



**Recorded Message:** The Hennessy Report, from Keystone Partners. A free-flowing conversation with leaders in the HR community, talking about themselves, the industry, and their work. Brought to in cooperation with NEHRA, the Northeast Human Resources Association.

**Dave Hennessy:** Welcome to The Hennessy Report. I'm your host, Dave Hennessy, and today we are releasing the third of three podcasts leading up to NEHRA's D&I Gala, which is next week, March 22nd where Anita Hill will be the keynote speaker.

Today's guest is Ed Hurley-Wales, the VP of market diversity and inclusion and ADP and he has two roles at ADP. One is focused internally, with D&I, and also he's focused on helping their clients improve what they're doing with regard to diversity inclusion. Ed is also Chairman of the Board of NEHRA, who this podcast is produced in cooperation with. Ed's a great storyteller, you're going to enjoy this podcast. He shares his personal journey, about how he got into the field of HR, and in particular diversity inclusion. It happened very early when he was in the military, fascinating story. He's a family man, a great communicator and storyteller. You're going to really enjoy this podcast as he gives advice to the diversity inclusion function and to the HR functions.

Before we go to Ed, I want to tell you about our next podcast, where we extend our diversity and inclusion series to a fourth. And we're going to have the recipient of NEHRA's 2018 Frank X. McCarthy Diversity Inclusion Champion Award, and that is Shawna Ferguson, who's the managing director of global diversity and inclusion at Wellington Management. We'll release the podcast with Shawna a few days after the Gala.

And now, I bring you my conversation with Ed Hurley-Wales.

Well here we are at NEHRA's headquarters with Ed Hurley-Wales, who happens to be the VP of market diversity and inclusion at ADP. And he's also, and the reason why we're here at this office, he's the president, chairman of the board of the Northeast Human Resources Association, NEHRA. Welcome to the podcast, Ed.

**Ed Hurley-Wales:** Thank you Dave, it's a pleasure being here, very exciting.

**Dave:** Kind of interesting, you've been with NEHRA quite a bit. You're a part of one of our three podcast series where we do our lead in to the Diversity and Inclusion Gala, which is on March 22nd, and we have Anita Hill as the keynote speaker for that event.

**Ed:** Very excited to have Anita Hill, and so timely, right, given the current state socially and politically in the country today. So, we are excited, as we always are, about our speakers coming in to the Diversity Gala. Always a sold out event. Dave, as you know. And so we're really excited to have our participants in the program really learn some great things. And I'm looking forward to hearing her.

**Dave:** Yeah, I know there's a lot of excitement about it. I've heard that things are selling out quickly, so...

**Ed:** Two tables left.



**Dave:** Two tables left?

**Ed:** Almost sold out.

**Dave:** Oh wow, that little is left.

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** Well I thought it'd be good, Ed, to just before we start getting into the topic of diversity and inclusion, and talking about your role at ADP, is you've got a great reputation of the work that you do in this function, diversity inclusion, and at the work you've done at NEHRA for many years. I thought it'd be good to take a look back, and as you look at your career now, did you ever think this is where you'd end up, this is what you'd be doing? How did it happen?

**Ed:** Oh, that's a great question. I've asked myself that question many times over the years. But my beginning started in the United States Navy. It was 1971, I was attached to an attack squadron, VA-147. And this is back when there was some racial unrest in the United States Navy, we were aboard the USS Constellation. So we deployed down to San Diego, California. And we were going to be deployed on the USS Constellation, and this was during the time, you know, just imagine, no cell phones, no emails, but two race riots broke out aboard the USS Constellation and the USS ... it was the Kitty Hawk. And we were on our way over to the Tonkin Gulf to relieve the Kitty Hawk, and two race riots broke out on both carriers, and this was just unusual for these times.

I was having lots of conversations with my captain at the time. It was a dangerous place to be. It was a really disturbing time for me being a young man, and being exposed to the level of disruption that was going on. And so the captain and I had many conversations around how can I help, what can I get involved in. And back then, they called it an ombudsman relationship, race relations. And that's what really started my venue down this path of race relations in the United States Navy.

**Dave:** Really?

**Ed:** He recommended that I go through this program, the Human Resources Goals Program, which was one of the first programs in United States Navy to deal with race relations. I was the youngest enlisted person to go through that program. But long story short, that was the beginning of my... the foundation.

**Dave:** Wow, very early in your career, and...

**Ed:** Very early in my career.

**Dave:** And in very tense moments, as well.

**Ed:** Right. Coming off the heels of the civil rights movement...

**Dave:** Right.



**Ed:** Or during that period of time, right. I was born in 1954, so you can do the math, and figure out that I remember when MLK was assassinated. I remember, I was here in Boston when he marched in Boston during that period of time.

**Dave:** Wow.

**Ed:** So I grew up in that civil rights..

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** ...timeframe. Understanding all of the racial injustices, and the complexities around that. And then, into the Navy and thought, "Okay, this would be a different change," and found out that it was not. Right, it was a very difficult period to be in during that time. But I was inspired and motivated to do something.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so I volunteered, and eventually...

