

IT Matters Podcast - Season 1, Episode 35_audio

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IT transformation, strategic pillar, vendor partnerships, cultural change, technology investments, leadership approach, remote work, IT department, project management, generational differences, AI in IT, work-life balance, IT strategy, technology solutions, business driver.

SPEAKERS

Aaron Bock, Keith Hawkey, Dana Staples

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Aaron Bock 00:00

Welcome to the IT Matters podcast hosted by Opkalla. We're an IT advisory firm that makes technology easy for your business. Our vendor neutral technology advisors work directly with your team to assess technology needs and procure the best IT solutions for your organization. On this podcast, expect high level expertise from our hosts, plus experience driven perspective from the leading experts on topics like AI, cybersecurity industry focused IT solutions, strategy and more. Now let's get into today's discussion on what matters in IT.

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Keith Hawkey 00:35

This episode brought to you by Cato networks, recognized by Gartner as a leader in Sase. With Cato, you get one unified solution for SD Wan, SSE, zero, trust and more, all delivered under a private backbone built for speed and reliability. Say goodbye to vendor sprawl and hello to always on security, simplified operations and a future ready architecture that grows with your business. Now let's hear from Cato themselves. The implementation of Cato was truly one of the most straightforward implementations I've been involved with in my career. With Cato, we now have a standardized security platform across all of our network and also on all our PCs, whether you're in a coffee shop or on one of our Super Sport sites, that I can sleep at night knowing that my environment is secure and have a latest version cater a true partner, and one in my career has almost been unique and an absolute pleasure to deal with. They deliver on what they say. And welcome to the it matters. Podcast, the podcast where we go behind the scenes with technology leaders who are making a real impact, not just with their systems, but with their strategy. I'm your host, Keith Hawkey, and today's episode is all about what it takes to transform it from the back office function to a business driver, especially in a mission driven organization, and today, my guest is Dana Staples, Vice President of IT, of ReVision Energy, a company leading the clean energy movement in the northeast, Dana stepped into a leadership role at a time when It wasn't yet the front and center of the organization, and through a blend of pragmatic leadership, cultural change and smart technology investments, Dana has helped ReVision elevate it to a key strategic pillar. In today's episode, we'll talk about how Dana approached his first 90 days in a fragmented environment, what it means to balance internal

capabilities, vendor partnerships, and how he's building a culture of empowerment within his team. He also shares lessons from his time and public service and how those experiences continue to influence his leadership approach. Today, let's get into it. Dana, welcome to the IT Matters podcast.

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Dana Staples 03:02

Wow. Thanks, Keith, that was quite an introduction

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Keith Hawkey 03:06

to the discussion. And let's, let's jump in. This is going to be awesome. Well, thank you, Dana, that is what they pay me for. If I can't do an introduction, why? Why even do a podcast? Right? Awesome. Off to a great start. That's right, I was actually doing a little bit of research before we started today. And ReVision Energy is a solar panel organization. You guys install solar technology. And I asked chatgpt, what the average number of days in Maine that were sunny compared to the rest of the country. And I was like, I wonder, I can't imagine Maine has more sunny days on average. And the answer was, Maine has around 200 sunny days, maybe a little less than 200 sunny days in the average. What do you think the average is in the United States?

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Dana Staples 04:03

Number of sunny days, you know? I bet it's not too much different from Maine, honestly. You know, it's just we get the snow, and other places get, you know, they get different types of weather. I would say, let's see if it's 200 in Maine. Let's say it's 220 somewhere else, that's about right between 205, to 250, is about the average.

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Keith Hawkey 04:26

So I was thinking Maine was overcast most of the time, but it sounds like you guys actually get some sun.

