just a little shift.

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00:53:05.050 --> 00:53:12.300

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: That was made to help them engage so much more Intentionally and impactfully.

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00:53:15.340 --> 00:53:33.200

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Other ways that I do that? Weekly check-ins. And again, that's weekly check-ins, definitely, but there may be other touchpoints that are needed. There might be a chat,

a quick chat, just to check in and see how somebody's doing with the tools that have been provided to them. Are they working? Do we still need to adjust?

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00:53:33.200 --> 00:53:40.069

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And, and the thing is, is circling back, perhaps every quarter, this is dependent upon different people.

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00:53:40.450 --> 00:53:43.909

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And again, recognizing what works best for them.

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00:53:45.660 --> 00:53:51.180

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: Checking back in and seeing if those things... if those tools are still working, because things shift over time.

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00:53:53.550 --> 00:54:02.130

Starleen Maharaj-Lewis: And so, I still can't think of... there's a model out there that actually speaks to that. I will put it in the chat when I remember it.

299

00:54:04.170 --> 00:54:15.210

Oliver Matikainen: Thank you so much, Stalene, and thank you, Sancho, as well. We've had some incredible wisdom from both of you, and I'd like to ask all of you to join me in giving Starlene and Sancho a virtual round of applause.

300

00:54:15.750 --> 00:54:23.120

Oliver Matikainen: And most importantly, thanks to you, the attendees, as well, for investing in your learning and being so engaged in the topic, both in the chat and in the Q&A.

301

00:54:23.960 --> 00:54:29.179

Oliver Matikainen: The team is going to pull up a quick poll now to find out how you felt about the event today.

302

00:54:29.420 --> 00:54:34.790

Oliver Matikainen: Which will help us continue improving our content, and we really do appreciate your responses.

303

00:54:36.860 --> 00:54:52.039

Oliver Matikainen: While you're responding to that poll, I just want to share a few more events that you can register to join us at again soon. So, if you're not available to join live, remember that you can always register for the event in order to get sent the recording to catch up whenever you have time and it suits you best.

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00:54:52.580 --> 00:54:58.050

Oliver Matikainen: So, on the 1st of April, we'll be exploring how to deal with conflict at work.

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00:54:58.190 --> 00:55:06.669

Oliver Matikainen: And later that month, you can join us for Communicating More Strategically at Work. And you can find those events on our website.

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00:55:07.120 --> 00:55:09.980

Oliver Matikainen: They will be posted here in the chat as well.

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00:55:12.020 --> 00:55:29.829

Oliver Matikainen: Okay, thank you, everyone. That's all we have time for today. We hope you found it helpful, and we want to say a huge thank you to our speakers, to everyone who made today happen, and to you, the attendees, for taking time out of your busy days to join us here. Keep an eye out for the email coming your way with today's recording and resources.

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00:55:29.910 --> 00:55:36.860

Oliver Matikainen: And don't forget to find the post in the community, and we hope to see you at another apolitical event very soon. Have a great day.

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00:55:37.080 --> 00:55:38.610

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thanks so much. Bye.