

Digital Podcast Show Notes

Episode 11 with guest Dan Turchin

Hosts: Barclay Rae, Ian Aitchison,

Guest: Dan Turchin

BR: Intro chit chat, hi Ian etc, and... Hi Dan Turchin. Give us an overview of you.

DT: I've been in ESM, and AI for many years. Made some cool early products around automated tools. Series of companies to now be People Reign. Also host podcast 'AI and the Future of Work'.

BR: I liked the AI definition you use. You don't think AI replaces human intelligence, correct?

DT: Yes IA is augmenting humans. Good for accelerating training or facilitating the self service process. And unfortunately (or fortunately) all employees have been asked to be their own IT people. The pandemic has accelerated the expectation on people to be self sufficient. Smart tech is there to help humans who are now on their own.

But we're not talking about a bot apocalypse, just using technology to make life of employees better.

IA: Today's trivia before we get to the main topic. I was looking at RPA vendor UiPath IPO is \$900M. UiPath talk about how their automation replaces people.

Unrelated... this week, wood is good! Varnishing wood is good for the soul.

BR: Yuk. Let's move on.

Main section...

BR: So, Dan, what are opportunities for organisations to benefit from AI?

DT: Tech projects fail, business projects succeed. Do not be enamoured with the A or the I, but instead with how new tech can benefit employees. I'll give you an example. One of our customers had junior staff supporting 1000s of important US Federal staff. They use AI to provide recommendations on which action to take to fix issues. It's not about humans replacing robots. It's taking mundane tasks and making them easier or taking them away.

Our metrics are: customer experience, Firstline resolution, MTTR, Reducing cost, shifting left to adopt self service. Nothing to do with AI, but all about the next experience.

IA: People doing a better job... stop serving big mac and fries, instead create and serve gourmet food.

DT: Candidate for autonomous work are Dull Dangerous or Dirty.

CEO of foxconn said they would replace 1million contract jobs in the next decade with roboticisation. I see that as a great opportunity to do more interesting better things, creating new and better jobs as the old ones are automated.

BR: Hmm, I'm more cynical. **Will it really be that good?** Surely with 1m people displaced, the number of jobs surely will go down. That calculation maybe needs some scrutiny. Do you have examples where the number of jobs went up.

DT: sure, look at 18th century and the cotton mills. Later on, don't be a telephone operator, that gets replaced, yet telecom industry employs now millions of people.

The digitisation of information has invented new jobs.

IA: yes, people can work in ways now that they couldn't ever before. Look at Fiverr, people can do work they could never do before.

DT: there's nothing but upside. I'm on a crusade to tell leaders that there's never been a better time to embrace technology.

BR: I like to be miserable sometimes, but you are right, there is a great opportunity to do great work.

Back to ESM topic, we have people outside of IT looking at technology. **Are non IT people now building processes?**

DT: Yes, we see HR practitioners roles changing. Mundane tasks are being automated away. HR staff are getting an hour back a day, that's magic. For more time coaching, or as a human they have more quality time with family. There is no downside.

IA: the shift to work from home accelerates that. You can still work for 8 hours, but not with 2 hours commute. 2 hours quality family time.

But, back to the AI angle for ESM... **Do you see new AI support technologies come into other departments?**

DT: yes, 15 years ago the principles of ITSM came to ESM. IT led with AI, but now legal has the same use cases or sales have the same use cases. We're at the point of applying AI outside of IT where we were 15 years ago inside IT.

IA: there is more sensitivity with some areas that need human touch. HR needs less machines and more human. **Is there risk there?**

DT: no, it's much better. Before it was fax machines and distant phone calls. Now we're tuning humans into robots and then back into humans.

BR: that message 'AI makes you a better human'... that message is not going out. **What do you think we need to do to improve that message?**

DT: the biggest impediment is company culture. Best practices include rewarding early adopters. Whether gamification or feedback loops. The second is to have leadership demonstrate strong support. It's one thing to introduce it, but another for leadership to say we're doing this and you need to all be on board together.

It's not about humans vs bots, it's about what's the shortest path to benefits.

IA: Also, if you don't adopt it, your competitors will and will pull ahead. If you plan to keep up, you have to consciously adopt these new things. If you don't you'll be in trouble in time.

DT: any time you can connect an ESM project to external business outcomes there is more motivation to get it right. Example, we now have shipping companies auto supplying items in trucks in advance because they can predict where demand will be. That impacts bottom lines. Where we can connect ESM to business outcomes we get best benefit.

BR: of course, ultimately it is all about business outcomes. Everyone gets why Ironman is cool tech, but many people are scared of how new tech impacts them. **Does it need a new message?**

DT: Leaders need to go on a new charm offensive. This is not a choice that employees are making. So being positive and explaining what the decisions are being made are important. I think Boston Dynamics and their dancing dogs do a disservice to technology and jobs impact. There's a big disconnect there.

IA: yeah but... any new tech, leaders need to bring it in. nothing changes there, it's the only way to succeed. But also, funny coincidence, there was a police video on social media today showing the police using Boston Dynamics dogs in a raid. Directly intruding into our lives.

BR: 3 years down the line, **what's an indicator that this has all worked out well?**

DT: we talk about the maturity model for enterprises. In 3 years we wont see tech replace live agents. In 3 years you'll see tech augmenting employees intelligence and improving experiences.

BR: I'll be a librarian in an old folks home!

Endbit

Dan's recommended favourite drink:

Quarantini.... A martini consumed over a Zoom call !

Key Lessons from Dan Turchin

- 1 - Tech projects fail, business projects succeed
- 2 - Candidates for autonomous work are Dull Dangerous or Dirty.
- 3 - AI makes you a better human
- 4 - the biggest impediment is company culture
- 5 - Leaders need to go on a new charm offensive
- 6 - Barclay wants to be a librarian in an old people's home
- 7- Varnishing Wood is Good.

Useful Links

PeopleReign: www.Peoplereign.io

Podcast 'AI and the Future of Work'

Dan on Twitter: @dturchin

Dan on linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dturchin/>