

Announcer ([00:21](#)):

On today's episode of Tune in Tuesday, we're joined by SHRM president and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. as he shares key updates around the SHRM21 speaker lineup and discusses the importance of leadership and personal growth with Jennifer Lee, director of learning and development at JB Training Solutions, and Alden Mills, executive coach, former Navy SEAL, leadership speaker, and CEO at Alden Mills, LLC. But first, your Tune in Tuesday host, Christopher Lopez.

Christopher Lopez ([01:00](#)):

Hello, and welcome to SHRM's Tune in Tuesday. If you're joining us for the first time, thank you for tuning in, and if you're returning, welcome back. My name is Christopher Lopez. In today's episode, we're going to focus on leadership and development through a panel discussion led by none other than SHRM president and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor Jr. During last month's program, SHRM Chief Knowledge Officer, Dr. Alex Alonzo, discussed mental health support in the workplace with SHRM foundation partners, the Honorable Patrick Kennedy of One Mind, and Marjorie Morrison of Psych Hub.

Christopher Lopez ([01:32](#)):

In case you missed that episode, I encourage you to watch the replay at any time on this page. SHRM knows firsthand the importance of the work HR professionals like you are doing around the globe, that's why we want to be your lifelong career partner. Through your membership, you will receive immediate access to the resources and related tools that will support you in your day-to-day role, connecting you to a community of 300,000 plus members across the globe, to stay on the leading edge of the profession, creating impact in your workplace and communities.

Christopher Lopez ([02:09](#)):

You can rely on SHRM for access to interactive tools, compliance resources, the latest research like our blue-ribbon commission report on racial equity, professional development, and my personal favorite, membership benefits, one-to-one guidance from expert HR knowledge advisors, and so much more, including the SHRM Executive Network just launched last month. This exclusive executive membership offering is geared specifically to HR executives and business partners who support HR leaders as they continue to shape the future of work. Learn more about each of SHRM's membership offerings and join or renew your membership today.

Christopher Lopez ([02:51](#)):

Now, before we get started, let's take a quick tour around the platform. First, if you're looking to add captions to your viewing experience, hover over the player window to find the CC icon. You could click on the button to turn the caption feature on. Now, to the right here, you'll see our chat window where you can communicate with your fellow attendees and toggle to the other conversations to ask your questions throughout the show. Just below that window is our polling feature. Let's test it out right now by answering the following question. What are you most excited about for SHRM21 Annual Conference & Expo? Use your cell phone camera to scan the QR code and submit your answer.

Christopher Lopez ([03:35](#)):

Lastly, below the video screen, we have upcoming dates, announcements, and resources related to this episode for you to explore. So, be sure to mark your calendars. Now, let's get into today's discussion. As we're on the road to SHRM21, we hear at Tune in Tuesday are interested in bringing you content that you can expect to experience at annual conference, taking place in person in Las Vegas and virtually online from September 9th through the 12th. SHRM president and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor Jr., is here to share some key updates surrounding our main stage before heading into a discussion with two of our mega session speakers around leadership and personal growth. I personally cannot wait to hear what he has to say. Johnny, welcome back to the Tune in Tuesday program.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([04:32](#)):

Thank you, Chris. We're so happy to see you all today and I personally am happy to be back on the Tune in Tuesday program. But before we get into today's exciting conversation, I have some key highlights I'd love to share with you, each of you, and our Tune in Tuesday audience. Now, this is our 12th episode of this program. Believe it or not, 12. After the cancellation of our SHRM20 Annual Conference, my team got together and said we needed to find a way for all of us to stay connected and informed. So, what did we create? Our very own monthly show, and it has given us a great opportunity to keep you updated on all things work and to allow each of you a chance to catch up with each other, exchange advice, and ask our speakers questions in our chat.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([05:24](#)):

I want to thank all of you for watching, listening, and sharing. It's been a joy for us, me in particular, to connect with you each month in the lead up to our SHRM21 Annual Conference and Expo. Speaking of SHRM21, we've just announced two keynote speakers who bring some amazing leadership experience and insight to our conference. We'll be welcoming the co-founder of the Life Is Good company, Life is Good, we've seen the t-shirts, Bert Jacobs. They call him the CEO, but it's not CEO like you think, Chief Executive Officer. He's the Chief Executive Optimist. At a time when every business is doubling down on workplace culture, Bert will explore how to harness the power of optimism to lead and collaborate in the workplace.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([06:15](#)):

Also joining us on the main stage will be Brian Niccol, CEO of Chipotle Mexican Grill, and Marissa Andrada, Chief Diversity, Inclusion and People Officer at Chipotle Mexican Grill. We'll be sitting down with these guests and other HR and business leaders for a conversation on workplace culture, resilience, and the crucial partnership between HR and the C-suite. That's something we focus on through our Together Forward @Work initiative which you'll hear more about later in this episode. We still have a few speakers on the lineup that we haven't announced just yet, so stay tuned. I promise you it's going to be great. You'll be surprised.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([06:57](#)):

