



CLOUD REALITIES

CR091

Every organization is made up
of people and work structures
with Jitske Kramer



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[00:00:00] You know, you have this romantic vision of a picnic in the rain, it's like light sprinkling. Yeah, what we would have is thunder and lightning and some would get hit with a lightning bolt probably as well in our situations. That was a picnic we lost Rob.

Welcome to Cloud Realities, an original podcast from Capgemini. And this week it's a conversation show exploring culture. How is it formed? How is it changed in organizations? Is it an ephemeral thing? Or can you really apply science and scientific methods to working your way through something and changing it?

I'm Dave Chapman. I'm Esmee van de Giesse. And I'm Rob Kernahan. So yeah, here we are. Gonna look forward to this one. Top marks on using the word ephemeral, Dave, in the intro. I see that's, uh, that's become part of your repertoire now. That's good. It's a [00:01:00] good word. It's a nice word. It's a nice word. Thank you.

Glad you noticed. Makes me feel special that you noticed. It's like an expansion of Dave. Something like that. Can you So, Es, how are you feeling? You haven't been feeling well recently. How are you doing? No, a bit of a flu, but it's been going around through the entire country, I believe. So, uh, I couldn't miss it.

Marcel will be patient zero. You can almost guarantee it. It's his fault. Aww. But I'm really excited about today's guest. So, um, really looking forward to it. Well, without further ado, let's introduce our guests. I think we're all looking forward to this one. Joining us is Jitske Kramer, a corporate anthropologist.

Jitske, thank you so much for joining us. Do you want to just say hello and give us a little bit of information about what a corporate anthropologist is and does? Ah, hi. Uh, yeah, a corporate anthropologist. What I do is I, I apply the knowledge and skills of anthropology into the business world. And that's very valuable.

Now, we are looking forward to digging into how you're seeing the corporate world and how you're [00:02:00] applying that in the conversation very shortly. But before we get to that, what's confusing you this week, Rob? Well, Dave, it's a big one this week. It's a big one. It's big. As you will have seen in the You set your bar high.

Uh, well, yeah, it's been quite dramatic this week. In fact, there's been, there's been a lot of conversation about this one, but it's AI models and everybody's invested in all this tech because AI is our future, right? And there's no downside to it and everything's rosy and everybody's going to double click on.

Yes. Brilliant. Woohoo. Or maybe not. However, a little thing called deep seat came out and what did that do? Well, it only happened to wipe 1.5 trillion off the UX stock market in one day because everybody suddenly went, Ooh, it's better. I'm going to use that. right? Now, here's the problem with it. When you intercept an AI model, there's no provenance around that model.

There's been lots of conversation about what happens to your data, but how is that model trained? How is it going to react? All this sort of stuff. There's actually no mechanism to prove the validity of the model and understand where it's come from, right? And you know what I always say, [00:03:00] Dave, the biggest crime of the internet was that nobody ever embedded security into it.

So we've been, I do, and now we've been retrofitting security. It's caused huge issues, right? The same thing has become true with AI models. In the race to functionality, even though we've relived this several times with technology, we have forgotten to put some things in that will help us understand whether we should be using these models or not.



And you know it's going to get retrofitted because already Italy's banned access to that model. So they've obviously got some concerns about it. And I think we're gonna just this, this is going to whip up a huge storm on where did it come from? How did it get trained? Can we trust it? And there's no way to actually be able to validate that technically.

So it's just going to cause a huge issue for those who don't recognize DeepSeek or understand the difference between say chat GPT and DeepSeek. Just give us a minute on what different, what differentiates them. So not a lot from a concept of what they are. Whenever you have a, an LLM model, [00:04:00] it has an effectiveness.

So you can ask it to do something and it will create an answer and you can judge that answer on, you know, its quality of response. What's happened is deep seekers come out. Apparently it's a lot cheaper to train, they say, and it's more efficient to run and it actually creates better results. So what you've got is billions of pounds pushed in one direction and then like, you know, this small.

Entity has created something that's more effective. And when you put them side by side, DeepSeq does outperform ChatGPT in many things. So it completely undermines the investment and the technology model that's been put in. But when you use it, you don't know how it was created or what it's going to do when you ask it to do something or whether that's valid or not.

So there's this provenance starting to come out and we're starting to see society react. to that. And you're saying that we do for chat GPT, for example. Well, no, we don't. So it's a, it's a massive floor in large language models is that is billions of parameters is incredibly difficult to unpick. Are we [00:05:00] actually, you know, opening Pandora's box or not?

And how do we do it? So this first wave of AI taught us all this, Oh, look at the magic it can create. And now, you know, 1.5 trillion could potentially cause Companies to collapse type thing. And we're starting to now question this. Should we use these models? Can we trust them? So that's the confusion that's arising now and it's quite complicated.

I'm actually going to get to that. Yeah, I'm actually going to get to the confusion. Confusion is, what do we do about it? Because where's the trust? It's just the big trust questions just arrived because a nation state that has a different worldview to ours has suddenly put something in the market that, you know, on the face of it is better.

What do you make of all that is? I understand his confusion, but I was thinking about the security should have been built in. Exactly. That's what I always say. Why didn't they do it? That's what I always say. No, just wait. We, I think we, back then we didn't know what, what we're heading towards. I know exactly.

But we should have known better. Yeah. Should we? Should've we? I don't think we were [00:06:00] able to even digest the world that we're in right now with internet. For me it's the classic happy thing. There's something shiny over there. Let's go chase it. And we won't be at all concerned about the consequences because nothing bad will ever happen with technology.

And it's happened again. It's like, oh my word, history has literally repeated itself. You know, I came in, I've been tracking the whole deep sea thing. I wasn't that confused about it until you just. Have I, have I lifted a layer up, Dave, and shown exposed, exposed something that I'm confused about, but I do know that I'm confused about something.

