Alan Walker:
So, hi Andy great to see you again— I'm wondering if you could just give us a quick introduction as to who you are and what you do?

Andy Curlewis:
Sure, so my name is Andy Curlewis— good to see you again— and I'm the SVP for brand digital and communications at Cielo Talent, so in effect that's a full service in pro branding and recruitment marketing agency which operates within the guides of an RPO.

Alan Walker:
Okay and do you just do that for Cielo's direct clients and the RPO clients, or do you do it externally for other clients as well?

Andy Curlewis:
Probably 70 percent of the workers for the RPO clients in 30 or 40% are just direct and aren't RPO.

Alan Walker:
Okay, well you can be some examples of the kind of clients you work with?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah you can probably mostly consolidate them into three sectors so a lot of healthcare particularly in North America, insurance providers and so forth quite a few technology companies either direct technology or their more traditional market sectors and they're trying to hire tech or digital or so forth talent and then really a lot of engineering and manufacturing so maybe most of them really are fairly large and most of them
they'll be a blend of employer branding websites social media recruitment marketing, all the kind of good stuff that you would expect from a marketing agency.

Alan Walker:
Why do they come to you rather than doing that kind of work themselves?

Andy Curlewis:
Well I think if you look at internal acquisition now, it's a pretty different landscape from 10—15 years ago.
I think there are so many components now that you have to be an expert in you have to be an expert in technology you have to be an expert in marketing you have to be an expert in sourcing interviewing assessment psychology soothsaying I mean there's a huge amount really that the talent acquisition teams need to get their heads around and I guess from from our perspective either they'll outsource all of this to us would be an agency of record although partner with us to augment and boost what they're doing and I think if you can get it right there's a really good blend of in—house expertise but also leveraging third party knowledge and scale in everyone's he needs to scale in a way that's meaningful and

sustainable but really for it from our perspective if you can get the best insights from both inside and outside the market you should be able to do something special.

Alan Walker:
Do you think the skill of marketing is an important one for recruiters to have nowadays?

Andy Curlewis:
Absolutely and it's kind of funny I used to work in b2b and b2c and and the reality is that we're selling a career here not a widget or a product and that's in my humble opinion is a pretty sophisticated sell and so if you spend a lot of time with headhunters they're quite interesting because they really get how I would define an employer branding so looking at intrinsic looking extrinsic looking at one of those motivators and drivers are and actually those headhunters have always been pretty sophisticated and understanding how to sell a role to a very very senior client and I think what we can see now with the market is as we've scaled as markets have have become harder to penetrate as jobs and roles get more more niche and certainly as skills get more transferable and indeed you get more entrance into your marketplace I think it's an imperative for everyone to really be clear as to what differentiates that company and how to sell that role to that candidate and they get so many messages now so many approaches and that actually if you're not really clear on what that looks like you're not able to market that really well then you're gonna struggle I think when we if you look at Sergio Zyman.
I mean he was the chief marketing officer of coca-cola and he kind of coined this phrase marketing's you know nothing more than selling more more stuff to more people more often for more money and sometimes when you think about employer branding is that actually just the ability to sell more careers to more people for more value to all of the various stakeholders at less cost there's no other reason to do it so I think marketing is a key discipline now.

Alan Walker:
So talk to me about talent pipelining talent pools talent communities what are they are all those things different?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah, I think kind of it there's a number of kind of buzzwords around and you know in our industry we all know what they are and community has been very much one of those over the last 5-10 years however I think it's really only the last year or two where we've really been able to understand what that looks like and more importantly build them and take advantage. But for us if we would kind of quickly define pipe linings, talent pools and communities pipelines really are generally specific to a role, one particular role with specific criteria these only tend to be short-term in in focus and it's with a specific end goal in mind.
Talent pools when we think about that we think more about broader job segments or it could be locations or countries so it could be that we're looking at the UK or North America or it could be that