**Dave:** So it was you ... you sought it out?

**Ed:** I sought it out.

**Dave:** Yep.

**Ed:** I saw some injustices with fellow sailors, and I just thought, "I have to do something." And that's my mom's training, right? She was like, "You just don't be a watch ... "

**Dave:** Don't be passive.

**Ed:** Don't be an observer, right?

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And that's how I got involved in that.

**Dave:** Wow. And what did you get from that experience, as you came through it? What was some of the big things you took away from that whole experience that led you down further in this world of diversity and inclusion...

**Ed:** You know, I...

**Dave:** ...and human resources, both?



**Ed:** That's a great question, because I didn't have the answers then, right? And so I went through the Human Goals Program back then, right, and it was with the University of Memphis, and it was a structured program, and they taught you negotiating skills, communication skills, race relations, as it was known at the time. But I just knew back then how complicated it was, and I was always perplexed by why? Right, if we're a team, if we're one unit, why can't we just get along? I look back now and I understand a lot more today. But then it was just, if you're from Nebraska, and I'm from Boston, and we're on the same team, we're in the same unit, why can't we just get along?

And so I think that's the key thing that I've taken away over the years. Because I think this is a topic, when you talk about diversity and inclusion, there's no quick responses, this is not a easy journey...

**Dave:** There's not an answer to the equation.

**Ed:** No, no. There is a continuous journey that you're on, right? It's complicated, you're dealing with how the brain works, and how we're conditioned and the experiences that we have.

**Dave:** Right. And what culture has put on us, right?

**Ed:** You got it, you got it.

**Dave:** Well maybe we could talk a little bit about NEHRA, and your role here, and the progression you've seen since you've been involved in the board, and also been president and chairman of the board.

**Ed:** Oh, that's great. Well I was recruited to come to the NEHRA board by Deb Hicks, who we all know, and Lisa Zankman, and I've been connected with Russ Campanello for years.

**Dave:** One of our former guests of the podcasts.

**Ed:** Exactly, exactly. And Russ and I have a connection with Wang Laboratories along our journey. But that being said, I was on the board of HRLF and I was just about to come off the board at the time that the chair of the board was Claire Muhm, who you know.

**Dave:** Yes.

**Ed:** And Deb Hicks and Lisa Zankman said, "Okay Ed, it's time to continue to give back to the community," at least that's how they phrased it. And so I said, "Great," and they said, "We need you to come on to the board." And so it's been nine years, nine years with NEHRA, and it's just been ... and I believe in what we do here, right, and so years ago I was a member of NEHRA, many years ago, and it was viewed as that junior practitioner, right? NEHRA has changed dramatically.

**Dave:** Yes.

**Ed:** And I ... hands off to Tracy, the executive director, and CEO, as well as the many members who have served on this board, because this organization has really morphed into something that's really great.



What I love about HR is as I've gone through my career, the network is phenomenal. The opportunity to share and collaborate. If you're a developer and dealing with agile technology, right, most developers don't share codes with other companies. In the HR community, we share everything. People are just open to sharing new approaches, ideas, systems, processes, policies, approaches, so it's just been...

**Dave:** Right, it's more collegial as a function.

**Ed:** Very much so.

**Dave:** Well, let's talk about your role at ADP too, because you have a very unique role, I didn't even know this, Ed, I've known you for a couple years, but I didn't know that you have a dual role. The title is VP of Market Diversity and Inclusion, but you have a role with regard to diversity and inclusion inside ADP, and also with ADP's clients. And maybe just talk a little bit about...

**Ed:** Sure.

**Dave:** ...what you do every day at ADP.

**Ed:** Yeah, sure. Let me explain how I got here.

**Dave:** Oh, okay.

**Ed:** And so, I was the SVP of HR for Workscape, which was a human capital management company that got acquired in 2010 by ADP. And I feel blessed that they spoke to me then, because both the CEO and everyone on the C-Suite thought once the deal was signed, bye bye and off to the next juncture. And we have a great CEO at ADP, Carlos Rodriguez, Dermot O'Brien is our CHRO, and ... our CDO, by the way, is Rita Mitjans, who's just doing phenomenal work. And so they said, "We want the talent. No one has to run away." And they said...

**Dave:** With the acquisition?

**Ed:** With the acquisition.

**Dave:** Yep.

**Ed:** And so they said, "Ed, let's talk about what role that you'd love to do." And they had some ideas, and I had some ideas. And it has morphed into this role of working both internally, right, with a lot of the internal programs around training and those initiatives, working with consulting to leaders, and managers, but also working with out clients. As you know, we are a very large organization, we have about 60,000 worldwide global associates. One out of every five people paid in the world are paid through ADP.

