

Women in Business and Technology

Transcript of Episode 024 - Committing to culture with Microsoft's Chief People Officer Kathleen Hogan

Guests: Serena Schuler, Kathleen Hogan

Summary: We hear from writer, director, and producer Serena Schuler about her upcoming comedy TV series focused on a female founder, *Makeshift Society* (www.MakeshiftSociety.com). Our hosts interview Microsoft's Chief People Officer Kathleen Hogan about the company's culture transformation. We wrap with Procter & Gamble's pledge to have women direct 50% of ads by 2023.

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KATHLEEN HOGAN (NARRATION): I, certainly, view myself as one of my people who are activating the culture change. I mean, ultimately, it's about all of us activating this culture change and saying, "Where I am I showing up with a fixed mindset? And every day, how can I be better? How can I be braver? How can I demonstrate that growth mindset?" And realize, you've never arrived, you'll always be working on that.

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NARRATION: You are listening to the *Women in Business and Technology* podcast from Microsoft. In each episode, you will hear from women in amazing technology and business roles, as well as male allies, who are helping make the industries more inclusive, and bringing you tips on how to build a successful career in a supportive community. Welcome to *Women in Business and Technology*.

(Music.)

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Welcome to Episode 24 of *Women in Business and Technology*. I'm Colleen O'Brien.

SONIA DARA: And I'm Sonia Dara.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: In this episode's Community Connect segment, I chat with writer, director, and producer Serena Schuler, about her upcoming comedy series, *Makeshift Society*.

SONIA DARA: And then you'll hear our interview with Microsoft's Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Chief People Officer, Kathleen Hogan. We talk about diversity and inclusion, the importance of a growth mindset, and so much more. Colleen and I are really excited for you to hear the conversation.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: And we'll wrap up the show in our Cutting Edge segment with a conversation about Procter & Gamble's pledge to have women direct 50 percent of its ads by 2023.

SONIA DARA: But before we jump in, Colleen, I know that you attended a very inclusion-centric event this week, right? How did it go?

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Yeah. I attended an event called Ally for All on campus here at Microsoft this week. And it was a dialogue about inclusive behaviors sponsored by the Women of Marketing and Consumer Business, your organization, Sonia.

SONIA DARA: Yes.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: And the event kicked off with an amazing panel discussion of employees who talked about their experiences of feeling "othered" in the technology industry and strategies that they had for inclusive improvement.

SONIA DARA: Yeah, I was able to catch some of it over Skype the first hour, and I noticed Anthony Clay was on the panel.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Yeah, he sure was. Anthony is a business planner here at Microsoft and a leader in the Blacklight community -- an organization of black marketers at Microsoft. Anthony actually had one of my favorite takeaways from the panel. He suggested that all allies need to do their homework.

SONIA DARA: Colleen, I think our listeners need you to elaborate a little bit for this.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Sure. In other words, there's a ton of information about how to support people with underrepresented identities on the Internet, in literature, et cetera. And if you're really committed to supporting a community, you as an ally can do the work and read that information. Educating people on how to be an ally or an advocate is work, and that's a burden that we can take off the individual or the community that we're looking to support.

SONIA DARA: Absolutely. That was a great takeaway, and he always also says, "Don't consider a culture to be monolithic," which I thought was another really good takeaway. It demonstrates that allyship and advocacy are beyond the status quo, and that there's work to do to really earn those titles.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Yeah. You know, to make this really tangible, I just quickly searched for how to support women at work, and there are 68 million results. And, you know, while there are definitely more qualified authorities than others on the topic, diving in and getting perspective is the goal here. So get curious, get reading, and earn that title of an ally.

(Music.)

NARRATION: Community Connect. Get involved and stay connected.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: In this episode, we're taking a look at community through a couple of different lenses. We're considering the community that we see in the media -- people who may or may not look like us -- and the community that helps bring that media to life with resources like time and money.

With those topics in mind, I spoke with writer, director, and producer, Serena Schuler. She's the creator of an upcoming comedy series called *Makeshift Society*.

The series centers on Alex, a bright young woman who's booted from the tech scene when she refuses the predatory advances of the CEO. When Alex discovers a co-working space filled with founders and entrepreneurs chasing their ambitions, she finally decides to build her own startup.

Serena shared a bit more about *Makeshift Society* and her motivations for starting the project.