we're looking at sales or technology.
Equally of course it could also be career states so when we think
about graduates then or emerging talent then very often and
fundamentally that's a talent pool because you might have
sales ,marketing, operations whatever it finance whatever it might
be so we very much look at that as as talent pools they generally
tend to be a little bit more mid term in nature and again some when
the methodology as to how you go about identifying sourcing and
nurturing those people might be quite different from a pipeline per
se this this notion of community has been really interesting so in
the consumer world we've long talked about developing communities
crowdsourcing and so forth when we think about it from a talent
acquisition perspective or from a talent perspective community
traditionally has been more relevant to certain job industries so
for example healthcare and hospitals those organisations
particularly North America you're selling to caring for and hiring
from the same group of people public sector over here in the UK very
much a multi-dimensional brand scenario and often when you speak to
when those kind of senior stakeholders in those organisations
particularly healthcare in North America they don't get this concept
of employer brand.
There is only one brand and fundamentally to differentiate what it
means to be a nurse or a physician there doesn't really work for
them so when we think about communities; here we have a much longer
term play we have a much more multi-dimensional and strategic play
and that is the recruiting even that's though our core objective
actually isn't the only priority isn't the only goal equally I think
another big another big influence or change in the market over the
last few years years is the growth of total Talent as we call it and
so for many organisations the rise of the gig economy in the rise of
contract working and changes in contract loyalty what that kind of
means is people aren't looking for organisations and jobs with them
in the same way that they used to what that actually means is that
we need to be able to engage a gig workforce which actually is quite
transient and actually you know what they will know a lot more about
your market than then you will because they've gone in to all of
your major competitors spend some time in there and gone beyond and
so those are the other kind of dimensions where not only is it
really important for your talent acquisition and indeed your talent
management but actually there's a huge amount of market intelligence
that's out there as well which if you're able to manage and really
in a good way work closely with corporate comms marketing and the
business and areas there's some huge value there.

Alan Walker:
So as we said there's some crossover there isn't there between the
community of the pipeline and the polls etc drilling down to a bit
more detail talent pipeline is probably the busiest of the buzzwords
that are being used at the moment and how how would an organisation
identify whether building a talent pipeline is the right approach
for a particular a particular role or a particular type of role?

Andy Curlewis:

Yeah we took a lot of about there needs to be a lot more predictive and how we go about things you know one of the challenges when talent markets is that they're moving so quickly it's actually quite difficult to be able to ID something before it's been moved and morphed and changed into something else so from our perspective and it's no good an organisation going well I can't predict my workforce I haven't got a workforce plan well you're not going to suddenly start selling fridges if you're in technology but maybe you could but you know what I mean so the reality is that and they really need to be able to segment their workforce by function by state and by location and they need to gather the right information and data not just on their own workforce working closely with org dev but obviously working closely with them with external market insights and if they've got the right personas if they've got the right data if they can also understand supply and demand then looking at that they need to bear in mind talent economics okay do you think that you can keep cranking the wheel and starting a new process and you're gonna be successful in finding people or is that talent market so hot, so condensed that actually you need to build a more sustainable way of doing that and that means that you might need to build in invest I hope in some infrastructure CRM, CRM strategies communications engagement has slightly different people to manage those so there is definitely a talent economics about it and that's all about your propensity to succeed in finding the right talent is it just a pipeline and it's a recruiting job or is it harder and you need talent pools and communities.

Alan Walker:
Interesting— so if we were building a talent pipeline we've decided it's the right approach and then we should do for a particular role or role type where would somebody start with that?

Andy Curlewis:
Well I think we must never forget that this is a recruiting effort I mean actually if you're working closely with your people and culture and colleagues it's more than that but for the purpose of talent acquisition it's a recruiting effort so the first thing is to understand within your workforce strategy and your talent acquisition strategy how does this fit in so that strategy in that plan is the key point making sure you've got those right insights and data that I was talking about and then we need to build the infrastructure from my perspective at the heart of that actually is technology that in fact is the blend of Technology and the right talent poster a community leader high-tech high-touch if you like the reality is that the market has moved on so exponentially in the last couple of years CRM really is old hat now at table snake stuff in many respects but what's really interesting is that those technology providers have really pulled in a lot of consumer techniques consumerism, AI whatever you want to call it which provides fantastic platforms for us to really be able to scale a lot of the things that we need to do so once you've got the right piece of technology in you've got the right methodology process thats in place, you've got the right segments and the right CRM strategy for how you go about that here then is where you start to then think

more about some of the marketing and engagement techniques so got
your infrastructure got your process got your recruiters and your
people now actually you may well need a community manager or a
talent pool manager as well then you need to think about what's that
nurturing engagement and conversion strategy what communications do
you need how do you integrate that with with great events how do you
leverage social media in a meaningful way not a way that makes it
looks like your dad's dancing.
How do you then underpin all of that with a smart website whereby
you're able to capture all of these little pieces of data or moments
or signals or whatever it might be so that you can then continue to
engage that person before you bring them desperate for the job at
the at the the actual final interview so I think it's a combination
of a number of those different steps.

Alan Walker:
So it's all about driving people through that funnel in essence?