You're confused about being confused, or where you should be confused. On that note, thanks for that, Rob. That's alright. Excellent, very enlightening, Matt. One thing I did see



on it, though, on a serious note, was that apparently, you know, you get these, like, that are effectively just wrappers and front ends for ChatGPT.

Yes. One of the comments that I did see, I mean it was only like comments online so take this for what it's worth, is that nothing. Is that [00:07:00] Perhaps. It was on X. I just had to say it. It was on X too. Um, is that companies that used to just be wraps for ChatGPT were being sort of undervalued and practically discarded as being slightly worthless just, you know, UXs at the front.

But this particular thing was speculating that this whole DeepSeek thing, and I'm not sure what the connection is, maybe you know, it had some sort of, somehow validated that model. So, When you use DeepSync, what's different about it is it kind of tells you how it's reasoning, and by that it talks to you about saying what it's doing.

It's a bit false, but it basically does this big description about how it's going through itself to try and get to an answer. But it's statistical tokens and things like that, right? So we have to take it with a pinch of salt, but now it's kind of Pete. It pretends to peel back the curtain and explain it all.

Those front end apps help you prepare all that stuff in and then drive it in to get your answer out. So there is a, it's a bit like prompt engineering. If you think about it, there's an art [00:08:00] form in how you present your question to the model so that you get the best results out of it. So there's a, a preparatory step that can help an awful lot.

If you put an overly sub Simplistic prompt into these things, you get an overly simplistic answer out. There must be, there must be a day when you'd have a UX that sits across a number of models that could parse, parse prompts to multiple and then, and then aggregate back. Well, that is the agentic structure that we talk about.

is that it's like going to the doctor. They give you a diagnosis. You might want to a second opinion and a third opinion and a fourth opinion. And this, this is this where it's giving you opinions and merging it together. So you're asking multiple sources for their version of the truth. And then you can decide what you want to believe after it.

So there is, there is an advantage to it where, and if you think about how models are used, uh, there's multiple. models in testing and checking and all this sort of stuff. So the concept is highly valid. It's just the cost of every time you [00:09:00] do that, rather than boiling a kettle once you've boiled 10 kettles extremely quickly.

So there's a sustainability impact to that as well. For me, it actually is that now that you're actually able to see the prompt, it helps me build trust. I don't know if that makes any sense. It could be false trust in it. It's just doing it to make it feel right. I you know, I see this line of code and I'm like, and I can read quite some code just, you know, from any, I'm not that technical, but it does feel like, oh, okay, now I am, it's, it's showing me it's transparent in a way that I now understand that it's doing stuff that are not going to harm me.

That's a show in its own right where you just text her. I know. Yeah. Yeah. Now look on that note, let's go and find out about tricksters and how they operate in our society when we might not even be aware of it. So let's start with stepping right back away from, you know, kind of what we might assume culture is in an organization.

There's lots that gets said [00:10:00] about it. It's, it's clearly every, every organization seems to have an inverted commas. A culture that culture may or may not be representative of something that the organization thinks it stands for and we all know that as we will talk about this as we go through the episode as we go through changing businesses and changing



society and changes and through things like transformation culture is one of those things that often might get remarked about.

But really, we're not very good at changing it. And I think we've had guests on, most notably the likes of Dave Snowden, who would probably say you can't change your culture, that's sort of what it is. And you have to be respectful of it and work around it and those sorts of things. But before we dive into the many and varied things we're going to talk about surrounding this, Jitske, maybe set the table for us a little bit.

Like. Culture, what is your definition of it? And where, where might it come from? Well, culture is what makes us human beings. So I'm a [00:11:00] cultural anthropologist. So we, I try to understand how people shape cultures and how cultures shape people. And as soon as you get a group of people together, it doesn't matter if it's a family or an organization, they start shaping a culture.

There's. There's no question about that. And it's shaped by interaction and decision making. So in every interaction you have, you share different views and thoughts about reality. And then you decide upon what you think is good and bad and right and wrong and true and false. And then you start creating life around you, like procedures and buildings and all that.

So culture is really the glue of us being human. So yeah, we shape it. And if we shape it in a way we don't like, we need to reshape it. So it's changing every day. Right. It's live effectively. So if you have a situation where say in a startup and you've got, you know, initially maybe you've got two or three people that then goes to five and then goes to 10, it feels like within that relatively contained number, then culture might [00:12:00] be sort of traceable.

And just by adding one or two people, you could modify that culture. Is that a fair take on that at that small scale? Yeah, it's, it's. Well, going back to how it's been shaped, you could say that nothing has meaning of itself. So that that's an important thing to realize every behavior just is. And then we start shaping using that excuse for years.

Well then the question is, how do you shape it? Right. And if I, if I am the owner and a star and the founder of a startup. Then I have my thoughts in my mind about what is good and bad and right and wrong and how I like it. So I start shaping my business and my reality according to what I feel like, my personal culture, which is shaped by the people around me.

And then I start creating that. Then I, I hire people. who agree with me usually. And then you create a culture. So a culture is created like mirroring the one, the founder or the head of the [00:13:00] family. And, and then it's, and then it solidifies in the choices you make when you choose for certain methods or strategies or techniques or anything.

And then it solidifies in the buildings literally. And then we perceive it as to be like really true. So yes, if it's a small group and one people joined, then. then it can change. But even then it can be very clear. Even, you know, if you have in families, one people joining a family of three, it can still be very difficult to change that family culture.

Yet at the same time, if there's a person coming in with a loud voice and a lot of power and rank and money and knowing people, then it might shift. very quickly. So, so it's really good to realize that it changes in interaction and decision making. So the main thing is who can join which interaction, who can have a say, and then who will decide what.

