

## A Professional Portrait

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Speaker 1: Tech Reimagined, redefining the relationship between people and technology, brought to you by Endava. This is Tech Reimagined.

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Bradley Howard: Hello, and welcome back to Tech Reimagined. I'm Bradley Howard, and I'm very pleased to welcome you to the latest season of our show. We're now at the very beginning of season three, in which we'll explore how technology is influencing the fabric of our society, the way that we work, the way that we live and the way that we do business, stay tuned on every podcast platform that matters, to listen to our fantastic guests this season. And speaking of fantastic guests, we're very honored to start the season off with a special episode with none other than workplace equality advocate and British businesswoman, Dame Inga Beale. Hello, Dame Inga, how are you?

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Dame Inga Beale: Oh, hello, Bradley. I'm very well today, thank you. And how are you?

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Bradley Howard: Good. Thank you very much. Can you start off by telling us a little bit about yourself and your very impressive career history?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, I've worked for 40 years in financial services, most of that in insurance and my last executive role was the CEO of Lloyds of London. And I stepped down from that at the end of 2018. And now I sit on a variety of different boards as a non-executive director.

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Bradley Howard: Thank you very much. So I've heard your story about your first role in insurance and then how you went traveling and then you came back and ultimately, became the CEO of Lloyd's. But it's such a fascinating story, would you mind sharing it with our audience again, please?

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Dame Inga Beale: Sure. So I started in the eighties in the financial district of London, the City of London. And I didn't plan to get into insurance actually, but I wanted to stay in London. I came from a small town, Newbury in Berkshire, which is about 60 miles west of London. And I came to London first actually, to study, but I decided that my degree that I was studying, it wasn't really interesting enough for me, it was accountancy. So I thought, "I need a job." And I happened to get into insurance, but at that time it was a very male dominated environment. And so I was pretty much a lone woman in the city at that time. And so sport very much ruled my life, I rode a lot and then I played rugby for Wasps for 12 years and that kept me going, I guess. So my career wasn't very important for me at the beginning, sport ruled my life.

And then after a while, I think it was about 10 years, something sexist happened at work, a very sexist incident. And I guess, this anger had been building up in me, maybe this resentment being the odd one out for so long, that I actually walked out of the office

one day. I didn't say anything to anyone, I didn't say anything to my manager, I just went home and vowed I'd never work in the world of insurance again. And that was in the days before mobile phones, so I didn't have a mobile, no one was sending me text messages, but my manager kept phoning my home phone, leaving voicemails, worried about me. On about day four, I phoned the company back and said, "I'm not coming back to work. I'm going traveling." And off I went, I packed a ruck sack, bought around the world ticket and went traveling around the world.

Started off in India, went through other parts of Asia, went to Australia. Eventually after a year, I came back and then I needed some money, because I hadn't planned this trip, so I really needed some money. And I needed a reference from my old boss, when my old boss heard I was back, he offered me a job again, at which point I said, "Hmm, I'll come back on a contract." Because I thought, "No, I still don't want to have a career in insurance." But as it happened, an opportunity came along. I stayed in insurance, I got offered opportunities around the world. I was lucky enough and I suppose had the courage, to take some opportunities, to move countries several times. And eventually, I got to be the first CEO of a public listed company when I was 43. I was very, very chuffed about that, that was in Switzerland. Did that for a few years, stayed in Zurich for another few years. And then eventually, came back to London and got offered of the role as the CEO of Lloyds of London.

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Bradley Howard: Such an amazing story. I've got so many questions for you. I've heard that story a few times, but it's just every time I'm captivated. So first of all, in your early career, do you have any tips that might help young people today in the workforce?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, I'm going to of course, use my experience. And one of the things I think about is, don't stress too much about what you do right at the beginning of your career. I've done a lot of mentoring over the years and often people, they're starting out and they're so nervous about making the right choice, that first company they work for. What should they do? I say, don't stress too much. You have a long life ahead of you. Things are always changing in this world. There will be opportunities coming your way. Don't think that what you do at right at the beginning of your career is necessarily going to reflect at the end of your career. But what I would encourage you to do is, to show an interest in things that are beyond your specific role and your specific team.