Andy Curlewis:
Exactly, I mean you know if you're looking at the consumer funnel
you know you're really
thoughtful and mindful for every single marginal gain of 0.01%
efficiency percentage here and there when you're doing at a volume
and I think we should be taking some of the same principles and
deploying it for talent acquisition we've got the machinery we've
got the technology we can gather this data but there's no point
gathering all of this data if it's not aligned into the funnel
knowing that you've got the right candidate generation and what we
mean by candidate generation is I'm generating enough meaningful
candidates so that you can go through the funnel and the appropriate
ratios but more importantly that you spit out qualified available
and interested talent which then gives those hiring managers and
business leaders a choice.

Alan Walker:
Have you got any examples of campaigns you guys have run and talent
pipeline?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah so when a lot of the a lot of the ones that we've run have
generally tended to be around very specific roles so technology
roles data and analytics and then also things like physicians and
doctors and so forth so you know we're very fortunate to have a
number of healthcare organisations in North America but also here as
well and what we find is that nurses in particular particularly
North America it's a very specific environment where you know this
is a known universe you know you basically know all the nurses that
have come through.
Same with data scientists same with with technologists so if you've
got a known universe of those individuals you can identify them all
if you can identify them all you can get them into your CRM system
and then you can start to organise that but again we find a lot of
attraction for building teleports and communities in engineering as

well, but typically around oil and gas
a very known sector hot spotted in some specific locations and
fundamentally if you're able to ID you know ninety five percent of
the potential and available talent you can categorize it into
priorities as to which you think are a) right and b) available or
you could get it and then deploy it in that way and I think you know
some of those organizations in technology, in engineering and in
healthcare are probably a little bit further down the road than many
of the other sectors and mostly because it's driven by need.

Alan Walker:
They can they know they're addressable market or they universe and
then it's a case of using
the right activities the right content to drive people through the
funnel qualify and qualify etc what what are the various different
pieces of content or activity that somebody might want to consider
in terms of moving somebody
through that funnel?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah, so content is such an interesting thing I mean again that's
another buzzword contents king and all that kind of good stuff and
it's been around for however many years and but the reality
is that content is only King if it's super relevant hyper relevant
hyper personalised so again if we've submitted our workforce and our
potential workforce and we're really clear not just to run the job
segments but around the personas emotional drivers intrinsic and
extrinsic as much as anything else then really we can get a hyper
target in the kind of content that we're producing so we manage
social media on behalf of thirty-two organisations so I don't know
150 – 200 profiles plus what that does is give us a really
interesting in-site into what contents interesting and again you've
got to think about the different types of content so not everyone
wants to see hot jobs not everyone wants to see a day in the life of
for someone you know city manager being pushed around in office with
a video cam.
They still want to understand corporate comms and what's going on in
the marketplace but also how that's relevant to them in their career
they want to see the leaders they want to understand the leaders
journeys they want to see what the latest projects are so when we
when we work with our social media clients and will journey tend to
calibrate the right mix of content corporate, careers, specific
jobs, specific locations and specific to that particular talent
segment and again another thing there is considering you know
whatever what – evergreen what's crowdsource what's user-generated
and all that kind of stuff and the reality now is that for most for
most people looking to make a decision as to whether they join a
company you know they really want to know what it what it's like
it's not it's not just about money corner office and all that kind
of good stuff now in the old days we used to say, if you're building
an employer brand in the first instance you think about the
extrinsic drivers money success power and then you think about the
more intrinsic which is more about engagement actually these days I

think most people particularly in niche sectors they want to know
who the people are they wouldn't know what the cultures like they
wanted no one's gonna feel like they want to know what other people
are saying so I think we're thinking about a content strategy just
keeping all of that in mind to be multi-dimensional that's probably
probably our biggest recommendation.