So there you can see that cultures. Shape all the time and they reshape and it [00:14:00] shuffles when other people are allowed to join the interactions and when other people are allowed to make the decisions. And you can see that going on on world scale at the moment. Can you intentionally decide on what you want your culture to be?



So for example, you could, you know, organizations might say, we would like a culture of innovation. And if they're coming from a organization, let's say there are a services management organization where it hasn't been about innovation historically, it's actually been more about stability and predictability and, you know, efficiency.

And then all of a sudden they want to become an innovator because, you know, the world's going digital. Everybody wants to innovate. Is it even possible, do you think, to intentionally design a culture from the top down if actually what really creates it are those sort of meaningful interactions? Yes and no.

So that's a, that's a nice answer. Thanks for that. That's a comfortable answer. Let's clear that up. Let's go [00:15:00] home. No, but the thing is, is again, if I, if I give like a crash course anthropology, so how do people shape cultures? Like I said, nothing has meaning of itself and we have to create the values, what we think is valuable and not as valuable.

Right. So, and from this values, we start creating behavior because you have to. to act on what you think is valuable and from the behavior norms. Get out, you know, they, they, so some norms are very clear. They get in the, in the book of law and you have to apply them. And others are very implicit, but the group makes it very clear.

That's it. So you have the values, behavior, and the norms, and that's your storyline. That's your narrative, right? And then that narrative gets solidified. In how you shape the world now, if for 10 years, efficiency was your main value, then you probably created behavior, sets of behavior and skill levels.

And you hired people who are really good at the behavior, which is in line with efficiency. And then you created method and techniques and buildings and [00:16:00] everything. The productions lines are shaped. towards, you know, efficiency. Now, if you want to change that, obviously it's not enough to create a PowerPoint and a poster to say, now we're innovative and we put a nice poster on.

No, it won't work. Of course not. And if the whole management team is really good at efficiency behavior, and now they say that now we want innovation, obviously you see that. The behavior and the skills and therefore the norms and therefore how you organize your organization should be differently from efficiency and it will, it will, it will collide with it as well.

So yes, it can be done, but it means that it has to translate into behavior and that's mainly the thing because that means that the ones in power who probably very good. at the old cultural values and behavior. Those are the ones who need to change not only their [00:17:00] behavior, also the mindset and think that other things are valuable.

And that's where issues arise. Well, let's come on to that in a second. But before we get there, I just want to double down a little bit on this notion of sort of deciding on. Culture might be in line, probably with some form of corporate strategy and the phrase that keeps popping into my head as we're talking is culture eats strategy for breakfast.

So I wonder what your take on that is before we get into, you know, transformation and change. Well, the first thing is, is that I think many people have the wrong idea that you have something which is called. procedures. And, uh, many times we call it, I don't know, in Dutch, we call it blue, like the blue kind of the strategy, the hardcore, the wiring.

And then we have culture, which is more about the soft skills and emotions and values. That's absolutely the wrong perception. [00:18:00] So it goes hand in hand. So. If you have a certain type of behavior, you wire your organization, you make decisions in the structure based on



what you think is valuable. So culture eats strategy for breakfast.

Yes. Culture is part and parcel of strategy. It's not two things. It's not like, oh yeah, we decide on the strategy and if we've got time Friday afternoon, we do a culture program. Yeah. I mean, that sounds really good and it fits very nice in a spreadsheet, but it's not how it works. And if we do it like that, it won't work.

And that's why people say, yeah, culture change is really, really tough. And even to the, to the extent that I come to organizations say, well, culture, we culture for us is the forbidden word. We don't know it's too vague. We don't know how it works. And I tend to say, I have that with gravity, you know, it's very vague.

I don't want to have. anything to do with it, but it's still there. So, so yeah, if you run a business, you better understand how you create those cultures [00:19:00] because you shape them every day, even if you have no clue how you do it. So let's go on to then changing a culture. And you've intimated that it's possible, but difficult.

So set out, set out what culture change looks like from your mind. And I agree. It has to be simply more than an email sent to everybody that goes on Monday. We all love the overly transactional management style of I told you to be digital and now I'm off. And when I come back in three months, it better have happened.

You better be digital. You better be innovating, put some, you know, kind of. of that, you know, you know, there's innovation rooms that organizations used to have where there's a specific room for innovation and it's got like grass on the wall or something like that to be all wacky and to get you think differently, you know, like that, that, that to me just is an eye roller.

So I'm guessing. You don't think you could turn the innovation culture to one room in a building? No, no, not at [00:20:00] all. And the thing is, is that it, again, it does go hand in hand. So if you change the environment, it will have an impact on how people behave. It's not the whole trick. So if I say I want to, to live a healthier life and I want to cook all my dinners myself, not go to the fancy restaurant with the champagne and all that.

I just really want to cook myself. Uh, but my kitchen. doesn't allow me. So the strategy of structure, the procedures doesn't work. So I have to buy a new kitchen and it's very valuable to me. So, uh, you know, the highest price for the, the newest things in the kitchen and it's all great. So it's all installed.

And then usually the thing is, what is the first thing you have for dinner? It's pizza. You order in because you're tired. Um, so having a new kitchen in place, so having the new procedures in place, it's not that then. automatically you start cooking [00:21:00] healthy dinners, but it does help because it's there. But then you see that it does need to, to also integrate in, in behavior.

So culture is really the combination of a narrative, what you believe in, what you believe is valuable. And the attached behavior to it and how that is solidified in the world around you. So if you change the world around you, it will have an impact on the storyline and the narrative and therefore the behavior.

You can also change behavior and that will impact what we think is valuable. And once you do that, you realize. I need a new kitchen. Um, so there's not, it's not like, what is the best route to change a culture? It's really understanding how people shape cultures. And if we understand that process, it becomes easier to change it.