We'll be releasing those names soon and I promise they're going to blow you away. Now, to get into today's program, with 2020 now behind us, and I know many of us are happy about that, I know you and your businesses are eager to jump into a transformed work landscape. And you're also thinking about your own personal growth and development in this new post-pandemic era. So I'm happy, in fact, honored, to sit down with two experts who are part of our mega session speaker lineup for SHRM21. The first is Jennifer Lee.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([07:35](#)):

Jennifer is the Director of Learning and Development at JB Training Solutions. And Alden Mills, an executive coach, a former Navy SEAL, leadership speaker, and CEO at Alden Mills, LLC. By the way, having just left Memorial Day, thank you very much for your service, Alden.

Alden Mills ([07:55](#)):

Thank you, Johnny.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([07:57](#)):

I am so thrilled to get into today's discussion with both of you. So, welcome Alden and Jennifer, to our program.

Jennifer Lee ([08:05](#)):

Thank you.

Alden Mills ([08:06](#)):

Great to be here, Johnny.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([08:08](#)):

Well, it's great to see you all. So, here's the deal, here's a question for both of you, and we'll do ladies first. Managers play an outsized role in defining company culture and the employee experience. In your opinion, what separates a standard people manager from a stand-out people manager? How do you assess these skills within your organization? So it's two part- standard, stand out, and then how do you assess these people within your organization? Jennifer?

Jennifer Lee ([08:41](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Thanks so much. I think a lot of times what happens in organizations is we have people who are amazing individual contributors. They're really good at their job. They've got great skills. Then as organizations, what we say is, "You should lead a team. You're going to do great." And we promote them. So we make them in charge of two people, three people, maybe even a team of five. And sometimes, they're able to shift and move from what is called doing, into this idea of leading. Right? Individual contributors, they are good at doing their jobs. And so, sometimes they're able to pivot and I think that pivot makes you a stand-out leader as opposed to just a people manager.

Jennifer Lee ([09:20](#)):

Those people managers that aren't able to pivot, a lot of times they're not great delegators, they still hoard some of the work for themselves because they really enjoy it and they're good at the technical skills. The stand-out leaders, I think, are able to do a few fundamental things when they people manage. One, they're able to proactively delegate as opposed to that reaction. "I've had a bad day, gather around people, I can't handle all this work anymore, so I'm just going to give work out." So they proactively delegate. I think they're really good at being able to give feedback in a timely manner, especially right now during the pandemic where everybody's gone virtual. Some people are good at it, some people aren't.

Jennifer Lee ([09:58](#)):

But being able to connect with their people is so incredibly important. I also think that they're able to make sure that they are showing up not only with empathy, but this ability to keep people accountable. That's been a big one in 2020 and into 2021. I don't bump into you in the office to have those casual conversations, so how do I make sure I'm really empathetic to everything that's happening and still keep people accountable? So, I think that pivot is really, really important when it comes to those stand-out people managers. They're able to say, "Okay, I'm going to let some stuff go and truly let people be great at their jobs and I'm going to help them get to the next level as well."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([10:36](#)):

Love it. Alden?

Alden Mills ([10:38](#)):

I love what Jennifer said on that pivot. I call that pivot the difference between the hero and the guide. She mentioned, "Hey, we're the doer. We're doing all these great things." But now once you get into that position where it's time to not just manage yourself but also lead, it's about guiding and helping others and helping them succeed, helping them get the credit. One of the things you can watch for right away is hearing everyone... when you hear the letter I. "Oh, I did this. I did that." Instead of, "Look at my team, look what we did. Oh, Deborah, was so great here and Annie was so great there." Be on the lookout for who's going after the credit.

Alden Mills ([11:26](#)):

There's a big shift that occurs when you go from hero to guide. It is on this continuum of selfishness, "Hey, it's about me. I want to always be in the spotlight," to selflessness. When you see that, and just think of it like a number line, and say, "How selfless has this person been? How much have they been trying to enable their team to go out and perform above and beyond?" Some of these things can be... they can get hard to measure. But one of the other standouts that I talk about, and she mentioned a very important word, empathy, is the standouts start to not just connect mentally, but they connect emotionally and they start to get into the heart of each of their teammates to push them beyond what they originally thought.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([12:18](#)):

Alden, you said something that is so counterintuitive. I think if you asked a group of Americans, a group of 2,000 of them, "Do you want to be a hero or do you want to be a guide?" Everyone's going to gravitate toward being a hero, right? That word has so much more importance and positive connotation in our community, and our society, I should say. And what you all have, in a counterintuitive way is, you've suggested, "No, the guide is actually the superstar." So it really requires that we retrain the way people think because everyone wants to be the hero. Speaking of, Mr. Navy SEAL, right? That's what we romanticize, if you will, in movies and everything is being the hero.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([13:05](#)):

So I'm really glad you talked about that, is why it's actually better to be a guide than to be the hero. So let me segue out into that as a follow-up. As a former Navy SEAL commander, you've been highly trained in a range of disciplines designed to lead platoons and missions, to guide them. And now you're a CEO.