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Dana Staples 04:34

Yeah, sure. Well, you know it's, it's, it's a misconception, especially in the solar industry. I know when I personally was putting panels on my roof. I went into it thinking that maybe we would really just produce them this summer, you know, because that's when you feel the sun, but, but the the fact of the matter is, you know, we get sun all winter. It's just that the days are shorter, and so you may make a little bit less power then. And I guess. The added benefit of living in Maine is that we get the snow, so you gotta wait for the snow to fall off the panels. But you know, with the right roof, it does it pretty quickly. So lots of lots of things to consider, though, I can't wait those sunny days, though, in the summer, aren't they beautiful?

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Keith Hawkey 05:13

They are speaking of the snow, I'm curious, does the snow impact technology? Impact it in any strange ways, where someone that's like an IT leader in Arizona doesn't really have to deal with I guess they might get a little snow in the mountains in Arizona, but thinking maybe South Carolina, where we get very little snow, you know, where I find that it makes the biggest impact, especially, I would say, before the pandemic, where remote work never really happened was you get a big snow storm, and suddenly it's a lot harder for some people to get into work.

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Dana Staples 05:47

You know, we clean the roads pretty well here in Maine, but you get the right storm. And, you know, a 30 minute commute turns into an hour commute pretty quickly, and especially when you have, you know, daycare not open in a school closed, you know. So you end up with childcare responsibilities sometimes, and you got to juggle those things. But as far as actual like it, you know, I don't think that there's huge impacts with snow, as long as, as long as you're not hitting too many power outages and those types of things. I think it's really just the weather patterns that you have to watch out for. As long as the snow doesn't get in the data center we okay.

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Keith Hawkey 06:29

I remember a long time ago, there was a data center and a company I worked for that got a little bit of water, and it wasn't to the point where it really impacted things, but people were starting to get pretty concerned quickly about whether, whether or not this is going to turn into something. And, you know, we brought in some fans and dehumidifiers, and it ended up going away, but people were nervous, yeah, and speaking about new situations, I'd love to talk a little bit about how you you know you stepped into this leadership role at a time when it could have looked and could have become a more prominent focus in the business. And this is, this is not unusual. There's a lot of organizations that are out about the size of ReVision Energy where you start off and and maybe you have an MSP, you know, you buy, you buy into different productivity suites. You have some, some cyber security in there, but it's kind of an afterthought. And eventually organizations get to the point where they're like, we know we need a professional grade IT strategy. We need someone who's going to lead this charge. So it's a very, very typical evolution, like small and medium sized businesses. And I'm curious, what are some of the early signs that when you stepped in, that you realize, you know, some some things, some of the things here, we need to change.

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Dana Staples 08:07

Yeah, sure. So I think the, I think the path that revision took, for for deciding to invest a little bit more in it was, you know, they worked with some of the remote consultants to do some of the help desk work that they had, and they ended up using a local consultant to give them some of the strategy lessons. And that consultant got them into a place where they started to develop a strategy towards moving into Dynamics. Microsoft Dynamics is, you know, the the backbone of our systems, really. And I think a little ways into that, they realized that the consultant was was

adding valuable work, but they couldn't hire the consultant, and so there was a need to move into something more of a full time role. You know, consultants are super expensive, and, you know, there's you can only really go with them for so long to work on a project, and so they brought in the role that I currently have. So I think one of the things that we learned early on was that the company grew from a small just a couple of guys at first, and it grew and grew and grew, and over the years, there was a lot of people that had various needs in it that had to figure it out. And so what you end up with is, you know, disparate systems that are kind of managed by so many different people. And you find, hey, there's some redundancy here, and maybe not the most optimal solution over there. And okay, maybe we need to put some of this information together so that one system can talk to the other system. And how do we do that? And you know, it quickly turns into a problem that you need somebody with some expertise to come in and solve some of those issues. And I think that's really where revision decided that they needed to make an investment. Where I see. Things get a little tricky sometimes is that, you know, those habits of people that want to manage the systems by themselves, sometimes forget, hey, we got an IT department. Now you can come to us and we can help you solve those things. So that turns into, you know, sometimes there's some decisions that are a little further along than you'd like when it is brought in. Yes, so can be a little tricky.

