00:00 Okay, let's go ahead and get started. On behalf of the Suffolk MBA and the Career Development Center, I would like to welcome you to today's session, titled The future of work, optimizing the workplace, through people analytics, the panel will be moderated

00:17 by Katarina Gonzalez, Assistant Professor of Management here at the business school, so your business school, and our two panelists are Noel Perez, who is the PMP director for the HRPMO and HR data and analytics office at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

00:35 and Halle Bregman, who is the Global Head of people analytics at PTC a recording version of this webinar will be available in will be emailed to all registrants next week, so I welcome Katarina to kick us off.

00:51 Thank you Sarah, and welcome again everybody as Sarah mentioned my name is Katerina Gonzalez I'm an assistant professor over in the management and entrepreneurship department and I'm really excited to introduce this panel and our esteemed panelists.

01:09 So, this is centered on people analytics and we know that managing HR related data is critical to any organization success. So we're really focused. Today, on data driven human resource management and the people insights that can help drive change in

01:29 organizations, so making sure that data are high quality and using the right communication channels to disseminate findings are going to really help and motivate decision makers to ask so we're going to touch on that.

01:42 And this panel is really focused on helping you unlock your potential and your organizations. By identifying and developing the skills and capabilities that our best to put people data into action.

01:57 So the panelists are going to be sharing from their own experiences how the field overall has evolved, the value that people analytics, have contributed to their own organizations and where they think the field is going.

02:11 So we're honored to have with us to esteemed panelists. First, Noel Perez.

02:17 He has over 15 years of leadership experience, he attributes, continuous listening and learning as key to his career mobility and success. He has worked in product management global supply chain and software development, and in his latest role as director

02:35 of the PMO and HR data and analytics office at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. He's aimed at driving a cross functional approach to a more data driven agile and product focus human resource management.

02:50 He is actually a 2010 grad of Suffolk's global MBA program and is PMI certified.

02:58 Our next panelist is Dr. Halle Bregman she is the Global Head of people analytics at PTC where she's focused on data driven driven tap transformation and storytelling.

03:09 She leverages for unique background in psychology and data science to understand employee behavior and drive insights and her areas of expertise include diversity, equity and inclusion in digital transformation and AI or artificial intelligence and machine

03:26 learning. She's known for pioneering the use of data to identify and quantify inequities in the workplace, bringing transparency to hit an organizational and cultural challenges.

03:36 She's also recognized as a visionary and crafting full funnel data solutions and innovative technology designed to support team mission via automation skill building and cross functional partnerships.

03:48 Halle is frequently invited to share her expertise on people analytics and enjoys participating in panels such as this one, and podcasts to influence the broader community.

03:58 So, first, it would be great to just have a bit of a glimpse into the panelists career journeys. So perhaps we can start with Halle, so please share with us how your career has evolved over time and how you ended up in the role that you're currently in

04:16 be to be here and thanks so much for having me today and very happy to share, I have a bit of a non traditional path to people analytics although I'm not sure there is such a thing as a traditional path.

04:28 And so, actually started my career as a psychologist, I got my PhD in clinical psychology and focused on child psychology, but really, very quickly learned that I loved research and statistics.

04:42 And so, leaned into that and when I graduated I actually started working at startups and research analytics and data science roles where I was able to apply all those skills I have learned in my early days and psychologist, to the actual workplace, and

05:00 I found I really liked the pace of that things moved a lot faster you're able to test and learn test and learn test and learn. And that really kind of met my hunger for understanding how data actually drives action.

05:14 But as time went on I miss the people. And when people analytics, kind of came onto my radar which at this point few years ago and frankly hasn't been around that much longer than that in its formal capacity and is how to field as it is today.

05:31 It was the perfect marriage of my passion for people in human behavior and understanding what's going on with using those data driven techniques and so I am now the Global Head of people analytics at PTC PTC is about a 7000 person technology company and

05:46 headquartered in Boston with offices across the globe, and I get to think about people strategy and data across the employee lifecycle really really fun, great to have kind of that breadth of experience where I get to think about recruiting and where

06:02 data might help us drive efficiencies or understand who our hires are and how we might better support them as they onboard. I get to think about things like employee engagement and how folks are feeling as they're an employee performance.

06:17 As mentioned, I have a big passion for di and so I've done a lot of work in that space. And then again, thinking about what makes employees leave so I love the part of my role that allows me to again kind of think about the holistic employee picture,

06:31 as well as leverage business partnerships and relationships to drive it forward.

06:41 Awesome, thank you and Noel if you want to just kick off from there and share with us your path. Absolutely. So again, thanks for having me. Thanks to be, for being here and obviously.

06:53 Happy to be on this panel with Halle brain and I I hold in high regard.

06:58 So you know for me I think similar to how you know as you mentioned in my introduction Katerina, I've, I've had several career changes and, but I think at the core that I would want to share today is, I've just always been really curious, and always been

07:12 asking like why. And I think early in my career, you know, I had an early mentor that I always talk to me about learning both upstream and downstream and, and it really gave me great advice on you know you need to know our process.