For any active service members of veterans listening, how can they translate their military skills and experience into leadership roles in the civilian workplace? Because we hear a lot where people said, "My gosh! I feel really... I'm pissed." And you're like, "Why?" "Because I decided to give my life to this country, to defend our country and every citizen in the country, and then I come back after serving and I can't get a job."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([14:00](#)):

What can we do, and those without military experience, learn from veterans to enhance our own leadership skills and personal growth? So, two part, what can we do? But for those who are sitting out there who have valiantly served our country, what can they do? Because there's a mismatch. We're all committed to veterans, right? We owe our very quality of life and existence to people who have joined the country's military and provide a military service. But there's a disconnect.

Alden Mills ([14:29](#)):

Three things, three things that I really want all vets who are listening to understand. Number one, they know something that a lot of folks coming straight out of college haven't even really experienced, and that is the selflessness serving for something greater than themselves. The great organizations out there create cultures where nobody's worried about who gets the credit. They're focused on, "Look what we can do with our product or our service for our customer. Look at the dent we can make in our universe." That's signed up for that. They get that.

Alden Mills ([15:08](#)):

So, on that continuum that I talked about with selfishness and selflessness, they're way over here on the selfless society. They get that, right? So that right in itself is a way that when you bring a vet in, know that you, Mr. Employer or Mrs. Employer, need to be ready to talk about the higher purpose of what your business is all about, what these values are. And know that vets are going to be curious to say, "Hey, I hear you on the aspirational side, but how actual are these values? We'll jump into that gap. They can help you there and they can set that example. That's part one. Part two of what vets do is they've worked in large organizations.

Alden Mills ([15:55](#)):

The US military is one of the largest bureaucracies in the world. They know the complexity of working through all kinds of different departments to get a job done. Finally, part three is, they're self-starters. They are given opportunities to go just get... At the lowest levels, they're already leaders. So I need them to understand, you have a different vocabulary, you've got this military vocabulary, but it directly translates to what you can do in the civilian world - you just have to be patient to learn a new vocabulary. On the employer side, know that you have this military, highly acronym-based vocabulary.

Alden Mills ([16:41](#)):

Be patient and teach them your vocabulary and you'll be surprised at how quickly they can be team players for you and move your ball down the court to get to the point where you're really looking to go as an organization.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([16:59](#)):

No, it's interesting that implicit in all of that is this notion of empathy that Jennifer mentioned in the beginning. You need employers to spend time walking in the shoes of, seeing life through the lens of, someone who's not been in the military and who's been in the military and vice versa. So everyone has got to try to experience each other's... the world from their vantage point before we can actually make progress. Thank you so much for that. Jennifer, here's a question for you. You talked about it earlier when you talked about the individual contributors, people who are really, really good, they are the doers, and how do they translate somehow... and some successfully, some not so successfully, into people managers and leaders?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([17:45](#)):

Well, so here's a question for you. In building a leadership career, everyone has to start somewhere. Rarely did you get the opportunity in your first job to lead. How can an individual who's not currently in a leadership position begin to develop the skills they will need to lead a team or an organization?

Jennifer Lee ([18:06](#)):

Yeah, I think we need to think about leadership in different ways, especially if you're not at the C-suite, you're not a senior manager, you haven't gotten to that point in your career, and looking at leadership and leading as a verb. It's not necessarily a title, it's a verb. So, how can I then step into that action? What does that look like? I think there's a few ways to do that. One, when you see problems that are happening within your role or with a client or on your team, show up with solutions, be a solution finder, help your team in that way.

Jennifer Lee ([18:40](#)):

I think that's one big way to lead, is to help find solutions to make everything better for the people you work with and the organization you work for. I think you can be a really great listener, not only for your team, but if you have your clients' needs, and hear what those things are, and then be able to communicate those up. We're talking a lot lately about this idea of curiosity from a leadership position. So, our leaders who are curious, hopefully, they will then listen to those individual contributors who are saying, "Hey, listen, I've got some solutions. I have some ways to do work better."

Jennifer Lee ([19:13](#)):

I think those are a couple of ways that are really important. Then third, I think that you can be the person that holds up the morale and the productivity of a team. If you can show up and have a positive attitude and be optimistic, have that growth mindset, and really think about, how am I positioning myself on this team? All of a sudden, you hold a great deal of influence and you're able to lead people in a direction even though your title might not have leader in it.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([19:38](#)):

I love it. Alden, I'd love you to just chime in here because-

Alden Mills ([19:42](#)):

I just love what she said. I'm just nodding in my head, "Go, go, Jennifer. Yes." The verb, leading, right? Yes, it's a verb. And listening is a verb, right?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([19:55](#)):

That's right.

