

The Weekly Take

Your Time Is Gonna Come: The benefits of disruptive innovation

3.14.2023

Spencer Levy

Ladies and gentlemen, we interrupt this program to bring you a deep dive into disruption. On this episode, we welcome an expert on personal and organizational growth, who is the bestselling author of multiple books on the subject, including *Smart Growth*, *Dare, Dream, Do*, and a title that presents the compelling twist that we're about to discuss, *Disrupt Yourself*.

Whitney Johnson

It's like the telephone did to the telegraph, like the automobile did to the horse and buggy. More recently, we've had Netflix disrupt Blockbuster and now cable TV. Well, when you disrupt yourself for what I call personal disruption, it's when you take all those ideas and you apply them to you.

Spencer Levy

That's Whitney Johnson, who began her career as a secretary on Wall Street until she, well, disrupted herself in ways she'll share. She became a broker and ultimately a best selling author, leadership coach, and keynote speaker. We caught up with Whitney at this year's CBRE Global Workplace Solutions Institute Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, where she was a featured guest. Coming up, a discussion of disruption across the business world and for personal growth. I'm Spencer Levy and that's right now on The Weekly Take.

Spencer Levy

Welcome to The Weekly Take and this week we have Whitney Johnson. So Whitney, thank you for joining us here today.

Whitney Johnson

Spencer, Thank you for having me.

Spencer Levy

I'm delighted to have you. For the benefit of our listeners, just tell them who you are and what you do.

Whitney Johnson

I am the CEO and co-founder of a company called Disruption Advisors and what we do is we work with organizations that want to grow, and we believe that you start by growing your people because companies don't disrupt, people do.

Spencer Levy

Let's talk about *Disrupting Yourself*. And that's the book that I'm holding right here – *Master Relentless Change and Speed Up Your Learning Curve*. Tell us what “disrupt yourself” means.

Whitney Johnson

Well, for those who aren't familiar, disruption is a term of art that was coined by Clayton Christensen at Harvard Business School, and it was the idea of a silly little thing that takes over the world. So when you are disrupting, it's like the telephone did to the telegraph, like the automobile did to the horse and buggy. More recently, we've had Netflix disrupt Blockbuster and now cable TV. Well, when you disrupt yourself or what I call personal disruption, it's when you take all those ideas and you apply them to you. The big difference, though, with personal disruption is that you're Netflix and you're Blockbuster, you're the telephone and you're the telegraph, you're the silly little thing and you're the big Goliath that David is disrupting because you are disrupting you. And so that's the difference between disruption in products and services and disrupting yourself.

Spencer Levy

Now, disrupting yourself can come in small ways, it can come in very large ways. I remember early on in my career, I made a switch. I switched from being an attorney to becoming an investment banker. And while it worked out well, in the end, it was really, really scary when I did it because I had to do it and take a step back to do it. But it was maybe the best thing professionally I ever did. Is that a concept that resonates with you when you talk about disrupting yourself?

Whitney Johnson

Oh yeah, So you make a really good point, Spencer. There is kind of the “big D” disruption, the personal disruption that you just described. You can disrupt yourself and make a massive career change and that's one kind of disruption that we talk about. Another kind that I think is equally, if not more important, is the “little D” disruption. So that's the ability when you are faced with all sorts of industry disruption, whether it is figuring out how to deal with cost pressures, deal with hybrid work, deal with carbon reduction commitments, it's the little disruption, those small things that you do every day in order to be able to act and be an actor, to be agentic and deal with that disruption.

Spencer Levy

I guess the big disruption is switching careers, but everybody has a little bit of disruption every day when they're trying to make a change for the better. Whether it be on sustainability matters, as you mentioned, but it will be on cost reduction matters. But even in those instances, it takes a little bit of courage to change the way you're doing

things and so how do you get people to get over that hump of you're better off disrupting yourself than somebody else disrupting you?

Whitney Johnson

You're kind of asking two questions. So let me let me answer the big question and the small question. So the big question is, you're in a job and you have this experience of, you know what? I think I've learned everything that I can learn in this job or I've contributed to my team in every way that I think I can contribute to my team. I'm starting to feel a little bit bored, I'm starting to feel a little bit demotivated. If I try to stay there and I'm not growing and I'm stagnating, then I am at risk of getting disrupted. I'm at risk of losing my job because they're going to say "you're not really delivering the way you were". And so in that instance you are in a much better position of making the decision, "What am I going to do here? I'm either going to jump to and do something new or I'm going to figure out a way to make this not, it's a summit, but not the summit. I'm going to figure out a way to reengage. And in that sense, I am disrupting myself, either doing something new or finding a way to reengage." But then you also started to open the door to the smaller disruptions. And there can be something as simple as, "you know what? This morning I had a conversation with one of my children and I wasn't really paying attention to them very well. I think I want to do a do over because I want to have a better relationship with my children. And so tomorrow or even this evening, I'm going to pay attention to them when they're talking to me as opposed to checking my phone." That's a "Little D" disruption. It doesn't seem like a very big thing. But over time, if every day now for the next year or two years, I pay attention for 10 minutes to my child instead of checking my phone. Over time, that aggregates to a massive disruption in the sense that I have a good relationship with my child.

