

Michelle Ockers:

Welcome to another episode of Learning Uncut Elevate. In the spirit of reconciliation, I would like to acknowledge traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and culture, including the people of the beautiful Brinja Yuin Nation, whose lands I sit on today, and just to pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging. And my next privilege delight is to introduce our guest today, Dave Kelly. Hello, Dave.

David Kelly:

Hello Michelle, thank you so much for having me.

Michelle Ockers:

It's an absolute pleasure. I think our connection probably goes back to, I'm going to say Twitter back in its hayday is probably where we came across each other, but it could have been a conference somewhere, something along those lines.

David Kelly:

It definitely was Twitter. I think the first time we saw each other was in neither of our home countries, probably in London at one of the shows there.

Michelle Ockers:

Probably. And as listeners can tell, you don't have an Aussie accent. So tell us a little bit about yourself, Dave, where you're coming from and what you're doing professionally.

David Kelly:

Sure. So, yes, you're very astute on my accent. For those of you that aren't familiar with the accent, I am from New York in the United States, specifically Long Island. If you're familiar with that accent, it's like the New York accent, only more obnoxious. I am the chairman of an organization called the Learning Guild. The Learning Guild is a professional development organization. It's a global organization, but our home is in North America, and that's where the majority of our face-to-face events are. Like a lot of professional development organizations, we provide a lot of different content and resources that people can use to learn how to do their jobs better and connect with each other. We do online magazine and articles. We do lots of publications. We do events both virtually and in person. The things that most people associate or are most familiar with from the Learning Guild are our face-to-face events in North America. We have the DevLearn Conference that takes place in Las Vegas and the Learning Leaders Conference, Learning 2024, which takes place in Orlando each year. And the Learning Guild, like a lot of professional development communities, has its niche. Our niche tends to be at the intersection of learning and technology and finding opportunities for people to make sense of that space, discover the opportunities and the risks associated with technology-based learning.

Michelle Ockers:

And isn't that an ever evolving space, Dave?

David Kelly:

It really is. I mean, I've been in this field for, I usually describe it as a number of hair colours, for a long time. And I've always been really intrigued by the possibilities that technology has. And when the opportunity came to join the Guild, that was like the stuff that I liked doing

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suddenly became my job to really be on top of the opportunities that technology presents itself. There's always emerging technologies that are coming into play that are creating opportunities, disrupting the work that learning professionals do and finding opportunities to make sense of that and provide resources that help people harness the potential of emerging technologies is just a privilege to be working in that space on a daily basis.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. And one of the things I particularly appreciate, obviously it's difficult living in Australia to get to Las Vegas and other places in the US for conferences, but we are going to talk about that in a little bit in the context of the upcoming conference, DevLearn, but your research publications I find particularly valuable. And for anyone who's listening, you can join the Learning Guild without paying a fee and get access to some really useful, interesting on-point resources, including research publications. I think Jane Bozarth is your head of research, right, Dave?

David Kelly:

Yeah, Jane's been doing a great job for us on our research reports. One of the things I love about the way that she approaches research is she approaches it from a very, through a practical lens. A lot of research can be a hard read. It can be very academic in nature. And Jane's approach is much more practical looking at it from the standpoint of what are we going to do? How is this information that we have going to inform better practices? And she just writes in a very accessible way to break down all of the research that's there, all of the academic nature of it, and really boil it down to this is what you can do with it and how it's going to improve your practice. And she does a wonderful job for us in that space.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, she certainly does. So I think there's some threads we've laid down there that we're going to pull on as we talk about making sense of trends in L&D. And of course, a lot of the trends these days are tech related trends. Let's start with a pretty broad question, Dave. Why do trends matter? Why are they important?