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Keith Hawkey 10:28

Yeah, that's yeah. And the whole idea of making the IT department feel as if it's an enabler instead of a disabler, is a cultural shift that many IT leaders from working at small to large enterprise, all across the board, that that is the that is, that is the Paramount challenge. I mean, ultimately, we're a cost center, you know, so, so we're, we're, we're charging the company to be here, and so we're not bringing in the profits. So ultimately, you want the folks that are bringing in the profits to be working on figuring out how to do that, rather than to solve it issues. And I think that's the crux of the issue is, how do we focus people to do on, to do the things that they're best at, and to get those people out of the weeds of issues that they may or may not be, you know, equipped to solve, and so you put the right people in a room, and a lot of times, you kind of figure out, all right, this person's got this issue, and this person's got that one, it turns into, it turns into a pretty good environment when you have a collaborative team, and you probably arrived with some, you know, there are certainly some motivation from the business to make some significant investments and it, and one of your challenges is, what, you know, what are the, some of the first initiatives that should be prioritized to help show the value of those investments? I'm curious about kind of your thought process, what the lay of the land was, what were some of the first initiatives that you thought would be simple enough to implement yet be able to show a quick ROI on those investments?

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Keith Hawkey 12:17

Sure. Well, I think the biggest thing you have to focus on right away is figuring out, what are you working with, you know, doing some sort of an inventory of the systems and the in the maybe not even necessarily the systems, but what problems are you trying to solve those systems, and what are the, what are the challenges of the company, and how do the systems actually solve those challenges. So I think that's, that's part of the initial look at things, is just like, where are we, how did, how did we get where we are? And so, you know, after, after doing all that and doing a deep dive into what are we using here and why, you know, you figure out

quickly that at least at my company, we had a we had a position where we had just implemented a new CRM, and that that CRM was was working really well, but there were still some things that weren't necessarily handled inside of that CRM, so some business processes that we were trying to capture, and you know, that work was being done On the side someplace with spreadsheets, or, you know, you know, a little bit a little bit of sticky glue just to put everything together and make make something work and and so I think we enabled some of those things to be done inside of dynamics with a little bit of, a little bit of actual, you know, engineering work to make some of those changes. And that was, that was a big win, I think, as far as you know, making people not have to do a lot of the swivel chair stuff, where they're in six different systems, to do one thing that really should just be in one system. And one of the other things that we've been doing is we have a few different business units, and trying to figure out how to get the to figure out how to get those business units to talk and be able to, you know, pass a project from one team to another without having to jump through a lot of hoops. And so, you know, those types of things, it's really what happens when you have a disjointed system, is that, you know, one business unit doesn't really talk to the other one all that well. And I would be, I would be remiss to say that I came in and solved all those issues. I mean, the team's been doing awesome work, and we still have a long way to go, but we've made some good progress, and so I think that's, that's probably where we're going to focus a lot of our work. In the future is to try to make that story even better. Yeah, and a lot of, I can imagine you, you had some, some pretty disjointed vendor relationships that you know, that are they were there when you got there. You know, part of, part of your challenge is. Kind of understanding, all right, we're, we are bringing in some IT talent. You know, there's an investment where, you know, obviously your role, potentially some roles that you would, you would help support in it. Some of that might encroach on some of the vendor relationships. Perhaps there's MSP involved. Wondering, how do you balance the, you know, the new motivation to insource, some of the it with what still needs to be outsourced,

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Dana Staples 15:33

you know, with with capabilities. Yeah. So, I mean, part of that is doing, you know, figuring out what do we have for vendor relationships, and what work are they doing? So for instance, we have a couple different relationships with a few different vendors. We found out pretty quickly that one of the vendors was you was being used primarily for your bigger projects, you know. And so we've we maintain a relationship with them because we had another project that we really wanted to accomplish. Wanted to accomplish, to bring one of our basically redo the dynamics implementation that one of our business units is using just to better fit with the other ones. And so that that relationship is ongoing, and it's been a pretty successful one. We had another relationship that was, it was a it was a vendor that was kind of doing a lot of ongoing work. And, you know, it was stuff that just kept coming and coming. And it wasn't really project based. It was just maintenance and all that and and from that one, we found that, you know, over the course of a year, we would easily spend more and vendor fees than we would in like, full time salaries. So so we hired a person to do some of that work, and, you know, still coming up to speed on some things, but that's proving out to be a pretty good move, I think, and that person is able to do some other things that the vendor wasn't doing before. And so it's even, you know, it's a win there as well, yeah.