Alden Mills ([19:55](#)):

Caring is a verb. Communicating, all of those things. I'm just nodding my head here on everything she said there.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([20:04](#)):

But I have to ask you, so you have a slightly different perspective because corporate America doesn't invest with intention and leadership the way the military does. There are a few exceptions, but by and large... I spent time by the way, several years, in Junior ROTC and ROTC in college, right?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([20:25](#)):

Yeah, air force. And so, this idea, I can tell you there was so much intentionality around developing leaders. It wasn't an accidental. Jennifer and I know of on the corporate side, the individual contributor sometimes falls into a leadership job, and oftentimes without any preparation at all. But the military is different. You are actually, almost from day one, you're building leadership at every level within the organization. So, anything you could add from your perspective as a member of one of our most coveted military groups in the world?

Alden Mills ([21:03](#)):

You're correct in what you're talking about with the military, from the very beginning. I ended up going to the Naval Academy, and from day one, it was lead, lead, lead. There are constraints in the military leadership that I want all the listeners to know. The military isn't just the only place to teach leadership. The best leaders that I always witnessed in the military were the most authentic ones, that they said, "Okay, yeah, those are the constraints, but I don't always need to be yelling or barking orders to be that leader." I had this wonderful commanding officer in seal team, and he was more like a Greek philosopher.

Alden Mills ([21:47](#)):

And before we'd go off on my first set of missions, he'd say, "Alden, I only ever want you to be as tough as the situation dictates." That is a little contrarian when a lot of people think about leadership, right? So, as you as an organization out there make it your goal to create environments that let all different types of leadership flourish, the more congruent people can be with their authentic type of leadership, the better they're going to be at listening, the better they're going to be at communicating, the better they're going to be in caring for each other and building the trust that will help people go beyond what they originally thought they could do.

Alden Mills ([22:34](#)):

Because, to me, the job one of a leader is to get people to believe not only in that leader, but in themselves. And when that occurs, now we've moved from a group of individuals to a team that can go beyond what anyone else's expectations can be.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([22:55](#)):

You all nailed it together. Thank you. Okay. So, Jennifer, I want to pivot to something that is top of mind for us at SHRM and frankly, I think, around the country, it's a big issue. Before the pandemic, women were making significant professional progress. In fact, few people know, but just before the pandemic, for the first time in history, women made up the majority of the American workforce. But in 2020, companies appointed fewer women to leadership roles and more than two million women left the workforce entirely.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([23:32](#)):

Meanwhile, many fields and organizations have few or no women and leadership across the organization. What should organizations be doing to reverse the reversal? Because that's what happened. And related to that, what can women themselves do? Because it's easy to say the organization has to fix this, but we all have some personal accountability to these things as well. So, what can the organization do, but what can women themselves do to grow their leadership and amplify their career in a post-pandemic world of work?

Jennifer Lee ([24:07](#)):

Yeah. It's a big topic because it's so concerning. The latest McKinsey study that came out, you're right, two million people that are females have left the workforce and that's a big number. So, I think we really as organizations, for organizations that are out there, they need to really think about, "Okay, what do we do moving forward? How do we reduce the gap instead of just letting this linger?" I think there's a few things that we really need to do as organizations. One, we've got to close that pay gap. Because what happened during the pandemic is a lot of people, including me, had kids at home.

Jennifer Lee ([24:43](#)):

So partners looked at each other and said, "Okay, who makes the most money and who's going to stay home with the kids?" Especially, care costs are up here and we look at who's making what. So, a lot of times in those instances it was the female who said, "Listen, I'm going to take the back seat because you make more money." So I think that happened in some cases and that brought people out of the workplace. So we need to look at that pay gap, I think it's really, really important at all levels in organizations. Second, I really think we need to think about paid leave and what that looks like.

Jennifer Lee ([25:17](#)):

There's this mommy gap that exists. Often, it seems like statistically it's the female that leaves because they receive paid leave when a baby comes. If we can offer that to partners, to spouses, I think we'll start to see a little bit more of individuals staying or sharing that paid leave and that offsets some of those childcare costs. So, I think those two are a really big deal. I think third we need to look at flexibility. Before the pandemic, I had a lot of clients who were like, "We're not those people that let you work from home, that's not our thing. We need to be in person."

Jennifer Lee ([25:54](#)):

And I think over the course of the last year, we've really learned, "Hey, listen, we can do this. We can do the virtual thing. Yes, it might not be five days a week like it has been the entire pandemic, but we can do this and we can offer flexibility and we can have great intelligence in the room because we're offering flexibility." So I think as we go back to hybrid and as we reenter this post-pandemic world, we need to

think about, okay, what are we offering, and when we offer, are we being inclusive to all of the needs that are out there from a gender perspective, from a race perspective..

