INTELLIGENT ORGANIZATION ACCELERATOR

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Chetna (00:06):
Hi, everyone. My name is Chetna, and I'm excited to welcome you to our CIO Chat series, where I have the unfair luxury of chatting with some amazing leaders. Before we start chatting, though, I want to talk about a historic figure who has always enamored me: Einstein. We know him for his brilliance. We know that he solved several of the deepest mysteries of the universe. But few might know of the adversity he constantly faced. The book, "A Short History of Nearly Everything", revealed some very interesting information. Einstein failed his college entrance exams the first timeround. The only job he could get was in a Swiss patent office. He published his E=MC² theory, which explained how stars could burn for billions of years and how radiation worked. One simple formula that endowed geologists and astronomers with game changing enlightenment. However, when published, this attracted minimal attention, after that Einstein applied for a job as a university lecturer, he was rejected. He then applied for a job as a high school teacher. Again, he was rejected. Now this is the author of the general theory of relativity, which is quoted as one of the highest intellectual achievements of humanity, but he had the world telling him he was not intelligent enough, facing

intense headwinds most of his life. Now while Einstein's contributions and the corresponding adversity he faced might be on the extreme end, it does have a parallel in today's world of disruption, driven by technology, where one of the roles that faces constant challenges is the CIO role, a lot of headwinds for today's CIOs. And so the question becomes, how can they navigate through all this? How can they rise above? That's the code we will aim to crack today. And we have the perfect person to help us with that. Our guest today is a leader who heads the technology practice of the largest technology services company on the globe and has worked with hundreds of C-suite executives, including CIOs, Paul Daugherty, Accenture's technology group, chief executive, and the CTO. Paul, needless to say, I'm thrilled to have you with us. Welcome.

Paul (02:26):
Well, it's great to be talking to you, Chetna. I'm really looking forward to our conversation. That was a great intro on Albert Einstein, one of my favorites. I've studied him a lot.

Chetna (02:34):
Wonderful. So we are going to dig right into it, Paul, then. I'm going to continue with this

theme of being a CIO is tough. So, they have many priorities. They have to support digital transformation. They have to ensure future-ready skills, and now they have to support business imperatives such as customer experience and even revenue growth. So, Paul, what role do you see a CIO play in today's world of disruption?

Paul (02:59):
I agree with what you said. I've been saying that for a while and talking to all my CIO friends about this is that, I think the CIO is the hardest job that there is because of the different demands on the role. It used to be, maybe years ago, is about just keeping systems running and things like that. But the job is far from that today in terms of the requirements of a modern CIO looking to the future. And the underlying driver of a lot of this change is what's happening with technology. While technology used to support the business, technology is much more than that now. Technology is at the heart of every business, every tech, every business is really a technology business, as I've been saying for a while, because if you're digital, that means you need to be leveraging technology and good at technology. And that quest, companies to really leverage technology for strategic advantage puts a lot of pressure on the CIO. And I think the way to think about it is, what is really that "I" stand for, if you're the CIO? If we say information, but that's like only one part of the CIO's job. If you think about the CIO and what the "I" stands for, on the one hand it's infrastructure and keeping things running and keeping things cyber resilient in this increasingly complex time, and thinking about blending the legacy with the cloud. It's about information, sure, the data and everything, which is increasingly valuable and increasingly strategic to companies. It's

about the insights that you get from data. Another "I" that you could say is part of the CIO's job. It's about new capabilities of the CIO as a business person, the innovator, bringing innovative business ideas on how to leverage technology. And the imagination officer, the "I" for the imagination of what are the possibilities of new digital technology, digital manufacturing, the metaverse artificial intelligence and educating in inspiring the imagination of the business executives. And then from a talent perspective, the CIOs got a massive role. The "I" in that case might be the Chief Inspiration Officer, inspiring people, creating a magnet for people to come, technology workers to come to the company, inspiring the work that the technology teams do. And the Inclusion Officer, making sure that this is all done in an inclusive, diverse way, because the best way to success and the only path to success and innovation is through an inclusive workforce, so that "I" really becomes overloaded as you look to the future and all the things the CIO needs to do. And that's why the job I think, is on the one hand, the hardest job, but probably the most rewarding and one of the most impactful that there is across any company today.

Chetna (05:31):
Oh my goodness. I loved that, "What does the 'I' stand for?" That's brilliant. So, Paul, you have been recognized as a technology leader by Computer World, Retail World, LinkedIn, and many others, I can go on. And in your role at Accenture, you brought theright vision with technology to many of our marquee clients and industry leaders. So we have a lot of technology and a lot of use cases out there. Some are recent, some are older. The question is, how should CIOs unpack all of this to bring true value to their

organization?