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Keith Hawkey 17:05

And, I mean, you know, a lot of times like those vendors that, yeah, we when these

organizations are evolving in this sense, there are relationships. There are, you know, that maybe they've been there since the inception of the company, and they've grown in some capacity. And I know for one a lot of times, they have some understanding of kind of where the bodies are buried, of some of the inner workings of the company that is useful. There's always this kind of give and take, of trying to pry some of the information out of them, so perhaps you can look for a better situation, or in source some of that talent, maybe even a better vendor partner that can have has more capabilities. But it's like there's always this kind of give and take in the beginning, as as you're starting to try to uncover as much information that the vendor has, because they've been there since the beginning,

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Dana Staples 18:10

yeah, and I think that that's, that's one of the challenges, right? I mean, obviously, if a vendor has been working with a company for a while, they they've got a lot of that legacy knowledge that you just necessarily won't find on your own sometimes, with the vendor that we I was just talking about, we we maintain a relationship with that vendor even now, and it's more of a well, sometimes stuff breaks and we need to fix quickly. And you know, it's good to have a person in there that knows, like, how did that get created, and why is this problem happening now and and so, you know, you maintain some of those things and not necessarily bring the same number of hours to that vendor in the that you did in the past, but you still have that ability that if something comes up that, hey, we really need some help here. They're still around for you. Sometimes that ends up costing a little bit more because, you know, the hours, if you're not using as many hours, it's not necessarily the best, the best price that you had before, but it's still important. You know, I think, I think those things are good, and sometimes you never know. You might go back to them for another project anyway. So no sense in burning a bridge.

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Keith Hawkey 19:19

Yeah. And, you know, there are times those vendors can absolutely save the day, because they do have that legacy knowledge. So, you know, having strong vendor partner relationships is, is one of the the keys, in my opinion, to any success of an IT leader, especially new in the role of leveraging, leveraging that when it comes down to it, an IT leader is, or any leader, the biggest piece of anything is relationships, right? And so I think if, if you want to be successful in a leadership role, you have to be really good at knowing how to work with people and maintain relationships and keep those types of things working well.

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Dana Staples 20:00

Well, I think that's always, it's always a challenge, right? Because you have different different motivating factors that are that are driving you every day, right? So everybody that you work with is going to have their own thing that they need to get done. And, you know, sometimes that may not align with what you need, but I think building those relationships a lot of times can get you out of some sticky situations if they come up, because they're always going to come

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Keith Hawkey 20:24

up. Yeah. I mean, one thing that stood out to me was the way that you view enabling your people, particularly the idea of kind of getting out of the way of your team innovating and being able to do their jobs. Can you talk a little bit about how you've empowered your team and what what your vision of leadership, technology of leadership, looks like in your organization?