SERENA SCHULER: *Makeshift Society* will be the first-ever TV comedy series about a female founder. And this is so groundbreaking and important because we need to see women in technology represented in TV and film. If we can't see it, we can't be it. So I feel like this series will resonate with the next generation of women who are aspiring to pursue careers in STEM.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Prior to pursuing a career in the film industry, Serena held a few roles in tech herself, but she's leaning into research for the show, and meeting several female founders to better understand their experiences as well.

Serena explains that because there are so few women with access to venture capital today, those who are fundraising carry the additional responsibility of representation.

SERENA SCHULER: One of the advisors in the project, and I talk about this all the time, that she's a VC, and the female founders that she advises, she tells them, "You have to be a step ahead of the game." If you're going for seed funding, you need to look like a series-A company. If you're going for series-A funding, you need to look like a series-B company.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Like the female founders she's looking to represent on screen, Serena has some first-hand experience as an entrepreneur contradicting industry norms.

SERENA SCHULER: I, too, am an entrepreneur. I am starting my own production company in San Francisco. I'm going off the beaten path, myself. You know, there is sort of a traditional Hollywood route to take of, like, send your script to the production company and have the agent make the introduction to the network. And so we're doing something similar in that we're disrupting the Hollywood system by like creating our content independently of the more established, traditional system.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: *Makeshift Society* is in the final stretch of fundraising to make this project a reality. There are great rewards for backers, including everything from social media shout-outs to sitting in the writers' room to getting an IMDB credit. That's a pretty cool one.

SONIA DARA: That's pretty cool.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: If you're interested in supporting the series, visit makeshiftsociety.com. And now, let's get on with the interview.

(Music.)

SONIA DARA: So, listeners, we're trying something a little different with the show today. We've actually crowdsourced some questions for Kathleen from our social media channels. So we'll be weaving them into our interview today.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: We are so excited to welcome Microsoft Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer, Kathleen Hogan to the show today. Kathleen, thank you so much for being here.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Thank you. Thanks for having me. Looking forward to this.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Can you give our listeners a little bit more information about your responsibilities as Microsoft's chief people officer?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, my role as chief people officer, I view myself as having, perhaps, three roles: One is supporting Satya Nadella as his HR lead. A big role is leading the HR function and the HR team. And then the other is being the chief people officer, which is ultimately responsible for ensuring our employees have an exceptional work environment and an exceptional experience here, and ultimately being the advocate for our employees.

SONIA DARA: So, Kathleen, you grew up in Wisconsin, which is fairly far from the West Coast tech scene. Did you always have an aspiration to build such a successful and impactful career?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: I think the short answer probably would be, "No," in the sense that I think when I was younger in high school, I don't know that I thought that deeply about, quote, my "career." But I think I did have ambitions to learn and to explore, and so I was really excited to go to school on the east coast.

And I think as I collected different experiences, it led to exciting things for me.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: We'd love to dive a little bit deeper into your curiosity and learning and talk about your educational background.

You graduated from Harvard College with a degree in applied mathematics and economics and started working as a development manager at Oracle shortly after.

After your time at Oracle, you received your MBA from Stanford University, and I'd really love to hear your reflections on the value of that experience. Sheryl Sandberg has, famously, said on Quora that, quote, "MBAs are not necessary at Facebook, and I don't believe that they're important for working in the tech industry." What are your thoughts on MBA programs and their relevance to the tech industry?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, you know, I've always said I don't think that you have to have an MBA. Certainly, there are a lot of people who have been very successful without an MBA, so I get that question. At the same time, I wouldn't say that they're completely irrelevant, because I think you can learn a lot if you get your MBA.

For me, what was fun is after four years at Oracle, it was my decision to go get an MBA. I think when I went to college, I guess in theory it was my decision, but I think at that point, it was more you graduate from high school, you go to college. It was just what you did, versus when I chose to get an MBA, that was really me thinking about what I wanted to learn and invest in myself.

And so I went and got my MBA. I think I explored a lot of classes that I otherwise wouldn't have explored. One of my favorite classes was a class called -- code name was "Touchy-Feely," but I think it was really officially called "Interpersonal Dynamics." But it was just a great lesson in empathy and putting yourself in other people's shoes and actually seeing how you're viewed by others.

So I learned a ton. And I had great colleagues and great networking. So I would never say you have to get an MBA, but I certainly wouldn't say it's irrelevant, either.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: I appreciate that answer, because I have invested in my MBA.
(Laughter.)