Spencer Levy

Is actually comes right out of your book talking about the personal and the professional and the concept of disruption applies to both. But you're the same person at home, you're the same person in the office. How do you bring the two together?

Whitney Johnson

My answer to your question is that the more we can bring who we are at home into the workplace and the more we can bring all of the skills and the capacity and the capabilities that we develop in the workplace into our home life, the better off we are. So I think the more we can integrate the two, the more our workplace benefits, but the more our family life benefits as well. If you think about work life, what do you do at work that you do pretty well? You just said to me before we started, I'm really good at being on time. You do that well at work. You're very good at organizing and preparing for a meeting or a podcast. Very well at work. Well, what if we also bring that at home? We're on time for dinner, for example, not 15 minutes later, like I frequently do. Or we're very good at organizing our family meetings or vacations or outings or whatever. And I think by the same token, we can bring that sense of humanity and compassion and caring that we exhibit for the family members that we love. If we can bring that sense of deep love and knowing and seeing people and that they matter into the workplace, then our

workplaces will become more humane. People will be seen and they will feel a greater sense of agency and capacity because we're aware of who they really are.

Spencer Levy

Well, it's interesting within the book, *Disrupt Yourself*, there's 100 examples here, but I'm just reading this is one example where you were talking about the former head of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and she was trying to regulate derivatives. And it was a great idea because look what happened to derivatives during the global financial crisis. But she got tremendous pushback from some very big names in the finance world; Alan Greenspan and others. But the comment here is from Arthur Levitt, another legend in the business. Well, if she just would have gotten to know us, maybe it would have gone a different way. So these are some of the legends of finance. This is a disruptor with a great idea. And, she wasn't able to implement it because she wasn't able to connect in the right way with the influencers. Tell me about that.

Whitney Johnson

Every time you disrupt yourself or want to disrupt yourself, you are by definition, requiring the people around you to disrupt themselves. And we don't like change, especially when other people are trying to foist it upon us. And so I think you raise a really important point is that when you decide that you want to do something differently. And we're going to talk in a minute about about the S-curve of learning, you're jumping to do something new because you're inviting someone else to do something new. You need to de-risk it for them as well. You need to make it safe. You need to make it feel like, "this sounds interesting, this sounds exciting, this doesn't seem scary, in fact, maybe let's do it together." The more we can recognize my disruption precipitates your disruption and make it so that it feels safe for them to disrupt themselves. And that goes back to the Brooksley Born example is could she have made it safer for them to do something different?

Spencer Levy

Right. So when you're disrupting, you can't just think individually. You have to think collectively, because ultimately, if you're within any organization, it is not a one person team, it is a team-team. And getting that team to buy in is, generally speaking, if not in all cases, the pathway to success. But since you brought up the S-curve, I love the S-curve concept and I think what you were referring to for your S-curve is that's how people learn new skills or disrupt themselves. In the beginning, they learn a ton and then it flattens out. But tell me, in your words, what is the S-curve and why is it important for disruption?

Whitney Johnson

Yeah, humans are wired to grow. Growth is our default setting. We want to grow, but we don't always know how. We don't know what it looks like. We don't know what it feels like. And so what we have done at Disruption Advisors as we have come up with a map of what growth looks and feels like, and we call it the S-curve of learning, it's very simple, it's very visual. Now, you might be somewhat familiar with it. The S-curve itself was popularized by Everett Rogers back in the 1960s, and he used it to help us

