

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

On today's episode of Tune in Tuesday, we're joined by SHRM President and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., and Laszlo Bock, former Senior Vice President of People Operations at Google and current co-founder and CEO of Humu. But first, your Tune in Tuesday host, Christopher Lopez.

Christopher Lopez ([00:48](#)):

Hello, and welcome to SHRM Tune in Tuesday. This is our first episode back from our SHRM 21 Annual Conference & Expo. If you were able to join us in person or virtually, we hope you enjoyed hearing from our main stage speakers and connecting with your fellow HR and business leaders. My name is Christopher Lopez and in today's episode, we have an exclusive conversation about SHRM's latest book release, *Reset: A Leader's Guide to Work in an Age of Upheaval* written by SHRM's president and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. During last month's program, we heard some of our SHRM 21 speakers discussing the importance of workplace culture during a transition. In case you missed that episode, I encourage you to watch a replay at any time on this page after this episode is over. SHRM knows firsthand the importance of the work HR professionals like you are doing around the globe.

Christopher Lopez ([01:42](#)):

That's why we want to be your lifelong career partners. And through your membership, you will receive immediate access to the resources and 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. You can rely on SHRM for access to interactive tools, the latest resources and research, professional development, one-to-one guidance from expert HR knowledge advisors, and so much more. Learn more about each of SHRM's membership offerings and join or renew your membership today. 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, click on the CC button on the player window, to turn on the caption feature. Now to the right here, you'll see our chat window where you can communicate with your fellow attendees and toggle to the questions chat to ask our SHRM knowledge advisors questions throughout the show. Just below that window is our polling feature.

Christopher Lopez ([02:46](#)):

Let's do that right now by scanning the QR code on your cell phone camera and answering the question, which area of HR are you hoping to reset in your organization? And lastly, below the video screen, we have announcements and resources related to this episode for you to explore. And make sure to mark your calendars for October 12th. Now, let's get into today's discussion. The pandemic has upended everything about the workplace and the biggest challenge leaders are facing today isn't technology, innovation, or even leadership. It's cultivating a culture that attracts, develops and engages the right talent to thrive now and in the future. Backed by 70 years of SHRM experience and expertise, SHRM's latest book "*Reset: A Leader's Guide to Work in an Age of Upheaval*" delivers a candid and forward-thinking vision for leaders to re-imagine their company cultures in a time of global disruption and presents data-driven strategies to make the necessary foundational reset of all things work.

Christopher Lopez ([03:56](#)):

We're joined today by the book's author, SHRM President and CEO, Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. As he discusses the topic 'talent' with Laszlo Bock, former Senior Vice President of People Operations at Google and current co-founder and CEO of Humu. I cannot wait to hear this conversation. Welcome Johnny and Laszlo to the Tune in Tuesday program.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([04:25](#)):

Thank you, Chris. Thanks a lot for that kind introduction. Welcome everyone to our first post-SHRM21 Tune in Tuesday. Wow. What an experience for those of you who attended in-person SHRM 21, as well as you in our virtual audience. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. It was incredible to engage in so much discussion about the future of talent in transforming times, and to have some up-to-the-minute insights on inclusion, equity, and diversity, following such an intense period of conversations about race in our workplaces. I know that you, like me, were also inspired by Michael Phelps and his story. Even if you are not an elite athlete, I surely am not. We can all relate to feeling pressure to perform in difficult situations while trying to balance our own wellbeing.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([05:19](#)):

And then Bert Jacobs, Bert Jacobs from Life is Good also brought emotional health into the spotlight, showing that optimism has magical powers, especially amid all the negativity we experience and are bombarded with every day. And then our friends from Chipotle, Marissa and Brian, they showed us what great chemistry between a CEO and a CHRO looks like and how it leads to a rock solid employer brand and great numbers. Our members are our greatest asset and having so many of you together in-person and virtually was an unforgettable experience. Thanks to everyone who came up and introduced yourselves to me and others on the SHRM team. As I also spoke about it in my keynote, it would be foolish to hold out for return to the way things used to be. It's a message we need to carry through our organizations and embed in our changing culture. This is the time to completely rethink, restructure and yes, reset operations to create a more daring, resilient and sustainable future.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([06:31](#)):

