Weston Morris:

Welcome to the next episode of The Digital Workplace Deep Dive. I'm your host, Weston Morris.

Weston Morris:

You know, there's several companies out there that do a really good job of evaluating and rating your workplace operations. I'm talking about companies like the Help Desk Institute, or HDI. The Service Desk Institute, SDI, and the European Contact Center and Customer Service Organization. So what, what do they do? They look at your operations, they look at your security, they look at your culture, your investment in technology, as well as the investment in your people. And I tell you what, if you've not taken advantage of their services, I, I highly encourage you to do so because if you've done that, you've found that these organizations are hopefully identifying some things that you're doing really well and pointing out some things where you need to improve and kind of giving you a pat on the back for the hard work that you're doing with your digital workplace.

Weston Morris:

Now, three years ago, I can think of, oh, maybe just a couple awards in the Digital Workplace Services area that we had won. But I tell you what, over the last two years, my guest in today's podcast, Patrycja Sobera, the vice President of our Digital Workplace Services delivery, has racked up 11 awards, which I'm, it just blows me away. So I thought it would really be good if I could pin her down for a few minutes and ask her, what is she doing differently in her delivery of digital workplace? And in so doing, maybe she can share some tips for how you might look at improving your digital workplace services as well. So, with that, I wanna say how happy I am to finally be able to sit down with you and have a chat with you. Patrycja, welcome to the podcast.

Patrycja Sobera:

Wow. Thank you, Weston. Pleasure to be here, actually. And, and thank you for having me, <laugh>. And listen first, first and foremost. Wow, I don't think anyone has actually listed all these accolades and awards in, in one go like this. So thank you for doing this. It has certainly been, uh, an amazing journey for us, actually. And I think it's been an amazing journey for, for Unisys overall. And whilst of course I want to focus on the end user experience organization and digital workplace, I just want to say that, you know, Unisys as an organization, really for more than wow 150 years now, have been innovating, right? Pushing for that next breakthrough. And whether it's power of quantum computing, whether it's AI-driven data models, a summation, of course, you know, a ton of next-generation technologies we're using to deliver these powerful outcomes for our clients.

Patrycja Sobera:

Of course, my passion, selfishly, is really firmly in the area of digital workplace. And this is really where I have focused my team's attention on really, in a way moving away from, from the traditional view on delivery and support and that kind of traditional look at attainment of SLAs and KPIs. And I really focused on a different way of thinking, right? The kind of rootless travel, so to speak, in the, in the world of an MSP, which is ultimately how do we improve, how do we help people work and collaborate in a digital workplace, right? And how do we continue to, to evolve our support, to evolve our delivery capability. So it really enables that collaboration, so it enables that improvement. So there you go. Here we are.

Weston Morris:

Well, Patrycja, I know you asked me not to do this, but there's one other award I was gonna mention as well. The ISG just recently had their Women in Digital Award and they granted you the top award, the Titan Award. So congratulations on that. I think it also plays a little bit in here what we're gonna talk about. I know, of course you hate the spotlight on you. We're gonna focus on the team <laugh> so we'll do that here. So I think, first of all, let's get back on track with the team here. I'd like to ask you what's different about what you're doing in delivering digital workplace services.

Patrycja Sobera:

Thank you. And very naughty, by the way, mentioning Digital Titan <laugh>, but thank you. Very humbling at the same time, so appreciate it. What's different? Well, you know what, I just wanna start by saying that I feel so privileged and so lucky to live in this era of this unprecedented technological change. And I personally feel that this is also a period where technology alone is not enough to make a difference. It's really not enough to, to meet the demands of our clients, to, to really help them with their challenges and the requirements. And for me, this is where the opportunity has been for us to approach support from a completely different lens and again, move away from the traditional support focus. And in fact, the last couple, well, two and a half years now, actually two and a half years at Unisys, have really been focused on, on the transformation of our digital workplace delivery model. And if I had to put this transformation down, two absolutely essential things, you know, two really essential success factors, I would say experience and culture. There's probably a third one actually, <laugh>, there's probably a third one. But I think that might be, uh, enough of a conversation for a next get -together, which is probably more around that change-focused leadership. But yeah, let's focus on experience and culture. 'cause I really think that these are the two essential success factors.