understand how groups change over time. And then we used it at the Disruptive Innovation Fund that I co-founded with Clay Christensen in our investing. But the a-ha that I then had was that this S-curve could also help us understand how we learn and how we grow. So every time you do something new or start something new, you are at the launch point of that S-curve. So it is flat. Now what's interesting about that launch point is that your brain is running a predictive model. You have lots of predictions about what it will take to go from the bottom to the top of that curve. And most of those predictions are inaccurate. So dopamine, the chemical messenger of delight, it drops, and you feel overwhelmed, discouraged, frustrated. Why did I decide to do this? I thought it was a good idea and now it's not. And it's not the growth isn't happening, it is, but it feels slow, which makes it hard to start something new. Then there's the next part of that curve, which is the sweet spot. You put in the effort. The model is increasingly accurate. Your dopamine spikes. You feel exhilarated. Growth's not only fast, it feels fast, which is why it's easy to keep going. And then you get to mastery that part where you level off. This is the place where the model works. But now you're not getting very much dopamine because you're no longer learning. So now you have this dilemma because on the one hand, you like being on top of the curve. You liked being a lawyer, you were really good at it, master of all you survey. But because your brain needs more dopamine, because learning is the oxygen of human growth, because if you're not growing, you're stagnating, you have to keep climbing, you have to jump to a new curve. And so now you understand this is a model for what growth looks like. It helps me understand why I can be really good at something and no longer keep doing it. You can use it because it is so simple, because it is so visual. You can use it with everyone on your team. You now have this model that helps you understand and normalize and contextualize that process of growth, which we're all wired to do.

Spencer Levy

One of the things I've noticed about many of our, if not most of our great professionals, not only here at CBRE but in the industry, is that they are the masters of one thing and they have 100 skills, but they are the best broker in New York City for leasing for the media industry, the best broker in Atlanta for leasing industrial space. They do that one thing and they are "the best" at that. Is that consistent with what you're suggesting here? Because for me, I'd say just keep doing that, keep marching, keep pounding that drum. Maybe they shouldn't disrupt themselves. And when you, if you are at the pinnacle, when do you make the decision that you should disrupt yourself?

Whitney Johnson

The first thing I would say is that our lives are actually a portfolio of S-curves. Just like you have a portfolio of properties, you have a portfolio of S-curves. And so on the one hand, you can be in mastery along a curve. You can have tremendous domain expertise and that is a very good thing. But if everywhere in your life, you are in mastery and you feel like you've figured it out and you're not getting that dopamine, you're going to start to have what I call Mr. Blah. I mean, you're just going to feel like you've done everything. And so you want to add to your portfolio some launch points. You want to have in your portfolio some sweet spots. So maybe you are the master of all that you survey. So it's time for you to take up a new hobby, or it's time for you to go on a really

interesting vacation, or it's time for you to start figuring out "how do I impart some of this expertise that I have to the next generation." Which, oh, by the way, that's a very different skill, being very good at something and teaching other people how to do it, completely different skills, what we call an S-curve loop. So that would be the answer to the first question is, you can be very good at it and you probably want to continue to be good at it, but you probably need in your portfolio to have a balanced portfolio; a couple of things where you're in the sweet spot in at least one thing where you're at the launch point. Maybe it's at work, maybe it's at home, but you need that in order to continue to grow and feel like within the context of your life and your career, you're in the sweet spot.

Spencer Levy

Mr. Blah, is that the word you used?

Whitney Johnson

Yeah, Mr. Blah, yeah.

Spencer Levy

I love that.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

So we're talking with here a world class author, and Mr. Blah is the descriptor. I love that. But you know why I love that, because it gets right to the point and it speaks to the audience in language everybody understands. What that means because everybody's been at that point in their lives where I feel like. Mr. Blah.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah, yeah. And to build on that – so one of the things I think is really important is being at the top of the curve does not necessarily mean that you are the world's foremost expert. What it means is, is that whatever I set out to do in this role, on this project, I've done. It means that I'm no longer energized by it and so when you start to get those indicators, when you feel like also there's more for me to do on this planet, that is a signal for you that it is time to disrupt yourself. It can be Big D or Little D, but that's your signal, That's that your brain saying, "I need to grow. Please give me some dopamine."

Spencer Levy

Mm hmm. And I think back my own career. And the thing that's different about the professional corporate world is the thought to finish is so long. That's why I like cooking, because cooking is "I could buy the stuff, I can cook it and eat it right then and there." So how do you deal with these different time horizons of feeling good about what you do versus deferred gratification?

Whitney Johnson

Well, that's such a great question. So if we go back to this idea of moving along an S-curve as a dopamine management exercise, what you know is that in the sweet spot, you're getting a lot of it. The challenge at the launch point is that it's dropping. But what do we know? We know that it spikes when you exceed expectations. And so when you're trying to gain momentum, when you're trying to, like you said, you've got this longer time horizon, how do you set ridiculously small goals that will allow you to still get that? So you're trying to master a new skill, whether it's, let's call it tennis, whether it's, you know, being a real estate broker, whatever it is, you set very, very small goals. So, for example, today I'm going to spend 5 minutes learning something new about this topic. That's all. Only 5 minutes. I could spend 15. I could spend a half an hour, but I'm going to spend 5 minutes. Well, guess what? Most of us can easily do 5 minutes. So now if I do 6 minutes, what happens? Dopamine rush! Next day, "All right, I think I can do another 5 minutes." And then I get another dopamine rush. And so now all of a sudden, because I've broken it down into these really small goals at this launch point where it feels like growth isn't happening, now feels like growth is happening because I've hacked the system.