Alan Walker:
You talked earlier about incremental gains so there's 0.01% tweaks
here and there and improvements what are the key metrics you need to
be mindful of in terms of measuring the success of a talent pipeline
or community or pool?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah so we found we kind of broken it down into into a methodology
that works for us and most of our clients so overarching is a
philosophy that we have which is talent magnetism so just thinking
holistically around that that the the point of talent magnetism is
that it's hard to go out there and fight time and time again for
talent and if you're able to position yourself as a talent magnet
you're going to not only draw the right people to you you're
probably going to make sure that the wrong people deselect and then
more importantly they don't walk straight in through the front door
and out the back, but actually we all need a proper ROI dashboard
and so for us that means in the front-end awareness
engagement, conversion and then success so awareness is all of the
good things that might be around kind of brand index or universal
rankings and you know volume of traffic to your website you know
numbers of fans and followers and that real top-level suspects if
you like you know these people are part of
our Vista they could be relevant.
Engagement is then more where the rubber hits the road you know what
then are the metrics by which we're engaging or capturing these
people again on social media this is about actually registering
engaging
downloading referring whatever it might be in the website this is
more about stickiness engagement the amount of content or data that
we're able to gather and of course let's not forget high-tech high-
touch
events how many people are beginning to our events and what kind of
engagement we're getting.
Reality is that the only important yardstick is conversion how does
that then translate into the top of
the funnel and at every stage down and how do we make sure that
we've got the right ratios between and there's an enormous amount of
analysis that you can do at each of those points so at a macro level
we try and get our clients to think bold and think disruptive you
know why are you trying to open an office in
in City X when there's no one that fits the bill for a thousand
kilometers around there but actually incremental gains at each stage
each steps of that will actually add up to some pretty good value.
The final piece I forgot to say and is then that success so again
for most of our partners and our clients talent acquisition success
metrics is one thing has actually adding value to the organisation

what do we
mean by quality of hire and so from our perspective when we look at
those dashboards some of the traditional stuff like you know quality
of hire surveys and so forth promotion, retention, recruitment
prevention time to highest still really important because actually
that shows a sustainable talent pool
actually how does it then translate into organisational performance
increased sales increased productivity market differentiation so
again if we can track and measure all of those different components
you're making sure you're answering the business case in the ROI
case to different stakeholders.

Alan Walker:
So social media clearly an important part in most organisations
attraction strategy does it really work?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah the old million dollar question how really do you measure
social media and indeed marketing and yeah it does, you know the the
reality is that a few years ago we we talked to him when we really
thought about social media you know the the angle there was you've
got to meet your people where where they are you know your your
lovely career side that you spent a huge amount of money if it's not
really connected into it into those talent communities others hello
markets then it's an island and unconnected island and so really
when we think about you know the careers website the shop window to
your organisation how do you make sure that it is signposted and
connected as much as possible there are many different ways to do
that but social media is absolutely one of those and again when we
think about the 30 30 odd clients that we deliver social media for
its really interesting looking at the different mix of platforms and
media's that gets used but as long as we're really clear as to what
these communities are what these social medias are and how best to
leverage them and we've got the right metrics aligned against them
then they can be enormously successful so for example you've got to
be really really clear are you using social media for awareness are
you using social media for conversion or actually increasingly are
you actually using it simply for reputation management of course
there is a question how do you really define social media is
LinkedIn actually a social media, is Glassdoor a social media so
when so from our perspective we always try to be really really clear
upfront if we're talking about awareness then there's a slightly
different statistics and data points that we're gathering if we're
talking about conversion, then how does that integrate into a
broader sourcing attraction, nurturing approach if we talk about
reputation management that's as much of a corporate comms discipline
as it is in HR and talent discipline but no, we find that people and
organisations more and more using them and I think they're more and
more getting sophisticated and understanding how best to leverage
them and then deploy in the right technology and indeed people and
thus content to make them successful.

Alan Walker:

Assuming that everybody is pretty much using social media in some
way shape or form and from an organisation perspective and personal
perspective how can an organisation actually differentiate
themselves from the noise that's out there and actually make
themselves stand out on social?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah, the psychology of having a job with an employer is pretty
bizarre yeah I mean in the old days of command and control
structures and you know we get in to work at 8:30 in the morning and
we walk through the front door and then azar we'd be a completely
different being we'd behave in a totally different way and we do
things that you just wouldn't do in your personal life and equally
all those things that you did in your personal life you wouldn't do
in work probably a good job at times and but the reality is that
social media and the digitisation not just of our work environment
but obviously consumer and and how we conduct our lives means that
actually how people use social media not just the what but the how,
in itself can be really interesting so for example the traditional
big three or four LinkedIn Facebook Twitter and Glassdoor actually
if you break the demographics down then obviously the standard thing
to say as well you know Instagram and now snapchat obviously
Pinterest in certain ways and so if an organization is going to be
properly using social media and it should because social media is
there whether they're part of it or not then anybody needs to be
mindful around what our strategy is do you just stick to the core
four are you a big professional services organization or regulated
environment at pharmaceutical business or whatever it might be or
even if you are a regulated environment could how you use social
media be the people behind the product people behind the service and
when we work with corporate columns and marketing one of the great
things for ads is look we're another whole channel you can't add a
huge amount of personality sometimes in a regulated environment but
actually the people that work behind the scenes can and if you then
represent that and more importantly get people to get involved on
social media it can be really really powerful and of course if
you're a consumer business and your demographic is you know up to 25
26 27 then actually there's a lot of really good things that you can
do and snapchat an Instagram obviously most 18 year olds now
including my daughter wouldn't be seen dead on Facebook because
their dad's there but it's still the biggest advertising generator
and I think used appropriately it's a good opportunity but again
excuse me this also comes down to your employer brands your
personality your tone of voice the content that you're generating
social media menu specs is the mechanism in the vehicle but at the
heart of all of this is as humans because we've always wanted to
tell stories you know we've always been worried about our reputation
or or how we perceive other things and we always respond to
experiences and so social media just simply gives us another vehicle
to do that.