07:24 A to Z. So you might be in this part of the, the life cycle of something but what's happening upstream and how is it coming to you. And after you touch it, where does it go and and I share that here because then it makes sense when you think about my

07:38 career journey where I was in product management doing new product introduction for a computer hardware and software company, and that was such a great learning experience for me, but then moving out of that manufacturing program manager role.

07:51 I got to do global supply chain and it was actually about a year out from graduating from Suffolk in getting the micro level MBA international marketing.

07:59 And I do want to preface that I swore I swore up and down that I was going to go into marketing. I want to do brand I want to be a designer, so I wanted to move up the chain, like I was, you know, design, delivering the build of a product but I thought

08:11 I want to move up the chain to branding. The reality was, I found myself in my career.

08:17 At this point had been working full time and I was like, do I take a pay cut Do I go into marketing and start fresh as a marketing manager or brand manager somewhere, or do I leverage my expertise that I already had as a manufacturing Program Manager

08:28 doing new product introduction.

08:30 And then just continue that that growth path so I actually moved into logistics, but I'd be honest, I didn't know anything about logistics didn't know anything about supply chain so I needed to learn that, but I was grateful for that opportunity because

08:41 I spent four and a half years traveling to Asia. I was responsible for warehouses in Tokyo and Hong Kong and in Australia. I got to go to mainland China I just got to do a lot of really cool stuff and learn a whole lot, but at the at the core it was always

08:54 about the supply chain. A to Z how are we moving and how we're supporting things.

08:59 I found myself in the last eight years at Blue Cross and in my time here at Blue Cross has really been as a technical pm. And then I really got my feet wet with HR back in 2016 when I rolled out the workday recruiting implementation, and that really,

09:14 you know, have me learned so much about workday recruiting but also the process of hiring and interviewing and what the HR data set would look like. And thankfully I did a good job.

09:26 And I got actually hired into HR as the director of the CMO and HR data analytics so I would say of the last four years now in HR. It's been just really wonderful to just really have an impact on looking at the data, exploring sort of analytical document

09:42 across HR so how do we all understand what we're talking about how do we democratize and create a common set of language and we have you know our data dictionary, what are the metrics, how are we doing the math there.

09:52 I did avoid math for most of my educational time. But now I mean it every day. So I would say that you know over the last couple years it's just been really exciting to work on really these people analytics initiatives that are driving business value

10:04 for the organization, but also for the HR division as a whole. So like how do we continuously learn and improve on what we offer to our employees, so that they are happy and engaged and want to work here right every company wants to be an employer of

10:16 choice. And you know, and that's been really exciting and the people analytics field over the last couple years and being able to add value in that way.

10:24 So even though people may not see human resources as being a data driven organization we actually are and we have such a vast amounts of data and access to employee information that ultimately, use the right way and used for good can really make people

10:39 want to be here because at the end of the day, salaries and you know the whole you work for is one one facet but at the end of the day if you're not happy where you are, you will leave or you'll do a poor job, and every company wants to be high performing.

10:53 Everyone wants operational excellence. So I'm really excited to talk about people analytics today and I love the field government today.

11:01 That's awesome and I love how you both have highlighted these.

11:06 Let's say non traditional path to this field because I it's such a new, new field so a lot of people are coming in from from different industries different functional areas and and really taking the lead in their organizations.

11:23 So I already see questions in the chat and we'll come to those later. I just want to give the panelists a chance to give some insight on what's taking place in their organization.

11:35 So, from here maybe Noel if you could continue to share a little bit about some of the business challenges that your department is helping address. Maybe you can give us an example, or a situation from your experience that highlights how your group is

11:56 adding value using people analytics.

11:59 Yeah, no, absolutely happy, so happy to do so so actually back in, right about, I was about a year into HR, and we started we implemented us at our case management system for our HR team to support all the inquiries that every employee has at any company

12:14 right once my benefits open enrollment. And by implementing the Salesforce case management system that I lead back in 2018, we really started to mind the data and, you know, when you're starting out, we had to do an exploratory analysis, there's a lot

12:28 of people have different opinions on exploratory analysis, but in recognizing that this was new for us was like let's just look at the data by different demographics by different organizational attributes.

12:37 And what I mean by that is, what we did is we just took a broad view. Is there anything related to 10 year. Is there anything related to sort of time in office or you are at work or mobile just to get a sense of, do we have any outliers.

12:49 Right What are our control limits. And what we found that without analysis back in 2019 was, you know, our new hires, and as people within the zero to six month range of the company were only 5% of our organization but there were 25% of all of the questions.

13:10 So then we started really working with the partnership across our, you know recruiting team to say, hey, how is our onboarding process I believe beginnings, we know we have a class, we welcome everyone very warmly into our Boston office we have this beginning

13:22 session. But are we getting to the things that people really need because look at all the questions and FAQs we're seeing on the HR side. Four months later.

13:30 So that's a good example of where we were able to really add value from a people analytics perspective. And it was really, you know, I think it's fairly simple but it's pretty straightforward when you just looking at volume to the relative size of the

13:42 population in this case, our new higher population was 5%, but they're 25% of all of our questions so something's going on there. Let's unpack that and what we did was implemented a whole new workday onboarding module for our new hires integrated that

13:57 onboarding module as a one stop shop for our new hires and but also embedded that in the class. So now during the beginnings, they actually log into work day and make sure everybody can see the resources, the right links and we automated some tasks like

14:12 signing up for your benefits within 30 days or choosing your emergency contact. So just some of those outliers that we thought were important, but it did reduce our call volume by over 15%.

