

07152019 Inspire Gavriella Schuster Open

Microsoft Inspire 2019
Gavriella Schuster
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ANNOUNCER: Please welcome Gavriella Schuster.

(Cheers, applause.)

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: Welcome! (Cheers, applause.) Welcome to Inspire 2019. Give it up for those great dancers. (Cheers, applause.) That's what we're all going to look like later this evening when we're partying, right? Obviously.

Well, welcome to Las Vegas. I am honored to be able to welcome you to this fabulous week ahead in Las Vegas. We have a tremendous lineup of speakers, of sessions, of experiences to learn, to listen to each other, to grow, and to celebrate together this week. Are you excited? (Cheers, applause.)

So, before we get started, there's something that's been weighing on my mind. And it's about the events of the last couple weeks. And so it is really important for me to talk about us, our relationship that we have with each and every one of you.

Now, I am fortunate enough to work for a company where our culture is based on listening, learning, and a growth mindset. And those are not just words on a page, those are the values that we live by. And it gives me the freedom and the opportunity to wake up smarter every day based on what I learned.

So, as you may know, a couple weeks ago, we announced changes to the program competencies and internal use rights. And the response from you, our partner ecosystem, was overwhelmingly negative. (Applause.) We clearly underestimated the value of those benefits and the impact that that would have on you and your businesses.

You know, your partnership means more to us than anything. And we value the relationship and the trust that we've built in that partnership because it is based on commitment, integrity, and trust. And it requires us to have ongoing communication, collaboration, and accountability.

And when I heard your response and I listened to what you were saying -- and I read every single blog and tweet and article. In my mind, there was really no choice but for us to walk back on that change. (Cheers, applause.)

So, we are going to keep the FY19 competencies and internal use rights just as they are, and you have my commitment that I will continue -- we will continue to listen, to learn, and though we may stumble, we will grow together and we will celebrate our wins together. (Cheers, applause.)

So, with that, I want to get to the celebration side. There is a set of partners that are very, very special for all of the innovation and all of the value that they have delivered to our customers this year. So, please join me in a resounding round of applause to our 2019 Microsoft Partners of the Year. Please stand up.

(Music, cheers, applause.)

(Video segment.)

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: (Cheers, applause.) Thank you. Thank you for all that you do for our customers, thank you for pushing us to the edge of innovation. I can't wait to see what you do this coming fiscal year.

Behind every great success are people -- people working together to collaborate, to build, to work on something that's bigger than themselves. It's what we all do every day. And I appreciate the people in this room more than you know. And if I could, I would personally sit down, have a cup of coffee, and thank each and every one of you.

But, unfortunately, we only have a few days in Las Vegas, and I don't really have enough time to do that with everybody. So, like many things, I'm turning to technology to help me out. And so we are going to use technology to show our appreciation to you.

I found a partner in Australia called the Lakeba Group. And they specialize -- and they must be over here. They specialize in modern workplace solutions, and they build Teams applications.

They have a customer called thnx! who delivers tangible messages of gratitude out to people. And so I wanted to use this application to thank you all, a free cup of coffee on us, in Teams. But when we went to do that, I realized that you do not all have Teams app on your phone yet. So, I'm going to make a deal with you, okay? I'm going to send you an e-mail, kind of old school, with the commitment that by the time you leave here today or this week at least, you will download the Teams application to your phone, okay? Is that a deal? (Applause.)

All right, so this cup of coffee is good at any Starbucks in Las Vegas here this week. And Starbucks has been gracious enough to actually name a coffee after us. It's called the Microsoft Inspire Cloud Macchiato. You can get it hot or cold. (Laughter.) And so that I feel like I sat down with you, please take a photo as you do that and share it with me. It's my way, it's Microsoft's way of saying, "Thank you for all that you do." Thank you. (Applause.)

Let's get this show on the road. I am excited to invite our next special guest out onto the stage. He is a world-renowned speaker, author, and business consultant. Please join me - - oh, let me tell you what he does. He focuses on talking about how you take

relationships to the next level, business relationships, and the human side behind that. Please join me in welcoming Simon Sinek to the stage. (Cheers, applause.)

SIMON SINEK: How are you?

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: Very happy to have you. So, Simon, you are an expert on business relationships. I think all of us would benefit from understanding from you, what does it take to go from having good business relationships to great business relationships?