David Kelly:

Well, I think they represent direction. I think, you know, trends by their nature have a very future focused lens. And part of our job as learning professionals is to prepare people for the workplace. And if the workplace is evolving and if it's shifting and one of the major drivers of those changes are trends, especially technology-based trends, we need to be on top of that. I mean, if a trend is going to impact the way that people live, work and play, then we should be aware of that because, you know, I often say when people talk about the how do I stay on top of trends? One of the main pieces of advice I give is don't look at learning. If you want to understand how technology is changing the way that we learn and educate and train, you don't look at education and training in isolation. You look at the way that we live. Because if you want to understand how technology is going to change the way that we live and we educate and we train, you look at how technology is changing the way we live our daily lives. That sets expectations around the normalcy of digital interactions that are going to inform and shape the future of how we use these technologies in the context of training and education. So following these trends is really important.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, so it's about getting beyond the L&D bubble as well, because people bring their whole selves to work, right? We talk sometimes about people have consumer-grade expectations when they come in and start trying to interact with whatever it is we're offering with learning, and much of that is tech-enabled now. So I think that's probably one aspect of it that people's expectations are set by their daily experiences as well, Dave. What are the other

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aspects? Why is this understanding what's happening with how people live, work and play important? Because, you know, much of that's happening outside of the organization as well.

David Kelly:

We keep hearing about this phrase, the future of work. And I think there's a reason for that. Things are changing rapidly. I mean, I know it's the hot button issue of the world right now, but even if you just look at AI, not because it's that technology is so important, but just look at how quickly the conversation has shifted through the emergence of generative AI and how the world has just latched onto it. And everybody's talking about how it's going to do that. That's probably the most visible example of something that happens every time an emerging technology comes in. It's just kind of like, oh, this is going to change it in these particular ways. And we have to not only think about it in terms of L&D, but the environment in which L&D exists. I think that's a mistake that people often make is we look at it and we say, well, how does this technology that's emerging, how do I use this in the context in L&D? And that's important. But I think the bigger issue is how does this change the work of the people that I support? Because if our job is to support their work, we have to stay on top of these trends to understand how it's going to change the work of the people we support, because if their work changes, our work inherently changes. Because if our job is to support them and their job changes, we need to be aware of that on top of it so that we can make sure we're giving them the appropriate layer of support.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, so context is everything. I'm almost in my head seeing this kind of set of concentric circles emerging where, you know, my temptation is to put us in L&D and our work in the middle. But of course, we should put the individual in the middle or in their organisational context. But there's all these layers that we need to think about in terms of what's the context in which they work. What skills do they need? How do we support them to work as they work? If the point of all of this is to improve performance and help people keep up to pace with shifting and working as things evolve around them. And then of course, there's also what's happening with L&D and how can L&D better utilize the tech that's available? So there's a lot to try to stay abreast of, Dave. How do we do that?

David Kelly:

Well, you know, one of the challenges I think we're in today is it's kind of impossible to stay on top of everything. I've been in this field for a while. And I remember a day when personal computers emerged. I mean, when I started in this field, as a trainer, I was in a classroom, and I was a classroom facilitator, and everything took place in that classroom. And then suddenly, the computer started to become more mainstream. And we had this new thing e-learning that emerged. And that was, it was a real disruption to the way that I worked. But that was one tech, it was a big tech, but it was one thing that was changing that disrupted what it meant to be an L&D professional, and we had to adapt to it. Now we've got so many concurrent things that are going on technologically that are changing the workplace. It's challenging to stay on top of them all. You got all AR, VR, AI, data analytics, different types of learning platforms that are out there. There are so many technologies that are evolving so fast that it's really difficult, even for someone like me, who on a certain level, that's my job to kind of keep a lens on everything that's going on. And I don't have time to do all that. So for me, the best way to stay on top of trends isn't necessarily to be an expert in everything, but to know who the experts in specific things are. For me, the way that I tend to study, I've kind of indirectly outsourced my need to stay on top of trends to people that I know in the industry and trust within the industry who are very narrow in what they do. You know, I've got probably a list of five people in any major space that I look towards to be doing that research, to be taking the deep dive, to be spending, you know, 50% of their time just staying abreast of the trends that are specifically in the space that they operate. And I count

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on them and I follow them to do that work for me. So when I, you know, when I've got someone who might be an expert in VR, as an example, when they share something, I follow that. And if they feel like in all the research that they've done, this is something that they found compelling and interesting and important, then I'll read that. And I didn't, they might've read a hundred things that week, but they only shared two or three. And that's a reason they only share two or three. And that's why I read those two or three things. So sometimes the best way to stay on top of the trends is to find people who are taking the deep dives and count on them to surface things to you so that you can stay on top of them.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. They're like human filters for us, right? So you need to find these people and you're suggesting you need to find them by topic as well. We'll circle back to kind of people that we might follow or organizations that we might follow to stay abreast more broadly of what's going on in the tech space. But how do you find these people? What are your tips for listeners to find the right people to follow in a topic that they're interested in?