One of the things I found very beneficial is volunteer for stretch assignments, get involved in special projects. Don't be scared to leave your comfort zone and get involved and learn something, so keep on learning. Another thing I would say, is ask for lots of feedback. So often we have cultures at work where feedback, people are a bit nervous about giving open and honest feedback sometimes. People can take it very personally when they receive it and they think it can be very critical. Actually, I've always wanted lots of feedback and I've embraced it and usually, it's been the most valuable thing. But there's one thing I think you should remember, and that is PIE, P-I-E. It's a simple model that I was taught and I wish I'd actually been told about it much, much younger. You have to focus on the P and the I and the E, the P is for performance. You must do a good job. You must be recognized for the work that you do. But the I is also important, the I is your image. How are you coming across? How are people perceiving you? How approachable are you? How collaborative are you? All of these things, your image will matter a lot. And that's when I specifically get you to ask for feedback, because sometimes we can come across in a way that we don't appreciate, and only others can tell you that. So make sure you get feedback and focus on that I, the image.

The third letter, the E is for exposure. Exposure matters almost more than anything else when you want to move up the career ladder, move into new roles. People are noticing you all the time, senior people are noticing you. Make sure you get exposure, take a scary opportunity that might mean moving to another country, whatever it is.

Ask your manager, your line manager, to perhaps be connected with someone else, ask them to make an introduction to someone, networking is the most important thing. Now there can be virtual networking in virtual settings these days, we're very used to that. You have breakout rooms, they're virtual breakout... Make sure you make the most of those. If you're in a physical environment, make sure you are always enlarging your network, going and talking to people that you wouldn't normally talk to. Your network and your exposure to different people will be really the test for how well you do in your career.

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Bradley Howard: Oh, thank you for that. And on the feedback point, especially in the UK, our British culture is not to give negative feedback so directly, which is not such a confrontational culture. So how do you encourage to get that feedback? Because I would imagine you're looking for how you can improve, which is always going to be some critical feedback. How do you encourage people to do that for you?

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Dame Inga Beale: Yeah. I mean, I have grown to be quite frank in the feedback. And I do remember coming back and taking my first role in London after I'd been away for about 12 years, coming into the traditional culture I'd worked in before, but I'd somehow forgotten what it was like. And I was a CEO, I was coming in as a CEO, so I had senior people reporting to me and I was giving them open and honest feedback. And I remember the first conversation when the guy said, "Wow, I've never had that feedback ever in my career." And I thought, "Oh, whoops, perhaps I've gone a bit too far." Because there is a certain element that people don't do it, but the thing is, as somebody giving the feedback, you can do it constructively, it's not about being overly critical. I often also think that by asking a question of someone, it's a way of getting them also to self-reflect, and then you can perhaps build on something they've said, rather than necessarily coming out with it first of all.

But the other thing is if you are getting feedback and I really would ask, get it to be as specific as possible. So if you've been, I don't know, say you've just made a presentation in a Zoom meeting or something, ask immediately people, "How did I do? What did you think?" Because it's in the moment that's so important. But I do remember having some personal feedback that when I first received it, I was pretty shocked. It was some years ago, but I was working in a global company and we were already using a lot of video capability for our meetings. And he was in the US, he was my direct boss. And after this particular video meeting, he said to me, "Oh, Inga." He said, "I don't know what it is." He said, "You have such a sneer on your face." Now my initial reaction was, "Wow. How could you be so personal about my facial expression?" And I didn't really respond, particularly when he said it, I just said, "Oh right, okay." Because he said, "It's affecting people. They don't think you're being genuine when you're speaking."