Paul (06:05):
I'll give a short answer, then I'm going to give a longer answer, I'll mix it together. I'll go back to what I said. Every business is becoming a technology business. And as a CIO or as a technology leader, you need to think about that and understand it. It is every part of every business, which I'll come back to. And exponential technology change is accelerating. COVID and global crisis of wars and things don't slow the pace of technology innovation. In an era of chaos and uncertainty in many aspects of the world, the one certainty is the pace of technology change in the fact that can power change in your organization. And that's the way you should think about it as a technology leader, in terms of bringing certainty to an uncertain world, by powering the advance of technology and powering the advance of change in your organization. Now, if you look to the next decade and what's going to define and shape the next decade, and as a technology leader, I'd submit there's five things you need to think about, that you need to bring as a technology leader, if you want to be a leader and if you want your organization to be a leading organization going forward. The first is what I touched on already, which is every part of every business will become digital, will become technology enabled, every part of every business. And we're only probably a third of the way on that journey or less. So there's a lot of room ahead for the CIO to lead in that journey using a lot of those "I"s talked about earlier, but that's just one part of it. And the second part of it is sustainability. And these are really challenges on how to frame the next decade and what you need to think about for success. Sustainability is going to be the

defining issue of this generation and of the next decade. And how do you solve sustainability challenges in a company? A lot of it is going to be the technology and a lot of it needs to come from the CIO tracking and tracing ESG, metrics, et cetera, more efficient ways of running IT, which is becoming an increasing consumer of global energy, et cetera, and sustainability becomes critical on the agenda and will shape a lot of the agenda for what we do in technology. Talent is the next thing on the agendas. I've talked about that already, so I won't dwell in it more, but the scarcest commodity, and I've used the wrong word, the scarcest resource in the next decade is going to be skilled people around technology to do what you need to do. Thinking about your company as a talent, what's your talent brand as a company to attract technology talent and how ae you retaining it and creating careers for the best talent that you're going to need given that every company is a technology company? The fourth thing is the metaverse. The metaverse will come on the scene and is going to define a lot of the shape of the next decade. You may doubt that now. I'd say, if you're doubting that now, I'd relate it to 1999, when many were saying they didn't need a webpage, or 2013, when we said every business is a digital business and many didn't accept it at that time. But the last decade has been defined by every company becoming a digital company, and the metaverse will reshape digital ambitions and will reshape digital opportunity more than we've seen in the last 10 years. The future ahead of digital transformation powered by metaverse-related technologies is even greater. And then the final thing is there's other new technologies that are coming on that you need to start to understand. But in terms of understanding

quantum cryptography and the risk you may have today, or very soon is something you do need to understand. So, there's all these new innovations around harnessing the future of what's going to come from the ongoing tech revolution is really important as well. So, those are some of the things to think about, and that's what's going to shape the next decade and what technology leaders need to make sure they understand and are leading in their organizations.

Chetna (10:00):
Oh, that's perfect. Paul. And we are going to actually jump into the rapid fire questions. Getting to know our CTO in this case. And the first question is about the metaverse. And I had to ask you this because I've heard you talk about the metaverse and it's very engaging. The question to you is the most exciting thing to you about the metaverse? The metaverse is the most misunderstood thing, and there's a ton of fog and confusion hype around it. It's not about putting one of these things on and wearing it 24 hours a day. That would be a pretty depressing view of the metaverse. The metaverse is about 2D to 3D experiences, it's about blending real-world experiences with virtual and a continuum of experiences. We talked about the metaverse continuum. It's about digital twins in your factory, connected to augmented workers, connected to your employees training in a virtual metaverse environment. And in that sense, the most exciting thing about the metaverse to me is the sense of how we use it to enhance our own human abilities. How do we allow people to connect more effectively? There's research, I was just reading about healthcare applications of metaverse technology to help patients that need different sorts of treatment, the human potential and the glass half full side of the

metaverse has huge potential and it's very exciting to me. I don't think we can yet even envision the possibilities that lie ahead. And like any technology it's got its downsides as well. And that's why our focus is on responsible metaverse, building trust and sustainability and other principles in from the start. But the opportunity to, again, enhance the real life we lead through the virtual experiences that augment that is the real exciting potential of the metaverse.

Chetna (11:34):
I'm no Einstein, Paul, but I can tell that's going to be a game changer. All right. Your favorite sport or activity?

Paul (11:41):
A lot of different ones, but sailing is probably my favorite activity. I love to sail. I've got a sailboat and that's my one getaway. The thing I like about sailing is a lot of other things I do, I can be thinking about different things and be distracted, but when I'm on my sailboat and I'm watching the winds and the tides and the waves and thinking about where I'm going, nothing else is in my head. And it's the perfect mind-clearing, beautiful experience for me.

Chetna (12:04):
Wonderful. An important trait in folks you look for, if they're joining a technology company like Accenture?