David Kelly:

So there's two major things that I would suggest. One is, as simple as it is, it's ask. Ask people in your network, how do you learn about this? I mean, one of the most common things that I will ask is if there's someone that I know is knowledgeable about something and is an expert in something, they have greater expertise, it's an area that I'm interested in and they have greater expertise, I will ask them like, you're really knowledgeable in this space. You obviously know your stuff. Who do you follow to stay abreast of everything? Who are your top five people? And then I'll go to LinkedIn and I'll hit the follow button to people so that they start appearing in my feed. I will do specific research. I'll go into a particular platform. LinkedIn tends to be the one that I'm gravitating more towards today than other networks because I feel like it's got the best content for what I'm looking for right now. And I'll search off the hashtags. I will look for the different, you know, learn how to be a power user of whatever your application of choice is. I don't just do a quick inquiry, I will go in and I will do a multi-nested inquiry of look for people in these space with these sorts of titles that are talking about these sorts of things to kind of see who's sharing in there, who's getting the engagement. And I'll just start to follow them. And I'm very intentional about who I follow, who I unfollow, not that anyone's doing anything wrong, but I want to have my feed be as current as I can and get the best possible stuff because everyone's time is limited. So I think that there's a certain curation of your personal network and how you use it that can help surface things in a strategic way.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, I agree, it's a skill. And even the ways that you do that keep shifting on us. So the little notification, the bell button on people's profiles, it's one thing to follow them, but you follow enough people or it seems these days, even without following a lot of people, your feed can get pretty busy, right? So finding the stuff that you're really interested in, the high quality stuff, there's a little bit of an art form to that. What was it, you know, on Twitter back in the hayday that you used to be able to have little topics and just have just a feed appear. For people you've added lists, Twitter lists. I wish we had the same thing in LinkedIn, but of course we don't at this point, but I think following and then just using the little notification bell button on people's profiles, hitting that so that you can select whether you want all of their posts to come up in your feed, because it's easy enough, as you say, if you're finding it's not as useful as you thought, or your interests have moved on to go in and unfollow or, you know, remove that bell as well. So you can do some alteration.

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David Kelly:

And I think that Twitter lists is a good analogy. Part of what I find interesting about being intentional about these tools, and Twitter lists is a great segue to this, is finding something that works and finding a way to get that to be part of your everyday process. So for instance, Twitter lists to me was great. You would just click on your list, and it would just filter the feed to show what was on that list. Two things that I've done to kind of carry that over to LinkedIn, because for me, Twitter has not been what it was when you and I first connected on it years ago. It's just not a resource. The feedback's not, the stuff's not as good as ever. So I mentioned those nested searches that I do within LinkedIn. When I find one that works, I will take the URL that I'm on and I will save, I will connect that URL, I will capture that URL that has that search in it. And then I actually go into my to-do list. I'm very big on to-do lists and I will put in a weekly to-do list and say, just explore the AI and learning list on LinkedIn. And I put that URL in. So I just click that URL, and it executes that search form, which is essentially what the lists kind of did at that point. You had a particular list for a particular reason. I have a particular query that I put into LinkedIn, captured that URL. And the thing that I think is important is I have my to-do list every week. It's just a weekly thing. Every time I do it, it comes up. I just click that link, and I might spend 10 minutes, might spend a half an hour depending on the amount of time and how much of a rabbit hole I want to go into. But it's an intentional thing to go in there and be curious and see what people are sharing so that I can just stay on top of these things.