And by the way, this is the main message of my book, reset. The organization succeeds when it intentionally reinvents itself regularly through effective talent management. Remember that adage, "Never let a good crisis go to waste?" Well, that doesn't mean exploiting an opportunity of weakness, but seizing the opportunity to be stronger and better in our work. So let me add to that old adage, make constant reset your friend. I'm so happy to welcome our special guest today. I consider him a friend and a professional advisor and mentor, Laszlo Bock co-founder and CEO of Humu and an HR leader who doesn't need a lot of introduction because we know him from Google, who has managed to become a household name. Pretty darn rare.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([07:23](#)):

Laszlo is the architect of Google's legendary workplace culture and creator of the field of people analytics - just think 10 years ago, 15 years ago, we weren't even talking about that. And now everyone is, he has basically redefined the art and science of workplace happiness and productivity and business leaders like us know how to leverage technology and behavioral science to make employee's jobs, and their lives, better. At Humu, he is demonstrating how technology can create work environments where

employees feel empowered and are given room to grow. So Laszlo, I know, you're the superhero, right? It's so great to see you again.

Laszlo Bock ([08:06](#)):

Johnny, it's great to be here. I'm super excited to chat with you and also to talk about reset and all the great things you're sharing with the world in your work.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([08:14](#)):

Well, thank you my friend. So welcome to Tune in Tuesday. It's the first time we've had the pleasure of having you on our program, but of course you're no stranger to SHRM because you are the executive and residence in leading the charge in our executive network space. We're thrilled to have you as, again, the executive in residence of the executive council, but more importantly as a friend. Lots of exciting things to come from our partnership, but for now I want to dig right into some Q and A. And so I know you want to ask me questions, but I'm going to put it on you. First of all, tell us a little bit about what you're working on at Humu for those of us out there who don't know what it is and how your work is going to help organizations like ours, get into the mindset of reset.

Laszlo Bock ([09:02](#)):

Well, thank you. And first let me start by saying it's a thrill to be talking to all our friends and family at SHRM because there's lots of people working in the people field. But what I've found is the people who are SHRM members tend to be the ones who are the most focused on their own growth, their learning, and through that, how to better the organizations around them. None of us can become great by ourselves. And so it's just great to support you provide a great to be speaking to so many of your members.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([09:28](#)):

Oh, thank you.

Laszlo Bock ([09:29](#)):

What we do at Humu is we built on some of the very good stuff we did on the Google side, and I've tried to really democratize access to it. What we do is we partner with enterprises to help drive change, in personally relevant ways for everyone using a concept called nudges. What our nudges is do is we help make change real by providing personally relevant ways that every person can take action, whatever the kind of change is. Whether it's adapting to hybrid work, whether it's inclusion, whether it's making managers better, whether it's a cultural reboot. And what we do is we actually sent different kinds of nudges in a complimentary way to leaders, to managers, to individuals, because what we found is the core to driving changes, you cannot do it alone. The traditional top-down ways just don't cut it. You instead have to figure out how to get every person activated and involved and moving forward. And we sure need a lot of help doing that these days. So that's what we do at Humu for companies larger and small.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([10:28](#)):

And so just do you call people, do you text them, do to email them, do you Slack them? What do you do to nudge people.

Laszlo Bock ([10:34](#)):

Well, all of the available except phone calls. So I think it's important to meet people where they are. And so the default is email, but Slack, Microsoft Teams, SMS, we find that different people respond well to different ways of getting in touch with them. And we try to find something that's most helpful to folks as we engage with them and help them become happier and more productive and stick around longer.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([11:00](#)):

Wow. I've got to ask you just a quick... You use that word happy and I got to tell you that is such a good word that we, frankly, as HR professionals and business leaders resisted for so long, it was like culture was a word that made us feel soft. Happy was a word that felt soft and not serious and hard driving. Why did you choose the word happy? And tell me how you react to people who might say, "Oh God, here are the HR kumbaya people again."