Jennifer Lee ([26:26](#)):

But when it comes to women in particular, I really think we need to think about that flexibility piece. From an organizational standpoint, the other thing that I think is really, really important is this idea of bouncing back. So, some women step out to have a baby, they take a year off, they've had a very high power job, they take a year off, and then they want to bounce back in. So this idea of allowing people or encouraging people to bounce back in I think is really important, and thinking through what that looks like in your organization, how can you get that talent back who's taken a year or two years off?.

Jennifer Lee ([27:03](#)):

So, I think that from an organizational standpoint, those are some really important things we need to do. From a personal standpoint, because you're right, we can't just say, "Organization, make this work!." From a feedback perspective, we can't just say, "Hey organizations, it's all on you." If you are a female sitting out there and listening to this, I think there's a few things we need to do. One, before the pandemic, a lot of females would tell me that they struggled with what's called imposter syndrome.

Jennifer Lee ([27:26](#)):

They felt like, "Do I really belong here? Am I really smart enough to be in this room? Am I smart enough to be in this circle? Should I speak up? Should I not speak up? Is it good for my career? Is it bad for my career?" So, I think one of the things as we get back to this post-pandemic situation, I do think we need to think about, "Okay, am I speaking up? Is my intelligence heard in every meeting, whether it's on Zoom, whether it's physically in a room?. Am I making sure that my point of view and my intelligence is in every room?"

Jennifer Lee ([27:53](#)):

I need to make space to make sure people have heard what I have to say and not be afraid to do that." So I think that's one really important thing. Second, I think women need to bring their whole selves to whatever is happening post-pandemic. A lot of women have been home with kids, they still have kids in their house because schools haven't fully opened, maybe they've cared for someone that has been sick during the pandemic. So I think they've been juggling a lot. The McKinsey study showed that.

Jennifer Lee ([28:20](#)):

A lot of people said, "Hey, listen, I've been taking on a lot of extra workload that's not necessarily what I get paid to do." So, as we go back, I think it's important that we bring our whole selves and we start making some asks. I think men for a long time have asked for things, and I think sometimes women forget to ask, "Hey, listen, I need to work a four-day work week and I need to work one day from home." We need to ask.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([28:44](#)):

I love it. And again, that empathy, employers have got to be willing to hear it. We have had a ton of discussions here at SHRM around what the post-pandemic workplace will look like and you're absolutely nailing the issues. What I can't let our audience not forget... And we'll bring you back on Jennifer

because I know you have some great insights around this. By the same token, we have to be really, really, really careful to be thoughtful about the consequences of it. So, sure, we have employers who say, "Sure, I'll let you go work remotely. But when it's time to be promoted, there is a bias for people who work in the office."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([29:30](#)):

Employers who say, "Well, Johnny has been in the office all day. I run into him at the water cooler. I go grab coffee, I got to know him. Mary was home. We still love Mary, she's a great producer." But when it's time to make the decision whom do we promote, we have this thing, this human experience where people who we know better are the people who we promote because that's just the way life works. So, we're trying to figure out when those decisions are made to allow people more flexibility to work remotely that they're not doing it to their disadvantage. And that is hard because it's counter to the way human beings interact.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([30:11](#)):

Familiarity breeds safety and security, and we're all seeking, even as CEOs... Right, Alden? We want security. So I hope all of us continue to think about, what are the long-term implications of having groups work remotely when you say, "Well, what percentage of our employee base work remotely?" And you say, "70%." But 80% of that... I'm sorry, 30%. 30% of our employees is going to work remotely. But 80% of that 30% are women, there are consequences that you will see that play out 5, 7, 10 years from now in terms of who gets promoted. So we're very thoughtful about that. Say something about that, Jennifer, because that's a longer term issue.

Jennifer Lee ([30:58](#)):

And it's a big concern, right? This idea of, who are we excluding and why because they're not at the water cooler? And it's been an issue for years. It was an issue before the pandemic. It's something that we need to talk about, and thank goodness I feel like we're having way more inclusion conversations-

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([31:14](#)):

That's right.

Jennifer Lee ([31:15](#)):

... than we've had in the past. As organizations, I'm seeing more and more of my clients being really intentional about having biased conversations, inclusion conversations, so that we can be more intentional about who's included and who's not when it comes to promotion conversations and that sort of thing. Couple of things I would say to what you just said, Johnny, because you're absolutely right. I think there is still a mentality that if I see you, I like you, you get promoted. So, a couple of things, I think, need to happen. One when it comes to flexibility, we need to offer it to everybody.

Jennifer Lee ([31:44](#)):

And I think there's more and more men who are saying, "Hey, listen, I'd like to work from home one or two days a week too." So I think we need to think about that. Second, hybrid. I think we need to think, "Okay, are we bringing a team in all day Monday?" And they're here, all day Monday, that team collectively is here as opposed to a hodgepodge. I show up on Mondays, but my team's not there, so

nobody sees me. I'm sitting in the office, but nobody sees me. I think we need to think differently about what community within organizations looks like, and are we consistently creating community, even if it's only two days a week, so that we interact with people and we still are seen and there's visibility.