Michelle Ockers:

That is such a great tip. I'm going to take that one. I haven't been doing that. You know, who else is really good on how to do this kind of filtering and following is Mike Taylor. And I did do about three years ago over the Christmas period here in Australia, I did an episode with Mike around personal knowledge management and how he does that. So I'm going to put a link in the show notes to that for anyone who's interested in upping their game and making things more efficient and easier to find good quality information on things they're interested in. Between your tips, Dave, and Mike's tips, I think there's a lot that you can play around with. So using your network, particularly your online network, is one way of staying abreast of trends, finding out who to follow, asking around who do you follow on particular topics. I find conferences really useful, not just going to conferences and handpicking and going to conferences is really, really valuable. You know, when you can make the time and get that consciously into your diary, but even just looking at who's speaking at different conferences, what topics are they speaking about? Of course, I have the benefit of being able to reach out to people and saying, let's have a chat on the podcast if something interests me. But a lot of people, particularly if they're on the speaking circuit, you know, you connect with them on LinkedIn, they're open to answering questions, maybe even connecting. So keep abreast of what sort of conferences are going on. Tell me a little bit more about DevLearn and, you know, how you approach, because I'm assuming you're very involved with putting DevLearn together, how you approach, you know, what are we going to talk about this year at DevLearn? Who are we going to get to talk about it? How are those kinds of decisions made to help people to stay abreast of trends?

David Kelly:

Sure. So in all of our conferences, but DevLearn as an example, all of our stuff is from the community by the community. So we do an open call for proposals that anybody can submit their stuff into. And for DevLearn as an example, we might get anywhere between 750 to a thousand proposals for a conference that has about 120 to 130 slots. And myself and members of our team, we read every single proposal. We look at them in isolation to see what works, what doesn't work and see if it fits the program. Usually the biggest problem we have is that there are, you know, if we get a thousand proposals, we might have literally 400 to 500 that get all five stars and they qualify to be on the program and we still only have 120

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slots. So it's a good problem to have, but then we start getting into the, what are the trends? What are the hurdles that people are encountering right now? What is the story that people need to hear this year? And try to curate that story through the sessions that are there, balancing it out across different topics, different tracks. The trends are always a part of that as well. And looking to see what's the most compelling program that we can host that will find people, that balances that stuff, the problems you need to solve today, things you need to be thinking about tomorrow, and things that are going to stretch you beyond your comfort zone. Those are three of the major buckets that we look to fill when we're balancing out our programs. But the vast majority of the sessions that are on the program, we always have some thought leadership as well. But the vast majority of them, we're looking for practical sessions where it's, I did this, here's the decisions that we did, here's what we learned, and here's how you can replicate it. We shy away from the phrase best practice, because I think best practice sometimes removes the context of what works for in different organizations, but it's a proven practice. We look for sessions that have proven practices of I did this, it worked for me. This is how we did it. You might, it might work for you. You might need to adapt it in some way to get it to work in your environment, but it was a proven practice for me. It might work for you and you might need to adapt it to get it to work for you. So DevLearn is definitely, it's a tech show. So everything there is going to have some leveraging of technology as part of the solution that's being shared. But everything that we do is coming from the community, people sharing the work that they've done so that others can learn from it.

Michelle Ockers:

It's a really exciting event. And I know you guys run a demo fest, which is fairly unique, which is part of the here's what I did. Here's how I did it. I'll pop a link to some information about the conference. It's run in early November every year. I understand same kind of time period every year. Is that right, Dave?

David Kelly:

Yeah, it's in the fall every year. It's usually the first week in November. It'll be the first week in November again this year. It's in Las Vegas. It'll be at the MGM Grand this year. It's our 20th anniversary of the show this year. We've been in a mirage for a couple of years, but we kind of outgrew it. So we're moving over to the MGM, gives us more room, gives us some space to do some things that we've been thinking about doing for the last couple of years that we just haven't had space for. So we're really excited about being able to introduce some of that as part of the 20th anniversary of the show.

Michelle Ockers:

Fantastic. So it's November 6th to the 8th in Vegas. You can register if people are listening and thinking, yes, I'd love to be there. And I know I would love to be there. I think I'm have to put it in the diary for 2025 in advance. But if people are interested in registering, you can register at devlearn.com, And for learning uncut listeners, if you use the promo code uncut, in capital letters, all capital U-N-C-U-T, you save a hundred US dollars. So if you are traveling from Australia, that is more in Aussie dollars. So that's a good offer. Thank you so much for being generous in that way, Dave. Do you offer an online option for the event or online access to any of the, any session recordings or resources from the event? How does that work?