And what I noticed in many organizations, we are impatient. We want, yeah. Okay. That's all



very well, that all shaping [00:22:00] stuff, but how do we change it? Well, the changing is done in the shaping. And is there a point there then around momentum, because you get, you know, initial where people become aware they maybe need to change their approach and everybody gets very into so you get your new kitchen and you might cook one or two meals and then you get tired and you lose energy in the day to day gets in.

Yes, very often. Have you got a point? about how you might want to sustain that momentum or how it might be more effective because you get a lot of change programs that start with loads of energy and then slowly they die or it goes away and then everybody goes back to that place where they were is there a point in there about that and do you see that being a a thing that's easy you know how how do you get around that Problem.

Yeah, I think one of the things is that people need to understand why. I mean, why? So once the going gets tough, we ask ourselves why. And, and again, if you have a whole organization for 10 years driven around efficiency and, and still you [00:23:00] want now innovation and creativity. But you keep all the system in place geared towards efficiency.

So, uh, the bonus structure is still around efficiency. Uh, it's great to have innovation and chaos, but in the end of the day, um, the, the profit margins, they need to be right. The annual, you know, everything economically needs to go the right way. So. Yes, you change the storyline, you get this room with, with great features, but if you don't change it in what you truly feel is important, it will fade away.

You only have this one or two people screaming around it, but it's really about, do you really, so it's, it's, again, it's the combination of a narrative behavior and all the structures. And so it's not one thing. Um, and usually if we don't. integrate it in how we, how we design the world. Um, it will fail. So you need to integrate it in your bonus structures and, and all [00:24:00] that, um, change the method you use, um, change the building and then the behavior and many times maybe change the people or the people need to develop themselves towards the new types of behavior.

And that's where I see a lot of times that the top hundred stays and they give training courses to the rest. But Yeah, it doesn't work like that. It's, it's, do you really integrate that in the way you look at the world? What are the different aspects of the complex change that you describe? What do you mean?

Um, the trickster archetype. Ah, one step back. So there is. So I wrote the book Tricky Times. So I wrote nine books and some of them are more geared towards corporate anthropology. So culture change within organizations, uh, corporate tribe, building tribes, all the kinds of books. And Tricky Times is really looking at what's going on in the world.

What do we see in society? What are the big transformational processes we go [00:25:00] through? And then what I see is that there is what I tend to call Relatively simple changes like a new kitchen. Someone's been there. Someone knows how to do it. It can still be very tough, but we know how to get there. We can make a plan from A to B.

Someone can define B. We get there when there is really true transformations, big transformations. We know situation a We know and we know that we can't stay, but we don't know B, we only know that we need to change and we need to leave a to go to a new place and that new place, which is a transformation.

No one been there. It's new. We need to explore. Um, if that's the case. It's a totally different change program than an A to B program. Now, if we enter this space of where we realize that we can't stay in the current situation, so we got to leave, but we don't know where we got yet



[00:26:00] exactly, then we enter a space of not knowing.

which anthropologists call liminality. And liminality is two words, uh, the Latin word liminal. So it's a limit. It's the space between. So we call it like, it's the messy middle of change where you know that, that what was no longer is, but what will be, it's not there yet. And in that situation, everything, what was usual.

Like we said, this, this is good and this is bad. We are confused now because it used to be good, but is it good for now and for the future? And how do we do that? Um, what's right and wrong. Uh, and also on a deeper level, what's true and what's false, because we have this narrative we believed in and that was always good.

But if it's not good now, what is then good now? So we in a multiple layers of. of confusion, which is called a [00:27:00] liminal space. And that's, that's such a magical space to be in because everything can be transformed into something new. It's a bit like, I see Rob's business travel like it's Rob going into a liminal space.

And it really throws him because he likes, uh, he likes control in that situation, don't you, Robert? As you describe that, I like the A to B, especially when you're doing international travel, but sometimes things don't go to plan and then you're in this state where you, I'm not sure how this is going to turn out, but to the analogy, if I use my wits and quick thinking, I can find a route out, uh, hopefully in good time.

Yeah. And then in that in between space, you've thrown back to how do you, how do you manage your anxiety? How do you manage uncertainty? And if there are someone. saying, Oh, you know, Rob, I'll help you out. Just do this, this, this, even if it's not true. It sounds really good at that time. It's compelling, isn't it?

That's how I get to my [00:28:00] answer. And if that person has bad intentions and it's playing around with you, it's tricking you. Yeah. It's, it's pranking you. And, and that's the danger. during transformational stages. So in an organization or a family or an individual or a whole society where people feel that we are in transformation and we system change and where we collectively feel that, whoa, we, something needs to change.

Something's not going well. We're very vulnerable to be played by others. Which in anthropology, we call it tricksters and tricksters are, are great because they trick us, they play with boundaries. So if, if things are, if we're stuck somewhere and we have this one idea, then we need a trickster to play our mind.

So we get new ideas, right? create chaos. But if there, there always needs to be a counterpart, like a leader or [00:29:00] someone with sanity saying, okay, that's, that's really nice. You let us think now we, we have a new idea about good and bad. So we have to rethink our mind, but this is what we're going to do. If the leaders we have.

become tricksters. So they prank us and they create more chaos. Instead of helping you out, what decision to take, we get lost. And when we're lost, we even more vulnerable to more tricksters. And unfortunately, this is what happening, not only in organizations, but on the world stage. And even, even worse, it's, it's a good.

economic business model. So people make profit from this, from pranking around. And that's not a very good situation we're in. And that's a human trait, isn't it? When we're in a place where we don't understand and somebody has, it's the easy answer is very compelling. And then it's, it's, I don't know, it's a bit sad.

It plays on it. Is there a, is there a state that human can get to where they start to [00:30:00] realize this is happening and they become? aware of it and then they're able to deal with it,



or is it unfortunately this is a thing that keeps occurring to humans and they keep falling into similar traps? Yes and yes.