Laszlo Bock ([11:31](#)):

Well the truth is we toned it down to get to happy. When we started the company, we put up a webpage that had a picture of the Humu fish and because it's a Hawaiian state fish. And it said that our mission was to make work better for everyone through machine learning, science and a little bit of love. And we got a resume a minute for two weeks just based on that page because the word love really meant something. And then as we started meeting with companies, you have large global enterprise and show them about love and they're kind of like, I'm not sure. So It turns out happiness though, from a scientific perspective, there's something called eudaimonic happiness, which is a sense of purpose, contentment, flow. And that's a mediating factor to drive performance and inclusion and accountability.

Laszlo Bock ([12:19](#)):

And so by actually making people feel better about the work, you get all the objectives that even the most money-hungry corporation wants. So for some companies we show up and talk about happiness, for others we just talk about retention, they care about retention and we absolutely boost retention by 10 to 40 points as well. But if I may, obviously I've got my book in the background. I wrote a book years ago. And I want to talk about your book. Like my book, and I had no idea you were doing this, you said all the proceeds from Reset are being donated to the SHRM Foundation. So you don't get a penny, your friends and family don't get a penny. That is amazing because almost nobody does that. So since it's all benefiting the SHRM Foundation, can you just say a few words about what the foundation does?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([13:09](#)):

Right. So the SHRM Foundation - and everyone thinks that we're the 501 C (6), that's the tax status, but we run the business of SHRM through SHRM. And then we take a significant number, percentage of our profits every year in this nonprofit. And we give it to an organization called the SHRM Foundation. And many of you out there donate to the SHRM Foundation. We use it for scholarships and from a thought leadership standpoint, we support programs. But the one thing that we've been doing lately is really focusing heavily on untapped pools of talent. And what do we mean by that? We mean the formerly incarcerated, giving them opportunities to get back into the world of work. We talk about those people who are differently abled, we don't talk about disabilities, but differently abled veterans and older workers.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([13:57](#)):

Those are key areas for us to try to do good and do good. At SHRM we say better workplaces can lead to a better world. Well, we got to make sure that significant parts of our population get the opportunity to come to work. That's the only way that they can improve their lives and lots of their communities and their families. So the SHRM Foundation literally gives away money. We are a grant maker to people who are trying to change the world of work and change people's lives.

Laszlo Bock ([14:25](#)):

That is amazing. What moved me when you told me this was you're hitting on all the groups of people who are overlooked by everybody, corporations, particularly the incarcerated, but all the other groups as well. So it's rare that you have a chance to better yourself by learning while also directly benefiting people who need it the most, so bravo.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([14:49](#)):

Thank you.

Laszlo Bock ([14:52](#)):

What did inspire you to write this? There's a million books about people and about future and hybrid work and times are changing. What inspired you to go out there and say, you know what? There's something different and special about this moment and, "I Johnny Taylor and SHRM, we have something distinctive to tell people."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([15:11](#)):

Right. So practically speaking the fact that I wasn't traveling, for the first time. Think about it, you and I know you spend 70, 80% of your life on airplanes when life pre-pandemic. And then all of a sudden it came to a halt. I remember Friday the 13th, March 13, 2020, we all stopped. And I had all of this free time. I would have been rustling up taking my kid to school, getting dressed in the morning, getting on an airplane. And I had some time to think. And frankly, as much as we talk about the negativity of COVID and all of the negative thing and downsides to it all, something positive came out of this. And we referred to it a lot as your, what is it, COVID clarity?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([15:53](#)):

I've heard people talk about it as a phrase. That was my moment, to really sit back and say, okay, what are we going to do? There's a quote from Lenin that sticks in my head a lot. And I think about it a lot, "There are decades where nothing happens and there are weeks where decades happen." Think about that. "There are decades where nothing happens and there are weeks where decades happen." So here we are: fast forward, March 13th happens. And we immediately as HR practitioners, as business leaders, we've got to figure out how to continue business and enterprise from home. And none of us.. We've never done it before. So in a second, we are forced to reinvent. And what happened to me as I began to think about it, I said, and people were using the language 'pause', and I almost called this book the great pause. Because we all thought at the beginning, they said, "We're going to shut the country down for 14 days. We're going to shut the globe down for 21 days.' And then two months, three months, 15 months, 18 months. And here we are still dealing with it.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([16:56](#)):