14:21 So then, part of that was an. All right, now I need to measure monitor and adjust. So we track that for the following year. And, you know, we're really happy that ultimately when covert hit in 2020.

14:33 We didn't really have to do much we're like we're doing virtual onboarding we were we were we're we actually felt pretty good and we were set up for it in March.

14:40 but you will get enough predicted that back in 2019.

14:45 That's awesome and it, I'm sure that, well, there's a lot of work that suggests that when people are on boarded properly right they feel like they're socialized properly.

14:56 Within that process then they're going to be more committed later on so I'm sure, in the long term, even though perhaps you haven't measured it yet you're going to see some games in that area.

15:07 Oh, yeah no absolutely yeah so we continue to do engagement surveys, a post actually 30 6090 out from my new hire and we actually do use our workday serving platform for that just because it was easier to automate, but we do continue to measure satisfaction

15:23 after we launched that program and were able to track actually I think it was 95 97% of our new hires had a positive response to the changes we made and their experience.

15:33 So we did continue to track that afterwards. I'm glad you mentioned that Katrina so that's cool that's that's very valid, but the, to your point to there's the social science obviously behind you just feeling supported right and you feeling like this

15:45 company investing time in me, and I'm in its, and you don't have a, for lack of a better phrase buyer's remorse right, you end up in an organization and you're like, I don't know if I want to work here.

15:55 So it's being mindful of that because there's obviously a cost to attrition, as you mentioned that turnover pieces.

16:01 Everything's dollars and cents at the end of the day. Yeah, and at the end of the day if they're able to hit the ground running and get logged into their, their real work acted Timothy's and do less on the onboarding side it's going to be better as well

16:16 for productivity and the bottom line ultimately how the same question for you Do you have a, an example that you can share with us of how people analytics is adding value.

16:29 Yeah, I think, for one, there's a lot of difference in people analytics across companies. So I started and people analytics at wayfarer where I was for several years.

16:41 And then I spent a little bit of time at toast and now with the function at PTC and really founded the function really building it from the ground up here at PTC, but if there was a much more mature organization in terms of the people analytics capabilities,

16:56 as well as data literacy so employees, we're very used to thinking with a data focused mindset.

17:03 I always clarify and say that you know data driven does not mean math right no well you said you stayed away from math for a long time.

17:11 And so a lot of what I do in people analytics is partnership is helping folks answer business questions, and I can probably count on two hands how many times I've actually done a formal statistical analysis in the year I have been at PTC right and so

17:30 there is value to be added but there's a starting line and a finish line right and I am not, I'm not at the starting line at PTC we're not there we've started now, but we're certainly not at the finish line either and so there's a lot to do along the

17:43 way. But PTC, I saw a tremendous opportunity to democratize data to get some of these insights into the hands of our stakeholders. When I joined I had questions about what's my turnover rate What's our representation.

17:58 Basic reporting metrics, but some of the most critical things you can know in order to be able to act. If you don't understand how many folks are leaving, and what those things, you know what's driving them out of the organization, it's really hard to

18:11 think about how do we retain folks better. So I'm actually spent a good part of the last year implementing a platform where we've now enabled the entire organization, every single person in the company to have self service at some level, dependent on

18:26 their seniority and access to part of the organization. And that has really helped. One receive fewer of these more operational questions to give folks the you know the platform for them to be thinking about this in real time themselves apologize.

18:44 There's a, there's an airplane flying by if there's background noise and.

18:50 And also, you know, be a lot more proactively thoughtful, they can say well what are the questions I want to ask, what can I actually find myself. And then, When do I go to highlight for something second order.

19:01 So, I think a lot of the value that my team adds is when folks can say, hey, I've noticed this trend that employees are accepting offers and then they're not starting right there no shows.

19:14 What do we do, and I can actually start to go in and look and see if there are signals earlier on in the candidate funnel process I can see if there are like characteristics across all of the folks who are no shows, etc.

19:28 signals to us that we can look out for as we go forward.

19:32 The other thing I focused a lot on in the last year. And I know you said one project but I feel like it all just blurs together is is diversity, equity and inclusion and this is something I focused a ton on in former companies as well.

19:47 But here we really started to think about the representation, metrics, the way that we're tracking this information as part of the holistic and play story.

19:57 And so a lot of folks want a.

20:00 I say this a lot but want a diversity dashboard a place where they can find metrics and I think it's the worst idea in the world because you separate those metrics out and they're now no longer on the same page as engagement and turnover and retention

20:15 and so I really focus again on that story, pulling all of those metrics together, having a single place where folks can go and say, Hey, what's going on in my organization across the employee lifecycle across all the same dimensions because I highly yes

20:30 I'm a woman, but I am also a, you know, people analytics lead and I am also a mother and I'm also right there's a lot of attributes about me. And when you pull them out.

20:41 I'm so satisfied with this company, etc. When you look at things in silo I think it's really hard to tell the whole story and so I focused a lot on bringing those aspects of information together.