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Dana Staples 20:51

Yeah, absolutely. So I think I believe really strongly that you hire people to do a role, and once you hire them, you should let them do it. And so to me, what that means is I don't necessarily always need to be there in the room looking over your shoulder and making sure you're doing the work, you know. And so if, if I tell a team that we need a project done, and they and they go and they look into it, and they figure it out, and they give me a project plan. I look at it, you approve the project plan, then you let them do it. You know, you get a periodic check in once in a while to see how that's going and make sure that things are on track. But I try not to get buried in the weeds on the everyday stuff. As long as you give people the ability to go and do what you've asked them to do, a lot of times, that's when you see people thrive and come up with situations and solutions that you may not have noticed or expected in the in the past. And I think that really empowering people to do the jobs that you're really hoping that they do creates really good work and allows allows people to thrive and build skills that they might not have had before. So I think, you know, if you give one person an assignment and you just let them go and do it a lot of times, they have to learn a little bit of project management skills to figure out, well, how do I get the things done that I need to get done? And the same kind of thing happens with a team and a manager. You give a manager something to do, and they're going to figure out, well, how do I best speak to my team to get the things done in the right amount of time? You know, I had a manager once that that really helped me get out of the weeds and and enabled me to allow the team to do the work, and I think that that allowed me to scale the team and have a bigger team. As as more people came into my org, I was, I was a little less focused on every single thing that they did and all and more focused on, well, what are the results? How did, how did you guys get to where you are, and what are the steps that you did, that you took to get there, and where did things go wrong, and how are we going to do something better in the future? Those types of things, you know, I've worked with managers in the past that are, I mean, I hate the word, but micro managers sometimes that are, that are in a little bit too much. And sometimes you wonder, Well, do you want to do this work, or do you want me to do work, you know? And so I learned from that as as a way to, you know, let people do the things that you ask them to do, and see how it goes. And if it doesn't work, then you have to course correct, right? And then what does that look like? It can be different for everybody. Sometimes, sometimes you get a situation where you really have to jump in and say, Okay, now this is what I expect, and this is how I think maybe you should do it. But that's not, that's not where I want to start. That's, that's a, that's a thing that you only do when you really need to.

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Keith Hawkey 23:55

You probably have the opportunity to work with our some of our younger generations, particularly Gen Z, and I always like to ask it leaders, because some struggle with some of the generational differences between kind of the newer generation of it practitioners and the old

guard. What? What have you learned to along the way to get the most out of like new, fresh college grads getting into it space? How have you best enabled them? And do you notice much of a difference between someone that's graduating college today and 10 years ago,

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Dana Staples 24:43

I think that for the most part, people have the same motivations. You know, that they're in this work because they enjoy it and they want to do it, or maybe they're just good at it and they really want to thrive and learn new things. I find that, you know, generationally, people work differently, and. Um, so you know, maybe your your older generation, I guess if we're talking in generational terms, your boomers, your Gen X, they're probably a little bit more prone to wanting a meeting to talk about something, your your millennials, Gen Z, those, those folks, are probably a little bit more prone to wanting to do something via messaging, Slack, whatever, those types of things. And, you know, I think the thing that I've always found makes me successful is I try to talk to somebody and learn who they are and find out what, how do they like to work and meet them where they are. You know, I think, I think as a leader, you really need to be adaptable to different situations. You know, sometimes coming in and saying, This is the way it's going to be is a recipe for disaster. And if you have a team that some people want to do it one way, and other people want to do it another way, well, figure out a way that that works, and try, try to make sure that you're, you're hitting the right the right methods of communication, the right project management, those things, you know, the one thing that is interesting is, you know, you get, you get some people that work differently, and sometimes from that, you come up with interesting ways of working, that, that that neither, neither people, neither generation would have necessarily thought of on their own. So, yeah, that one's an interesting issue. I think that as we,

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Dana Staples 26:36

as we see, you know, the next generation move in and the and you're probably going to come up with new ways from that as technology evolves. You know, I think the younger generation, typically is the early adopter, and so it's kind of a fun thing to find out. Well, how are you guys doing this? And what can I learn from that? Because there's always something that that you have to learn in it, and if somebody is doing something a different way, like, that's that's my cue to find out, what is that and is it good? Like, let's figure out. Like, maybe there's a better way to do it, or maybe, maybe there's something that I'm currently doing that that I can do better. And I just love that about this job, I

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Keith Hawkey 27:19

imagine in today, especially going into the future, that you're going to you're going to be interviewing candidates for role, and maybe they're coming out of college, maybe they have a couple years experience, but you'll ask them, how would you solve this problem? How would you solve this problem? And a lot of the ways that they're solving problems are using different artificial intelligence platforms of and that's a different way of, you know, going about it. You know, for one, you have to have an understanding of the fundamentals. But also the element of, you know, I've got, I use these various AI platforms to help solve these complex IT troubleshooting issues and introducing that into the mix, teaching, you know, teaching the

manager of about, you know, how these different platforms can help and maybe how they how they construct Their prompting and get the most out of it. I can imagine that being a pretty seismic change when it comes to interviewing of this generational, institutional knowledge divide, because that's the world.