SIMON SINEK: Well, first of all, I'm not an expert, I'm a student. I believe -- I think there's lots to learn, and I'm always growing. And one of the things that I've learned is that having business relationships is like any relationship, when you say what does it take to take any relationship from a good relationship to a great relationship, it requires all of those human skills.

I hate the term "soft skills." There's nothing soft about them. And it's things like listening and empathy and patience and actually having genuine desire to do good for the other person. People can feel when we're selfishly driven. It's like if you've ever gone shopping and you can tell when someone is being paid by commission. We can feel it, right? They don't really have our interest in mind, they have their commission in mind. So, we have to get the sense that someone actually cares about us. And one of the best ways to do that is honesty. Honesty is actually a really easy thing, it just means telling the truth. And sometimes when we tell the truth to someone, even when it doesn't benefit us, it starts to build trust between two parties and eventually you can take a good relationship to a great relationship. There's no app for that, there's no hack for that. It's good old-fashioned human interaction and sometimes it takes time as well.

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: It takes a lot of time.

SIMON SINEK: It can.

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: And so when you think about how you apply that to a company, right, a company that may have hundreds of employees, how do you instill that in the company?

SIMON SINEK: So, the responsibility of leadership has nothing to do with being in charge. Leadership is not about being in charge, it's about taking care of those in our charge. And, unfortunately, this is one of the things that a lot of people who get promoted into a position of leadership forget. When we're very junior, we have to be good at our job and we get lots of training at how to be good at our jobs. Some of us get advanced degrees in whatever our job is so that we can be good at it. And if we're really good at our jobs, eventually we get promoted. And eventually we get promoted into a position where we're now responsible for the people who do the job we used to do, and nobody actually teaches us how to do that. Not enough companies actually have good leadership training. It's a different skill set. We're no longer responsible for the results, we're now responsible for the people who are responsible for the results.

And our responsibility is no longer to drive the numbers, it's to help take care of the people and create the environment in which they can perform at their natural best.

I get this question all the time: Simon, how do we get the most out of our people? Well, people are not a towel, we don't wring them out, right? The correct question is: How do we create an environment in which people can work at their natural best? And that's the responsibility of leadership. And one of those ways, to answer the question, is we have to act in the way that we expect our people to act. If we want them to be honest and act with integrity, we have to be honest and act with integrity because the leader sets the tone. And if leaders are cagey about the truth, then what will happen is the people will be cagey about the truth. If leaders are dishonest down, then people will be dishonest up. It's just how it happens.

And so the best way to create an environment in which trust and cooperation can thrive is for leaders to take the risk of trust. I've never in my life heard a great leader say, "Prove to me why I should trust you." It's the other way around. Leaders take the risk to trust, and they actually have to earn the trust of their people.

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: So, it's about expecting the best out of people, expecting that, and delivering that yourself. Right?

SIMON SINEK: Exactly. Exactly. We have to actually be the leaders we wish we had at all times.

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: Yes, and the level of vulnerability.

SIMON SINEK: The level of vulnerability. This is one of the things, when a leader asks for help, that's vulnerable because it shows that we have weakness, we don't know everything.

The amazing thing about building trust is we don't build trust by offering our help, we build trust by asking for it. Because by asking for help, we're actually admitting we don't know everything. By asking for help, we're admitting that we can't do everything. And for the leader to be able to say that, like, hey, guys, I've been promoted into this position, you guys have been doing this a lot longer than me, you know more about this job than I do, so my job is to give you the resources, give you the space, give you the top cover that you need, but I'm going to have to lean on you and rely on you to show me the ins and outs of this responsibility, of this category, because you know more than I do. That's huge. And it creates teamwork. It says that we have responsibility to help take care of our leader, and our leader's responsibility is to take care of us. And it becomes a proper trusting team.

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER: Yeah, you know, thank you, Simon. Thank you. This is super helpful. You know, Simon actually has a session in our leadership track, kind enough to do that, and so I would encourage everybody to join him -- not everybody,

because I don't think it's this big, but as many of you as you'd like. (Laughter.) You know, what you talk about in terms of relying on people who are much smarter than you is really what we do. We look to all of you partners. You are much smarter than we are. You are much closer to the customer than we are, and this week really is all about us coming together as a community to listen to each other, to learn from each other, to ask for that help and to build those relationships that take us forward to greatness throughout the whole year. So, thank you, and thank all of you and welcome to Inspire 2019. I look forward to a tremendous week ahead! (Cheers, applause.)

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