20:54 I commend you for making those transparent as you know a lot of companies are hesitant to disclose any statistics whatsoever on representation of different groups so and we've seen recent articles in the, in the press about different companies that are

21:12 withholding so it's great that you're doing that, maybe we can dig in a little bit. What do you mean by self service so what are you offering your employees, and I was really curious about the new shows too did you what was going on there.

21:26 I'll admit that is a newer question that is coming up in a couple of our different locations so we we have 90 offices across the globe.

21:35 And so, two countries in particular India and Romania we're noticing that that's starting to be a trend and so thinking through that obviously understanding there's lots of other things that play coded, especially in some of those regions and so you're

21:52 really just early stages of picking up on that.

21:55 In terms of self service, what I really mean is, we are all incredibly used to being able to find everything out at the touch of our fingers right I picked up my phone and I can look and see, you know, I don't know how, how many people have looked at

22:13 my LinkedIn profile in the last three days. That is self service right I don't need to go reach out to my LinkedIn Rep. Whoever and say Hey, who's looking at my profile and they pull it for me and then I send it over and it's this long process it requires

22:28 a lot of support requires time, and instead I just want to be able to go pull that myself. The same goes for managers and their teams and again they really want to understand how they can help their employees be their best selves be the most productive

22:42 selves, but also be included, and feel really connected to the purpose and mission of this company. And so when you make folks, jump through hoops and by hoops I really mean HR right traditionally HR was the gatekeeper to a lot of this information, HR

22:57 historically was a personnel department right. You were required responsible for the operational paperwork and onboarding and then providing benefits and, you know, the strategic elements and did there.

23:09 And so, we as HR are really rebuilding transforming this function at PTC, we've gone through a huge embarked on rather we are certainly not done the huge transformation and starting to give folks the ability to access this information themselves build

23:27 trust, so that we are no longer that gatekeeper they understand where there's nothing to hide. Right. And so, and also enables managers scene right you know directors, some of our leadership to be a lot more thoughtful and mindful about the work that

23:43 they're doing.

23:45 I think that's what.

23:47 One thing that you've just mentioned, there is so important that strategic alignment with the overall organization and I think that HR departments are moving from this linear linear approach to serving the organization to actually adding value in a way

24:03 that you know we can, we can increase the, the revenues and decrease costs by making small adjustments fine tuning the way that we manage people.

24:16 So it is one way that this space is growing and the other thing that Noel mentioned earlier, I think it was right after you when you are introducing your, your role.

24:28 You said that we have to do this the right way right and so there is a lot of a now that this is becoming a complex system we're managing different parts.

24:37 We've got to keep ethics in mind as we move forward right. Yeah, no, absolutely. And, you know, similar to how he was so much of what we end up doing and I love that you said that about the math part because so much of what we do, a lot of times is reframing

24:50 reframing the question are we asking the right question. Are you going to even make a decision, quit the data we're providing right because, you know, you know there's only so much resource and time to produce so at the same time, those are all critical

25:03 things that as you know people analytics practitioners and partners across the business that we want to have that conversation and be comfortable doing that consulting, but to the point about the strategy and tallies point right is is my turnover really

25:16 high in one department, or with one team that's costing the company money cost of higher cost of turnover, and we can be proactive and really find out why because maybe it's not the manager and maybe it's not even the team is the job comms correctly is

25:30 even the right job description are we asking for too much. Right. You know those things happen and HR needs to be that strategic partner as well to be a lookout for that other scenarios that you talked about being strategic would also be that you know

25:43 how do we move from being transactional where the manager saying, I want to hire somebody and you know they come to HR for that transaction, and really talking about workforce planning, what are the skills of the future.

25:54 What are we going to need not just now but two or three years out and how do we prepare for that based on sales growth based on revenue growth right, all of those things come into really come into play, and how we look for that but also the risk to the

26:07 organization, you know, most people may not know this but Blue Cross used to have a pension plan and we no longer have one but we used to have a pension plan so we have a lot of retirement eligible folks, and a lot of them are in certain divisions.

26:20 So when you think about from a risk perspective, you know, we say a lot Applecross one size fits none. So one of the things are is what's happening in this division.

26:28 Matter of fact, this small team of 20 people out 60% is retirement eligible. What's the strategy let's not wait for all of that, that brain knowledge to leave the organization let's plan for that, so that we don't have a risk to operations.

26:42 So those are those some of those strategic ways that HR and human resources uses data to influence the business, and it's again less transactional for us, us waiting for like a VP Senior VP to call us.

26:53 We know that and we're reaching out proactively.

26:57 If I, if I may, piggyback off of that. I think one of the biggest ways we think differently from transactional to strategic and that I really focus on is moving from the single person, Noel, Holly right to the aggregate the trend.

27:14 And so when you talk about that division of 20 people, you do not talk about, you know, Person A within that division, you talked about what's going on across that division and 20 people fairly small right and so you've got to be really thoughtful about

27:31 about ethics and confidentiality and so when I say we democratize the data right we gave a lot of insight and information to the organization in a self service way.

27:41 None of that is individually identifiable right because it does not matter how I personally identify or my you know my very specific information as your manager.

27:52 You know that, or some of that already, but there's other things you don't need to know.

27:58 And I think that's really critical and building trust. It's another piece with our engagement platform with kind of again these reporting elements these automated pieces.