David Kelly:

We have a lot of online content. We don't do a DevLearn online exactly. We don't do a hybrid event. We've made the decision, there's nothing wrong with a hybrid, but we've made the decision internally that if we're going to do an event that's face-to-face, it's going to be 100% focused on the face-to-face experience. If we're going to do a virtual event that's going

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to be digital first, then it'll be 100% virtual. Because we generally feel that most hybrid events that are out there, it's not a criticism, it's just a reality, is people who are virtual get to watch what people who are in person are doing. And that's not an equitable, everyone's getting a hundred percent of the experience.

Michelle Ockers:

You're compromising both, the experiences of both groups, I think. I mean, there's pros and cons. So you have to be there face-to-face November 6th to the 8th for over 200 sessions and networking activities with a really practical focus, as well as looking at what's coming up. I like the way you put it, something for today, something for tomorrow and something that's really going to stretch you. So I'm resisting the urge to start talking about what the trends are this year, because I really wanted to look at it being trend agnostic here. So it's really about how do we stay abreast of trends, which we've covered off. And then there's so much out there. You go to a conference or you start following people on LinkedIn and it's like, wow, there's some good stuff and people are doing good things, but we can't do it all. So we have to have a way of doing a bit of sensemaking about that and thinking critically about what we're seeing as the trends and making useful choices for what we're going to incorporate or what we're going to experiment with in our own context, in our own organizations. How can we think critically about trends and make those useful choices, Dave?

David Kelly:

Well, I think there's two critical elements to it. One is having at least a base awareness and knowledge of what the trend is. So you don't have to become an expert in it, but you need to have an understanding of what a particular technology is, what it enables, and what the opportunities are, just at a surface level. As if somebody, if I came up to you right now and I was like, hey, have you heard about generative AI? That you can have at least a conversational competence of what that term is and what people are talking about to at least not say no, but you have a very amateur level of knowledge. That's the first expectation. But then beyond that, it's a matter of, I have the privilege of speaking around trends at different events. I think the London event that we saw, I was probably there speaking about trends when I was at that event. And I'm often asked, how do I know the difference between a fad or something that's going to be really powerful, the next shiny object, or something that's going to make a big difference to my organization? And there's a lot of in-the-weeds conversation we can have to kind of dig into the thoughts up there. But it doesn't really start there. It starts with a much more basic question, which is, what problem is it going to solve? Because I think that's the biggest mistake L&D people make. They get caught up in the shiny object and it's like, oh, we need to do this VR. We need to use gendered AI. Why? I'm not saying you shouldn't, but if you can't credibly and accurately articulate the value that a new technology might add to the work that you do and to your organization, even if it's potential, like you haven't vetted the value, but you have an idea of this technology might have this sort of a benefit for us and to be able to say that it's either going to enable you to do something new, enable you to do something better or more efficient. If you can't answer that and articulate that in a meaningful way, why would you invest the money? Like why are you even having a conversation about investing money if you can't at the base level talk about what value it could add to your organization? Because otherwise you're just talking about a shiny object. So that's my first thing is have an idea of you should have at least enough knowledge about any sort of a trend to be able to connect it to a benefit that your organization can have or a way that you can enhance your learning programs and the value that your L&D group is adding to the organization before you should have any conversation about what the potential costs could be and how we're going to implement this. And we tend to skip that fairly often in the work that we do.

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Michelle Ockers:

There's a balance, isn't there, between here's the problems I'm grappling with today. And when I say problems, the business opportunities, the business needs, I'm trying to help people in the context of our organization to address. And, I'm going to kind of base it in AI at the moment. I mean, it could be a different tech. It might be the metaverse, whatever. So we can throw that in the mix as well. The analogy is, Henry Ford and the horse and the car. You know, people when they were running around in horses didn't know that cars were going to be so useful and will have so many benefits over horses, or even some of the things that other forms of transport might allow them to do that they couldn't currently do. My sense with AI is there's things it's going to allow us to do some of which we've wanted to do for a long time, but have struggled with. So maybe better ways of achieving some of our long running aspirations and personalization of learning is one example of how AI will definitely help us to do a better job with that. And we've struggled a bit with that, but there are possibilities beyond our imagination at the moment, things we haven't even thought about that a tech of that nature could help us to do. So there's this balance between and it's not about chasing shiny toys for the sake of it, but having enough awareness and being open enough to look beyond today's use cases at the possibilities of the future, but definitely grounding it with what do I need to do today and how's this going to help me? What are your thoughts on getting that balance right? And you talked about today, tomorrow and stretch when you're thinking about what do you bring to the DevLearn conference? Do you want to comment on that and how we get that balance right when we're thinking about our choices with where we put our time and energy and dollars with tech?