**Dave:** Oh, is it really?



**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** 20% of all paychecks are cut by ADP.

**Ed:** By ADP.

**Dave:** Wow.

**Ed:** Right. And by the way, even when I ... because I was a client for many years, using ADP services. But I didn't know the spectrum of support and roles that they've done. From talent management to taxes...

**Dave:** Yeah, it's not just payroll.

**Ed:** No, yeah, and...

**Dave:** So what are some of the other things that are...

**Ed:** So we recently acquired TMBC, the whole...

**Dave:** Marcus Buckingham.

**Ed:** Marcus Buckingham.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** It's just ... it's a very different...

**Dave:** It's not your father's ADP...

**Ed:** Right, right.

**Dave:** Or your mother's ADP.

**Ed:** So it really has expanded greatly, PEO services, etc. We talked about okay, so our clients, we really value our clients. And so how do we help them with thinking about their diversity and inclusion? Not only strategy, but can we share with them what we've done at ADP?

**Dave:** Right. Or, what other companies are doing. Because you have a lens to all of that, as well.

**Ed:** You got it, you got it.

And so we collect a lot of information, we have great research, but we're also, as being the ACM provider, and the scope and size of who we are, we need to also exemplify that, and so practice what you preach, they say, right? And so it's not about just what our other clients are doing, it's what we do.



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And here's what we need to continue to improve on. And so for me, D&I is about are we on the journey? Are we really making an effort to excel in any of these categories? And at the end of the day, it's about the people. It's about the talent that you have, the talent that you're trying to achieve, or attract, and the talent that you can retain.

**Dave:** Ed, why won't we dive into the Diversity and Inclusion topic, some of the core areas. What do you think it takes for an organization to be a true leader in D&I? I mean, you've touched on a little bit, maybe go a little deeper on this. Why should organizations be so focused on this?

**Ed:** It's a good question, the why. And so more so than ever today, a talent shortage is happening, right? So it's real world. And then if you think about the whole change of dynamics with the multi-generational workforce, and think about the millennials today. I think about my daughter, and what she requires from an organization, from the standpoint of what is their brand, what is their culture, what's my role? Am I going to be satisfied, am I going to grow with this organization? The bar has been set higher now, more so than ever.

And so diversity is just that. And diversity, back in my day, when I started doing this work it was about race and gender. And now, you can infuse a whole spectrum of elements here. Which is race, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender, I mean, you go across the spectrum, right?

**Dave:** Country of origin, all those...

**Ed:** Country.

**Dave:** Right, right.

**Ed:** Yeah, nationality.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** You just name it.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And it's so diverse now. And that's the challenge for HR people to really, really embrace that and really know the knowledge behind that. And so now you're thinking about ... so now we're very diverse, and you have a diverse organization if that works out to be part of your makeup within the climate of your organization. So how do you make sure that they're effective together, and that they're performing together? And that they're at their peak level of performance, right?

Because, as you know, it's about team again. And I go back to my example of the military. If we're one team, we've got to be locked arm in arm, right? It's about life and death, it's about making sure that we're getting there. In today's environment, it's about achieving the mission that you're seeking off the bay, right?



**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** But diversity's only one piece of it. And I think sometimes we've gotten knowledgeable about what does that look like? What does it feel like in your organization? I think the bigger issue to me is around equity within your organization, and what does inclusion mean?

**Dave:** Well and then that leads to the next question. So, to really ... to get there, you're helping organizations do this all the time. Can you give some examples about how organizations that feel like they're not where they need to be with regard to diversity and inclusion? What steps are they taking, what are the true leaders in this space doing?

**Ed:** That's a ...

**Dave:** I know it's a lot.

**Ed:** It's a lot. It's a complicated question, but I'm going to try to give you a sense of what I think organizations need to think about. Because I just met with a CHRO recently in the Boston area, and she said, "Ed, what do you think of this training? I want to do this training." I said, "Slow down, what's the strategy?" And we just looked at each other. Because I said, "What are you trying to achieve and accomplish?" And so what is it that we need? Is what we're trying to do connected to the business strategy and why?

ADP. Most of the decision makers that we're selling to are women. So doesn't it make sense that we would have a very diverse workforce? 70% is a big number of decision makers, right?

**Dave:** Sure.

**Ed:** And so it's...

**Dave:** Which we say is the number of HR professionals, right? 70% women, usually, right?

**Ed:** You got it, right. And so how do you make sure that you're aligned and you understand what that business connection and strategy is? It's the leadership buy in, right, the leadership commitment on any front that's really going to help move the needle from the top. And then I think it's like the business case. Do you have a business case on why you're doing what you're doing? GE moving into Boston, I like to use that as an example, and their goal is to hire 20,000 technical folks over the next couple of years. Well I looked around the table that I was in recently, of peers, and I said, "Where do you think they're going to get 20,000 people from?" Newsflash, there's not all coming out of MIT, right, so...

**Dave:** Maybe a few from there.

**Ed:** A few, right. But again, it's going to be from other organizations. There's a business case of making sure that your culture, your environment is...