SONIA DARA: Kathleen, your team is hyper focused on the future of work and keeping a pulse on the changing values and technology that impact the jobs that people do and the way in which those jobs get done. Can you talk about some of the key themes that are top of mind for you when it comes to the future of work?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, we've done a lot of research on this, and in fact last summer we did an envisioning paper where we really focused on what is the future of work, what are the key trends, and how is that going to impact what we should be doing from a people priority here at Microsoft?

And some of the key trends we certainly looked at is just the competitive nature of the war for talent. Even if you look at Microsoft, the companies that are competing for talent are no longer just the usual suspects, but everybody's competing for talent because everybody's trying to digitally transform.

If you look at just how quickly the skills are changing and how quickly what is required is evolving, the importance of learning and being able to evolve your skills, I think this notion, back to the MBA, but this notion that you go to school for four years and then you just work the rest of your life I think is archaic in the sense that you're going to have to constantly be learning new skills. The data says that in ten years, 70 percent of the jobs today will be different or completely new. So we don't even know what some of those jobs are.

A couple other key trends. Certainly, we look at diversity and inclusion. We think that's existential to be able to serve customers and understand customers' needs, but also to tap into the talent of today and the future.

And then the other thing we look at is purpose and culture. Those seem to be the new currency now in terms of, you know, of course people want to be paid well, but if you can couple that with pride in the company, if you can couple that with great people you love to work with, and if you can couple that with that sense of purpose and what you do has meaning, we think that's the real secret sauce in terms of the workforce not only of the future, but of today, actually.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: We're going to go to our first crowd-sourced question here: Along the same lines of the relevant experience and skills that you're talking about, I'd love to ask a question that was submitted to us via Twitter from Brenda Tye (ph.). And she says, "Hi."

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Hi. (Laughter.)

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: I'm a 63-year-old who has 35 years of experience in IT. I've been out of the workforce for four years, and I'm trying to prepare myself to get back into the workforce. How do I make myself competitive in the job market?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: First, I would say don't underestimate the power of -- what did you say? 35 years of experience?

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: 35.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: And just a lot of wisdom that comes from all of that experience. So, first, I would say don't underestimate all of the experience that you have and all that you have to offer.

Certainly, if you've been out, though, for four years, certainly I think LinkedIn is a great place to start in terms of looking at different opportunities. The other thing we have with our resume assistant in Word is it really helps you build a resume with some of the language and some of the skills that maybe are more used in today's market than perhaps four years ago, so I would look at that.

But above all, I would say, you know, have confidence and don't underestimate the power of all of that experience that she has.

SONIA DARA: So, Kathleen, you joined McKinsey after graduating from Stanford and became a partner there before joining Microsoft as the Chief Operating Officer of Worldwide Sales. Why did you decide to pivot into tech?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: I was a partner at McKinsey, and for about five years, I served Microsoft. So Microsoft was one of my clients. And I had, as you mentioned, I had worked at Oracle, and so I started my career in technology as a development manager at Oracle.

And so in my role at McKinsey, though, because of my background at Oracle, I think they had me slated more for sort of the high-tech companies. And so I'd work with a lot of high-tech companies, but Microsoft was the first high-tech company that I thought, "Wow, I could actually join this company." Just because I thought the people were so great. I really loved the mission and seeing how technology could make a difference in people's lives.

And then I served -- Kevin Johnson was leading CSS at the time, Customer Service and Support, and then he moved into running Worldwide Sales and Marketing. Kevin is now the CEO at Starbucks, but I thought he was a fabulous leader, and he had recruited me.

And so that makes a difference, too, in terms of joining not just the company, but joining somebody that you think can help mentor and sponsor you.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: We are going to jump to another crowdsourced question now.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: All right.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: This one comes to us from Anuba Kushwaha (ph.) on Twitter. And Anuba asks: How do you stay motivated each day without letting "imposter syndrome" overtake you?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: That's a good question. And I would admit, look, I've had imposter syndrome. I mean, to the extent imposter syndrome means you don't always have that confidence that you are, you know, fully ready to do that job.

And so I think it comes down to your own self-talk and not letting your self-talk be, you know, that I can't do this or I'm not qualified or everybody's more qualified than I am, or my voice doesn't matter. And realizing that whatever your experience is and whatever your capabilities are, they do matter, and your voice does matter, and it makes the team better, stronger, by you bringing your full self to whatever the situation is.