So I thought, "Right, I'd better think about this." So I did go away and think about it and then I realized going back in time, how this had manifested itself. And when I was first coming into work in the City of London, walking from the underground station, walking to the office, I would get a lot of comments from people, mostly men in the street, they may have been work men, "Oh, cheer up love, the sky's not going to fall on your head today." And things like this, because I probably looked a bit angry or glum. And this happened so frequently, I thought, "This is it, I don't want people to keep telling me I

look miserable." So I think I developed a false smile, which then was perceived many years later as a sneer. And I realized that this was one of the most valuable pieces of feedback I've ever had, quite personal, but it made me transform the way that I was carrying myself, holding myself, looking et cetera, cetera and it was invaluable advice.

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Bradley Howard: Oh, that's great. So when you worked at GE early in your career, I know you were offered a role, there was an opportunity to become the CEO of another reinsurance company. Did you feel ready for that role? How did that role come about? I'm looking for the insight into... Most people in their career, don't have that opportunity. So tell us a bit more about how it came about and did you feel ready for the role? How did you start?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, the company was in Switzerland and had got into a bit of trouble, not the company I was working for, the company that approached me. They'd got into a bit of trouble and they were looking for a CEO for some time, I think about a year. I was quite happy at GE, I was running a big division, EMEA and I was based in Germany. But GE had just sold the business, they'd sold the business to another company, they'd sold it to Swiss Re. And I was therefore, in this position of not knowing what my future would be after the acquisition. And then being approached by a head hunter, saying, "Come and be the CEO of this company that need to turn around." Right? "It's in a lot of trouble, they fired the CEO a year earlier. This is a turnaround situation, come and do this." And I thought, "Well, that's very, very scary, but I also have uncertainty here with this acquisition."

I was headhunted for it, I didn't feel I was necessarily prepared, although I'd come out of GE, so I'd had lots of training and experience of running big organizations, but this was going to be the CEO of a listed organization, so suddenly I was going to be dealing with all the investors and because it was a turnaround situation, the company had lost a lot of money, so there were some very unhappy shareholders and all of that was quite new to me. So I didn't really feel particularly ready for it, but I did have the courage to take it on and that's what I did. And I didn't actually, have much time to think about it, because they were so desperate now for a CEO, because they'd been rudderless for a while, that they only gave me a few days and I had only a few days to decide and I said, "Yep, I'm going to do it. I'm going to try it. I'm going to move to a different country and I'm going to take on this CEO role."

And I didn't actually anticipate the reaction. I was the first female CEO of a financial services listed company in Switzerland ever, so the media suddenly were all over me. In terms of perhaps the Swiss culture, not only was I a female and that wasn't very well... There were very few females in senior roles, but my age they regarded as quite young, I was 43. And I was British and the journalist did some research and they found out I played rugby, they didn't even know really what rugby was in Switzerland. So there was some headlines, Inga the winger, I remember as a headline in the Swiss media. And I was quite a bit of a strange being for them. And throughout my tenure there, I got a lot of media attention, because I was slightly unique. But if I'd known that before I went, I probably wouldn't have gone, but I didn't know, I went in naively. And actually, I mean, it was a wonderful experience and I have no regrets about taking that role.

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Bradley Howard: And once you were there, you've then had other chief exec roles. Do you have a particular approach or method that you use? Do you look at the people? Do you

look at the board straight away? Do you look at some of the burning issues that you were aware of or find out on your first hour of being there? Do you have that particular approach?

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Dame Inga Beale: When you take the role as CEO, well, before you take the role as CEO, you must try and do as much due diligence as possible. Obviously, if it's a listed company, there's usually a lot of news and you can find a lot about it. If you're the CEO of course, your board is very, very important. You want to know what their agenda is, what they really want you to drive. So for instance, with the Converium role in Switzerland, I knew they needed this turnaround. The company had lost its financial ratings from the rating agencies. There were some very specific things that needed to be done and the board was clear in what they wanted. So the due diligence you must do before that is vital. When it comes to then the people in the organization, your actual team, that's what you start focusing on when you get in. Are these the right people? Do they want to work for me? Can I trust them?