**Dave:** Ah, yes.

**Ed:** Your leadership capabilities are there.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Your managers are in tune, and your retention thinking...

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Is right on point, right...

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** Because I think that is so important. And then the resources to do it. So oftentimes diversity and inclusion groups don't have a lot of people. You've got to make sure the alignment again, that you're working on the right issues. That you're working on the right things that you should be doing.

And I do think you need to be passionate about this work. A good friend of mine, who you know, Steve Pemberton, said he had an epiphany. And I love this quote. He had an epiphany one day that this work is really hard, right? Because dealing with gender, race, sexual orientation, whatever these topics are, they're complicated. And dealing with getting a team to perform the way you want them to perform it can be complicated. And so just note that level of passion and commitment needs to be there. As important as it is, I think it needs to be thought through and facilitated appropriately. And so we're sitting here, in Concord MA at the NEHRA headquarters. Race is still relevant, race is an issue in America.

**Dave:** Where do you still see it, Ed?

**Ed:** It's interesting. Last year, 2017, and we think we're making such great headway in this area, and we are in many aspects of it. This issue is alive and well. And I live in Concord, Massachusetts, and I happen to be in Jersey on a business trip, and I got a call from the Chief of Police in this town, and I said, "What's up, sir?" And he says, "There was an incident with your daughter." And I'm now in mass panic mode, right.

**Dave:** You hadn't even heard from your daughter?

**Ed:** Oh my god, no.

**Dave:** You heard directly from the police.

**Ed:** Directly from the Chief of Police.

**Dave:** Oh my god.



**Ed:** And he said there was an incident that happened. Three men threw a metal object at your daughter and called her real negative words. And the police are on the scene, one of the officers took her home, they were checking tapes from Dunkin Donuts and the bank to see if they can get the license number, because she only got the first three digits. Which is great, because they were so caring about my daughter, which was wonderful, and they went to extreme efforts, and they even met her for that week while she was taking the train, right, from Concord Center, they would...

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Meet her and make sure that nothing happened. But my issue is, race issues still happen.

**Dave:** Still today, yep.

**Ed:** Right, and so ... and we think we live in liberal Concord, Massachusetts, right?

**Dave:** One of the most thoughtful places in the world.

**Ed:** Right, exactly. And race is still an issue. Gender equity is still an issue. LGBT biases, I mean, we still have diversity issues overall regarding our inclusionary efforts that we need to do.

My hope is that that generation and leaders like yourself and NEHRA, and others, will make it different, because that's my only hope and I've got to think glass half full. That we're going to make a difference. But these are trying times on this topic.

**Dave:** Yeah, well thank you for sharing that story.

**Ed:** Sure. We need to have these honest conversations. And by the way, it's not just with race, right, it's gender. I mean, how long, from an HR practitioner view have we been talking about pay equality for women? As long as I can remember, right? And we've not achieved that. Race issues. There was a *New York Times* article recently that said how come we haven't achieved this yet, right?

**Dave:** And there's a *Boston Globe* series...

**Ed:** Spotlight.

**Dave:** ...Spotlight series, right.

**Ed:** Spotlight. And so it's interesting because when we have these conversations, oftentimes I'm dealing with neighbors and friends, and they're shocked by it. And I'm like, "Really?" And so I'm not shocked, I mean, I see ... I've lived in Boston, born and raised, I've lived other places around the country, but I was not shocked by it. And you could see the difference even with the Seaport area, and who's moving there, and who lives there. And it's not about ... it's just about is this plan, is this unconscious or conscious efforts going on? And how do we have the conversation? I belong to 100 Concerned Black Men of Boston, and we met with the mayor recently.



**Dave:** 100 Concerned Men of Boston?

**Ed:** Black men.

**Dave:** Black Men of Boston.

**Ed:** Black Men of Boston. And we invited the mayor in at one point to have a conversation about just that. So what are we doing around equity within this community, within Boston? And so the Spotlight series doesn't shock me. I think what's good about that is when you talk about courageous conversation, and I thank the Spotlight series for doing this, they put it out into the open for us to read, and really understand what's playing out on so many different dimensions, and to have that conversation.

But to have the conversation, for you and I, I need to listen to you, and you need to listen to me, and we really need to think about our views and opinions, and where those views and opinions are coming from. That's an important piece.

**Dave:** And how does that apply in the workplace? In what way have you seen that concept of courageous conversations work well with regard to diversity and inclusion inside a workplace? Doesn't have to be at ADP...

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** ...or just like...

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** ...are there any examples, or ideas you have around that?

**Ed:** I can give you an example of just in this town I did a training for the Concord Police Department, and as an African American man, when the chief called me and he goes, "Would you do a diversity and inclusion training for the department?" At first I was hesitant, because there's lots of issues of ... it's controversy, right, to deal with the police shootings that have taken place.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And many organizations and people think it's the we/they thinking, and so I was hesitant, but I did. I did an eight hour training, and it worked out very well. And we had a lot of what you would consider to be courageous conversations, of just having honest dialogue. And one of the things that I try to do is have a fact based conversation. Because sometimes it's based on even my biases.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so, you need to go in there with knowing the facts, first and foremost, and then having an open dialogue. And being respectful that one session, you might not walk away with agreement.



