



TALENT
LEADERSHIP
IN ACTION

Leading through adversity: HR and procurement perspectives.

TLIA December 2024 | London

The final London TLIA event of 2024 was a thought-provoking session where HR, talent acquisition, and procurement leaders shared their personal experiences navigating challenging times. It was clear to all in attendance: It's more important than ever to possess the tools and strategies needed to lead through adversity.

Our event culminated with a captivating speech by Ann Daniels, one of the first women in history to reach the North and South Poles as part of all-women teams. Ann is described by *The Daily Telegraph* as one of the top 20 great British adventurers of all time. Learn how adverse experiences required her to lead with courage, determination, and a pioneering spirit.

Overall, the event focused on critical themes including:

- **Leading through adversity**
- **Simplifying complex processes**
- **Adapting to rapid organisational change**
- **Leveraging design thinking**
- **Building trust and empathy**

Attendees left with actionable insights, renewed motivation, and practical strategies to drive forward in their careers and organisations!

The following summary of the main topics includes key takeaways and recommendations for improvement.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH ADVERSITY.

Speakers discussed how creative collaboration—and effective leadership—can help organisations navigate challenging times. By fostering a supportive community built on conversation and collaboration, leaders can guide their teams through adversity. Developing actionable plans ensures that creative solutions are implemented effectively.

Key takeaways:

- Creative collaboration can lead to innovative solutions during challenging times.
- A strong community built on open conversations provides valuable support.
- Actionable plans are essential for translating ideas into tangible results.

★ Recommendations:

- Encourage regular brainstorming sessions to foster creativity.
- Build a supportive community that relies on collective insights and shared experiences.
- Utilise structured frameworks for discussions to derive actionable plans.

Speaker Quote:

“... remove the assumptions, focus on the intent, and don’t be afraid to ask ... What do you mean? Can I have another go at trying to make sure I understand what you’re saying?”

Tammy Browning, President, KellyOCG

SIMPLIFYING COMPLEX PROCESSES.

Many speakers emphasised that over-complication often hampers efficiency and highlighted the benefits of simplifying workforce management processes. It is important to engage in open discussions with internal stakeholders to align on goals and identify common pain points. This approach not only improves processes but also enhances overall business performance.

Key takeaways:

- Unnecessary complexity should be eliminated to improve efficiency.
- Open communication with internal stakeholders is essential to understand and align on goals.
- Clear action plans should be developed to ensure smooth execution and accountability.

★ Recommendations:

- Periodic reviews of existing processes to identify and eliminate redundancy.
- Establish a culture of open dialogue where team members can discuss pain points and improvement areas.
- Create detailed action plans outlining roles, responsibilities, and timelines.

Speaker Quote:

“One of the things I’ve noticed in all of the corporations I’ve either worked in or with is there is a disease of over-complicating things and creating process on a process on a process, and sometimes going back to basics and simplifying complexity is a great way for you to really effectively remove adversity and make your life easier.”

Julie Smith, CEO, JCS Global Partners

CULTURAL CHANGE AND RESILIENCE.

Speakers highlighted the importance of resilience in navigating cultural changes within organisations. Leveraging existing cultural strengths can help teams adapt to rapid organisational changes. Clear communication and support during transitions can reduce uncertainty and resistance among employees.

Key takeaways:

- Rapid changes require clear strategies and effective leadership.
- Leveraging cultural strengths builds resilience in teams.
- Clear communication mitigates uncertainty and resistance during transitions.

Recommendations:

- Develop change management plans with specific steps and communication strategies.
- Provide regular training programs to build resilience among employees.
- Create support systems, like counselling services, to help employees during transitions.

Speaker Quote:

"It's more about the kind of cultural challenge, and how we've really used that, and leveraged that to build resilience and to help us through some pretty rapid change that we've gone through over the last four years."

Charlotte Johns, Head of Talent and Communications, Elida Beauty

DESIGN THINKING AND NEGOTIATION SKILLS.

Using design thinking as a tool for problem-solving was discussed extensively. Flexibility in negotiation to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes was also emphasised. Balancing financial targets with long-term strategic goals is crucial for sustainable success.

Key takeaways:

- Design thinking can help identify innovative solutions.
- Understanding and aligning priorities is key in effective negotiation.
- Balancing short- and long-term goals ensures sustainable success.

Recommendations:

- Implement design thinking training to enhance problem-solving skills.
- Develop flexible negotiation strategies considering both immediate and future benefits.
- Schedule regular reviews to ensure alignment of short-term targets with long-term strategic goals.

Speaker Quote:

"We question everything. We rip it to pieces, and we make sure it works. And we do that with the procurement team. We do that with the HR team. We do that with the business. So, every contract ... looks and feels a bit different. It's fit for purpose, it's agile, it's quick, it's efficient. And sometimes we do things on a very kind of short-term basis, and sometimes we look at the longer-term solution."

Charlotte Johns, Head of Talent and Communications, Elida Beauty

BUILDING TRUST AND EMPATHY.

The speakers talked about the importance of building trust and empathy by respecting and adapting to various working styles and cultural contexts. Open communication and mutual understanding were highlighted as critical for successful collaboration within diverse teams.

🔑 Key takeaways:

- Respecting and adapting to different cultural contexts is crucial for team dynamics.
- Building relationships based on mutual understanding enhances collaboration.
- Open communication fosters trust and empathy.

★ Recommendations:

- Invest in cultural competence training programs.
- Encourage respect for diversity and adaptation to various working styles.
- Provide platforms for open discussions on cultural expectations and experiences.

By integrating these insights and recommendations, organisations can enhance their leadership capabilities, simplify complex processes, foster a supportive culture, and build stronger, more adaptable teams.

💬 Speaker Quote:

"I think, as a leader, that's ... important. Just check on your team, make sure they're okay ... I asked every single one of them: Do you want to keep going? [Let's] talk about the difficulties that we've all been through—all of us have input, and all of us think about how to keep moving forward."

Ann Daniels, polar explorer, and one of the first women in history to reach the North and South Poles as part of all-women teams

Thanks for taking time to review our December event. You can find information on our next TLIA event [here](#), access additional honest talk and opinions on the world of work on [The Table](#), or visit our website to learn more about [KellyOCG](#).