28:07 We spent a lot of time on how to use them but even more time on the.

28:13 This is for aggregate trends we are not going to be disclosing how you identify or your compensation or your performance to a broad audience right this is very specifically looking for trends across the organization.

28:29 Yeah, that's, that's a nice way to put it, and I, there's so much we can get into but I really just want to move forward.

28:40 Because there are some questions that are related to the next topic that we were going to cover, somebody has asked, and maybe we can address we've talked about this a little bit, but maybe you can address this and then in the next response here.

28:55 So do you need to know statistics in order to be successful in this field now I'm sold right based on what you all are saying I this is the field that I think a lot of people are looking to get into.

29:07 And so maybe you can just describe some of the expectations that hiring managers have around data literacy. What are some of the skills that you or people that are hiring for this area expect job candidates to have is someone that wants to, what can somebody

29:29 that wants to move into the space do to prepare.

29:34 You can learn, and you look Noel and I probably have two very different perspectives here, but me coming from a very technical scientific background and well coming from, from a more applied now moving into the mathematical space.

29:47 You know, I love natural language processing as much as the next person, I think it is so fun to build some of these algorithms comb through and, you know, find interesting insights, do all kinds of things, complex, take hours, days, weeks, right, frankly

30:02 months to get some of these projects actually from from start to end.

30:08 But 99% of the time, that is way too complicated for what we need. Either we as a business, and where the business is at today on the journey where we as an insight right maybe I can get an insight that is 80% of the way after it.

30:23 By simply looking at some means, right, or the distribution of something over, yeah.

30:28 a group by statement is really what I think about.

30:33 And if I can get 80% of the way there and then I could use some real complex analytics and get us 95% of the way there. I'm like, how much, how much is that 15% game worth.

30:43 And so I actually always say symbol is better. And I use Python right I use sequel, I've used are in the past, these are certainly tools that some teams are definitely looking for and others are real happy starting in Excel.

30:59 I think bare minimum you've got to have some Excel skills.

31:04 And then you've got that I think the willingness to learn, and there's so many tools out there for folks to keep learning, and I, you know, nearly 20 years into my career, still push myself to learn all the time, because we're, you know, constantly evolving

31:32 And so there's certainly no surplus of people who have done people analytics to fill all of these roles right these are all going to be people coming in new to this field, either from something technical before or from something less technical and so

31:46 kind of putting your heads together and and demonstrating that willingness to learn is critical.

31:52 Totally agree with you have the in and I would echo yes and everything you said.

31:58 But also, you know, recognizing that you know I don't have that mathematical background, although I think I was sharing with some of the folks that I plan on actually going back to school in August.

32:07 To do a graduate certificate in data analytics and I started a Python class actually online as part of our even, we have a learning platform at my company.

32:15 So it's free.

32:16 So, you know, I want to get there but to have these point is valid. What's the business sophistication, what's your HR sophistication so you think about it as a maturity model or is the organization ready for that, and knowing that organizations are in

32:28 various stages of maturity and knowing that the maturity model for business analytics isn't linear.

32:34 So when I think about the roles and the skills. Some organizations I can use most organizations start off small but a lot more mature organizations, I know how you've seen this as well.

32:42 You need that data scientist, because you know you need predictive modeling and you want to get there. over time, how do I predict how do we become more prescriptive, but you still need that project manager consultant, the person who can really partner

32:55 with the business, you know, and going back to my comment earlier about one size does not fit all.

33:00 If someone can really do all these things that they, they're probably not really a data scientist anymore I think there was a great post recently, how do we saw on LinkedIn right where it's like, if you're really asking your data scientist whose core

33:11 and also desire is to script in code, they're probably not the same person who's going to be then presenting to your executive team and sitting in front of your CEO to show the insights, because they probably don't want to really want to do that in the

33:24 first place and if they can, or they really an individual contributor anymore being a data scientist, are they running the department.

33:26 Are they really an individual contributor anymore being a data scientist, are they running the department. So I think those are the things that were to his point about the maturity of the function of different companies in different industries, you're starting to see new roles pop up, you know, a product owner and analytics pm.

33:42 The data scientist role is there a data engineer, I don't think we've settled on the language at Holly I think we're seeing a lot of different naming conventions workforce planning.

33:51 I can't keep track of all the titles that are being used today, but I think the important thing for for everyone on the, you know, on today who's here is to recognize that there's lanes, and that one size doesn't fit all.

34:02 So you may want to make sure you brush up on your Excel skills and you understand how to use data to tell the right story but you might be in that consultant lane.

34:11 Really partnering with the business and getting that why, what do they need Why do they need it to then partner with your more technical, you know partner is an analyst, to then build right build that new report do the analysis to generate those insights

34:26 and there's a lot of that partnership and collaboration that you see when you're building a new technology for example, you know you don't have a system analyst and a business and those two roles for a reason.

34:34 Someone needs to play that translation.

34:37 So I think there's a lot of opportunity for all the students on the call today to get involved, but also carve out their niche based on what they're actually passionate about.