And it was that moment when I said, this is more than a pause, the problem with a pause, if you think about it, old school with the tape recorders, you stop it and you pick up just where you left off. This is different. This is an opportunity to literally reset everything. It's the computer button. When everything goes wrong on your computer, you reset and everything starts over. And I thought this was an opportunity for us to really reinvent ourselves, our organizations, what we think about at work, what is work, what are workers, how are we gonna do it, how are we not going to do it going forward? So that's really what motivated me to do it, was I had the opportunity, first of all, to think, well, to just stop. And then I said, "How are we going to operate going forward?"

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([17:38](#)):

And we had to challenge all sorts of notions of what we thought. I had my own biases coming in. If you had told me that you could hire, literally recruit, onboard, train people who you'd never met, employees, I'd say "can't happen", period. And there are certain groups of employees. Yeah, maybe those independent contractors, those engineers who I don't really work with anyway. Yeah, those people, fine. But I actually had to challenge my own notions of what was possible. And that's what reset is all about. It's like, don't pause, don't hit the pause button, hit the reset button.

Laszlo Bock ([18:16](#)):

Well, I want to dig into what exactly that means, but I want to understand the stakes first. Because companies are making things up as they go right now. Everyone stay home, then come back, maybe a day, maybe two days. If you're remote, maybe we change your salary maybe we don't. But there was a line that I actually had to ask my daughters what it meant. That said, as a CEO, you wrote, "This is the time to be extra." So tell me a little bit about what are the leaders risk the most by not embracing the reset moment and what do you mean by being extra?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([18:52](#)):

Right. So what we risk, and it's a real risk. I'm talking about an enterprise risk. We talk about little risks, but this is real. During this period, employees literally rethought everything. And I referred to the COVID clarity moment, but that's why we're talking about the tsunami, turnover tsunami, and the Great Resignation. A lot of employees have said, "I'm rethinking this entire relationship with work." In the past those of us who are a little older talked about the social contract between employee, employer, but guess what? They really had an opportunity to read every word of that contract. And as a result, the world that we live in right now is filled with employees who have said, "I'm just going to think differently about this going forward." So if you, as a CEO, decided to pause and pick up where you left off and back to your regularly scheduled programming, you're going to lose talent.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([19:45](#)):

And in a knowledge-based economy, you simply can't afford it. So it is truly the biggest of the enterprise risk to me is the CEO who didn't use this moment to reset. And we all have our biases, as I said, but to really rethink everything because your employees have done it. So here's the deal. If they engaged in reset and rethinking everything and revisiting even purpose and fulfillment and everything, and you didn't, you will not be able to keep the best talent. And what we know is if you can't keep the best talent, you're going to lose this game, period. CEO said to me the other day, "Johnny, I don't have a

problem accessing financial capital. The world's full of it, the cash is everywhere. In fact, they're funding bad ideas. The problem is human capital. I can't find enough of the right people with the right mindset and everything."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([20:33](#)):

And he said, "So we've got to rethink it all." So that's the risk for the CEO. Now to get to the other question. And it very much gets to this whole notion of where do we go going forward? What are going to be the drivers to employee engagement? Not just the technical part of how do you recruit someone virtually, how do you engage them? So turn on your Zoom and let me see you. But this idea of being 'extra' and again, you're right. I got it from my daughter. She says, "Oh, daddy, you can be so extra". I have an 11 year old. But that in a good way, you can be extra. So what does that mean? It's someone's birthday. You don't just put them in the company newsletter, you send them an email. Perhaps you send them a DoorDash or whatever you use, Uber Eats, you send them a meal. Here's better - you send their entire family a meal. They're working remotely, it's extra.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([21:32](#)):

And in the scheme of things it's \$30, \$40, \$50, even 100 bucks. But it's that thing that says to your employees, who've been at home, rethinking their whole relationship with work, "These people really care for me". And it starts at the highest levels of the organization. We, as CEOs have to be committed to being extra. It's not enough to do what the law requires, you know, Family and Medical Leave Act - you get 12 weeks of unpaid leave. But if I make \$9 an hour, you're asking me to choose between coming to work and feeding my family and keeping a roof over their head or coming to work sick. And guess what? Most people have to do the latter. So what can we do to be extra? Take that pressure off of our employees, particularly the ones who are most vulnerable because they're at the lower end of the pay scale. So it's just a new way of thinking. Being extra is the way to win the hearts and the minds of talent.