**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** But at least we're respecting one another, we're having that honest dialogue.

**Dave:** Ed, unconscious bias is another ... throwing around terms here, that's something we hear more about, and it's certainly something that I believe we all have as part of us, there's all these biases, you mentioned it yourself, so we all have these biases.

**Ed:** Right.

**Dave:** What's your view about how unconscious bias plays a role with regard to diversity and inclusion, and what organizations are doing?

**Ed:** There's a lot of training going on on this topic. And really good training, and awareness. And like anything, it's about that ongoing practice. And so at one point, as an HR person, right, you learn certain skills and competencies, and you're sharing that with the leadership team. And there was an awakening that I had, that once I took the Implicit Bias Test, from Harvard. And one of those awakenings were, "Oh wow, I have my own issues," right? And so I think it's so important to work on your own, your own work. Then you can work with others, because we all have our biases. We all have them. And it's thinking about how they play out. How do they play out when you're ... by the way, I'll give you multiple examples, if you said you were in the United States Navy, I would say, "Oh, there's a connection automatically," right? "What conferences did you go to, oh there's another connection." And so we all share them. And the pinnacle would be if you said, "Ed, I'm an avid fly fishing person," I'm like, "Okay, he's in," right?

And so I just think we need to think about...

**Dave:** I might be out, Ed. I don't think I have any of those...

**Ed:** If you're not hitting any of those stories, then that's a concern. But that's the level of sort of work that we need to think about when it comes to unconscious bias. It's like where are you going to get the talent? Are you going to the same sources? Are there new ways of looking at that talent?

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** When it comes to leadership development, are you doing the same thing that you did 20 years ago and you're not getting the results that you're looking for.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so it's really looking at all our biases, and our approaches, and the HR work that we're doing. And say, succession planning. If you see that women are making it to a certain point, and then no longer, what are the questions that we should be thinking about, or asking, or taking a different approach? And so we all have them, it's really peeling back the onion. To do this work, you've got to open to really



understanding different cultures and perspectives, right? You just can't ... the military is good with this. The military pulls people together, and they try to strip you down and make you all alike. At least that's how it was in boot camp, right?

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so ... and then you're one.

**Dave:** They force a culture on everybody.

**Ed:** You got it.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** You're the same, same uniform, everything.

**Dave:** Right, right.

**Ed:** And in industry, we really need to think through, and the military's gotten there too with new thinking around no, we need to accept people for who they are, we need to listen to who they are. My plight might be very different than your plight, my background might be different than your background, but we might have the same vision and mission in play.

You want to be successful, I want to be successful. You want your kids to grow and be successful, my daughter the same way.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so, in the work environment, I want to work with a collective team that's all about winning, right?

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so let's win as a collective team. We used to have this expression many years ago when I was a VP of HR for a company called Applix, and we started this expression on the C-Suite team with the CEO at the time, Jit Saxena and I said, "You know, we should have a sort of mantra, right? Never let a team member fail." And that was our mantra.

**Dave:** You've got each other's back.

**Ed:** You got it. Same with this topic. It's complicated.

**Dave:** Yeah.



**Ed:** And it's a journey. It's not one training-

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And you've accomplished your mission. It's how much are you capable of doing the marathon, because it is a marathon, and as you know, race, gender and many of these other issues have been going on for many years, it's going to continue to go on for many more years. But how committed are we?

**Dave:** Yes.

**Ed:** And I see us as a society ... I have hope. I have a lot of hope.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** That it's changing. And I look at the millennials today, my daughter being a reflective person in that group, and the millennials are thinking very differently. They're much more concerned about the earth and the well-being, they much more want an environment that's really about collaboration. They want to learn something new every day. I mean, it's just ... they're very socially driven, social media focused.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** I'm hopeful that...

**Dave:** So you're hopeful about ... that we're getting there.

**Ed:** Yeah. We're getting there.

**Dave:** ...even though it's been slow, you think we're getting there, as optimism...

**Ed:** Yes, we're going to get there.

**Dave:** You know, Ed, we're talking a lot about big companies and it seems like we're talking about big companies and what big companies can do. What do you see, like if somebody's like the head of HR of a smaller organization, is there any advice that you would give them with regard to diversity and inclusion, and any of these topics that we're bringing up, what they can do inside their organizations? If they're like a one person HR group...