So yes, it keeps occurring. It's makes us human. It's what we do. So we have the same pitfalls, you know, again and again in history, and we know how to deal with this. So. It's, it's in a way, it's very easy. So if you go through a big transformation, if it's in your personal life, uh, like you, you, you know, you need a new job, maybe a new partner.

So, so somehow you're, you're transforming your narrative, your behavior, where you live at same counts for organizations. You know, what you need at that point is clear leadership. People who hold space for you. If, if you are confused, you need someone to hold the space and to help you to see the emerging truth.

And, and if we have those leaders who can facilitate true [00:31:00] conversations and good interactions with solid and valuable information, you can make new decisions, which can reshape your life. gearing towards where you want to go. If only we had that, that would be a big thing. But the thing is that would be the leaders who don't give you the relief of saying, you know what, just take these three steps or you know what I've been to be, and I have to spreadsheet and we just go this do it in two weeks.

And, and we clear because. Usually that's not true in big transformations and that's the pitfall. So we as people in a group and leaders need to be brave to hold the space of not knowing. I can't help but ask this, but what is the definition of holding space for something? And in my head I'm thinking about the Ariana Grande.

And Cynthia Erivo interview where a [00:32:00] interviewer says to them, people are taking the lyrics of defying gravity and really holding space with that. I have no idea what that actually means. So you're, Just confused now. Oh, it's catching. So I really, I'm really interested in the fact that you use that term holding space.

So in this context. What does that mean? It's, you can also say creating and holding space. That makes it even more. So, so if, if you're stuck in a place, And you want to create head space. You want to create space where new things can happen, where you say, I have this prejudices or I have this ideas, but I put them on hold, then, then there's an empty space.

Let's release space where all new things can happen. And usually that empty space is filled with emotions, emotions of anxiety, emotions of joy. Wow. We can make something new. That's where the creation, creativity is an innovation [00:33:00] because that's. It's the moment where we don't know. And some people get a thrill out of that.

And some people get that scared. So holding space literally means making sure that we keep the space open, not, not clutter it with new rules. Because as soon as we put a new rule in place, the space is jammed again. And that's great. Because then. Well, we moved onwards, but if we do that too quick, we won't go through the transformation we need.

I see. So is it similar to the concept of living in the inquiry in the sense of sometimes it's natural for humans to get into a chaotic situation and the first thing they want to do is solve their way out of it and, and feel good because they've shut. down things and it feels clear again and of course human behavior tends to repeat itself.

So they'll probably go to comfort zone and you'll get what you deserve sort of thing. Is that, is that, is that a similar concept? It's like, look, don't shut things down. Let's just live, live with this for a little while. [00:34:00] Yeah. And yeah, I, I don't know the concept, but as you explain it, yes, I'd say so. So again, if we go.

go back to culture change, like the initial question. Culture change, if you have a very clear



situation, be in mind, and someone's been there before, make a plan and go and get, you know, go there. But many times, We have not a really clear idea. So there will be liminal spaces during transformation. And when transformation is, is on many levels at the same time, what we see in society at the moment, then there's lots of liminal spaces where it's chaotic, where things are possible.

And we need leaders and people, us to hold. That space. So if Rob goes on a business travel and is lost, I'm constantly holding space, right? We're holding space. We're holding space for Rob. So you'll be fine. So he can, he can, uh, you can connect to us and we say, you'll, you, we help [00:35:00] you, you can do it. So we there on, you can do it.

So we dare on the mental level, a mental support and if we know the answer, we should give it. Otherwise it's. very cruel to let him hang. Uh, so we help in advice. Well, I just like to point out for the benefit of the listeners, when I get into that confused and slightly anxious space with travel, Dave tends to double down and make it worse, not help me.

But he's not allowed to print your boarding passes. Yeah. So I don't know what the word is for that, David, but I think we're calling you out here on this one. I did not expect this. I feel like I've been hijacked. I'm neutral. I'm neutral. Holding space. Right. Let's quickly return to the role of the leader in all of this then.

You've touched on it a number of times as you've, as you've taken us through that framing. Obviously there are many, many styles of leadership. that a good leader deploys. You know, there are some leaders, let's say a bit one note, but let's, let's forget they exist for a second. And let's talk about accomplished [00:36:00] leadership, where you might do inspirational leadership, you might do supportive leadership or whatever it might be, I'm guessing the answer to this is there's no magic.

solution here. But what's good leadership to you in a situation like this? You know, clearly it's having the patience to hold space. I live in the inquiry and, uh, and things like that. But what kind of reassurance do the people need and the sort of empathetic aspect of leadership that will help them get there?

Well, during moments of change. We need different archetypes, you could say, and one is the leader and the leader, first of all, needs to manage his or her anxiety and also that of the group. So the group will ask, where are we going? And then if you don't know where you're going, you don't make up an answer.

You say. I'm not sure, but I guess, and let's find out. So, [00:37:00] so managing anxiety and uncertainty is very important. It starts with that. So holding the space of not knowing and being clear about that. Um, yet at the same time, you need to connect. new ideas. So in this space, new thoughts will, will pop up. So you need to connect that.

And in order to do so, you need to make sure that there are, that people are able to find out new ideas. So you need to facilitate interaction processes and then take the right things which are fit for the future, which may not necessarily be good for your ego or your current position, but which are fit for the future of your tribe, of your department, of your company, of your country, and then make the decisions that will help go through.

And as a leader, Either you take the decisions yourself or you facilitate others to take that decision. There's a level of culture differences [00:38:00] around autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, but at least the leader needs to make sure that the decision can be made. And in a way doing that, you create new boundaries.