Laszlo Bock ([22:26](#)):

Well, it's interesting. And I want to tie it back to in the book, you talk a lot about curiosity and as I'm listening to you with these ideas of going from a newsletter, to actually send them an email, to actually send something to them, to send their family... It's hard to know without being too curious, what's actually going to make people happy? And you talked about this theme of curiosity as being a big part of the reset. So how do you, whether you're a CEO, how do you get curious and figure this stuff out across the organization? What's the role of curiosity in figuring out all this and how can anyone become a curious worker?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([23:04](#)):

Well, we, as organizational leaders, either in HR or other business functions, have got to build our own curiosity muscle. It's atrophied. We know what we know, and we stay focused on it. And we know our experiences. Like I know my experience as a reasonably well-paid educated executive da, da, da. I know, I don't think about what my employee's experiences are every day. If I have a problem with my kids, I hire a tutor. But I don't think about the person who can't afford that tutor. They're barely keeping the lights on at home, right? So that curiosity is bigger than just an academic exercise. It's very much like, I wonder how other people are experiencing life? It helps respond to issues, diversity, equity, inclusion. You've gotta be curious of what goes on in the world outside of my known existence.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([23:56](#)):

And it solves so many issues. First of all, it's fun. It's really fun to say, gosh, I hadn't thought about that. I hadn't thought about what that single mother is experiencing every day and how my rules might really place for her... Put in her life an obstacle, a barrier that frankly is of no consequence to me. I just had to rule because I had the rule. So curiosity is that thing that we as leaders absolutely have to be conscious and intentional about. So it's not enough to just say, I'm curious about what scores at this game or this concert price or whatever. It's really like, I wonder what's going on outside of my own little world. And as business leaders, we get so focused in achieving our KPIs and meeting our numbers and da, da, da, that we don't really become curious enough, like looking around the post COVID corner.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([24:48](#)):

So being very intentional about it and then building that within the culture of your organization, because it's not just enough for the CEO or the head of HR or the CEO of Humu to do it. It has to literally go through- cascade throughout the organization. Every employee, no matter the level, their title, their pay, has to be curious because that's how we innovate. It's not solving for the current problem. It's like what else out there is to be solved?

Laszlo Bock ([25:17](#)):

When you think about company culture? I don't know if it's fair to infer that you're saying curiosity needs to be a part of it, but stepping back to the high level.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([25:26](#)):

Yes.

Laszlo Bock ([25:26](#)):

So it does. How do you, culture is such a squishy thing. My favorite quote is that Peter Drucker one from famous management theorist, who said, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast". If you don't get that right nothing works. How do you define it in a way that everyone can understand that there's purpose behind it, that there's value behind it rather than just a slogan spray painted on the wall?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([25:54](#)):

Yeah. So culture. And we all have these fancy definitions of what it, but I had to find culture. It's how things really operate around here. It's the best way when you ask your employees. "Yeah, we can go fancy some vision, words, and values, statements and all of that." But at the end of the day, it is how people experience your organization, how things get done, how things don't get done. The rules, the written some are unwritten. When you ask your employees, "What is your culture?" I'm a lawyer by training, as you know. And so there was a justice Potter Stewart, former Supreme Court justice, who said, when asked about, I think it was indecency or pornography or one of those things that said, "How do you define it?" And he says, "You know it when you see it."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([26:38](#)):

I wish I could give you the perfect words. Culture is one of those things. When you go in and talk with the employees, they will tell you what the culture is, notwithstanding what you put on your plaque, or put on the screensaver on your office computer. Culture is how people experience it. And we know it when we see it.