And that by getting in the game, that's how you're going to get better, stronger as well, right? So if you don't put yourself out there, if you don't take on these challenges, you're never going to get better, stronger.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: I think the word "imposter syndrome" is such a buzzword and we're really circulating so many stories of feeling like we don't belong and I love flipping the script there and, instead, talking about how do we work through imposter syndrome? I think self-talk is such a great strategy.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Yeah. I think it's self-talk, and then I think it's really trying to find people who help reinforce that self-talk, you know? Working and finding those people and those mentors and those sponsors that are going to reinforce that self-talk.

For me, I've been very fortunate to have many leaders along the way help reinforce that self-talk. So when I was at McKinsey, I tell the story where I wouldn't get in the game and talk. You know, I kept waiting. "Oh, my gosh, let me wait to see what everybody else says." And then the longer you wait, the more you think, "What I have to say now has to be brilliant." And so then you don't talk.

And he said, "Kathleen, you've got great ideas, why are you being so quiet? In the next meeting, I want you to say something in the first five minutes. That's my goal for you. I don't care what you say, get in the game." And so I've had really great mentors like that as well that have helped me.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: That's such a great piece of advice because I've personally sat in that room and my stomach starts churning and, you know, I start to think I'm no longer paying attention to the conversation because I'm so focused on saying something brilliant. (Laughter.)

SONIA DARA: Oh, my voice is caught up here.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Even the simple challenge of, "Say something in the first five minutes," I think is such great advice.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, and realizing that you may say something and it may not be that brilliant, or it may not even be well received. And that's okay, too, because the next time, it may be.

I remember when I was sitting on the SLT. So here I am, you could say I've gotten, quote, more experience, I've joined the SLT, and so you would think you would have a ton of confidence. And I remember we were talking about marketing. And I was in my head thinking, "Well, I'm not the marketing person, maybe my idea isn't the best idea." And then did my self-talk, which is, "That's crazy. You're talking about inclusion, you're talking about the diversity of thought, if you won't put your own voice out there, that's crazy."

And I did. And, in fact, Chris Cap. actually -- Chris Capossela, our chief marketing officer -- actually liked the idea. But whether he liked it or didn't like it, the point is, you know, have that confidence in yourself.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: It's so interesting to think about the topic of inclusion as making your own voice heard as well, like not just thinking about including others in the conversation, but making sure that you're participating, too.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: We're so focused on inclusion. And as we focus on inclusion, we're going to make a big focus at One Week. We're doing this "I Commit." And I reflected on what do I commit to do from an inclusion perspective? And I certainly commit to make sure all voices are heard in meetings and helping that person that I can see who wants to say something, but perhaps isn't getting in the game.

But I also commit to be brave myself and always make sure I'm willing to say my own opinions. And I think that's something that you always have to be focused on.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: I'm going to commit to be brave, too.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Commit to be brave.

SONIA DARA: Commit to be brave, I like that. To go a little bit back towards your career trajectory, after your role in Worldwide Sales, you went on to lead a 20,000-person organization as the corporate vice president of Worldwide Services, before getting tapped to lead the Human Resources Organization. Can you take us through how you processed your consideration for that role?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: So, yes. I was leading services, which is our support and consulting group, and on some level, that played to my background from a McKinsey perspective in terms of coming from consulting, but certainly, it was a huge opportunity for me to scale as a people leader, leading 20,000 people.

And so in that role, I always focused on attracting, developing, and retaining exceptional talent because people are your product, from a services perspective. So I felt like I had some of that. I also believed, because it was true that my HR partner was so strategic in terms of building the business, but I hadn't really considered HR. But Satya and I had worked together, I was leading consulting, he was running STB, and so we worked together in the sense that I was consulting on his products with customers.

And so when he called, when he took over the role as CEO and said, "Would you consider being the chief people officer?" I thought it was a huge honor and a huge privilege to be able to try to take what I have learned and try to step into this role and make this an exceptional place for 110,000 people. I thought, "Wow, what a purpose-driven job."

But then back to the talk about your own self-talk, then you say, "Well, I didn't come from HR, I don't have all of the experiences, how would I do this?" And I've certainly relied on my team and investing a lot of time learning both from my team, but also from peers in the industry as I've had to ramp in my expertise as an HR leader.

But, ultimately, I think for me it was just this incredible opportunity to, hopefully, try to make a difference with the CEO with the leadership team around culture and around making this an exceptional place for our people.