Weston Morris:

Let's do that. And I think let's focus first on experience. And that is a topic that our listeners have found is one that we come back to over and over again, employee experience. But I think you're gonna help us see how that's connecting with customer experience, I think. Can you explain a little bit about what you mean by, you know, from your point of view, the digital workplace, uh, what is experience?

Patrycja Sobera:

Absolutely. Yeah. So listen, for me, it's quite simple and it actually starts with XLA, you know, we don't just walk and meet with our clients and ask, Hey, what type of service you need? Right? We, we completely put that aside. And first and foremost, we focus on what our clients actually do. What are their business goals? What are they trying to accomplish as a business? And then of course, who are the key personas who are essential to the success of these goals? And once we have that in place, we identify how our services can best support the achievement of those goals. And of course, you know, most importantly, guide them through the formation of XLAs relevant to this client, to their business objectives, right? But, there is a but. There is a lot of talk in the industry about XLA. Mm-hmm, <affirmative>, and from my perspective, XLAs alone are really not enough. They cannot really deliver their full value if you have no one looking at the data insights without a team, a team of people who can look at the, the data and translate the data into actionable deliverables. At the end of the day, it's just data without that kind of, so what? And this is actually where our experience management office comes in. I think for me, that's the secret sauce, the team that really is at the helm of transforming insights versus action.

Weston Morris:

Well, I would love to have you give some examples because, you know, in this podcast, you know, if you listen to it over the, the months and years, we've talked a lot about the theory <laugh> of XLAs and XMOs more recently, but nothing is like hearing how it actually, you know, where the rubber hits the road, what works and what doesn't. So yeah, please give us a couple of examples.

Patrycja Sobera:

Absolutely. So XMOs have actually been invaluable in saving money, saving time, supporting ESG goals. I've got a brilliant example of a client in the manufacturing space, in manufacturing industry who used to follow a very traditional asset refresh policy and really replaced all of their devices at the end of the three-year warranty cycle. And we were actually able to sit down and, and review their device health. And out of 9,000 devices in their estate, which were actually out of warranty coming up to that three-year period, 6,000 of those were actually performing extremely well with, with no issues at all. And only 3000 were actually under the expected performance threshold, which we set with the client. So thanks to the recommendation of the XMO, we actually kept the <laugh>, the 6,000 devices away from the landfill and really, you know, saved them at that point, 5 million in device refresh costs.

Weston Morris:

That's a great way of, of being able to take this data that you're using for employee experience and then actually provide business value to your client. And I love how you've tied that back to the XMO. I guess, you know, it's just a dashboard reporting data, unless you've got this group of people actually looking at it.

Patrycja Sobera:

Absolutely.

Weston Morris:

Do you have any, any other examples you'd like to share?

Patrycja Sobera:

Yeah, absolutely. Let me give you another, I think even more powerful example actually, as this is one of our healthcare clients who were undergoing a merger of two large organizations, and we're talking large, we're talking 195,000 employees, right? Coming together from two very disparate organizations with limited visibility of that end-to-end end user experience, limited visibility of any software changes, limited understanding of technology performance between those organizations, between divisions in fact, and really a number of challenges in terms of monitoring and managing the end-to-end. So to cut a long story short, we actually partnered with them on this challenging journey. We implemented a DEX tool, device experience tool, which would be acting as a single source of device-performance truth. And we created XLAs to measure and improve the experience parity as the two organizations, and ultimately the two IT systems were merged. So, you know, whilst doing this, we actually kept in mind that prime directive, that prime objective, which was to provide great patient care.