**Ed:** Yep.

**Dave:** Or a two person HR group?

**Ed:** Well, a lot of the consulting that I do is with smaller companies. And so small, mid-size, and enterprise wide organizations. I think the first thing is to do is to sit down, if you're a one person ... I just



met with a company in Cambridge, and I met with their diversity leader, and I just happen to know their CEO. And so we just sat down and had a conversation, and I wanted to get the insights from the CEO and founder of this organization. What was his vision? What would be like to see? What's the culture that he's trying to build? And then we just marked out three things that the HR person could do right off the bat, to say, "Here's what we want to start building." And so one was about talent attraction. So it's in the new area of Cambridge, that section of just ... the biotech section.

**Dave:** Oh yeah, the Kendall Square.

**Ed:** The Kendall Square area.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** And so we just came up with three things to say, "Okay, so, here's some new sources to find that talent." And so you want to do that. You want to look at so what are some of the communication efforts? Because again, I go back to that inclusion piece is so important. Many people are having issues with they bring the talent on, and then 12 to 18 months later, the talent's gone. What is it in the environment that you want to make that you're doing to facilitate that? And so it could be more teaming, more mentoring programs. It could be communications, it could be a number of things that we want to folks to really think through.

But the onboarding process is a really important piece, right? If you can start to do that, get leadership buy in. And this leader was a very much... he's the CEO and founder, very much committed to this, very well versed in what's going on from the standpoint of not just reading the publications, but also his own experience, and what he wanted to pass on, and what he wants the senior team to reflect, as well as the organization. So I think people are becoming more, as my daughter would say, "woke", to many of these issues and trying to work it.

**Dave:** Ed, are there are any misconceptions about the field of D&I, the perception of what people do with regard to diversity and inclusion in that function?

**Ed:** It's interesting that you said that, because I find this topic more and more when I'm engaging in conversation that the people feel like it's the soft ... they used to say that about HR, it's the soft skills. And I look at it as it's a major business impact. And many organizations are building a business case, but it's not about soft skills. It is right in line with developing a great culture, and a great environment for your associates to thrive. So I don't look at it as the soft skills at all.

**Dave:** You mentioned it a little bit, but who do you look to for thought leadership with regard to diversity and inclusion? And how do you develop your skills and HR and in this whole area?

**Ed:** I work for a company that is so supportive of the whole continuous learning process. So we're always learning new things, and supported to get access to that. Howard Ross would be one. We do a lot of internal development programs at ADP, and as I used to say to my daughter growing up, "Learn something new every day." And that's the approach that I take with my own development, again. I



recently met a gentleman, Robert Livingston. Professor Robert Livingston from Harvard University. And just ... I could listen to him all day long. I was on the conference board, by the way, years ago.

**Dave:** Oh, yeah.

**Ed:** The Diversity US Conference Board. And again, working with a collective group of individuals. I just know so many people throughout the country through that connection that share and collaborate info. Shawna Ferguson at Wellington Management, we can just go around the globe and say, "This is the work." And that's the beauty of this community, always willing to share. Paul Francisco from State Street, Colette Philips, everyone who's doing this work is really doing some really insightful work and sharing. So I don't pinpoint one...

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Exactly...

**Dave:** You just use your network that gives...

**Ed:** I use my network...

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** To look at...

**Dave:** To learn.

**Ed:** To learn new things. Jackie Glenn from EMC, I mean just pick a company, right.

**Dave:** There's a lot of great thought leaders right in our backyard here.

**Ed:** Right in our backyard.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** As well as around the country. And I think it's important to look at that. To look at a global view. I know it's a US centric type of issues on many fronts, but I believe in looking at it from a global standpoint, which is important.

**Dave:** Well, I think...

**Ed:** Oh and by the way, the NEHRA Diversity Forum.

**Dave:** Oh, yes.





**Ed:** I can't speak highly enough about the power of that. With...

**Dave:** The breakfast series.

**Ed:** ...the breakfast series...

**Dave:** Yep.

**Ed:** ...we have our symposium, that was a sold out event, and we have members from Novartis and many other companies who ... Harvard Pilgrim Health, who participated in that. And again, the power of the network and sharing is just ... it's worth...

**Dave:** And of course, the Gala coming up on March 22nd.

**Ed:** The Gala's coming up, exactly, with Anita Hill.

**Dave:** And we're back to NEHRA here, so the NEHRA question of the podcast. What things would you recommend to young professionals in HR, or diversity inclusion, who are interested in moving up in the function? What advice would you give?

**Ed:** Be a continuous learner. I mean, I think being a continuous learner is critical. The speed of technology is moving so quick. AI, right? Robotics, all these changes are happening. Social media, look at the speed in which all this is taking play. To be an effective HR person, we've got to be on top of the game, and we have to know not just what's happening today, what's projected out, what's the workforce going to look like three years from now? I also think it's so critical to understand the business. The one thing that has helped me in my career is when I started to look at the alignment to the business. I worked for a CEO once, who was at one point Computervision and Prime, I worked with her at Wang, and she sat me down and said, "I really need your focus on the business." Because I was all about policy, people, practice ... right?

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And she was like, "I need to you to be more in tune with this business that we're trying to build, and develop." And so I was...