Jennifer Lee ([32:20](#)):

Then third, when it comes to this hybrid, are we making sure we can see people who are sitting at home? I know people have Zoom gloom and I know they're tired of the cameras, but I think if you can see the person, there's a big difference. So I'm having some clients now who are doing study halls. From 1:00 to 2:00 every day, the whole team turns the camera on and you're sitting in person and you just work away and you pretend as if you've got that collaborative water cooler thing going on.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([32:47](#)):

Oh, that's cool.

Jennifer Lee ([32:47](#)):

So, building those things in, I think, are imperative to us shifting and truly including people instead of just going back to the way it was two years.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([32:55](#)):

Okay. No, you're spot on. Actually, that collaborative conversation that you just described or tool or exercise, I'm going to turn to Alden. Alden, at SHRM, we have a guiding principle called collaborative openness, and we believe that working as a solid team is key to advancing our mission here at SHRM. How does that focus on being a team player square with advancing your own personal growth? And this is a really good question for someone who has played the hero as well as the guide. How do you do that? Where does the team end and the individual begin?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([33:35](#)):

What tends to hold people back in realizing their full leadership potential? That's one of the questions we all have. What is it? What holds you back? So, let me start with just that, because I have other questions about how can HR facilitate and all of that. But just fundamentally, where does that end and how do you make this all work?

Alden Mills ([33:55](#)):

When somebody shows up at your organization, are they showing up for the paycheck or are they showing up for a purpose? That's part one. Now, the reason I'm hammering on the purpose piece, also coming from the vet piece, when we look to go out and serve, you look to go serve in the medium that you enjoy the most. When somebody shows up to say, "Hey, what are you guys all about? What are we here to do?" First and foremost, you want to understand, are they evaluating on the purpose or the paycheck?

Alden Mills ([34:28](#)):

And when somebody starts to look at their own leadership ability, if they're only chasing the paycheck over the purpose, they will always be stunted on their leadership, because, fundamentally, for you to grow, you have to give, you have to go beyond your personal selfish needs to be selfless and serve

others. The more you become that selfless leader, ironically, I call it the boomerang effect, it comes back to you. So, when people start to go and ask the most dangerous question, "What's in it for me?" That stunts their leadership growth from day one. If they start with, "Hey, look at this great company, look at the things we're trying to do."

Alden Mills ([35:20](#)):

And employers, don't forget, you're really trying to get the connective tissue of your culture about, "this is what we're here for, this is why we exist". If they see that and ask the question... instead of what's in it for me, they ask the question, "How can I serve others? How can I give? What's the best way that I can?" Their leadership will never get stunted. They will continue to grow and to grow.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([35:49](#)):

I want to follow up on that. Continue because I have a question for you.

Alden Mills ([35:56](#)):

The other piece of this is I'm a big goal setter. Ever since I was in SEAL team with my platoons, to the different businesses that I've started, I've always tried to uncover ten, three, and one-year goals, both personal and professional. I don't believe that people can have this complete Chinese firewall, so to speak, where they're like, "Oh, my personal stuff is at home. I can never be that issue." Jennifer is saying exactly what I'd be saying about, "you want more women in the workplace? Be more understanding of all the different things they got going on at home. They have an amazing amount of leadership responsibility at home."

Alden Mills ([36:37](#)):

So, when you start to understand that blend of what's really making their heart sing versus what they know they have to produce for, then you've got more opportunities to push that leadership gap for that person. One of the biggest things that holds people back, one is they don't really plan out what they want to do and they're just here like, "Well, I'm just here for the paycheck at first." But then a leader comes in and goes, "Hey, you're really good. I have discovered what your superpower is. I'm really seeing how great you are at this, I'm going to empower you to do A, B, and C, and I want to push you in these areas."

Alden Mills ([37:15](#)):

When people start get that confidence and continue to move forward, then you've got opportunities for great leadership growth. The problem comes, people's egos get in the way. If you don't peel off that ego and get them to think, "Well, I've got to be this when I'm here..." Jennifer was talking about women and saying, "Well, I'm in this male organization and I've always got to be like this." Remember when I told you about the commanding officer who said, "Hey, you only going to have to be as tough as the situation dictates." Here's the irony, it's a lot harder to be tender than it is to be tough.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([37:57](#)):

That's true.

Alden Mills ([37:57](#)):

And what I'm hearing from Jennifer is, "Hey, we've got to be a little bit more tender with our people." When you can do that and allow people the space, that is going to... And by the way, that only happens if the leaders in the organization are vulnerable enough, then people will start to shed the ego and say, "Hey, that's what's been holding me back from my leadership and now I'm going to move it forward with you because I feel you have my back."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([38:25](#)):

Well said. Jennifer, I'm going to ask you then, because you're... Alden, 100%. Check, check, agree. Jennifer, the question for those who are out here listening in our world today is, how can HR facilitate growing these skills, these qualities, these cultural norms that Alden has described in both their current and future leaders, because it's great too in the line leaders, but HR has a responsibility in ensuring that the culture of the organization, it thrives. So, tell me specifically, HR, what should we all be doing to facilitate this world that Alden is describing?