David Kelly:

Sure. And I love your analogy of Henry Ford and such because I think that it comes down to, I tend to be at this point in my career very focused on the language that we're using and being intentional about because I think a lot of the answer you're talking about rests in a question that I often ask people to ask themselves because I think if I look back at all the emerging technologies that I've seen come into L&D in my career, I think we make the same mistake repeatedly. At an overly simplified level, I would bring that mistake down to a single question, one of the first questions we ask about emerging technology, and it's the wrong question. We look at a new technology that emerges and we say, how do I do what I do with generative AI as an example? How do I do what I do with virtual reality? And that is the wrong question because it comes with the blinders of what I do. And it immediately assumes, it's one of the reasons that when e-learning first emerged, what did it look like? It looked like the PowerPoint that we used in a classroom automated so people can hit an enter button to go through, because we started with the, what do I do? It's one of the reasons when mobile learning came about, what did it look like? It looked like an e-learning course shrunk down to a smaller screen, because what I do. We've got to change that opening question and look at a new technology and say, how does this new technology change what I do? What can I do with this new technology that I've never done before? Because that's a question of opportunity. That's a question that enables you to start getting towards that question I was talking about earlier about, is there value in doing? Because if you're approaching it from the, how does it change what I do? What problem could I solve that I've never been able to solve before? You're asking a new, you're approaching a new technology with that, what I refer to as a lens of opportunity. If you can't answer that, then there may not be, and it should give you pause. But if you're looking at it, and generative AI is probably the most egregious example of that, because the entire conversation that I'm seeing going on in L&D is about how we can be more productive in doing the work that we already do. And we need to shift that very quickly about how does this technology enable us to do new things, to enhance the actual learning programs that we're doing, rather than just making the existing stuff that we do more efficient. We need to just change that lens so that

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we're viewing the opportunities that exist around a new technology, not just the opportunities to do what we do already more effectively.

Michelle Ockers:

And if we don't ask that question and experiment and look for ways of doing new things that are going to help people to perform better, to prepare them for the future, other people will do it, Dave.

David Kelly:

Yeah. And there's a lot of conversation, especially around generative AI these days. The phrase you often hear is, you know, AI won't replace jobs, but people who can use AI will replace people who can't use AI. And there's some truth to that. And I'm not big on absolutes that, you know, this is going to happen in no circumstances. But there's one exception that I'm willing in it. I think that there's a possibility that you are working for an organization today. And it may not be the most mature organization. Generative AI may, you may be looking at the thing. We're not going to be using that. It's not going to change my stuff. We're happy where we are. And we've been this way for 20 years. We're never going to change. And that may be true that there may be truth to it, but your next employer is moving forward. You know, most of us are not working for the last employer that we want. So while it's true, you may not necessarily have any downside risk in your existing employer. If you're not staying on top of trends, at least having a conversational awareness of what the trends are and thinking about what your next role might look like and building the skills towards that, you might be having a situation where your future doors are closing in front of you and you don't even realize it, that the doors of your next opportunity may not be open to you because you're not staying on top of it because you're too focused on what you need to do today and not necessarily what you might need to be doing tomorrow.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. So Dave, how would you sum up your key advice, key tips? I don't know if it's a list of questions or kind of a mindset tip, but how do we think critically? If people want to think better critically about trends and make useful choices, how do they do it? Summarise that up for me.

David Kelly:

Yeah, I think your point about questions is key. Because I mean, one of the things that I focus on is being very intentional about the questions that we ask. And even something as simple as asking the question why or how relentlessly. I mean, you go to a conference, you walk through the expo hall today, you're going to see everybody's talking about AI and asking people, how is this going to change what I do? How is this going to make my learning programs more effective? How is this going to make my work more valuable to my organization? Not only is that going to help you dig into the value of a new technology, I'm only using AI as an example, but any new technology, you should be asking these sorts of questions. There's a couple of things for you. One is every time you ask how, you're getting closer to your own personal context. It's taking the broad thing that applies to everybody. And every time you ask how, you're narrowing it down to your world. And that's a very powerful thing because it doesn't matter what this technology does for everybody. It matters what this technology does for you, your organization. And you ask how relentlessly, it brings you closer to that. The other thing it does is it starts to make curiosity a habit. Curiosity isn't something that you do. It's just something that is. Part of the reason that I mentioned earlier, the LinkedIn queries that I have just in my to-do list, that is me making curiosity just something that's part of my habit. I mean, I'm a curious person by nature, but it's very easy in the day-to-day business to just lose track of that and not have time for that. And I've got it in my to-do list. I've got a half an hour on my calendar on a particular day that's just