**Dave:** So that was a wake up call for you, as like, "Oh, I've got to..."

**Ed:** Major wake up. And to really understand the business, really understand the financials, really understand the sales market that we're trying to achieve. And so to do all that, I think has just been a great awakening for me in my career, and that's what I recommend to many of the HR individuals that ... and I mentor many, and here's what I think is so important to achieve.

**Dave:** Right, start with the business.



**Ed:** Start with the business, yeah.

**Dave:** That's great. Ed, have you had a tough moment in your career that seemed like it was like the end of the world when it happened, but it ended up being kind of a transformational experience for you?

**Ed:** Yeah. It brings back memories. My first VP of HR job. And I went through the interview process, I thought I asked all of the right questions that day. And came on board, and within about three months after coming on board, the CEO and founder sat me down and said, "You know, we're going to make a lot of changes," and talked about going international. Talked about going public, talked about doing some acquisitions. And of course, my reference point was this was steady state operation. And I was going home and losing ... I've got to be honest with you, losing lots of sleep. Have not ... at that point in my career, done any of those three categories. And I just thought, "This is not going to be a nice show."

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Long story short, it worked out very well, we were very successful. But the core here was that, again, being blessed with a great network of people, who spent lots of time and energy and information with me, on each of those items that worked out well.

**Dave:** So you're like, "I don't know how to do this, this is the worst decision I've ever made," and you just found a way to get all the answers.

**Ed:** Exactly.

**Dave:** From your network, and from others.

**Ed:** Exactly. And not just within HR.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** I had a CFO at one point who I knew from a prior life, who met with me and helped me through some of the elements around due diligence.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** So it was just ... it was perfect.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** But, and again, one of the things I'd recommend is, not just look at HR as your network. Like go beyond that.

**Dave:** Yeah.



**Ed:** Go beyond to looking at that business group. At one point I was being ... I attended the CEO round table in Boston from BC. I've attended like nine of those meetings, because I just think it's interesting.

**Dave:** I've heard good things about them, yeah.

**Ed:** It's great. And to learn from 400 CEOs on what's on their agenda, what's important to them, I think it's powerful.

**Dave:** More good advice to the HR community right there.

**Ed:** Yeah, yeah, just...open up the venue.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** And look at your network and really tap into that. But also give.

**Dave:** It's two way.

**Ed:** Yeah, it's not about take, but it's about giving.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** And so that's what I'm hoping to do.

**Dave:** Well you have been doing it.

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** All these organizations that you're leading. When you end up looking back on your career and what you accomplished, what do you hope to be remembered for?

**Ed:** I hope to be remembered for a strong leader, strong business leader who was a member of the HR team, who helped build great organizations, great cultures, that were successful. That's my hope. Yeah.

**Dave:** That's consistent with everything you've said, too.

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** Well we ask some silly questions on the podcast too, some of them are silly. If you could go to dinner with any living person, Ed, who would it be and why?

**Ed:** You know, I love this question, because originally I was going to say Michelle Obama. But then I changed it. I changed it.



**Dave:** Yeah, okay.

**Ed:** I changed it. Trevor Noah. I changed it.

**Dave:** The comedian?

**Ed:** The comedian.

**Dave:** On the Daily Show.

**Ed:** The Daily Show. I've been following this gent for a long period of time now, since he came onto the ... I went to his show recently. Awesome.

**Dave:** My wife never misses his show, ever.

**Ed:** He's brilliant.

**Dave:** It's always on in our house.

**Ed:** He's brilliant. And I paid top dollar to see him in Boston at a show, last minute, my wife and I. I was just at the Diversity Inc. Gala, last year, in New York City, and he was the keynote. And I sat center stage and I got a chance to shake his hand and say a couple of words to him. I think he's very insightful. I think when you talk about this whole diversity and inclusion aspects from his background or where he is from, his upbringing from being in South Africa to where he is today, I just think it's great.

**Dave:** Yeah.

**Ed:** And I'm big into ... I like to be inspired, and I love insightful people who care.

**Dave:** And you like to laugh at sometimes.

**Ed:** And he's also ... he can make you laugh. So yeah, he is great. But, he...

**Dave:** I know that from some of the board meetings here.

**Ed:** Exactly.

**Dave:** You enjoy it a lot.

**Ed:** I love to laugh, and I love to have a good time. And I think that's the key of any organization that I've been a part of. It's like I only stay when I'm enjoying it. I will leave if that gets to be old school.

**Dave:** Well, you know, satire is a good way to get at some of these issues too.



**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** And Trevor Noah certainly...

**Ed:** Oh, he's got it.

**Dave:** ...he's got a way to do that.

**Ed:** Right.

**Dave:** What's the first thing you do when you get out of bed in the morning?

**Ed:** The first thing I do is I wake up and I have a ... well, first of all, thank God that I'm awake, right, because in the military we used to this expression. Every day you wake up on this side of the grass is a great day. And then I proceed to have a cup of coffee and I'm a news person, so I need to observe and find out what's going on in the news.