Laszlo Bock ([26:56](#)):

Huh. What about, related to that, what about empathy? Everybody's talking about empathy these days and listening more carefully and things like that. What is the role of empathy in work?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([27:11](#)):

It's at the core of culture. And, and so we can talk about diversity, equity, inclusion- that's a part of the culture. Empathy, I think is when I'm full, and I hate to use superlatives. But empathy is at the core, every leader. And I'm not just talking to CEO. Any people manager has to begin to flex and use that atrophied muscle called empathy. And that's a real problem for us. We don't spend enough time thinking about, or trying to live life, experience life, observe life through another person's eyes. We just don't. The result is our employees say, "You don't care about me. You care about your numbers. You don't care about me." And empathy is that thing that if we get right and it's hard by the way, because it's not to be conflated with sympathy.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([28:07](#)):

Sympathy is very much, I feel sorry for you, not I'm actually trying to understand your experience. And so sympathy is important, but we've got to get empathy right. And when we do that, SHRM research and we have some great research that I talk about in the book, it says, 80 to 90% of employees say, "Even though I love where I work, I would go to another place and in some instances, take a pay cut to go to a more empathetic organization." That is how important it is, is if this is all about talent, getting it and keeping the best talent engaged, then they're telling us overwhelmingly money, all of that good stuff. But an organization that says, "When I learn, when my boss learns that my daughter or a family member has a serious health condition, they actually care."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([28:55](#)):

And they say, "Not only do we have good medical insurance got that check, but what can we do to make this place a better place for you while you experience this crisis?" That's what empathy is very much about. And then you begin to actually experience it with that person. You want to talk about loyalty, you want to talk about retention the way we get it, notwithstanding all of the perks of the world that you and I know ..ping-pong tables money, dah, dah, dah. It very much is, I also want to know my employee cares and tries to experience life the way I experience it.

Laszlo Bock ([29:29](#)):

Okay. So I'm going to imagine though, I think I'm not going out on a limb here.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([29:33](#)):

Come on.

Laszlo Bock ([29:34](#)):

Anybody who's watching this is probably pretty curious, pretty empathetic, or at least they're open to the ideas.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([29:42](#)):

That's right.

Laszlo Bock ([29:43](#)):

Right? There, they're trying to get better. If they're SHRM member, they're trying to get better. Trying to learn. There's another line deeper in your book, when you talk about how hard it is to drive change. So I'm now trying to put on the mindset of somebody whose listening to you going like, "This makes sense. This makes sense." And they have to turn around and convince their boss, their CEO, their team. The line was, "As leaders, we cannot forget people's astounding ability to sink any change." And you continue. "Remember this reset relies on reduced resistance." So tell me more about... That's like a hard truth. People's astounding ability to sink change. Everybody who's listening to you is like, "Let's make things happen." They go back to the office. How did they do it?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([30:32](#)):

Yeah.

Laszlo Bock ([30:32](#)):

Tell me about that resistance

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([30:35](#)):

And that's the key. We acknowledge, start with acknowledging. People generally while yes, we have an astounding ability to get with it, we're going to resist it at first. It just is how it works. There's this thing called gravity, which says when a plane gets ready to take off, it takes off in spite of gravity. But it's not that the gravity doesn't exist. The job is to hold you on the ground and not put these thousands of tons of metal in the air. So I got that. Resistance is a given and we have to approach it, understanding there's going to be a natural pull away from, keep you on the ground. But once you do that, appreciating an understanding that we've got to focus on how to get people past.. Americans will do it in particular. And I know this is a global audience, but we know that when we shut the country down on March 13th, how quickly people responded, I mean, they just did.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([31:27](#)):

And so that's the point of the book, but it was with, we've got to communicate as leaders and you've got to let people understand why this is good for them. We talk about AI and machine learning and everything. Naturally, what people hear is this is not going to be good for me. That machine is going to do my job, then what? But what's amazing... and one of my favorite movies is Hidden Figures.... once people communicate in that movie, if you hadn't watched it, basically they called these women who were statisticians and mathematicians. They called them computers. And then all of a sudden, an actual computer, a piece of equipment was going to come about and make their jobs go away. What was amazing is when they were informed, think about it in contemporary terms, your job might go away because something else is going to do it.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([32:17](#)):