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Dana Staples 28:36

Yeah, I think it's a it's an exciting proposition to think about what the world, the work, world, will look like in the next 510, years, especially with AI and its introduction into the workforce. I really look to really anybody that's that's using AI as is as a place of curiosity, really. And like, well, what are you, what are you doing with it? Like, how do we, how do we learn from what you're doing? And, like, what are the things that that you're doing with this, that that we can replicate and get other people to do? I try not to shy away from that stuff, right? I think, I think there's a lot of opportunity, especially with a new technology there, you want to, you want to be a little careful with it, right? You don't want to, you don't want to do unsafe things. So there's a little bit of a security that you want to, some best practices that you want to try and adopt. I think it's really interesting from a from a technical standpoint, to understand, like, How much better can we be with AI? Like, what are the things that that we can learn from it, and like, how do we how do we grow? It's interesting, though, when you bring up interviewing people in their approach to solving problems with AI, I know that back in some of the early stages of the pandemic, I was doing a lot of interviewing at the time, and I started seeing people. Virtual with virtual interviews kind of looking up like they're looking up answers, right? Yeah, asking a question and like you could almost hear him typing.

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Keith Hawkey 30:13

That is a real problem. So one of my good friends interviews. He's an HR. He interviews for roles in it for a pretty large bank here in Charlotte. Nit, you know, a lot of these roles, potentially, are from people that are just coming into the country, that are new here. And there's they have different, you know, work visa situations that are sensitive you can't ask about. But, you know, he speaks with lots of different people, and he his job is to really cut through the noise very quickly and to ask them very specifically about certain projects that they have in their resumes. Because nowadays, resumes, a lot of them are just copy and paste exactly what the job pro post is, and they put in the chat GPT, and chat GPT writes exactly what is on there. So all these resumes look the same, so it's difficult to filter, and it's that you know, the challenge is asking these probing questions and understanding enough about you know what your candidate potentially has been working on, to know if they really worked on those things, if they had to have that experience. And you know, he's been in situations where there's someone in the background, like, they'll go on mute, and then that person will, like, answer the question to the person interviewing. That person will unmute and then regurgitate, or try to regurgitate an answer, but you'll catch it somewhat. There's been situations where there's like one person that kind of knows what they're doing and but they kind of they manage three or four different people that have jobs they are unqualified for. My is same thing for my wife has has the same energy. She's the same issues with with her job. Yeah, really, it's because there's a lot of unqualification, and especially with the remote work and it I feel, yeah, it's interesting.

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Dana Staples 32:23

You know, at a previous company, I managed a lot of people who weren't in the United States, and so when you went to interview them, you know, English wasn't necessarily the first language that they spoke. And so I think that one of the fascinating things that I found is that there were a lot of people who were able to, like, really use some interesting technology to do some, like, translations, you know, from their from English to the native language, and then they would translate back. And some people were really, really good at it. It was, it was kind of impressive. You know, I think some of the ways that you cut through some of those interview questions, though, is you just have to ask some questions about, like, how did you do it? And, like, tell me about, like, what is, what did this look like? And, you know, some of those, some of those things you get from just talking to somebody a little bit more than, like, one or two questions, just kind of dive into it and, like, really figure out, like, what happened here, but I don't know. I think, I think also, like, some of the things that people might use during a remote interview, some of the software that they use is kind of interesting. I kind of think back to, you know, when I was in, you know, high school or or elementary school, even, and you go to math class and the teacher would say, Well, you can't use a calculator because you won't have one when you're older and working and, and I don't know about you, but I think that didn't, that didn't pan out. So in a in a remote interview, do you tell somebody you can't use AI because you won't have AI? I don't know if that's true, you know?