SONIA DARA: We, for one, can thank you for that because we appreciate the cultural shift. And I think the transition has been amazing with what the SLT's been able to bring down. So thank you.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, thank you for saying that, but it's definitely a team sport. At the end of the day, I think Satya's been an incredible leader, and I talk to a lot of my peers. And if you have an incredible leader like Satya who embodies the culture and is willing to make culture a first-class problem that he's going to talk about, that's been a huge accelerator. But it can't just be Satya's, and it can't just be the leadership team. It's the 16,000 managers and then it's the 110,000 people who are activating and pushing and saying, "We want a growth mindset, we want people to be able to take

risks, we want to reduce the fear, we want to believe that potential isn't predetermined, that everybody can grow and develop." And I think all of that collectively, I think, is making this just a special, special place.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: As employees, we're definitely witnessing the focus on culture. And I'm wondering if you can take us back in time a little bit and speak to the impetus for why the company started looking more critically at culture?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: I think there are many things. First, when you have a CEO change after 40 years and having only two CEOs, whenever you have a new CEO, that's always an opportunity to say, "What change should we drive with that opportunity?"

I think that we were very focused on digital transformation in my role from a services perspective, working with customers to interest to transform digitally, you soon realize that digital transformation required people transformation, and people transformation, ultimately, I think relies on the culture.

And so we were seeing that trend. And then just back to the workforce trends we talked about at the beginning of the discussion, I think those workforce trends, we were also looking at that and saying, "Hmm, given the workforce trends, could, should culture be more of a differentiator for us?"

And I think, finally, we're doing a lot of roundtables, we're doing a lot of surveys, and frankly, we were hearing from our employees that I think there was a strong desire to be more customer obsessed, to be more curious, to not be the know-it-all, but to be the learn-it-all, to feel like they could take more risks, and ultimately, show up as one Microsoft.

And so I think there was a lot of energy from our people around culture change as well. So I think when Satya was willing to declare that, I think he had a lot of support.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: It's great to hear that so much of the provocation there was from the ground, you know, grassroots, doing a lot of listening with employees, and you definitely see that showing up in how culture has transpired here.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, we took nine months. Sometimes people don't realize, we took nine months to really define and land on the culture as a growth mindset. And I can tell you, to go through that is a long process, but it included working with the SLT, it included working with the CVPs and breaking into 17 teams and getting their feedback, and then from that team, we had the culture cabinet, which were 17 leaders from across the company. We did focus group.

We looked at it from lots of different angles -- millennials, non-millennials, sales, engineering, women, men, U.S., non-U.S. -- just trying to make sure what we landed on was really going to be relevant to our broad population.

So, yeah, it was a long process, but I think, ultimately, hopefully we tapped into what people wanted versus what a select few were asserting.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Right.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: But for me personally, I will tell you, I know for me personally, operating in this culture, I feel like I'm a better version of myself, where I've got a manager who truly embodies that growth mindset versus some of the old behaviors that, perhaps, we were trying to move away from. And for me personally, I just think I'm a better version of myself in that environment.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: And is it really the space that your manager's allowing to be curious and take risks that's created this space where you can be yourself? Can you elaborate on that a little bit?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, it comes back to that mindset. It's that fixed mindset versus a growth mindset. And when you're in that fixed mindset, which is, "Oh, my gosh, I have to look smart, I have to have all of the answers, I can't fail because failures would mean that I'm not good," versus, "No, failure is essential to mastery. Everybody's going to fail along the way." When you're in that mindset, you are in retreat, you're in self-protect, you're in fear mode, and that's very different than, "Hey, take the risk." You know, and if you fail, I've got your back. And no fail for failure's sake, but if you fail because you've taken a risk, but you've learned and you're going to get better, stronger, I'm going to support you.

And yeah, I think it really -- it's a game changer. And I've noticed it in myself, I've noticed it with my son. You know, the thing that I like about this growth mindset is it's not just relevant I think in the workplace, I think it's relevant in your life. And I see it with my son.

In fact, one of the stories I tell my own fixed mindset is my son was going to take athletic training versus PE, and I said, "James, do PE, dodgeball, get an A, right?" (Laughter.) You're going to be taking, you know, math and history and biology, you're going to have all these other classes, so like make that your easy class.

And he said, "But with athletic training, I'm going to learn about cardiac arrest and a bunch of things related to being an athlete," and the punchline is, he said, "But, mom, I'll actually learn in that class." That's the growth mindset. And what a great space to be in that, which is it's about learning, versus I'm optimizing for the grade.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Right. I like that story. Thank you for sharing that.