Trust is a very, very important aspect, particularly at the top of an organization, you've got to feel that the people around you are people you can trust. And so you then in the first a hundred days, you've got to make an assessment about your team, very, very critical. And I did make some changes. And the challenge then when you're coming in as a new leader, whether you're the CEO or in another leadership role and you start changing people, is that you can then have a team that's divided of those that were there already and the new ones, the newbies. And then trying to meld that so that they're working collaboratively and well together, was about the biggest challenge I took on at Converium, because I had half new and half of the old guard.

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Bradley Howard: Do you sometimes read a Saturday paper of, or the FT and see about a company that's also going through some changes or some challenges and they fired their chief exec maybe? Do you sometimes think, "Oh, you know what? If I was going to do this, this is how I would approach this company?"

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Dame Inga Beale: I do often think that. I learnt many years ago when I started to be a manager for the first time, that my natural style is to include other people. So that's really my approach, so whenever I've gone in anywhere, I've always wanted to talk to lots and lots of people and hear from them. As the CEO, you never know all the answers and you must rely on having really, really, really good people around you, so that you end up making the good decisions. But I also understand the politics in an organization and you've got so many parties to keep happy and things like that.

And at one time, at certain times in your career, you might be moving in slightly different strategic directions and sometimes that's okay, sometimes it's okay to actually be the CEO that's just gone, because you're not necessarily the right CEO for that time. Someone new comes in with a fresh approach, they can make the changes necessary and that'll be time for them to move on. And the average tenure of a CEO now, I think is below five years, four point something years, because that's the pace of change in the world of business today and you need to keep having that refreshment at the top of an organization

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Bradley Howard: Other than when you walked out of a building and decided to go traveling, can you share one of the most transformative moments that you've had in your career or life?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, there aren't many actually, but I know we've got an only limited time to talk today. But I think the thing that I will mention that really, really kick started my career, was the time I was offered my very, very first promotion. I had been working for 12 years at this time, so up until the 12th year of my career, I had not managed one single person. So don't think that I started off as a high potential person and I was moving up the ladder, I wasn't. After 12 years, I was offered my very first promotion and it wasn't to lead a big team, it was a team of three people. I didn't have the confidence and I actually said no. I look back now and I can't recognize that young Inga that said no at that time, but I said no.

But my boss actually had been asked, and this was the nineties, it was a requirement in the company that people had to promote women and they had to promote ethnic minorities. So here was his bonus going to be affected, because I had said no, and I was the only woman he could promote, there weren't any others. So he actually, reached out to the US, which is where all his management were and he said, "I need help. Come and tell me what to do with this woman who said no to promotion." And so basically, the organization surrounded me, they supported me. They said, "What do you need?" They provided me someone as a mentor. I got the training I wanted. And about two months later, I went into my boss and said, "Yeah, I'll take the promotion." And that then, was when I first got on the management ladder and I never looked back. So that to me was the biggest, really biggest single moment of my career.

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Bradley Howard: And what about failures or mistakes, are there any key learnings that you look back on that you'd like to share with us?

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Dame Inga Beale: If I think about early on as a manager, I remember being accused of bullying an individual, and I was absolutely flabbergasted by this. Honestly, I couldn't get my head around it. So then we discussed it and I discussed it in lots of discussions actually, not just with this individual then, but with other people in my team, to work out what it was and why this person felt that they were being bullied. And I actually learned a lot about how to treat others as a manager. So this wasn't in a management training course, this was real. And I learned about treating people in the way that they wanted to be treated, not in the way I wanted to be treated.

And I'll just explore this a little bit, so I was someone who was quite strong minded, independent, I did not want to be told how to do something. So if ever I had a manager that said, "I want you to do this." And then they spent 10 minutes telling me how to do it, I got frustrated and a bit fed up, because all I wanted to do was to get off and start doing it. So that was how I wanted to be treated and that's how I wanted to be asked to do things. So that was then how I was dealing with my team. And I was just saying though, "Oh, would you do that?" And not giving them anything other, no more information, no context.

