

Fireside Chat with Carol Bartz
Moderated by Jenny Dearborn
September 26th, 2015

SPEECH HIGHLIGHTS

Autodesk and the importance of change

Carol Bartz worked at Autodesk during the huge global shift towards the Internet. At the time, the company did not believe that the Internet would actually take off, and they were comfortable with their current position. Carol Bartz came in and created a sense of urgency and a desire for change. "A company that does not see a need for constant change is a dead company."

Lessons

1. Walk away from a company that tells you they are stable. "Stability is not part of the lexicon of a good corporation"
2. Unless it's a startup, run away from stable companies with multiple founders. Once you've solved the problem, they won't need you anymore!
3. Don't believe the media.

Diversity

It's unfortunate, but the reality is that young white men are going to have a much easier time in their careers than everyone else. And if you're an old white male, you're going to have a tough

fit the game, but it does mean that you should be aware of the very public backlash that can happen if you do something people don't understand or agree with. When Bartz was CEO of Yaho

and, we can go into that more if you want, but that didn't enter my consciousness until I got that question, and I've been getting that question ever since.

Jenny Dearborn: It wasn't something you noticed, you just sort of went into the room and you said "I'm going to get to work." You didn't put your head up and go, "Huh, wait a minute?"

pictures and show all their buddies. They just thought it was a hoot, and I was mortified because where I

Carol Bartz:

companies or whatever your chosen profession is AND make sure that you're reaching your hand back to other people who look like you in your flocks and help them spread their wings a bit.

I would also say one more thing which has really gotten to me lately. There's something going on in this time period right now. I'm going to use the word millennial and that's kind of an overworked word, but you've got to stop with this frat boy business.

Jenny Dearborn: What do you mean by that?

Carol Bartz: Are there Greeks at San Jose State?

Jenny Dearborn: I don't know., Are there Greeks at San Jose State?

Audience: Yes

Carol Bartz: Well, you don't know what that means?

Jenny Dearborn: I was at a sorority, so I don't know anything about frat boys.

[Audience laughter]

Carol Bartz: Frat boys are the following: they get together, think they're goliaths, drink too much, act out, do bad things, and they brought that into the business world. So you can get into these start ups, especially again, if you're not a frat boy, and all of a sudden you're dragged along, especially for the females, into situations you don't have to be in. So what I'm saying is, please don't get into those situations. Don't believe that you can do whatever you want because that is what you did when you were

have to do that for someone else. Equally, you can't run around feeling guilty about all this stuff you should and ought to do. I hate "should" and "ought." You can't feel guilty about that stuff. Guilt takes up so much space in your brain! So if you're going to be busy for awhile, tell your friends, boyfriend, whoever you're hanging around with that you're busy with a project at work, and you're not going to be around two months. And that you'll be busy 7 days a week for 2 months, so "don't bug me and leave me alone." You can even do that with your kids. I had 13.5 hours time zone differences in India and I wasn't calling home! So you have to get them used to that. It's not a perfect world. Then when you have time, you go back and dedicate time. And I would say if you're going to be with somebody, put that goddamn device down. Give somebody 5 minutes of your direct line of sight where you're actually looking at them. d

Jenny Dearborn:

you were doing was trying to keep your employees stable because of what they heard. So they heard this, this, that, that, that, and rumor mills. So then you start thinking, 'Well, I won't tell them anything; Well, that doesn't work because we're in this boat together and we've got to solve this problem, refresh this technology, whatever it is.' So you have to let people know what your goals are; but as soon as you let your goals out, then there must be a problem. So that's the biggest thing.

Jenny Dearborn: Business is more global than ever. What do you recommend for people who are working across culture? Is there any advice or stories around cultural awareness?

Carol Bartz: Get your passport stamped. Go visit some places, and I'm going to say this as if you're working in a company and you have the company pay for you to travel -- but if you can go to places to travel, go! You can't understand how to do business in India unless you go to India. You can't understand how to set up a software facility in China unless you've been to China. My folks at AutoDesk, my Senior Management team used to get really mad at me because I had the McDonald's Starbucks index because an architect in Colombia or Chile didn't make what they make in New York. But why do we charge the same for our product? So if we were going to actually be taking half their salary to buy our product, they were going to steal our product; they weren't going to buy it. So I said, "What does a McDonalds or Starbucks cost in this country versus another country? There's your index right there!" That's where you start understanding how should you market, approach a country, what you should do to help them with their education system so we can graduate people with no drafting and that sort of thing. So you don't sit in the middle of Silicon Valley and pontificate about what's happening with Brexit. You can, a lot of people do that. But if you're going to be a global leader, and I'm sure all of you would like to be a global leader, then you have to

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