Spencer Levy

What are some of the tips you would give to a leader to spur their organization and their people into the right direction?

Whitney Johnson

I think the first thing we do is we go in well, first thing is recognize and acknowledge the shoulders we stand on, number one. Number two is to go in and execute against what we were actually hired to do. And then number three, that gives us permission to start talking about some of the other things that we would like to try. And then we look for other people throughout the organization who would like to experiment with us as well. And then we gradually, we're at the launch point, we look for those very small proof points that allow us to gain momentum, that allow us to get the buy-in because we're disrupting ourselves and then we start to give other people the courage to disrupt themselves as well. The thing that I would say is that sometimes we believe that we have very little power and very little autonomy within a large organization. And it is true, the sky is not our limit. There is gravity, but it is also true that we have far more autonomy, far more ability to execute and make things happen than we believe that we do.

Spencer Levy

So let's talk about some of these concepts, if you don't mind. Let's talk about "embrace constraints." And I don't think anybody likes to be constrained, but there is constraints of I don't have enough money to do this project. I don't have enough time. I don't have enough resources. I don't have the right people on my team. Tell me what it means to you.

Whitney Johnson

Mm hmm. I think this is so interesting. Did you know that skateboarders are some of the quickest learners in the world? And the reason that they're quickest learners is because

they receive very fast and useful feedback. Every action, every move that they make has an immediate consequence. So what's happening? They have constraints. And so as you think about this idea of moving along and S-curve, the constraints are something that give us friction, there's something that give us tension. We actually need them. It's a law of physics. You need something to push against in order to gain traction. You think back to college, you think back to law school. Would you have graduated if you didn't have a deadline for taking exams? Would you have taken the bar if you didn't have a deadline for taking the bar? No. Constraints are some of our finest friends. Gravity is our friend. And so the sooner that we can get to the point where we embrace the constraints, the constraints start to become a tool of creation. And I would argue for you and anyone within the sound of my voice, our biggest accomplishments in our lives came about because of a constraint.

Spencer Levy

You know, it's interesting. You used the word gravity, because you know what I was thinking about while you were giving that description, Whitney, was the movie *Wall-E*. In the movie *Wall-E*, by the way, it's a cartoon.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

But in that movie, they had no gravity in the ship and everybody became Mr. or Ms. Blah. And so because they had no constraint, it changed them as people.

Whitney Johnson

That's right, I remember that. And it was kind of depressing, wasn't it.

Spencer Levy

It was.

Whitney Johnson

To see this sense of ennui that they all felt. There was no purpose. And in fact, I'll tell you one other story. There was a seminar that took place probably 30 years ago, and it was - Rollo May talked about in one of his books called *The Courage to Create*. They had this seminar about, you know, what could we do, what's possible in the world. And so everybody said "the sky's the limit." And what they found is by only saying the sky's the limit, people got together and was like, "yep, sky's the limit," and there was nothing to talk about. They realized, but gravity is good, too. We start to really create something when we have some constraints imposed.

Spencer Levy

I agree with you on the constraint, but on the sky's the limit thing - we have this corporate thing that we talk about here called RISE Values; and it's Respect, Integrity, Service, Excellence. That's RISE, and I don't think E gets its due enough because I think people are afraid of the E, they're afraid of excellence, and I think they're afraid of

it because every time we do a speech or we do a presentation, we want it to be, on this team, we want it to be excellent. We want it to be the best people have ever heard. That's daunting, that's scary. And maybe if we were to apply some of the teachings from your books, maybe that's the wrong way to go about it.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah, the way I hear you talking about that is that there are some sense of judgment that we're imposing on ourselves, as opposed to - "I want it to be excellent. I'm going to put in the work. I'm going to do everything I can to prepare. And then once I prepare and prepare and prepare, then I'm just going to show up and I'm going to be present and I'm going to trust that I'll be able to say what I need to say." And so I think what I'm hearing and the nuance of what you just described, and probably because I've done this on far more occasions than I would like to admit, is that there's a judgment taking place of "it should have been this or it should have been that, as opposed to let me do the best work I possibly can from my point of view, how I see the world. Let me show up and be present and then it will be excellent."