And then I would go back and say, "Well, have you done that?" And they were looking at me panic strick, because they hadn't done it, they didn't really know how to do it. They'd just been trying to explore how to do it. And that was really how I learned about this issue, that this person thought I was bullying them. But in fact, it was just I was treating

them the way I wanted to be treated. It's not about that, it's do unto others as they want to be done unto. It is not doing things how you want to be treated. And that was one of the biggest, well, real crunch times in my early management career, but also a huge learning, which I've tried to always remember.

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Bradley Howard: There's a really good lesson in there, definitely. So I know you've got some views about wider society and trust. I'd really like to explore some of this. So let's start off with the big question, how do you think that the pandemic has influenced the wider society?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, trust has changed a lot. It was quite interesting, so pre-pandemic business trust was going down, and there's a wonderful barometer of trust that's freely available and it's called the Edelman Barometer of Trust. They publish this every year and it's a pretty global piece of research and it's very thorough. And pre-pandemic business trust was going down and I can remember having conversations with people about how we were going to restore trust in business. The pandemic came along, what happened? Well, trust in government generally went way down, because people saw governments not prepared, not doing the right thing, flustering, making decisions, not working together. I mean, fancy individual countries not working together on a pandemic that is affecting the whole world. And yet businesses were stepping in, they responded really quickly and they were doing good things for their employees generally. And suddenly, business trust or trust in business started to rise and people were going, "I know that my company's doing the right thing for me." And that was a very interesting thing to see happening.

To be honest, I haven't checked out the latest data this year, post pandemic, be interested to see how it was going. Media trust is pretty low and I don't think that really helped as well, whether it's social media or your more old fashioned traditional media. But it was fascinating how trust in business went up. And that means that's actually good for business, that means we're in a good high spot to actually build on that, perhaps get more loyalty out of our people. And in this huge movement where everyone's leaving, trying to find new jobs, maybe that's a great opportunity to build on and actually build some more loyalty with our employees.

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Bradley Howard: When you had been chief executive at Lloyds, I understand you were part of a consortium that looks into very widespread threats and you worked with different governments and different mayors of different megacities. Can you share any insights into that?

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Dame Inga Beale: Yeah, this was some research that Lloyds specifically did with Cambridge university. And when I was there, the first time we would launch this report, it was 2015. And it was looking at the risk of cities, because we could see across the world that there was huge urbanization going on. And there were cities being created that are bigger than some countries economies, right? And there's a lot of urbanization going on, we've got huge megacities. And we started to think, "Well, actually, we need to now think about the risks that these cities are facing." And one of the things that came up in one of the top risks for cities, was a human pandemic, because so much more travel, so many people meeting up all over the place, we realized that this could be a huge issue for cities.

The other things for cities were a market crash, weather events, could be a flood or a windstorm, depending on the physical location of where a city was. Actually later, not that year, but the report has been repeated and later, one of the top risks now is interstate conflict. And that actually, Lloyds brought that report out before the recent Russia/ Ukraine issue, that was on there and cyber attacks. So they were the other things that we're looking at, but human pandemic was being looked at. So I know that from a risk perspective, there were many people looking at a human pandemic. I know that we were not alone, Cambridge University would not have been alone, there were many, many groups looking at it.

We should have been better prepared when the pandemic came, when COVID 19 hit. But I have to say, when we launched our first report and we tried to have conversations with generally mayors of cities, because this was a city focused thing, rather than a country focused thing, talking to the local government, we really couldn't get any interest. Yes, they looked at what our report was saying, they looked at the potential downside, but I guess it wasn't in their short term agenda, because often politics is full of short term agenda, and they didn't want to have to invest or prepare for these other things that we were saying were coming along. So therefore, all the cities, countries weren't really prepared for a pandemic when it arrived. And I believe that there's a lot to be said for why this didn't happen across the world, it's not just about Lloyds and the conversations we were trying to have, it was about people not being included at the tables of influence.