But there are other jobs that you can do that you've got to re-skill up-skill and get prepared for. What the beautiful point of that movie, and they did it in the context of a racially segregated society when it was like, legal to discriminate, those women said, "I've got to change. I will change. Tell me how to change." And then the story goes on. The big machine came in, they then retool themselves so that they could fix the machine. They could program the machine, they could do all of that. So that's the point at the end of the day, the human being will embrace change. Initially resistance. We as leaders have to build a culture where people are allowed to express their concern, the natural human resistance, and then say, "But this is good for you. I'm going to go on this journey with you and we're going to be better on the other side of it."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([33:08](#)):

So I hope I answered the question, but sometimes when I talk to people, they say, "When you're going into your organizations, well, I talked to my leader and they didn't get it." I said, "Yeah, and they probably won't." So it's going to take you some time, find them where they are, understand through empathy, what their resisting moments are, and what nuggets do they need to get to get them over and then bring them along as opposed to just judging them. And that's something that we've got to do in this new world. If you want to get there, don't say, "The business, my leaders don't get it," help them get it.

Laszlo Bock ([33:44](#)):

Amazing. I think we could all benefit from a little less judgment and a little more focus on what we can learn.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([33:51](#)):

That's right.

Laszlo Bock ([33:53](#)):

There's another interesting thing though, just to turn specifically to reset. It felt like it was written at the same time for a wide range of audiences. And I don't mean people in every country though, that's certainly true, but for individuals, for managers, for CEOs. So if we can just pick that apart, if you're new to a company, you're new to the workforce, you're a new employee, what can you learn from reset? What's in there for somebody just starting out? What do you want them to take away from that?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([34:22](#)):

A couple of things. Number one, that there wasn't a pause. It's a reset. And so if you're busy trying to reach back to pre-pandemic days, February of 2020, you're in trouble because the world has moved on. That's number one. And that applies to managers as well as employees, executives as well as the entry-level person. The world has moved on. The other thing that I hope they all take away, and I spent a lot of time talking about untapped talent. We have a war for talent, particularly in the U.S. we have a birth rate challenge. Americans had fewer children and have for the last two decades, it's been on a real decline during the pandemic, the birth rate reduced, we lost another 4%. Okay? So this is going to be a long-term problem, this war for talent.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([35:15](#)):

And the only way that we're going to be able to respond is in addition to changing how we treat our employees and our relationship with the employees. The other thing is we're going to have to expand who we bring into the workplace. So when I talk about untapped talent, we've got to deal with our own biases against hiring people who we don't think can do the jobs that we're going to need them to do. We've got to open the aperture. And that's a big part...so i talk about untapped talent. I talk about the formerly incarcerated, overcoming our biases. I talk about older workers. Here's a little status I wrap up that's really interesting. Millennials, you know that group of petulant little children, they turned 40 this year. Yes. When you think about how we defined a, right? 1981 was the first year officially of the millennial generation.

Laszlo Bock ([36:05](#)):

Well, now I feel really old now.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([36:07](#)):

Exactly.

Laszlo Bock ([36:09](#)):

That's brutal for me and you.

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

That's right. But what does that tell you? It says like, oh, we got a new generation coming about, and they have a different way of thinking about work. So it is now up to us to think about how we don't ignore these untapped pools of talent. We take advantage of them because we need them. Again, reset relies on reduced resistance.

Laszlo Bock ([36:31](#)):

It's so funny because I've read in the press about the birth rate in the U.S. Every articulation I've seen is framed as the only way to keep the workforce growing is through immigration. I'm an immigrant, I came as a refugee, big fan of immigration. I haven't heard anybody talking in the way you just did about expanding the workforce to include the people who are locked out of it today. And in fact, I saw something on Twitter the other day that said, "Most people when they're in their '70s and '80s are considered, they're out of society, we're done with them, they can't add value. But our government's being run by people in their '70s and '80s."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([37:13](#)):

Fancy that.