Jennifer Lee ([39:05](#)):

Yeah. And I love everything that Alden just said. I would say from an HR perspective, a few things have happened during this pandemic that I hear from a lot of my clients. One, when the world kind of stopped and we sent everybody home, we put a lot of things on hold. We said things like, "We'll do performance reviews when the world goes back to normal."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([39:23](#)):

We did.

Jennifer Lee ([39:23](#)):

"We'll train people when things go back to normal. We'll really encourage managers to get more feedback when the world goes back to normal."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([39:31](#)):

Later.

Jennifer Lee ([39:31](#)):

Right. Later. We'll kick it down the road. Then we got to August and we were like, "Yeah, we'll do it later." We just kept doing that and now we're starting to open back up and people are talking hybrid, but we've spent a year without doing really fundamental growing for people. And now our people are tired. So I think we've got this kind of storm that has happened.

Jennifer Lee ([39:54](#)):

So, for HR professionals out there, I think what's so important going into this new year is encouraging people to get back into the habit of giving a performance review, giving feedback on a regular basis, once a week, train people, provide opportunities for them to learn about managerial skills, learn about how be more empathetic, learn how to collaborate within these hybrid situations. We have to skill train people because we've just left them in voids and said, "Survive, people. It's going to be great."

Jennifer Lee ([40:25](#)):

On top of it, we're now we're now hearing from a lot of people, "Hey, work feels transactional." Johnny made a report, Johnny sends me the report, I say thanks, and we move on with our life. We need to get back to rhythms that we had a couple years ago. We need to start growing people.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([40:41](#)):

No, it's music to my ears, but it's tough.

Jennifer Lee ([40:45](#)):

It is.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([40:45](#)):

It's tough because although we talk about a year, we've kind of been out of commission for about a year and a half. I remember the day, Friday, the 13th, March, 2020, when we all officially shut down. But some organizations saw this coming and were shutting down in February, right?. We stopped travel in February because of the global fear. So, here we are now, and you're right, we've got to spend a lot of time trying to get back into the groove of things. I won't spend a lot of time because I want to get to our final question, which I know everyone in the audience is just waiting to hear responses from you all.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([41:22](#)):

We had a lot of employees who were also not given feedback, as you said. Not just in the performance review, the exercise of doing it, but people to be fair were so... And people managers were trying to be empathetic. So, we didn't have a practice of giving people stern feedback on their performance because it was like this person's at home, they're dealing with children, they're dealing with this, they're losing family members because of the COVID. So we absolutely pulled our feet proverbially off of the gas and allowed things to coast.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([41:59](#)):

And now we're back. The economy is bustling and we need people back in the workplace, and there's a shock, there's a shock to the system. So, I know HR practitioners, this idea of empathy, not to be confused with sympathy. By the way, there's a big, big space between the two, although we conflate them a lot. It's something we're going to talk about a lot, perhaps in our next Tune in Tuesday. But before we go, we have a large audience listening today. Thank God, Right? What is one piece of advice, each of you, you only get one now, you would give people in our audience that they can start using?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([42:36](#)):

So, not just theoretical, but that they can actually put into practice today to boost their own leadership skills and personal growth. Because again, we as the HR folks, we're always taking care of people and we don't invest in ourselves. So, I'd love both of you to tell me, if you were to give one piece of advice to those of us who are listening, the thousands of people who are listening to Tune in Tuesday today, what would it be? What should they do right now to boost their own leadership skills and personal growth? I'm going to ask Alden to take the lead.

Alden Mills ([43:10](#)):

I would tell you... You talk about March 13th, that really hit home for me. I recently wrote a brief article for Memorial Day weekend about fog, faith, and freedom. Faith isn't exactly what you're thinking of here... this is about having 100% confidence in your team, right?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([43:36](#)):

That's right.

Alden Mills ([43:37](#)):

And how you got through that. And how do you navigate in the fog? And here we are coming back out of the fog of uncertainty after that year. Never forget how we got through it. And the way we got through it is we went and we asked about everybody's safety, right? When we all dissipated and worked remotely, we were thinking about their safety first and foremost, the ones who were really effective from leading from home. We first wanted to understand their safety and then we were able to put a structure in place to get them serving again, right? That moves us on that continuum.

Alden Mills ([44:15](#)):

Once we can get them serving again, now we're in a place that can help. How did we do that? Jennifer mentioned it at the very beginning, through listening. There's three types of listening. There is listening to win. "I'm going to listen and win my argument because I'm going to tell you I'm the smarter one here. You got to do what I'm doing. It's my way. We're back in force now, you've got to get here all the time." There's listening to fix. And listening to fix is, "I just want to fix a problem and move on."