SONIA DARA: That's great.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Well, it makes my son look good, and it doesn't make me look so good. (Laughter.)

SONIA DARA: I love the transparency, it's awesome.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: But, yeah, it helps you as a parent because in that moment I thought, "Oh, my gosh, Kathleen, you're having a fixed mindset. You're not having a growth mindset, it is about learning."

SONIA DARA: We're going to switch back to a crowdsourced question. This one is actually sent over LinkedIn from Michaela Keiner (ph.). She says, "I'd like to know how Kathleen sees her role in culture change that's part of Satya's leadership." And I think you touched a little bit upon it.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: I like to think that I need to be a champion for that and a catalyst. I need to be somebody who's listening and hearing from the employees about what we need to do and make sure that we're not declaring victory, because we're not, but we realize this is a journey that we'll always be on.

But also, back to what we talked about, I certainly view myself as one of many people who are activating the culture change. I mean, ultimately, it's about all of us activating this culture change and saying, "Where am I showing up with a fixed mindset? And every day, how can I be better? How can I be braver? How can I demonstrate that growth mindset?" And realizing, you've never arrived. You'll always be working on that.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Along the lines of culture, diversity and inclusion is a key pillar of Microsoft's culture in practice. How has that commitment influenced our company's recruiting strategy?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: If you believe, which I do believe, that in order to empower every organization and person on the planet to achieve more, you need to then represent the planet that you're trying to serve. And so I start from a perspective of -- from a diversity perspective, we want to have broad diversity within the company.

And diversity defined on many dimensions. There are now 34 dimensions of diversity, so of course there's race and there's gender, but there's many other dimensions that I think make us stronger from a diversity perspective. And, ultimately, it's about diversity of thought that I think leads to better outcomes.

And so from that perspective, we've really changed the way we recruit to try to get that broad diversity into Microsoft. We used to have a process which I would characterize more as "screen out," which was very efficient. You know, you would basically say, you know, take university recruiting. It's going to be the top 16 schools, it has to be a CS degree, it has to be these criteria, and you would screen out. And you would get very, very good talent. But you were screening out great talent thought would be successful here as well.

And so I think we've really changed our recruiting approach to what we call "screening in." And asked, "Why not?" versus just assuming, "Not." And I think we're getting great, great talent, and much more diverse talent as a result.

SONIA DARA: So to pivot a little bit, as the #MeToo and #TimesUp conversations gain momentum, there's an increasing focus on the treatment and inclusion of women in the workplace. How has this movement impacted the work that your team is doing?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: I think it's just underscored, you know, the importance and the urgency of a lot of the work I think that we were already doing, but it really just put a huge spotlight on the importance of it.

I also think, as a result of that, we are seeing many more people feel empowered to come forward to share their stories, and I think that's fabulous, right? I think the #MeToo movement in that regard really helped, I think, people who, perhaps, didn't feel confident or brave to come forward. I think it certainly has data wise, more people feel empowered, and I hope it encourages more people as well to come forward if, you know, if somebody's using their power in a way that's, obviously, inappropriate.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Kathleen, you authored an article on LinkedIn titled, *Investing and Harvesting: A Tale About Time*, which I really appreciated. The premise of the article is that we all have periods when we're able to go hard at our jobs, and there are times when we need to take our foot off the gas. How have your personal experiences investing and harvesting influenced how you think about company policy in this dichotomy?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: So, for me personally, I've definitely had periods in my life where I've been able to really invest in my career and build those relationships and gain that social capital and gain those experiences, and then I've had other periods of my life where I've had to rely on that and perhaps not be going quite as hard.

I mean, it's like is your career going -- you know, is the slope of your curve going straight up or is it, perhaps, going -- maybe not flat, but not as accelerated. So, certainly, when I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007, that was the time where I said, "Wow, I'm certainly not going to be looking to get the next promotion." And I relied a lot on my

team and, if you will, harvesting some of that as I navigated going through chemotherapy and radiation and coming out the other side.

And so for me, I take a long-term view of my career. Here I am as the chief people officer, and I didn't opt out of the workforce because of that, because I had support, and because I had a company that helped me go slower during that time so that I could then come back and go faster when I was more able.