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Dana Staples 34:02

So ultimately, you need to have somebody that's really going to be able to do to do the work, and what tools they use to get the job done sometimes, doesn't necessarily disqualify them from the position. If they're producing results that that are really good and like, it's not just a flash in the pan. They can do it over and over. Maybe it's not such a bad thing. I don't know. I kind of have mixed feelings about it. Yeah, me too. It's so for one and I have some friends in the industry that tell me these things, but when they're using AI to write code, and then they have to solve for a bug, it becomes incredibly difficult when you didn't write the code to solve for so there's a unique challenge there, and you come first from a software development background, so you're probably more intimately aware of the challenges. Therefore, well, yeah, you know, it's funny, though I haven't been writing code. Think very much in the last few years when AI got a little bit bigger. So back when I was writing software, I, you know, I was doing it the old fashioned way. I had to figure it out. But we still had Google, you know. And back then, you know, most of the things that you got stumped on you could, you could kind of solve with a few Google searches. But, you know, I think anytime you work on a bug, though it's you really have to be able to read the software and then, or read the code and understand, like, what is this thing doing? And, like, how is it, how is it failing? Like, what's going on here? And I don't know, yeah, I think, I think currently, there's probably not a lot of AI solutions that are going to answer that for you, although you know you have to hope, you have to hope, you have to hope in the future, there's a solution for everything, right? So let's, let's see if that, if that comes around, I don't know, maybe someday it will. Yeah, maybe someday

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Keith Hawkey 35:51

we're getting toward the end of the podcast, Dana and you know, typically, what I really love to ask is, is, what, what do you think is missing if you are going to broadcast an idea to every IT leader in the world about what you think is important, maybe not spoken about enough within

your line of work. What would that message be if it could fit on a billboard or a cell phone screen?

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Dana Staples 36:18

Geez. You know, I think the thing that has enabled me to succeed a lot. And I think in the in the scheme of things, I think sometimes I see this as missing is, what is the human side of this? You know, at the end of the day, the people doing the work are are living lives outside of the work. And how do you make those people's lives better. You know, it's, it's interesting to think about, like, one of the things as a, as a an organization, that you can do to enable people to be able to live the life that they want to live outside of work. I think that a lot of the things that I've seen are, you know, you see a lot of these, like, anti work, you know, people that are trying to figure out how, what's the quickest way I can retire? And, like, how do I get out of this situation? And, you know, job hopping and like, like, the, you know, lots of, lots of different things. And I think a lot of us. A lot of the answers to that is like, how do we make work better to the point where it doesn't, it doesn't make anything that you're doing outside of work worse? And so I think remembering that people are people is is really important. It's it's something that if you, if you work for somebody who who doesn't understand that, or pretends not to understand that, I think, I think it can make your life miserable. So happy, happy. Staff produces good work. I think

K

Keith Hawkey 37:52

wise words from the legendary Dana staples, Dana, we I really appreciate you taking the time to speak with us in the it matter podcast. Where can people find you? If listeners wants to, would like to reach out about some of these, some of your ideas?

D

Dana Staples 38:09

Sure, yeah, while I'm on LinkedIn, you can always get me there. That's probably the best place. I think I'm always looking at that. I love to go on LinkedIn and just see what, what people I've worked with in the past are doing and and so I'm always checking it LinkedIn. There it is. We'll put it in the show notes to everyone. Thank you for joining, and we will catch you next time. Awesome. Thanks for the discussion, Keith. I really had fun today. Likewise.

A

Aaron Bock 38:35

Thank you for listening, and we appreciate you tuning into the it matters. Podcast for support assessing your technology needs. Book a call with one of our technology advisors@opkalla.com that's opkalla.com if you found this episode helpful, please share the podcast with someone who would get value from it and leave us a review on Apple podcasts or on Spotify. Thank you for listening and have a great day. You.