Paul (12:12):
Easy, ability to learn. Because we hire people not for what you know today, but what you're going to be able to learn in the future. That's what's critical. Things are changing so fast. You talked about the metaverse. I would submit to you that the top five jobs of five years from now are jobs that don't exist today. So, this is about as

individual, how do you make yourself relevant and learn for the future? Which is the subject of the new book I just wrote. And also as a company, how do you continue refreshing your own skills? Because you can't replace skills as people's skills become a little bit outdated, you need to invest in your people and the learning platforms to move your people forward.

Chetna (12:54):
Wonderful. And speaking of books, your top favorite books?

Paul (12:58):
I read a lot of books. That's a hard one for me, but one of my hands down favorites recently was Kai-Fu Lee's book, "AI 2041", which is brilliant. If you don't know Kai-Fu Lee, he's one of the most brilliant AI scientists around, he's also leading venture capitalist based in China, SinovationVentures, and he wrote a book that's about the future of AI in 2041. And he partnered with the science fiction writer. So, it's half science fiction and half facts about how the technology makes that science fiction come to life. A beautiful book, well written and very inspiring. I'll leave you with that one. I'll give you one other, two, since I read a lot of tech-oriented books like that. But, the other thing I love to read are things about storytelling, because I think my number one job, I believe is storytelling, articulating how the world is changing and what our vision is and what our strategy is through storytelling. I just went through the Epic of Gilgamesh and read all of the different translations of it. It's the first really recorded human story and understanding what that story looked like and how storytelling evolved from there is really fascinating.

Chetna (14:05):
That is fascinating. I'm going to put them in my Amazon cart right after this. And the last one on the rapid fire Paul, innovation or diversity?

Paul (14:15):
That's a false question. You can't answer that. If we've done research around this, is that inclusion equals innovation. We've written a report on this, which shows that if you want to get innovation, you better have inclusive teams because inclusive teams are the way to generate innovation. I firmly believe this. We're sponsoring an award with the Fast Company called Best Workplaces for Innovators. And, it's focusing on this issue and proving that the companies that build inclusive cultures like we're focused on at Accenture with our 50-50 gender diversity pledge by 2025, have demonstrably more effective innovation as a result. And if you're thinking about this as a CIO and you know, CIOs and technology leaders own billion dollar technology budgets at many companies and those investments are what will shape the future. And, it's our obligation, it's not a choice. It's an obligation if you're creating the future and investing with billions of dollars in shaping the future platforms, it's the obligations to do it in a way that's inclusive, that's creating the right opportunity for future people of all kinds. And the only way to get an inclusive future world, to be able through technology is to have an inclusive team building it from the start.

Chetna (15:31):
Oh, I love that. All right, Paul, I'm going to go to our final question. You've accepted the FASPE award for ethical leadership, and you've written the book, actually books, literally on how to apply ethical principles in AI and other technologies. In your mind,

what are the CIO's obligation to leverage technology for good, and you've already touched upon sustainability, but I would say technology for good and sustainability, and how do they practically execute on that?

Paul (15:59):
I think I would boil it down to trust. I think as any technology leader, really need to think about the role of trust. And, that's what I talked about when I did the address to FASPE for this award. And, I think trust is both a differentiator and an obligation. It's a differentiator because in the era we're moving into with more immersive experiences for your customers, more customer information that you want to create the products and services that you think the customers want, you think about the opportunities of metaverse, you think about new artificial intelligence that can anticipate what people need. Your ability to succeed as a business and get the data you need to create those experiences is going to be contingent on the trust you establish with consumers and customers and citizens and your workers. In my view, trust is one of the biggest differentiators going forward. And it is an essential part of your strategy. And, think about how every interaction you have generates the trust you need to then create those experiences and services for your customer. And, it's an obligation for the reasons I said earlier. We are shaping the future, we are in a privileged position to be living at a time in human history where exponential technology is reshaping the world we live in, and it's our obligation to do that in the way that creates a future we want to live in and it creates a future we want our children and others to live in. So, it's an obligation for us to do this in the right way as we go forward.

Chetna (17:24):
Oh my goodness, Paul, this was amazing. I'm feeling that I've learned so much and I'm feeling inspired and I love the passion. Thank you so much for your excellent perspectives and thank you for joining us today.

Paul (17:37):
It's a great discussion, Chetna, thank you.

Chetna (17:40):
Absolutely. So, there you have it. While disruption and the adversity that comes with it might be the name of the game, we've had some great insights from Paul on how to navigate the role of a CIO. From thoughtfully leveraging technological innovations for true value, to continuing with the imperatives of technology for good and sustainability. The CIOs of today's world can rise above, to not just survive, but also thrive. And so, while they might not unravel the mysteries of the universe, like Einstein, who knows? The disruption CIOs face might just be the impetus for them to unlock the mysteries of our corporate world. Thank you for watching. And although we know time is relative, we can't wait to see you soon. Be well.