34:47 Yeah and you mentioned earlier that a lot of the work that you're doing is not necessarily prescriptive it's descriptive at the moment right and you can use basic Excel skills to do that kind of work so it's a matter of getting your foot in the door right

35:04 and then figuring out what resources do I need to solve the, the problems that are at stake and maybe I don't need to get into full coding but maybe some statistics classes, wouldn't wouldn't hurt so much.

35:22 So, the next thing that I I'd like for you ought to share your thoughts on before we move on to the q amp A is, where do you think this field is going over the next five years 10 years.

35:39 It's a very young field right so

35:45 I have so many thoughts here. I'll let you go alley.

35:48 Um, it is only getting more and more elevated so the growth people on Alex has seen in the last year because of Kobe, because of our shift to remote work, and the critical role that HR has played in that.

36:05 It's really become a strategic partner, and a no longer nice to have but starting to be very much a must have within an HR team. I actually think that, well, historically, a lot of our ch arrows come from business partner and ta backgrounds right to have

36:24 the most common that skill sets that business partner role is very much what people analytics does as well. Simply with data. And so I think our next generation of ch arrows and people leaders are actually going to draw from our people analytics leaders

36:42 of today, and that is only going to continue to make this capability more and more just fundamental to the work that we do as a field I think the questions we're going to be able to ask and answer are going to get more and more sophisticated and with

36:57 technology. There is a boom in HR technology and then people analytics technology. And so the technical capabilities will just get better and better aloneness to collect more and more data answer more and more questions, but it's going to be right there,

37:12 you know, at the at the table with the executives talking about how this is actually helping the company elevate.

37:22 I think that's, that's so true and so valid I, you know what I think about or I get excited about is obviously technologies like new graph technologies that we have around organizational network analysis and how do you really measure collaboration and

37:35 so much of the conversation I know that a lot of us have experienced over the last year with coven and remote working was the culture, and what's happening to the culture.

37:43 And so much of that needs to be demystified because its culture really about people in a building, and if you're a multinational global firm, nobody's ever in the same building.

37:52 So really what how do you really measure culture. And what do we really value right what's the vision or strategy for the company to then understand then using tools and technology and people analytics to measure that.

38:03 And to understand what what levers to pull you know new, new policies new benefits new offerings. What do people really care about. so I'm really excited about the graph technologies, looking at oh and a or organizational network analysis to the cup measuring

38:16 collaborations and silos. I think the the biggest piece that I also I tend to read a lot about and I'm staying close to how he mentioned was a lot of the ethics in AI and machine learning, understanding that there's bias and the algorithms understanding

38:29 that we don't want to be punitive that we don't want to have, you know, things that are identifying the an employee specifically, and we're really it's all about how do we create the right organizational culture and momentum to deliver value so that the

38:43 businesses in is in business for the long term. Really, that's why we're that's what we're here for. And that you want to have the, you know, everybody wants to 18.

38:51 But do I have the environment for where the a team can really flourish. Right. So I think that's really where the people analytics is moving to and doing it in the right way.

39:00 Yeah, that I love, thank you for that and it really highlights the, the way that this field can be a vehicle for social change at large right if we're doing the right things that organizations and allowing people to climb and in a more organic way in

39:20 a way that makes sense for them.

39:23 Then we're going to see overall the benefits across society. So with that, let's transition to the q&a portion of this session. Please start I seen seen a few questions already so we'll answer those in just a bit.

39:38 Please start posting your questions in the chat, and I can.

39:44 I think I should be able to unmute you so that you can post them to the channel is the panelists. Alternatively, Sarah might be able to help you here with this.

39:57 But while you start posting questions I'd also like to just briefly announced that complementing this this topic and and this webinar we will be launching a people analytics course at Suffolk next spring.

40:10 I'll be teaching it in the course.

40:12 We're going to cover many conceptual issues that we've talked about today, that may arise across the HR lifecycle, such as how to manage recruitment tiring performance employee engagement and attrition, as well as will cover some of the statistical analyses

40:31 and techniques that could help you as a practitioner to engage in more effective inferences and storytelling. So, we hope that it'll be a fun class for all.

40:43 And with that, let me just start AC Raphael has have it has a question here let me see if we can.

40:53 Does that work is you able to come on up.

41:00 We should probably just read it out loud and answer it. Okay, I'll read it I'll read okay.

41:04 I wasn't sure if he could come on unmuted. Okay.

41:09 If I Sanchez would like to know how important our soft skills and people analytics and should students interested in these roles only focus on their technical skills.

41:23 So I would say soft skills are extremely important. I think it's one of the most important because, you know, at the end of the day and I think I've said this before in other forums where it is all about the people, and you know I think I've said before,

41:35 like the best technology and the best process will never address the person in the seat, not wanting to do their job today. So soft skills the relationship building you heard how he talks about is so critical, because at the end of the day, you're really

41:49 trying to influence decisions and advise and consult. And that's all soft skills. So coming in with just pure data and numbers and being super excited and pumped about it, is probably the best way right it's understanding your audience.

42:04 What does this person really care about. I mean, I be honest use all of the soft skills I've learned through my years both professionally and even in school.

42:12 When I think back to like your, some of your Myers Briggs test, or even you know the quadrant is somebody more analytical are they more amiable, because I know one of my main stakeholders is very analytical, I cannot come into our presentation without

42:25 pre read for that person because they need time to digest, to then listen to my presentation. But I also know I don't need that for everyone. So soft skills are paramount to your success because the best coding and the best data insights will not land, If you don't know how to deliver the story.