Patrycja Sobera:

And we focused our attention predominantly on their frontline workers, because of course, as healthcare professionals, they were interacting with patients, you know, they were the most important personas in this organization. And we established this through conducting a, a persona journey-mapping workshop with the client to really understand what these nurses, doctors, you know, if you think about

the emergency room admitting staff as well, right? What do they actually do? What do they need? And we identified and remediated problem areas that actually gave us nearly 600,000 hours back to these extremely important healthcare workers. So they could do what they do best, which is saving lives, you know, rather than facing IT issues. And, and in fact, we haven't just given them time back, we did something else. We shared all of this experience data with other teams because it's turned out that all that information, all that data XMO were analyzing, collecting was extremely useful to asset management, both hardware and software as well as SIAM. So truly multiple benefits in the example of that client. And anyways, I could talk about experience for hours <laugh>, so...

Weston Morris:

And I do like the, the example of a merger. I mean, you just think about any merger acquisition, there's almost always a degradation of service to the employees during that time period, right? You know, as you consolidate technologies and tell people you can't use that tool anymore, we're now using the corporate standard. And, uh, so your focus on the, the employee experience in this case, patient care providers, I love how you also connected that back to the experience that patients get as a result. I mean, that's, that's ultimately the goal, right? The reason for being there. Absolutely. So we talked about, uh, employee experience here and like I said, this is a topic we cover quite frequently in the podcast, but you've also mentioned, I think your second thing that you said that was super important was culture. Now that's a little bit out of my wheelhouse, <laugh>. So I'd love to hear you explain a little bit more about how you influence culture and how that culture plays a role in your service desk agents and the rest of the digital workplace, and how that impacts your customers as well.

Patrycja Sobera:

Oh, certainly. And listen, for me, as a leader of a large delivery organization, you know, a leader of 6,000 people here, culture is actually everything. I want my team to really feel inspired, to really feel committed. And for me, that's the kind of, you know, actually the most important thing. And how do we do this? Well, by providing career development, by providing opportunities, by celebrating, by celebrating successes on both team and individual level. We talked about awards already, right? But I think there's nothing better than seeing your team succeed. And I'm just so proud of the team and on both actually, team and individual level, from, you know, uh, all the accolades and the awards we have received. And again, I've got a couple of examples with more than a couple, actually probably, you know, enough for three podcasts, actually.

Patrycja Sobera:

<laugh>, <laugh>, I'm gonna pick on one of them, actually, Danny Niu, who has won two global awards, not just one, two global awards. So Danny won, um, the Service Desk Agent of the Year through SDI, as well as the HDI Best Agent of the Year, and actually who since that point, decided to pursue a different role as a supervisor. And he's absolutely rocking it. And I actually mean it, literally rocking it. Danny has actually written two rock songs. That's right. They really embody that, that, you know, everything about that team together. And, you know, he's just so passionate about people, so passionate about support. There's a brilliant anecdote, actually, I hope he won't mind me quoting this, but he has actually famously shouted after finishing a call, Hey, I saved a life. Hmm. And in fact, all the other agents clapped, you know, and they were like, well, you know, wow, okay, cool. You know, why did he say that? Well, he fixed a problem that was actually causing his client's PC to crash. And you could think, well, big deal, right? We, fix PCs all the time. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you know, he didn't save a life, but actually his client was, a hospital worker. And of course the people in the hospital, you know, he was supporting, well, again, emergency room, admitting staff, you know, key personnel. So he actually said, well, you

know what, I pictured my grandma coming into that hospital with a heart attack and really not being able to admit her quickly. Oh wow. 'cause that PC right was, was, was crashing, you know, wasting precious seconds, that's just not acceptable. So actually, yes, by fixing that crash, he may have indirectly saved a life. So just a, yeah, brilliant example of that true passion.

Weston Morris:

That's what you mean by culture. Yeah, I'm getting it now.