So If we go through transformation, we let go of the old and that's the old narrative, the



things we believed in, the behavior we thought is good behavior, the skill levels, how we should organize our organization. If it's a big transformation, we leave that behind and then together it's like in a travel, like a journey, we find out what are the new things and every time we see, okay, this is, this is the way to go.

you solidify that. So you, and, and the tooling you have because we're human beings, and now it will get very vague for some people. Uh, the tooling we have is rituals. So we are, we are emotional beings. We're not born with spreadsheets in our hands. We don't, numbers don't [00:39:00] They don't carry emotions. Facts are important, but stories we remember.

So what we need is storylines, is rituals, is emotional moments, is markers where we know this will be the new reality. So we can connect to that. And as a leader, you decide together with the people around you, okay, this would be something to take into the future. And this will be something we leave behind because that was just nice as an experiment.

And that's what you solidify. And what then during that process, do you think the individuals are feeling? You know, it's, is it a myth that humans are generally change resistant and don't like change, or is there something else going on that is causing that friction and the dissonance? I think part of it is a myth.

I think, especially in management country, we decide that people don't want to change. And then we say they have resistance. So when we prepare ourselves for change projects, [00:40:00] we think of what will be the resistance they have and how can we, you know, Manipulate them through it or motivate them. We like, we tend to call it motivation, but many times it's, it's something else.

It's potato, potato, isn't it? Well, it's not really in a way that if people like to change, if we don't change, we're dead. You're, you're a different person today than yesterday, uh, because your thoughts are slightly different. You've seen something else on the news. Uh, your behavior changes because you're getting older and not younger usually.

So. You know, we, we change all the time. Change is the constant. But the thing is, It's very difficult to change when someone tells me to do it, which is counterintuitive. And if I have a different idea, so resistance to something is usually just a different idea. And that's another thing when I work with organizations, I tend to say, well, resistance, you [00:41:00] can treat it as someone who is against something, or you can look at the same type of comments or behavior thinking, ah, that person has a really different idea.

of how to move forward. Let's listen to that idea. And that's actually transforming. And that's, that's where creativity comes in. Other people call it conflict, but conflict is just another word for creativity. Yeah. And in that situation where you're trying to head, let's say, head towards a specific destination or North star of what you want that shift to be.

Do you run a risk in that? Uh, in terms of like listening to every view and trying to absorb all of that is ending up somewhere different. And is that necessarily a bad thing? Well, that's where we answer the question is, do you have a point B in mind? where you've been and you have like this idea, that's where I want to go.

[00:42:00] Or do you have more like this, uh, this desire to go somewhere, but you're less clear where it is. So how big is the transformation? If it's a really new thing, you haven't been there. So then to get it, it's like when, when you are in liminality and when you know where you leave the spot, you have to create a new life.

It's, it's like being lost a little bit. Right. And if you're lost, You don't have this exact dot on the horizon, so you can't go wrong. It's if you don't move, you're wrong because then you're



lost forever. If you walk back what you had, you know, that you go to a point where you're unhappy or you shouldn't be.

So you find a new way together. So it's really making it up as you go along and, and, and finding the way together. But if you have a very clear, that's where I want to go, it's different. Then the question is, are you sure? Right. [00:43:00] If so, then me as a follower, I put my whole life in your hands. And then the question is, are you tricking me?

Is that good for your money or good for the shareholders? Is it good for the world? Are you a trickster? Are you pranking me? And if not, then yeah, I'll follow you. But then again, the question is, do you, do you have the best decisions because you actually listen to the different views? or not. So again, it's, it's not a black and white answer, but what I many times see is that we tend to put this dot on the horizon, put it in a project plan, and then that becomes reality.

And we, we have to follow those steps. And along the line, people have resistance, but you could say, well, No, this is the direction we want to go. That's fair enough. This is strategy. But there is walking lines. We're not there to connect the dots. We're there to walk the lines. That's a completely different [00:44:00] mindset.

Is there a bit in that, as you talk about it, is people are good at sensing they know what's currently true is wrong? I, I'm in a situation, but I know it's not the situation I want to be in. And then you're kind of describing the states about, I don't know what the answer is. I just know I need to move.

And there's lots of examples in life where people decide they don't like where they are, and then they go and move, but they find their way on the way. And it's the journey bit living in the moment. And it's that, and it's like, People are quite savvy in understanding that whatever is happening is wrong.

And I think, does that affect, is that a growing thing that rises and rises and start to catch up with leadership? Or do you think that's something that, that will be tolerated and they'll just go along with it? What's your view on that, about the human nature of just, you know, just feeling it's wrong? I think that most people feel that things can be wrong.

It can either be your relationship. Where for months or years you feel something's missing, lacking or [00:45:00] whatever, but it's, it's easier to ignore it than to voice it because if you voice it, yeah, well, you can't escape it anymore. And what I see in many organizations. People sense and kind of know and maybe know in the gossip that the way we run the production line or the way we give our consultancy to our clients, there's something off in it.

And people know, but it's many times easier not to call it out. That's why truth to power is such a difficult thing. It's, it's, we, we rather as, as human beings, it's tribe before truth. So it's very hard to, to, to tell your truth or to state it because then we, we can't avoid it. So to understand liminality for me, it's like I said, like, it feels like you're a little bit lost.

You're lost in your storyline. [00:46:00] You lost where you go. You just know that I got to move, but I don't know. So to understand, I, um, for the, the tricky times, the book, I did research and I also went into survival. Um, guides to find out what do people do when they're lost in the woods, literally lost. And then I came about the natural navigator and Tristan Gurley, he's in the South Downs in England.

So I, I went to him and I said, can you teach me what to do when you're lost without a compass and a map and all that. And so I went to the South Downs and we walked for 45 minutes going uphill, downhill, and, and all kinds of corners and all that. And after 45



minutes, he said to me, Please find the car and I had no clue and then he said, well, just think out loud and I said, well, I think, okay, so when we left the car, we went this way on the left, there were some woods and there was some water and then we moved this and that.