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protected on my calendar that I can just explore something that I'm curious about or go in and click one of these links and just see what everybody's talking about. It helps make curiosity. We are, some people may or may not have natural curiosity, but I don't care what you naturally have. I care about what you're intentional about. And we have ways of being intentional to build that muscle of curiosity. And I would highly recommend finding ways to do that because that's one of the easiest ways. to just start making trends part of staying on top of trends to something that you incorporate into the work that you're doing every day.

Michelle Ockers:

Absolutely. Some great ideas there. I'm just making a list of all of the people I know, all of the L&D leaders out there who I know are working with their teams to improve their kind of continuous learning in their team. And I think a lot of the practices we've talked about today and a lot of the tips you've given will be super useful to them. So I'm going to be sharing this pretty widely, Dave. Of course, at some point when you've reached that point of I think this might be useful, then it's time to start running some experiments with it. But that's a whole separate conversation. So not to negate that at some point you actually need to get your hands on something and try it out in your context with some well thought through experiments, proofs of concept, whatever it is, you know. Following some of the guidance you've given here on how we can stay abreast of trends will help you to make better choices about what to actually start experimenting with in your organisation or to have in your kit bag for future job roles, to your point. Is there anything else you'd like to add as we wrap up, Dave?

David Kelly:

Just that, I mean, as demonstrated in our conversation here, this is something that I'm very passionate about it. I'm very interested in, and to your point earlier, love talking about. So if anyone ever wants to reach out and have a conversation or learn more about this, or just chat about an origin technology, I'm very open to it. You can find me on LinkedIn. Best thing, my parents have blessed me with not only a very common last name, but a very common first name. So David Kelly Learning Guild is probably the easiest way to find me. If you just search David Kelly, you'll be diving into that haystack for a while.

Michelle Ockers:

Fantastic. And we will put a link to a whole stack of stuff off the back of this conversation in the show notes, including your LinkedIn profile. I'm going to cherry pick a couple of the resources I have found most useful recently from the Guild and pop them in as well. And of course, we'll have a link to devlearn.com where if people are interested in registering for that November 6th to 8th and using the promo code uncut, you can save yourself a hundred US dollars. Can I put a little placeholder on that for next year, Dave, do you think?

David Kelly:

Absolutely.

Michelle Ockers:

Wonderful. I'm going to pop it in the calendar. Thanks so much for making the time to talk to us today about something that's much broader than just how do we make sense of trends, but also how do we start building our network and making our network more useful and our habits of curiosity to stay abreast of what's going on in the world more intentional. So thank you so much, Dave.

David Kelly:

Thanks for having me. It's great to be here.

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Learning Uncut are learning and development consultants that help Learning and Development leaders and their teams become a strategic enabler so that their businesses can thrive. We work in evidence-informed ways to drive tangible outcomes and business impact and are strong believers in the power of collaboration and community. We specialise in helping to build or refresh organisational learning strategy, update their L&D Operating Model, enable skills development, and conduct learning evaluation. We also offer workshops to shift learning mindset and practices for both L&D teams and the broader workforce – as well as speaking at public and internal events.

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About your host, Michelle Ockers



Michelle is the co-founder and Chief Learning Strategy at Learning Uncut. She is an experience, pragmatic organisational learning strategist, L&D capability builder and modern workplace learning practitioner. She also delivers keynotes, workshops and webinars for learning and broader professional or workforce groups at both public and in-house events.

Michelle received the following prestigious industry awards in 2019:

- Australian Institute of Training and Development Dr Alastair Rylatt Award for L&D *Professional of the Year – for outstanding contribution to the practice of learning and development*
- *Internet Time Alliance Jay Cross Memorial Award – for outstanding contribution to the field of informal learning*



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