Alan Walker:
and whats your view on user-generated content versus the corporate

content that's been pulled together by a marketing team or a comms team?

Andy Curlewis:
It's a great question and I think for organizations that get it right corporate comms/ marketing work well with people in culture or HR or with a talent or or whatever it might be and again going back to what you said I think there is only actually one brand you know there's this whole construct of employer branding in many respects and you know is a construct and so if you're able to tell the story of that brand and harnessing corporate comms harnessing marketing harnessing HR and talent then the Sun becomes greater than the parts of course the cliche and the generalization is that corporate generated content generally is a little bit stiffer maybe not quite as engaging perhaps lacks in a little bit of personality but then again one of the key requirements of that department is governance is is PR is reputation management so if if you've got the right blend whereby those important notions and disciplines are represented but they're calibrated well against hey but you know what this is actually what goes on around here and then I think you can get it right and equally of course even if HR talent people and culture whatever
it is have a relatively free rein, again you want to make sure that it's appropriate you want to make sure that there's some kind of governments around it.
People always used to say freedom and if within a framework and whenever I hear an organisation they're saying are we new we give our people a freedom you know within a framework I often kind of think actually that means that you're a really autocratic environment and no one can do anything so getting that balance right is really important.

Alan Walker:
Have you seen any great examples of user-generated content that has worked really well so
unpolished authentic to use that other buzzword that's kind of just just gone crazy and been highly successful?

Andy Curlewis:
Yeah I mean I think our most successful emerging talent program was was absolutely about that so we put in place a tool and so this was looking for about three or four hundred graduates and
interns across 16 European countries so it was a very well-known FMCG business and in itself you know you've got a very very strong brand with a lot of very strong consumer brands and then you've got all these different countries so apparently the strategy and the thinking there is we're never going to be able to represent that well enough in a corporate level I mean you could have worked with my team for years trying to cover every eventuality and it just wouldn't have happened so we pulled together an integrated careers website campaign social media events program which followed on with from the consumer marketing environment and then we put in place a tool whereby people were able to generate um you know great stories

content whatever might be submit it into the tool it would be
approved make sure no one is saying something absolutely horrendous
it would be tops entailed with nice items and then it would be
published on to YouTube and various other social medias and then on
the website so we had hundreds of stories hundreds of them which
this looks absolutely fantastic and again the key thing there is
that if you are able to engage individual countries and individual
locations which we did through some gamification and some some
incentives and brand ambassadors we don't like that term anymore but
people don't then that you can get some really good stuff out there
so there's a really good examples as one in the marketplace and some
very good PR going around about it right now so yeah user-generated
content really important for lots of reasons.

Alan Walker:
What about directly advertising roles through social media whether
using Facebook advertising or or LinkedIn rather than their career
sections or their traditional job pages but actually directly
marketing through social. Is that effective?

Andy Curlewis:
It can be obviously traditionally when people first started using
social media you just get blitzed every day with with the job feed
in effect and clearly that's not such a yeah that's not such a
sensible way forward so if you've got the appropriate blend of
corporate content product innovation location career segments
careers EVP whatever it might be a community in events DNI
sustainability CSR you know as a massive content that you can talk
about so if three or four percent of your content actually do you
know what everyone we really need great people here then I don't
think there's anything wrong with that that said I do think better
for these kind of direct hiring opportunities to be promoted by our
own people and again when it comes to referrals humans are funny old
things we're more than happy to recommend cars to each other and
beer and good food and all sorts of stuff but for some reason we
never really are that keen on promoting or referring our own company
and our own jobs however I do see some change in there and if there
was direct hiring I'd see referrals as being a good wrap around
that.