And so that's, certainly, my own personal experience, but also just my belief that you -- that things happen to people in their life, whether it be having to take care of a sick child or a sick parent or having a child or receiving a health issue yourself, or whatever the issues are, how do we support people to be able to invest when they can, but then support them when they need to, you know, take the kettle off the -- what is the expression?

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Foot off the gas. (Laughter.)

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Thank you. But take a long-term view of people's careers and not lose them during those times.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Right. Simple last question is: Where can our listeners find you on the Internet?

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Definitely on LinkedIn. That's probably the number-one area that I would say, LinkedIn. I think LinkedIn is such a fabulous forum, and I really appreciate the opportunity on LinkedIn to share, but also to learn from other people who are posting and sharing their stories on LinkedIn as well.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: And you're sharing some great articles there. Kathleen Hogan is a great follow on LinkedIn.

SONIA DARA: Plus one for me.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: You're very kind.

SONIA DARA: Thank you so much for joining us today, this was fantastic.

KATHLEEN HOGAN: Thank you.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: We really appreciate you taking the time.

(Music.)

NARRATION: Cutting Edge, our take on stories in the business and technology world.

SONIA DARA: In this edition of Cutting Edge, we're taking a look at an article by Natasha Bach that was published on June 19th on fortune.com, titled, *The World's Biggest Advertiser Wants Women to Direct 50 Percent of its Ads by 2023*.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: The world's biggest advertiser is none other than Procter & Gamble, which owns a lot of household brands that you may have seen, like Pampers and Tide. And while women are only directing about 10 percent of the company's commercials right now, they're working toward that 2023 goal.

SONIA DARA: So, listeners, if you're not aware, companies often outsource creation of advertising to creative agencies, which I know was kind of new to me when I joined Microsoft, where I thought most of ours were actually in house, but they're actually not.

So, right now, 30 percent of top marketing and creative roles in advertising agencies are filled by women. So if Procter & Gamble delivers on this goal of actually increasing to 50 percent, you'll actually see a shift in the industry which I think will probably get more women promoted to director levels and get more women actually into these positions to help dictate what advertising might look like in the future.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Absolutely. And, of course, that leads to recruitment of more women as well. All in all, I think there are good things to come from this commitment.

SONIA DARA: Creative juices flowing will be great, and the bottom line will be better.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Procter & Gamble is also committed to the "Free the Bid" pledge, which requires that at least one female director be included in any group of final candidates for consideration to produce a commercial. So any time they're going to make that decision, there's always going to be a woman director in consideration there.

SONIA DARA: The article cites the business impact that a brand-centric company like Procter & Gamble might see here. According to a study by the #SeeHer initiative, gender-equal programming spurs a 10-percent increase in brand trust, and a more than 20-percent increase in sales. So like I said, bottom line, doing real good here.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: The article wraps with a note from Marc Pritchard, Procter & Gamble's chief brand officer, who states, quote, "Some of P&G's best-performing brands have the most gender-equal campaigns. It's clear that promoting gender equality is not only a force for good, it's a force for growth."

(Music.)

SONIA DARA: Listeners, thanks for tuning into another episode of *Women in Business and Technology*. We hope you enjoyed our interview with Kathleen Hogan, I know I did.

It was such a pleasure to meet her, I have never had a chance to really interact with her and she was just so smart, so well spoken, I thought she just had this great energy about her.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: I agree 100 percent. And I'm glad that we were able to bring Serena Schuler onto the show and talk about *Makeshift Society*. Listeners, be sure to check out some of Serena's other projects online. She is a very talented filmmaker.

SONIA DARA: Yes. And as always, please remember to rate, review, and subscribe to the show. You can find us on Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, YouTube, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

COLLEEN O'BRIEN: Our website is wibt.com, and if you have any feedback or questions, please e-mail us at wibt@microsoft.com, or tweet us @MicrosoftWomen.

SONIA DARA: Listeners, your mission for this episode, if you choose to accept it, is to run a more inclusive meeting. This mission is inspired by our conversation with Kathleen and her initial fear around speaking up in meetings.

You can find a lot of great tips by doing a quick Internet search for "inclusive meetings," but here are a few things to consider: One, send out any materials you plan to cover in the meeting in advance; two, if the same person is always taking notes, ask a new person to do that task; and three, consider pausing after questions to ensure that everyone has had a chance to speak up.

Creating inclusive spaces is an ongoing effort, keep flexing that muscle and you'll be an office superhero in no time.

(Music.)

END