And I tracked it [00:47:00] back and I said, I think we know we need to go that way. And he looked at me and he said, people who think like that, they die. I said, thank you. Um, and then he said, do you know where you are? I said, no, I have no idea. And do you know where the car is? I said, no, I have no idea. I said, that's your starting point.

Don't pretend you know, you don't know you're lost. I say, I'm lost. I said, that's your starting point. But the thing is to realize that you're lost, you kind of have to look potential death in the eye because you're lost. And I think that's what we as human beings need to learn on so many levels. Uh, and if we talk organizations, we know when a project is lost, we know, but it's very hard to face it.

And if we don't. We don't face it, then we know [00:48:00] that we'll die. And if we do face it, it feels like we're dying. Now, maybe that's the better choice.

Is what you've been looking at. I've been diving into Hooked again, which is a book by Nir Ayal. And I think a lot of product managers and product addicts are known by the book. It really is about triggering, making it stick. Making sure that you build a product, a digital product or any kind of product, actually, for your end users to not resist.

So you keep on grabbing your iPhone or your whatever phone, um, to really get into that app again, all those notifications, how does that work? So there's a lot of thinking behind it, a lot of research behind it. And now we have AI, of course. So we're all into hyper personalization in these apps already. [00:49:00] We have people like Jitske, you know, that deep dive into, uh, the ways that we act as humans, human behavior.

So there's a lot of stuff already available when it comes to research outcomes and AI is also able to get that information. So how about, you know, dynamic addiction loops and hyper personalized triggers that are. in the minds of AI. I don't know if AI has a mind, but they are actually using that to, to make it even more addictive for us.

This is, this is the precursor to the film WALL E, which is where all the humans go on a big spaceship and get consumed by the screens in front of them and then just go through that world. Are we suggesting that because of AI and technology where basically the creators of Wall E were actually visionaries at seeing, or truth sayers at seeing what we would all become.

Because it is essentially that, we get so addicted and sucked into this world, and it's so compelling, we don't leave it. Yeah, and we don't notice it. [00:50:00] I think that's the scary part, right? But I suppose you say, are we happy? This is the thing, isn't it? That's a deep question, actually. It's a very good point about technology sucking us in and then AI.

Well, as opposed to the previous conversation, AI then becomes the trickster. It has all the knowledge to trick us. There you go. Look at that. Bridging between conversations, Robert. Have I done something good there, Dave? I was due something good over the last few years. Marcel, write that one down. Do I get a gold star that says he did something semi intelligent?

Yes. So it made me think of Block Blast. What you were saying there. Have you played block blast? No, what's that? No, it is bit it. Well, you will be hooked Are you down with the kids Dave? Is this what you're gonna reveal? I wouldn't go that far I wouldn't go that far, but the kids do play it. It's basically like an updated version of Tetris, right?

So instead of it for instead of its shapes falling down or you have to make the lines disappear



You get three three options of shapes [00:51:00] that you can put on and every time you get rid of a line Or a group of lines, you score points, and, you know, the more points you score, the better. You have just described Tetris, no, the blocks aren't falling down.

They're like the options at the bottom. And you just, you can place them anywhere. Oh, I've seen that, and you place them in the grid, and then it gets, ah, okay, I'll get you now. It is, uh Is that you being sucked in and it's totally addictive? Hours can disappear, and like, and I'm saying I put quite a few hours into getting my score to like, say, 8, 000.

And then I was talking to this kid, literally a kid, like one of the kids at my kids school, and he's like, Oh yeah, what's your score? And Eight and a half thousand and the kid's like, oh, uh, well done. Mine's like 120, 000. There's a very good point in this though, Dave, about you're not very good at the game because you're old, right?

But the actual point is, there's a load of entertainment associated with that because it sucks you in, but what is the waste? [00:52:00] associated with you not doing something more valuable to you as a human or to society or this sort of stuff that might be more compelling in the end or might be more rewarding, etc.

But how much time are we blowing on just crap digital experiences that aren't so crap because they're compelling and they suck us in? I mean, I would have thought that's a high number. So, so, Jitske, let's bring it back around to your perspective and your point of view on this. And let's use Rob's final point there as, as maybe the core of the question, which is, is all of this digital attention and apps and being hooked to things like this, is it doing any good culturally and in society, do you think?

Not sure. It's, it's, it's pretty dangerous. So, so if we, it's helpful because it's connecting, we get new ideas, but we can get lost as well. So if we don't know what to believe anymore. If we get to the point that I can't trust pictures and can't trust [00:53:00] audio fragments and I can't trust video, so I'm not sure if what I'm seeing is true.

It's very difficult for our human brains to understand that because emotionally, I got already excited about something or angry about something. And then later on, I need to realize that, but wait, wait, this was AI was not true. So, uh, it, It, it gives a very deep new challenge and, and how we deal with this.

And it has a good side as well. Like last month I was in the jungle, deep in the jungle for a documentary project. So I stayed for two weeks in the jungle of Indonesia with a family, a clan, the Sakudai clan. Amazing. Yeah, that was, it was wonderful. It's a, it's a whole new story in itself, but that, that specific clan is so deep in the jungle.

There is. There's jungle, that's basically what's there and they have phones, uh, as well. And the thing is that if they travel for two hours in a canoe, [00:54:00] which is a tough and very expensive travel, so you don't do it every day, there is a star link. So there is, there's a satellite so you can download stuff.

So every time someone goes to that. at a village. They can download and they download all types of things from YouTube. And then they come back to the family house. And then, and what I noticed is the kids, it changes their behavior deeply because for a couple of days, uh, the phones. The batteries are high and there's new films.