Patrycja Sobera:

Absolutely. <laugh>. Yeah. But there is, like I said, there's a ton of other people, you know, who absolutely...

Weston Morris:

I'd like to hear another, if you've got one.

Patrycja Sobera:

Yeah, I do actually. Let's, let's pick on a different geography. So we've got one of our supervisors, actually now operations managers, but at the time, a supervisor in our lovely Center of Excellence in Budapest in Hungary. So Yudit Gal was actually, uh, supporting one of our major clients, a major airline, and she has actually led the team through a major change. This client was going through, uh, a change of their ITSM platforms, and she ensured that end user experience was, was really prioritized despite of the new system being rolled out, despite the new system being used by the agents, she ensured everyone was trained, everyone had communications that the quality assurance was followed throughout that, you know, we migrated on time and migrated successfully, and not only maintained, but in fact exceeded our performance standards, really ensuring that the performance standards were actually linked to, of course, what this client is in the business of, right?

Patrycja Sobera:

Which is making travel comfortable for the passengers who are, you know, using this airline. And if you think about the airline, this is actually a super challenging environment because of course they need special support. Their desk, in many cases is not a traditional setup. Their desk could be, uh, you know, Gate 35, for example. So very, very different set of challenges and Yudit ensured that these were understood, that these were followed, and that we provided support and seamlessly delivered that migration without any glitches. So she actually won the Supervisor of the Year award at the HDI conference, and since then progressed into a role of an ops manager. Again, we could quote millions of other examples. And from my perspective, I just love celebrating those. I think that that celebration of each other's success is actually one of the key factors behind employee happiness.

Patrycja Sobera:

And of course, you know, from my perspective, at least, happy employees will deliver that exceptional support, you know, and, ant to be here and drive that culture. And for me, these awards, you know, apart from being a fantastic, just fantastic industry recognition, they really are a celebration of our amazing people. So, you know, again, this is why, uh, you know, I think it's just so important, right? To not only really celebrate those successes, but again, use them as a kind of flavor for others who might be just joining our team today as a first-line agent.

Weston Morris:

Now, I remember when you joined, uh, took on this role, actually, you joined, and then you took on this broader role here, and I was thinking, man, I don't want to be Patricia service desk. Tough, tough job. I mean, really, nobody-- think about it. Nobody calls the service desk and goes, Hey, I love you, great job. You know, you just made my day. No, we call when something's broken, right? <laugh>. So, and that's what they have to deal with. Every day, you know, these are the calls. So I'm just thinking, what is it that you're doing to give agents a reason to come into work every day?

Patrycja Sobera:

Oh, it's such a great question and there's so many things, but let me try and name a few. So, you know, we really, and you mentioned this actually Weston, we try and help all of these agents, all of our services personnel and beyond, really see that bigger picture, you know, as you said, right? Who's the client? What are they doing, what are their objectives? What are their goals? How can we help them? How can we enable them? You know, what can we do to support them to succeed in their goals, right? Of course, as we said, you know, no one wants to call the service desk just to chat about, you know, great stuff and how great the weather is. You know, it's really because there is a problem. So, you know, it's really equipping the agent with that information around the client, their processes, right?

Patrycja Sobera:

The tools and all of those super, super important, you know, tools, techniques, processes. You know, um, mentors as well as buddies, right? To succeed. But I think for me, there's, that's the kind of foundational, that's the kind of, let's call it bare minimum. For me, the major thing is around providing them a path. And really, it's a career development path. It's a career development program, right? Really investing in their success, really investing in their future. And I mentioned this already, right? I have the same challenges. Our clients, of course, you know, attrition is very much here, you know, we're not really exempt from that challenge. So from my perspective, that focus on career development, that focus on their professional enablement, giving them that flavor of what does it mean to progress from first-line to second-line, from second-line to endpoint, you know, and highly technical sort of third-line tasks or even XMO, we mentioned XMO, experience management office, you know, what a great career path, right? For someone who really loves solving problems that have that positive impact. So there you go. There's just you know, a couple of things off the top of my head, but so much more we're doing there in terms of, you know, DEI, in terms of wellbeing, in terms of groups, in terms of AIGs, in terms of interest groups, oh my goodness. Just, uh, absolutely a ton of things.