Laszlo Bock ([37:15](#)):

So it's a really broad net you're encouraging us to cast. I want to ask, just as we move towards closing, two other questions. What's something everyday workers, what are some ways everyday workers can innovate every single day? So, very practically, again, I'm listening to this. I'm somewhere in the U.S., somewhere in the world, I'm going to go try to reduce resistance. I'm going to go try to get my CEO and

the company to be more empathetic and be more thoughtful. What about driving innovation? What can I do tomorrow and the next day and the next day?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([37:53](#)):

Right. You've got to do it every day, no matter how small. And I know that's the short answer, but every day you've got to ask yourself, "What can I do, or at least explore doing differently than I've been doing for the last year, two, three, four, five years." It really is, I use that term, a muscle. It's an atrophied muscle. We talk about innovation as some thing, but how many of us really do it? And this is going to sound really funny, but I was resistant to change in some real hard ways. I'm going to tell you, I'm a creature of habit. I eat at the same restaurants, I do everything. And then someone said, "Start moving the furniture in your house, just periodically. Start taking different routes to work. You'll explore some things you haven't..." You're like, "Oh my gosh, I didn't know that restaurant was always here."

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([38:41](#)):

It really is. When I talk about innovation, there are real practical, small things that you can do in your life that will get you more comfortable with change and will make you more of an innovator. And it may sound small. I found an innovative way to get to my house. My God, that's a breakthrough moment. So I know, and it's kind of funny, but people were thinking about the other thing is spend time talking about it. These things don't happen if you don't talk about it, we know this from all of the work that we are now doing in inclusion. It's not enough to say "I'm committed to diversity, equity and inclusion" when no one talks about it. You really do have to get it out. And so using, and the word and the language of change and innovation, is something that each of us can and must do on an individualized basis in the collective, the aggregate will actually get there if we talk about it and we in small ways start to practice it.

Laszlo Bock ([39:37](#)):

I love it. Well, I'm going to commit tomorrow to do... Actually today, It's still early for me today. trying something new. Last question for you. And I also just I want to remind folks, because again, having done a book, it feels super weird to talk about your own thing.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([39:55](#)):

it does.

Laszlo Bock ([39:56](#)):

So I imagine this is a little weird, but it's truly for a good cause. Every penny, as I mentioned before, goes to the SHRM Foundation, which helps bring more people into the workforce as well as provide scholarships. So every single book, 100% goes to a good cause. For you, Johnny, what was the easiest part, hardest part about writing this thing?

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([40:19](#)):

So the easiest part was writing it because I wasn't traveling. I had so much free time, time that as I said, i would have spent getting ready for work or driving, getting on an airplane. So I had free time. The hardest part was - and I'm going to be honest, I had my own biases. I'm a pause guy. I really thought that much of what we do would get back to normal. I was like, oh yeah, I hear all of this change, but this is for

the moment, it's temporary, we'll get back to hiring people the way we used to hire them, we'll get back to onboarding... we're going to get back. And as this drew out six months, 12 months, 18 months, and it's still going... this is, It's here to stay.

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. ([41:07](#)):

And so that was the hardest thing once I actually was putting the final finishing touches, I was like, "No, this isn't a pause. This is a reset moment." And that was hard for me to actually embrace. So in some ways, lying on my couch, this was therapeutic for me. It really was, it was very therapeutic. I made my own growth. So listen, I want to thank you. Thank you Laszlo, I really appreciate your genius, but also your friendship and your approach to people. This was a great conversation. I think your insights will be even more helpful when you read the book, which all, as you said, and I hate to do this. You can find wherever books are sold. So I'm going to ask each of you to consider doing it. The ability to reset is in each of us. So let's take the lessons and the experiences we acquired in Las Vegas, during the pandemic, and in this session today, to think about resetting to a more sustainable workplace culture, one that is infused with empathy, unity, and wide-open possibilities. Thank you everyone. And thank you again to Laszlo Bock.

Christopher Lopez ([42:17](#)):

Thank you, Johnny and Laszlo for sharing your crucial insights on the program today. If you haven't ordered your copy of *Reset: A Leader's Guide to Work in an Age of Upheaval*, click the link in our episode resources to purchase your copy today. I look forward to seeing you next month when we focus on workplace culture DE&I, and give you a preview of our upcoming Inclusion Conference. Thank you for joining us today for Tune in Tuesday. We'll see you on October 12th at 2:00 PM Eastern.