42:41 story. I think the, the most important soft skill is storytelling right you you ended right on a high note because it is. I very often don't give my stakeholders, any numbers.

42:55 Once I've done the work for them. Right, I might say okay I found this insight and let me tell you a story. And the actual numbers underlying the story or not the most important part of it is that ability to communicate with the people who are in my audience,

43:08 and for technical stakeholders. Absolutely. I've got that my T's and cross my that my i's and cross my T's right, they'll be able to ask me the technical questions and I've got to have answers for them, but for the majority of my stakeholders and the

43:23 number does not matter if the insight that comes out of it does.

43:28 Here's a great question. It's very valid, I can relate to Holly's one because I've had some folks on my technical audience like what's the error margin and you're like, I don't have it right I know I did a where is it but you like so it's, you know we've

43:40 all been caught since, like, I'll get back to you on that.

43:47 Thank you and then Nick Lucas also has a question about how this. This field is applied in different sectors.

43:57 So he asks about government and nonprofit versus for profit

44:03 think there's great example if you think about nonprofit there's usually a pretty significant development team as an example right folks we're out there fundraising so that the business can do the work.

44:14 And folks have different relationships. Some of those relationships are incredibly key to the success of the organization, probably some of the major donors, but also some of the more well connected, really, you know folks who have relationships, using

44:28 something like organizational network analysis and a situation like that can really help you identify who are your key points of failure, right if Noel has all the major relationships, and there just wasn't insight into that before.

44:42 You now know that one, you've probably got to share some of those relationships so if Noel, God forbid leaves you still keep those relationships within your business.

44:53 But also, you, you know, can support Noel, and make sure that he's got the support and make sure your customers and you know all those donors feel supported I'm giving you.

45:03 You know, one example here, there are examples, everywhere. So this is certainly not an industry specific application, people are the core of every kind of business, government nonprofit healthcare technology, every kind of business and so understanding

45:21 your people is critical to keeping the lights on.

45:25 Yeah, absolutely. I did oh and echo everything, how he said it's all about the people and all about the skills you need to do the job you need to do so.

45:33 If you're in healthcare insurance high tech government nonprofit, there's still skills required to complete the work, whatever the work is and using the data to influence that and driving the right story and insights to drive the value as defined by the

45:48 business and that's why I mentioned earlier about decision making criticality and. Is this just, I'm curious, or do we have a business need and we need to answer a critical question around membership or customer satisfaction that that's that's applies

46:02 to every every area and every function of an organization that needs to sustain over time.

46:10 So, I there's a good question here from Canada nor, I hope I'm pronouncing it correctly. how do you make sure that data is not individually identifiable for smaller groups and I'm sure that it will you work for the organization so there is a bit of a

46:26 conflict of interest there with some of the, the data that you are privy to So, what can you do to put kind of protections in place, even if you're working with data internally like that.

46:44 I'd happy to share so there's a couple things we do as a function.

46:49 Anyone who has access to.

46:50 Because of the nature of the role right so there's always the, you know, the call of like, you need you have you may have enough data that you need to do the function of your job, but we also take additional measures like everyone who has access to HR

47:02 data signs a you know NDA and an additional confidentiality agreement, even down to every it partner. So even a system admin who does the technology support on the back end has a file that we knew every single year from a compliance and policy perspective

47:18 that just makes sure that there's that contract right with that says hey you're seeing things most people can't see. So we do some of those common controls, but also we there's sort of thresholds that every company sort of makes where they draw a line

47:29 in the sand and you're just saying, you know, we're not going to show information for any team smaller than 10, or any team smaller than five so there's different ways where you can put controls in your reporting structure or in your systems where you

47:41 know you agree that we're not going to go below a certain threshold because it does become identifiable, even when you didn't want to. So there's different pieces like that and then the last thing I would say that I know I'm very passionate about we do

47:51 and because we're in health insurance and we care about PCI pH I.

47:55 We actually don't include the details. So when you have these point earlier you see a summary report is aggregate trends or turnover percent by different demographics, but the ability to drill in.

48:06 So you can, you might you can't actually see that it's employee number, a and it's Noel Perez so you're just removing that data set from the column. So somebody just sees totals, and percent of totals and not actually the detailed reports so you just

48:18 turn and turn that functionality off which is I think one point we maybe hit on, but I'm we can drive home here. A lot of people analytics leaders, most people analytics leaders to be successful, are tech savvy understand digital solutions, because you

48:32 are also overseeing that part in the role, you know it's tech isn't over and it you know you're overseeing the implementation of the technology suite that supports the analytics, how we added a new I'm sure you can add more to this.

48:43 Yeah, I mean, so technology does a great job at security, and so there are technology and security experts out there, that is not me right that is not Noel.

48:53 And so, I'm not trying to build my own automated solution where I might introduce risk. I work really closely with our legal and privacy partner. So, our chief privacy officer, when we design, technological solutions when we say, Hey, we're going to have

49:11 this minimum, a team must be five people before somebody can have access. Well, now what happens if you go in there.