So you've got all these rich think tanks and rich knowledge everywhere, but fundamentally, tables of influence, positions of power, they tend to be a certain type of person. The other people who might bring these new ideas, different ideas, dramatic challenges, they're not really at this table, they're not at the tables of influence and therefore, they're not being listened to and taken seriously. And that to me is part of the whole inclusion and broader inclusion agenda, which I think has caused all sorts of issues in the more recent paths, where people have felt that they're not being listened to and they're not being included.

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Bradley Howard: So based on the fact that you did the research, then there was a pandemic, do you think that mayors and other local governments are going to take things like environmental risk more seriously for the future? Or do you think that it's just human nature, that we're just going to back down straight away?

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Dame Inga Beale: I believe the environment in terms of climate is being taken more seriously, but I think to be honest, that's partly pressure now from central governments, from the investor community, from the capital markets and the people with money, so I do believe that sort of thing is going to change. Getting prepared for other risks that are likely to come along and there will be more pandemics, I'm still not sure that people are getting themselves ready. But I am from the world of risk and I believe that if you are a business for instance, put risk really at the top of your agenda, make sure your chief risk officer has a prominent role to play. Make sure you are listening to them, make sure you're not sticking your head in the sand and not wanting to listen to some of the issues that are being raised.

And if you're someone working in risk, make sure that you are outspoken enough and not just doing what the powers that be do. And I think this is what regulators often struggle with, how do they ensure that there is a culture that's actually open enough, that people do feel that they can speak up and raise issues? Because somebody is thinking



about the new risks and we just need to get it out on the table and businesses and governments and cities need to be ready for some of this new stuff.

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Bradley Howard: And changing subjects a little bit. Again, I know you've got some particular views on free speech and cancel culture. How do you think that's influencing society at the moment?

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Dame Inga Beale: I think we're limiting our understanding and respect for other people's perspectives. I fall into the trap, perhaps many other people do, canceling out people on my social media feeds that have a different view. I don't want to hear them, I want a peaceful life. I mean, we are bombarded with information, so you can understand why we want to do this, because we aren't necessarily looking for conflict in our lives. But the problem is, if we do this, we could run into all sorts of bigger issues. If we are not understanding other people's perspectives, we can have huge divisions happening, divisions in society. We'll have potentially more conflict going on, because if it's happening at our micro level as individuals, it's certainly going to be happening up at more senior levels and even more senior levels.

And I do think a little bit about for instance, what we see about Russia and Ukraine and I think, well, I can remember talking about what was going on a few years ago, giving speeches, because I was transfixed really about the war that was happening between the US and China. And I don't mean a physical war, I mean an economic war, an economic battle for power, a technological war going on. And there was this focus of battling these things out and therefore, not such a strong focus on the entire global ecosystem. And I think then we've seen the fragility of this where people are saying, "Oh".

Now the attention, look at what they're doing, because together they control so much of the world. They're fighting each other so much, other people are now making hay while there's chaos, they're able to do bad things. And so that's the thing and I know it's really macro, but it does worry me, because if we can see that happening on a macro level and then we can see it in a micro level, it can be in our streets, in our homes, in our communities. And this division of society, I do not believe is in the best interest of anyone.

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Bradley Howard: So who should be changing it? How can we change it?

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Dame Inga Beale: Well, all of us individuals can of course, do our bit, try and be more understanding. And I talk about it as trying to be tolerant of difference and I think there's a big difference here. So there are people who are intolerant of others and therefore, go out of their way to do perhaps even bad things to people they're intolerant of. There is no reason to be intolerant of others, we need to accept that others are different and each of us are challenging our ourselves to say, "How intolerant am I being of someone who's different? Why am I doing that? Is there anything I can do about it? Is it the right thing to do? Probably not." But if somebody is being truly intolerant that I think we should show a certain intolerance towards them. But it's fundamentally saying, "We are never going to be the same. We're all going to be different." And that's the richness of life. Whether it's in your friends, in your business, wherever you go, it's the richness of our life. This is why we're human. We actually need this difference, we need variety.