Alden Mills ([44:53](#)):

Then there's listening to understand. As we transition back, if there is one thing I could offer everybody right now that will help you all grow, is to understand the gift that somebody is telling you, it's not a complaint, listen to understand what's going on in their world. The more you can do that, the more you're going to personally grow because you're going to be trying to serve whatever their need is. Listen to understand, would be-

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([45:29](#)):

I got to admit, I didn't know where you were going with that, but you nailed it. You landed that plane. I was like... okay... But then you landed it beautifully. Thank you so much. Jennifer?

Jennifer Lee ([45:41](#)):

I loved that so much-

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([45:42](#)):

Yes, I did.

Jennifer Lee ([45:43](#)):

... because I think as we pivot into this 2021, we have to hear what is going on with people, what's working and what's not working. At JB Training Solutions, we talk a lot about the golden rule, do unto others as you would have done unto you. And I would suggest for those of you who are leading people

right now, and you're thinking about, "Okay, where do I go the summer and into the spring?" I would really suggest that you think about switching it a little bit. So, do unto others as they would have done unto them, adjust for people.

Jennifer Lee ([46:15](#)):

That piece, empathy, is so important. Figure out where they're at. If you haven't given them any feedback, start instituting that into your rhythm. Set a micro goal if that's something you need for the summer so you can get people growing again. But I think we need to start to jumpstart. Do it slowly. You don't have to be like, "Here's our 12-year goal." But think summer, think spring. Get back into it, but adjust, adjust for your people. If someone needs something, meet them in the middle. Think, "What does this person need so that they can perform at high levels? And I'm going to adjust to them." If you don't know, ask.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([46:48](#)):

Listen, you all have been amazing. I want to thank you both for taking time to spend time with thousands of your HR colleagues around and fellow business leaders. This is really important. We look forward to seeing you all in the future, more Tune in Tuesday conversations. But the one thing that you've left us with, and that is the importance of HR really investing in leadership. Leadership is what's going to take us into the next century. We'll find doers all day, but it's leaders who are going to transform our country and indeed the world. So, thank you very much for joining us today.

Jennifer Lee ([47:26](#)):

Thank you, Johnny.

Alden Mills ([47:27](#)):

Thank you, Johnny. We loved your energy.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([47:41](#)):

Thank you.

Christopher Lopez ([47:42](#)):

Thank you, Johnny, Jennifer, and Alden for sharing your insights on the program today. Be sure to check out Jennifer and Alden's mega-session descriptions on the Annual Conference Session Planner. Before we close, I have a few updates to share with you. Like we mentioned earlier, SHRM has announced the launch of its SHRM Executive Network and Executive Council. The council, led by Laszlo Bock, CEO and co-founder of Humu and former SVP of People Operations at Google, gives CHROs and senior HR leaders a competitive advantage with access to exclusive knowledge, resources, and an elite network of global industry executives.

Christopher Lopez ([48:19](#)):

Both the SHRM Executive Network and SHRM Executive Council are key to delivering greater HR innovation and best practices as we live out our mission to elevate the HR profession. Last month, SHRM released our blue-ribbon commission report on racial equity, which is the outcome of six months of deliberations by the commission we convened as part of Together Forward @Work platform. The report

contains the members-only DE&I action to change toolbox which provides resource guides, conversation starter cards, and a step-by-step guide to supporting inclusivity and reducing bias in hiring, all changes HR leaders can begin to implement quickly in the workplace.

Christopher Lopez ([49:02](#)):

It also contains some new research on racial bias in the workplace and the cost of injustice. The report found one third of black employees faced unfair treatment at work based on race and ethnicity in this past year, and employee turnover due to racial inequity in the workplace has cost U.S. Organizations up to \$172 billion over the past five years. The blue-ribbon commission also reports that promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace is impossible without a strong focus on empathy. Empathy is key, and we believe it can be measured.

Christopher Lopez ([49:40](#)):

The blue-ribbon commission report features a sneak preview of our forthcoming empathy index, which will enable businesses to benchmark their level of workplace empathy against the competitors and across industries. You'll be seeing more about this as we get closer to SHRM21 when we will launch the official index. Lastly, on the note of what to expect at SHRM21. I want to remind you that housing and travel hotel information is now available on the Annual website. So be sure to check out the link in this episode's resources below if you plan on attending in person.

Christopher Lopez ([50:16](#)):

I can tell you that we at SHRM have been working diligently to make sure your Las Vegas experience is safe, exciting, and fun. But if you can't be there in person, I promise you, the virtual experience will be incredible. Whether you attend virtually or experience it live, you won't want to miss SHRM21. Thank you again for joining us today for Tune in Tuesday and I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, July 13th, for our next installment.