Weston Morris:

Well, you mentioned the possibility of maybe another podcast where we dive into some of these things <laugh> and I think we might pin you down to that. But maybe to wrap up this one here, I have one more question for you, Patrycja, for our listeners, thinking, you know, hey, what are, what are some things, what's one or two things I can do to improve not just my service desk, but my whole digital workplace experience? Whatare a couple things you might like to share?

Patrycja Sobera:

So, from my perspective, you know, the key recommendation I would give is to really try and elevate the service desk and to really look at support a lot more holistically, right? Uh, just to kind of blend the traditional division, you know, I think I still see it when I go to conferences and meet with my peers. I see a traditional division of tasks between first, second, third, you know, or more technical, uh, teams and

then knowledge management. But really, if you think about blending this into this more holistic focus on end user experience, you'll see that the teams will start working together and you can objectivize the team on the quality of the experience. So they work together. So we don't have, we mentioned we don't have that pointless ticket ping pong anymore. Instead, we have one holistic delivery approach and one holistic accountability.

Patrycja Sobera:

And trust me, our clients really appreciate it. It really makes things easier for us to serve our clients because, you know, they don't really want you to kind of talk about not being able to fix something because you don't have access, right? Or you have to pass something along to another team and you may not even know when they'll be in touch. <laugh>, there's just no place for that in today's digital workplace. And I think in that post-pandemic hybrid culture where experience parity is so important, where driving collaboration to then drive productivity to drive that end-user satisfaction, you know, we really cannot afford any hiccups as a support organization. So that focus on proactive, more predictive support is key. And listen, I'm not delusional, I don't think we can eliminate all issues from the environment.

Patrycja Sobera:

I think those reactive support requests will continue to come into the service desk, but they need to be handled by an enabled empowered knowledge worker, not a traditional services agent, right? Bound by, I dunno, six minutes average talk time. Hence that enablement, hence that training, hence that immersive client culture we talked about where, you know, it starts with training and, and training goes beyond the, the traditional knowledge base into more of a client-facing sessions. You know, we actually do quite a few client bootcamps that have been met with just such delight from our agents and the clients. So my kind of motto and the ethos I tell the team all the time is, let's just get it right. Let's get it right. First time, every time.

Weston Morris:

You know, Patrycja as I'm listening to you, I'm thinking how I thought this was gonna go. When we first put this, this down <laugh>, you know, Hey, you've won all these awards, 11 awards, what's the secret? And I was thinking, okay, she's gonna talk about some of the cool technologies, you know, generative AI, automation and you know, all the buzzwords in terms of technology. And you did mention a couple things, the importance of DEX tools and things like that. But actually what you focused on was how your services focus on employee experience, and then tying that to the customer experience, and then the culture side of things, which I wasn't expecting either. I mean, this was really great. I'm, I'm hoping that our listeners will find as much value as, I think we will. So, Patrycja Sobera, if people wanna connect with you and learn more <laugh>, what's a good way for them to do that?

Patrycja Sobera:

Absolutely. Would love to hear from our industry peers and colleagues, always open to conversation. So well quite simply, Patrycja dot Sobera at unisys.com, or of course, LinkedIn, Patrycja Sobera, very happy to connect with anyone who would like to chat more.

Weston Morris:

Awesome. And we will make sure to have your contact included in the notes for our podcast here as well. So you've been listening to the Digital Workplace Deep Dive podcast, and I tell you what, if you're

finding value in these episodes, I would love it if you would give it a rating or even adding a comment on your favorite podcasting platform. Until next time, I'm your host Weston Morris. Thanks for listening.