49:18 And let's say you've got five employees and your team, and you want to filter by gender male female non binary.

49:26 And then all of a sudden you've broken it into two and three are solutions, literally blank out you cannot apply a filter like that. Another interesting example somebody recently came to me.

49:37 And it was a leader who had a large organization and they had five direct reports right and each of their five direct reports had teams. One of those direct reports only had three people on their team.

49:48 And when they logged into their solution, they expected to see the numbers for the other four teams.

49:55 Now, you can look overall, you can look at your four teams can pretty easily back into what are the numbers for that 13. And so what the solution actually does is only show three teams.

50:07 It was you know at random. And so just one of those teams was not available in that particular view, because that way you could not discern of the remaining, which were on each of the two teams so there's a lot of ways that technology gets really smart

50:22 about protecting privacy and I you know it's our job to understand what the technology can do to make sure we configure it correctly, but the technology is really kind of stuff is actually how I've chosen solutions, a lot of my time is being like, I don't

50:36 to build this in house because my in house solution is not going to be a secure and if all the things that we need security around it is employee information.

50:50 Awesome. Um, so, um, there is another one here that came in from earlier, how, how drastically has the field change with remote work. And how do you use utilize analytics to optimize the efficiency of, I guess the new workforce.

51:10 The new way of.

51:14 I mean I would say that the field has, has changed for kind of two ways I think the way I think about this question one. I think having said this earlier right from a job security perspective, you have to kind of turn people away.

51:26 So I think the because of covert and understanding employee satisfaction and engagement is key to retention, and we're all competing for the same skills really, you know, the working from home has really allowed competitors that maybe we didn't come and

51:41 play in your space.

51:42 Take some of your talent. Right now we're seeing a lot of organizations, post jobs as yeah you can be in Menlo Park, you might want to be in Washington State of Oregon, but will also take someone remote.

51:52 So someone like us Blue Cross and Massachusetts we pretty much played in the New England area, and we're, you know, a hybrid workforce but now it's, I might actually be might lose talent to someone in the Silicon Valley company, or and but I also have

52:06 have a advantage of that now I can post a remote role, and I could hire somebody who works in Colorado, Texas. So I think that's when I think about the how, remote work changed.

52:15 It's definitely opened the field up from talent acquisition and hiring and recruiting perspective, but also it's made it more important for organizations to care about their talent.

52:24 Like you no longer can just be like, Oh, you should just be happy to have a job. I'm like really, because I'm turning people away. So I think it's it's it's really been a great it's really been a really powerful shift.

52:35 You know how we I'd love to hear your perspective on this and

52:40 yeah i think it's it's more than anything just accelerated the work that we're doing and it takes time to set up a real strong people analytics team right and and function and foundation, you can't just jump into the predictive analytics day one, but

52:54 it has meant that our surveys are even more critical right asking employees for their voice, and I think really there's a few different data types we work with we've got that active and we're folks are offering information to us passive we're we're listening

53:10 to collect this is where oftentimes organizational network analysis comes into play. And then simply objective what's going on, what are the facts. What was this person assigned and they're less performance review.

53:20 I wouldn't call that the most objective process in the world but the, the final rating is relatively objective and so I'm putting that all together, to understand, again, the world is open people can apply anywhere now and work anywhere.

53:37 And that again is a mutual relationship so we think a lot about the future of work. The other thing that has really shifted in the last, you know, year especially is the focus on skills.

53:47 This is the hot topic right now, but it's no longer about hiring for a job, but hiring for skills that can be applied to projects, the internal talent marketplace has become something that is a retention tool because I highly, maybe done with people analytics

54:04 in two years, and I may say, Well, let me go back to that were maybe Noel will say actually let me go into marketing now that I've done this for a while.

54:13 And he doesn't necessarily have to leave Blue Cross Blue Shield to do that. And that is really a unique concept that's just, you know, we're tipping the iceberg.

54:22 Maybe he actually can stay in people analytics and take on a marketing project. You know 25% of his time, 75% of his time like compile all of the different skills and interests you have this is you know, we talked about the gig economy.

54:35 And to date that has been up work and fiber and all of these sites that you have to go out of the workplace for what if that internal company is made up of the gig economy and, I think, as you know, the industrial workforce has shifted broadly, and that's

54:51 going to come more and more into play.

54:54 Yeah, yeah and i mean if we can increase our organizational tenure. We're enhancing our collective memory institutional memory and, and we have lower tuition costs so it's so it's a win win win.

55:08 So I think we're at the end of the time today, flew by. I know I really did and we still have questions, but as we wrap up.

55:20 Maybe we can just answer them directly to these folks. Thank you. Holly and Noel so so much for being with us today for this panel I was just, it was a fun conversation, and I look forward to connecting with you going forward and as always, thank you

55:40 for being part of the sofa community Noel and Holly for joining us today and you're part of the family now too so we're having this and I just wanted to mention Noel and I co organized the Boston people analytics Meetup group.

55:54 It's all virtual for the moment will be a session in June, so I welcome you to come learn more we're always happy to chat.

56:01 We can share the link. Absolutely. So, we were on the Boston coupon analytics meetup and we have a session, we have meetings, once a quarter we have recovered topics related to people analytics and how we use data and HR so if you're really passionate