So they, they're hooked to it. And the way they cry is different from the days when it's not downloaded stuff. And the other thing is it opens them to the world. So through YouTube, they see everything just like we, and that's a good thing because. It's nice, you know, you have different ways, different narratives, new ideas, [00:55:00] yet at the same time, how do



you integrate that in your life?

So in a way you could say it's to a more extreme because we're not in the jungle, but we have to deal with this constantly, you know, having new inputs, new impulses, new ideas bombarded at us and, and our, our ways of thinking are not really. up to it. And then when we mix that, this with AI and we mix it and, and that's, that's the main, well, one of the big issues when we mix it with leaders who say that it's true.

So they, they, they play with reality to a large extent. calling it common sense. That's tricky and it's dangerous and, and that's what we have as world leaders at the moment. Yeah. What a depressing, what a depressing thought that is. Sorry. Uh, no worries. I mean, I was, I was going to try and end on a high, but you know, I don't know what to do with that. [00:56:00]

But on a serious note, Jitske, thank you so much for joining. I could literally talk on this subject for many hours, but we are about timed out for today's session. I'm glad to hear that you are going to rejoin us later in the season, and we are going to dig into the impacts of technology in organizations and what that does to culture.

There are things like, you know, digital cultures, real, you know, those sorts of things. So looking forward to that. But thank you so much for today. It's great to see you. Thank you for having me. It was wonderful. Now we end every episode of this podcast by asking our guests what they're excited about doing next.

And that could be, I've got a great restaurant booked at the weekend, or it could be something in your professional life or a bit of both. Uh, Jitske, what are you excited about doing next? Well, the most thing I'm excited about is that I have two days without a calendar agenda or things to do. So open space, that's the main, then there is this Really nice restaurants, what I'm looking forward to on Sunday evening.

And after that, sometime in, in [00:57:00] future, there will be the first edit of the documentary I just briefly talked about. And I'm, I, I can't wait to see that. So does that, so, I mean, first of all, I think we have to acknowledge that finally, after all of my prompting in a hundred odd episodes, somebody's finally said a restaurant at the weekend.

You know, by the law of averages.

Yeah. Well, so I'm glad that like make a note of that one too, Marcel. That's two notes in this episode. It's packed, but yeah. So tell us a little bit more about the documentary. So is it going to be a On tv is it what is it it's called patterns of life so the ones who can't wait like me go to instagram and you'll find everything around it um it's a it's a self funded passion project we've been working on it for five years what travel to tunisia.

travel to India. Um, it's really basically about the store, the traditional stories behind traditional tattoos. So it follows the patterns [00:58:00] of life of tattooing. Tattooing is the oldest visual communication tool we humans have. It's an art form which dies when the person dies and the story behind it is dying too.

And it's, the stories are always around self expression. The stories are around feeling deep connections with tribe members, with spirits, with gods, with it. healthcare with all that. And unfortunately, many of these stories got crushed in modern life, in economic systems, in colonial powers, in religious systems and all that.

So the question popped up while filming the tattoos is Can you express yourself in an ever changing world? And, um, and then suddenly the question people have in the desert of Tunisia, the jungle of Indonesia are our questions. So that's what we filmed and it will be out, uh, in, in, um, after summer. So October, hopefully, and we're working on platforms



[00:59:00] and that's a completely new journey.

We've done that. We talk to people, Netflix, global discovery and all that. And they're all thrilled and there's always a big. But, and um, uh, and now we bumping into this thing that this is a story we really want to tell. So that's why we, we created it and we filmed it. People are very happy to tell it. And like in Indonesia, um, I think we witnessed a culture which is on the verge of extinction because The shamans are in their 50s now.

The children don't want to be a shaman. So that story will die. A whole world view will die. And now the question is, are we willing to hear the story? So if someone's listening from Discovery or Netflix or any big platform, I'm willing to talk about this. I mean, fascinating thing. Um, what do you make of just out of interest, you know, like over the course of maybe the last 15 or 20 years, like tattoos have become, have become massive in Western cultures.

Um, you know, people getting sleeves and things like [01:00:00] that. What do you make of that? Just out of interest? Like, was it just because, you know, a couple of pop stars and a footballer got them so like basically started off a, a bit of a trend or is there something deeper attached to it, do you think? That's a good question.

I think there's a big revival of tattooing, uh, and then the story refreshes all the time. And it's always linked, like I said, to self expression. So people feel that I want to express how they, and it's always linked to a little bit rebellious in our modern societies because we label it as rebellious.

And many times in, in modern societies, we look at it as, do I like it or not? So it's a beautiful or not, but in, in traditional. Coaches, many times it's linked to initiation rights, or when you get married, you get a tattoo or when you, you're in health problems, you need to connect to the spirits, you get a tattoo or to be part of your family, your tribe, you, it's like a t shirt, which you wear, it's, it's like, and it's, it's gives a [01:01:00] deep connection.

So tattoos somehow. give deeper connection. So I think that if I'm fan of a football club and I got the tattoo and I see the others, we feel deeply connected. Um, so I, I think somehow it must be linked to self expression. I want to, you know, carry what I want to carry, regardless of what you think of it.

And at the same time, it's linked to. I want to connect with a group, uh, who goes through the same process, uh, and, and I, yeah, so this has this double meaning. Fabulous. Well, I'll look forward to seeing that documentary at some point. That was brilliant. Very interesting. Patterns of life. Patterns of life. On that note, Ez?

If you would like to discuss any of the issues on this week's show and how they might impact you and your business, please get in touch with us at cloudrealities@capgemini.com. We're all on BlueSky and LinkedIn. We'd love to hear from you. So feel free to connect in DM if you have any questions for the show to tackle.

And of course, please rate and subscribe to our podcast. [01:02:00] It really helps us improve the show. A huge thanks to Jitske, our sound and editing wizards, Ben and Louis, our producer Marcel, and of course to all our listeners. See you in another reality next week.

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