Digital Podcast Show Notes

Episode 46 with Guest: David Ratcliffe

Hosts: Barclay Rae, Ian Aitchison

Greetings section

BR: Welcome blah blah. Any trivia Ian?

IA: No trivia, but today it's a question. What is the David Bowie link with Ian and our guest? Here's the guest

DR: Hi, I used to work in IT, then worked with Malcolm Fry and helped on Service books in the 80s, then moved to Canada and started Pink Elephant. Focus on ITIL and now also DevOps and Lean.

IA: Why Pink Elephant name?

DR: The history is unclear … but it stands out and is memorable.

Detail

BR: Into the detail section. What demand for help do you see?

DR: ITIL remains most important. In the past we've found that there are a bunch of related activities on top of the templates and materials. So Organisation Change Management has become a big and important thing. That's where the extra help on top of books is needed. You see the same with DevOps and Lean and Agile - how to you introduce these changes.

IA: Getting peoples behaviour to change is a consistent challenge. Have you seen the pandemic changing peoples attitudes to organisational change management?

DR: I've been amazed and surprised at how resilient organisations have been they have continued with their projects and their changes and been successful.

BR: Yes, there is an opportunity also now to accelerate more changes now that IT is well regarded. Is interest in taking IT best practice outside of IT?

DR: Well its nothing new to talk about it. But I don't see it happening. We';re not seeing IT people coming back and asking for these concepts to be delivered for people that are not in IT.

BR: Well, we know the vendors are trying but maybe see the same challenges.

DR: We;re now in ITIL4 and many concepts like business relationship management and asset management which can be applied more generically. But we are in an early stage of maturity and there is a long way to go., i don't see it as a new portfolio needed now,

IA: Is there anything common that current orgs need help with ?

DR: Well, yes, the basics. Incident, Problem, Change. How to do that. ITIL was always about operations and DevOps and service groups are becoming more unified. But the stuff that people understand and value the most is support and new services. This is where the greatest need is in the industry still. WEe have people coming into training classes being taught about strategy, when their role is operational and new to ITIL.

ITIL v1 and v2 was all about operations, and role based, there was great acceptance.

BR: But isn't there importance content that is still not used?

DR: We have operational level training course on Incident, Problem Change, and the most popular is Root Cause Analysis.

IA: Vendors often see that as a higher maturity activity.

DR: Yes, problem management adoption is the least mature (agreeing basically).

DR: when you talk to non ITIL people, they find that Problem Management is what they think of and Incident Management. To some, that separation is rocket science.

BR: SO the basics still matter. Does that mean the industry has failed to get that across?

DR: It comes in waves. We see an organisation come to us and then they stand on tier own two feet, and then 2 years later they come back again. It comes back to Org Change. Many orgs struggle to achieve the c=vision of that change,

BR: Do we need to educate at senior levels then?

DR: If an Org changes direction - merger or change in services - that is where there is friction and the risk of misalignment. You never hear of aligning marketing with the business, onty with IT. IT is struggling to keep up. Manay senior managers say the problem is with people above.

IA: Yes, when a senior change happens that can cause tool and strategy change.

DR: They need a long term vision. It seems like we are reinventing IT every couple of years.

BR: How do we get more CIOs to attend ITSM conferences.

DR: Lat couple of years at Pink we've included a CIO track,. We've always attracted senior level and most decision makers. Give them an opportunity to get what they need from the event.

BR: Is the content overall able to be consumed at all levels. That is a challenge.

DR: Pink has multiple levels of content - take a look at the website. But an event is there to provide what people need and be profitable from that.

BR: Tell us about Pink Conference, what can we expect?

DR: ITIL remains most important, also Agile and Lean IT. Also Org Change. Then the vendors latest changes and updates on Pink Verify.

IA: Pink Verify is a huge exercise for vendors.

DR: Yes that has been a big success. Confirming support of a tool for the ITIL guidelines. Vendor community embraced it and we drove companies to change their strategies around this.

BR: great stuff, thanks David.

(Trivia answer - Ian nearly had to perform Space Oddity with an astronaut on a ukulele on stage at Pink Conference, and Ian can't play the ukulele).

David's Recommended Drink
  • Manhattan on the rocks, With Rye Whisky and Vermouth and ice-cubes.

Useful Links

  • Pink Elephant: https://www.pinkelephant.com/en-us/Pink22/Home
  • David on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/pinkerdavid/

Bar Bio
David's accent suggests he is originally from Sunderland way back in his roots, then he spent some time in Reading in the UK, but has now for many years been the leader of a troop of Pink Elephants that are teaching the world about ITIL, DevOps, Lean and Org Change. You can see all the Pink Elephants at the annual conference circus in Vegas where they sing, dance and teach people the difference between Incidents and Requests. All this, directed by David from his secret castle high up in the mountains of Canada where I imagine he sits,

stroking a white cat on his lap, while drinking a perfect Manhattan on the rocks. Evil genius or saviour of the the IT service world? You decide!