So there's something about this being tolerant of people who are different or trying to learn to be tolerant. And then really, when you get to a higher level, whether it's any local government, national governments, whatever that is, then it's a case of please start talking and opening up lines of communication. Bring academia into it, bring all of these groups that are actually trying to make the world a better place, make sure that they're part of the conversations you are having. Make sure that what you are doing is in the best interest of the wider population, it's not about your own individual interest, it's about trying to make the world a better place.

I mean, of course I look through things with rose tinted glasses. I want the world to be a better place. I want there to be less wealth inequality. I want that gap between the rich and the poor to narrow. I don't like the fact that the 25 richest men in the world have more wealth between 25 of them than the entire female population above the age of 18 on the African continent and just think how many millions of them there are. There is huge wealth inequality. So of course I'm an idealist, this is what I want. And we probably will never get this, certainly not in my lifetime, but there is I think, a requirement now for governments to do much more collaboration amongst each other. And whether it takes a really, really nasty, awful incident, like Putin invading Ukraine, to bring some other countries together, I mean, it's tragic that it takes that, but at least now people are doing a bit more collaborating than they were before, when they were building walls, metaphoric or otherwise around their countries.

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Bradley Howard: But there's still always a gray line between free speech and being open and tolerant of other people's views, isn't there?

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Dame Inga Beale: Yes. And I think it's particularly difficult to even police at the moment. But partly because we are allowing anonymity and we are allowing fake news, because when things weren't anonymous, you knew where it was coming from, you knew who was saying it. Today, we have no idea half the time who's saying what. And we have evil people creating fake news and spreading it around and it's the anonymity. And I was speaking at an event the other week, it was in the Netherlands. And there was rarely actually, it was a business event, but someone had brought their eight year old with them.

So they brought their child, I thought, "That's great, how open. I mean, what a great idea, bring your child to a business forum." This child asked me what I thought about social media and this is where I said, "Right, okay." And I was really put on the spot. I wasn't expecting it, because I wasn't talking anything about social media. But I said, "Do you know what? I just think you need to be aware that if you don't really know who's saying something or posting something, just be highly aware, don't let people hide behind anonymity to say bad things and spread bad news."

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Bradley Howard: Well, it always comes back to, if you are uncomfortable saying what you're about to type into Twitter or any other platform, if you're uncomfortable saying that to someone's face, then just don't write it. Really, to me, that's a super black and white principle.

00:37:18

Dame Inga Beale: Yes, but in workplace, sometimes you've got to go through a phase of allowing anonymity. When I started at Lloyd's, I had to allow anonymity in comments,

because nobody had commented on anything. There was a very closed culture that nobody spoke up about anything. So when I arrived, I started blogging and sharing my own words, my blog and I allowed or asked people to comment to give me their views. But I allowed anonymity at that stage, because this was the first time we tried any open speech. It was probably about 18 months later, we then removed anonymity completely, because suddenly people felt, "Oh, I can speak up and I can give my view." So in the workplace you can actually create these safe spaces. You not allowing anonymity anymore, but allowing people to be free, not asking for conflict, but asking to people to be constructive and to share their views.

00:38:16

Bradley Howard: And on that note, I think we need to wrap up there. I could go through so many other questions, but that's been really insightful and I'm afraid we're out of time. Thank you so much Inga, for sharing your insight, views and observations on these really important matters. It was such a pleasure to deep dive into current work culture paradigm, the events that influence us and how technology connects us. To all of our listeners, I really hope that you enjoyed this first episode of our third series, a special edition of our Tech Reimagined podcast. Thank you for joining us today and please keep checking on all the popular podcast platforms for the next episode. Until next time.