**Dave:** That's right, and more diverse news sources all the time.

**Ed:** Exactly, exactly. So watch a little Fox, watch a little MSNBC, get my perspectives. Get both sides of the story. But that's how I start.

**Dave:** And what gives you energy? We heard a little bit about this before, but maybe it's some coffee.

**Ed:** I'm a real visual person. So what gives me energy is nature. Being outdoors, being with people. I'm an avid fly fishing person, and so you put me on a stream, put me in the ocean, put me anywhere, I get really energized. And it gives me that moment to think, and that moment of clarity.

**Dave:** What is the excitement of fly fishing? I never ... I know people are very passionate about it, but I see pictures of people standing in tall boots, in a river, what's so exciting about it?

**Ed:** You know, I've got to take you fly fishing, because it's not only exciting when you ... the flies that you're using to imitate bugs or a fish are really tiny, and when you can hook into ... in the ocean, you know, we catch stripers and Bluefin tuna. For fresh water out in Montana, for instance, you're standing in a river with total silence around you, but the wind, you hear the wind, you might hear nature, birds. But to catch a trout, a gorgeous trout, now I don't eat them, I throw everything back.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** But to see the patterns of color on a trout, to hear the water running by your waders, that whole experience, to me, that's what gives me energy. And to be around my family.

**Dave:** Yeah.



## Keystone Partners

**Ed:** I'm blessed to have a wonderful wife, Jennifer, and my daughter Maya. It just ... I'm blessed.

**Dave:** Sure. Yeah, that's great. A book that changed your life?

**Ed:** Now this is probably something you don't know about me. A book that changed my life was ... I named my daughter after Dr. Maya Angelou.

**Dave:** I was wondering that.

**Ed:** Yep. Quick story. Nine months after my daughter was born, my mother-in-law called me, and she said, "Come out in September because I have a good friend coming for the weekend." And I'm like, "Well who's the friend?" And she was like, "I'm sure you will enjoy meeting her." And I'm thinking, "Okay." I'll make it short, because there's the longer story to this, but it was Dr. Maya Angelou. And we had named our daughter after Maya Angelou. And I said to my wife, "Hello, where's the..."

**Dave:** How did this happen?

**Ed:** And why didn't you tell me? Because we named our ... we just named our daughter this.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** Namesake. And she goes, "Oh, she's been a long time friend of my mom." And so spent the weekend.

**Dave:** And you never knew that?

**Ed:** She never said one word. And so we spent a wonderful weekend with Dr. Maya Angelou, had the greatest time ever. And I've met her numerous times after that, and as a matter of fact, she signed a book just before she passed, to my Maya. But there's a book, *Wouldn't Take Nothing For My Journey*. And again, I love the stories that inspire you, that no matter what obstacles that you're facing you're trying to figure out, "Okay, so how do I go through it?" And I think the one lesson that she taught me that we weekend and we talked about race relations, by the way, really...

**Dave:** Oh you and Maya had a discussion?

**Ed:** Oh yeah.

**Dave:** Oh, wow.

**Ed:** Race relations, it was so powerful. So we talked about ... I've followed her all of my life, and I said, "Given what you've gone through, you've just had some tragedies in your life. How do you do it? How are the person that you are today?" And she said, "Give me an example of something that happened to your recently." And I happened to be in the state of Connecticut, driving back from Bethel, Connecticut, which was corporate for Duracell at the time. And I got caught out of my lane on the expressway,



someone cut me off and the guy was saying not nice words. And I was still hanging on to this, alright, just angry about this.

**Dave:** It was a racial...

**Ed:** A racial thing. Yep.

**Dave:** Right, yeah.

**Ed:** And it was funny because she goes, "So what do you think those gents are doing now?" And I said, "I don't know. They took an exit and I kept coming on." Right. But how many years ago was that? And I said, "I don't know, three or four years ago." She goes, "But you're still hanging on to it, right?" And you could see it ...

**Dave:** Oh just re-sharing. You go right back into the moment.

**Ed:** Exactly.

**Dave:** Right.

**Ed:** She goes, "You need to practice forgiveness. The greatest gift you could give to others and yourself." And I've been trying to do that ever since.

**Dave:** That's great.

**Ed:** Forgiveness. And so really powerful woman. But that book, and many others, I have her entire library of books that she's...

**Dave:** Of course.

**Ed:** ...including her recommended cooking books. But the best is the story of Maya Angelou, and my daughter is so much like her. But that's ...

**Dave:** That's great.

**Ed:** Yeah.

**Dave:** Great story.

**Ed:** Wonderful book.

**Dave:** Well Ed, this has been great having you on the podcast, thank you so much. Just a rich discussion about so many different topics related to HR, and business, and diversity and inclusion. Thank you so much for sitting down today.



# Keystone Partners

**Ed:** Thank you, David. Always a pleasure.

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