Spencer Levy

Mm hmm. Well, we had on this show our CEO, Bob Sulentic, and we talked about the concept of focus. And that's - I have no superpowers, Whitney. But if I had any superpower, even though I prefer to fly, I believe it's the ability to focus at the moment of truth. So I think you need to have more than just being prepared. I think you need to be prepared and using your word, you need to be not just present, you need to be present at the highest cognitive level you can be. Do you agree with that?

Whitney Johnson

100% and I would argue that your ability to focus has increasingly become a superpower because there are so many distractions. And so it's something that we don't necessarily know how to do very well. But when we can learn how to do it both in the moment so that we can stay present, so that we can deliver an excellent speech, but also along the course of our day to say, here are the five things that I going to get done today and get those five things done, or here are the five things that our business is going to do this year and get those five things done. So I think focus actually is a superpower.

Spencer Levy

Well, at the end of the day, maybe we're both superheroes in our own way. What would be your favorite superpower if you were have one?

Whitney Johnson

So I'm a coach and I am really good at – if I spend an hour or two with a person asking them about themselves and who they are, I can get a sense. I can start to name their talents and their gifts and give them an idea of what possibility I see for that person and so someone described it as a revealer. And I do think that that is one of my superpowers.

Spencer Levy

Well, then you have something in common with my father. My father was -

Whitney Johnson

Oh, good.

Spencer Levy

Maybe he was a snap judge and you're world class at this. He was just a lawyer in New York who liked to go to lunch with his clients a lot, but he was an incredible judge of character. He could judge character almost immediately and tell you who you are, what you do, because he read so many people and it's a wonderful superpower. So we're both, I guess, superheroes in our own way.

Whitney Johnson

Aren't we all?

Spencer Levy

And we certainly try to be.

Whitney Johnson

Mm hmm.

Spencer Levy

So let's go to a few more concepts in the book and some of these concepts – and I say this respectfully – I think are fairly well known in the business world. And they include things such as “give failure its due” or “fail quickly” is something you hear a lot. “Be driven by discovery.” Do you have a different angle on failure than, say the common way of looking at – the Disney...

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

– it's actually in some of their movies.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

“Fail quick.” What's your concept of how to fail? When to fail?

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

And how do you look at it?

Whitney Johnson

I do have a couple of thoughts there. First of all, we actually all fail all the time. We struggle with failure, but I think that we struggle with failure not because it's failure, but because of the shame that we attach to failure. When I think about leveraging failure, the first thing that I think about is that we need to really understand the experience that we're having when something doesn't work and to be able to ditch the shame that we attach to failure. We need to see it not as a referendum, but instead an experiment. And I'll share a story with you that I think helps you understand my journey with this word. A few years ago, I was writing my book, *Building an A-Team*, and I had a conversation with Alan Mulally, who is the former president or CEO of Ford, and then before that, Boeing commercial airplanes. And I asked him the question, "What do you think about failure?" And he looked at me and he said, "I don't." And I thought, what do you mean you don't? Like, it literally didn't compute for me. And so I asked him again and I thought, "okay, so no, really, what what do you do? How do you feel about failure?" And he looked at me again. He said, "I don't." I thought, all right, well, let's see if I can do this again and bring this plane in for a landing. I'm going to try one more time. He says, "Whitney, I don't. I just see when things don't work." And this is a person. They're building airplanes with 4 million parts. Like there's lots of, you know, margin for error. He said, "I see it as data. I see it as information. I see it as a gem. I see when things don't work as an opportunity to improve things, as a way to learn." And so the way that I would encourage people, as you're thinking about this idea of personal disruption, is to dig a little bit deeper and recognize the experience, the emotional experience that you have around failure and either do therapy or coaching or both, which I have done, and figure out how to ditch the shame. Because the faster you can ditch the shame, the faster you can iterate, the faster you can learn, the faster you can make progress.

Spencer Levy

The faster you get to dopamine, the chemical messenger of delight, the better.

Whitney Johnson

Exactly.

Spencer Levy

Excellent. Excellent. So let's talk now about remote work for a moment.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah.

Spencer Levy

And remote work has its pluses. It opens up a talent pool that wasn't there before, and that is undoubtedly a wonderful aspect of it. At the same time, when you're in an organization, I think culture is the question mark.

Whitney Johnson

Mm hmm.

Spencer Levy

Is that something you can maintain in an organization that is in a diffuse location? Should people come back to the office two days a week? Do you have a point of view?

Whitney Johnson

I do have a point of view. So some of the things that I think make a difference and one of the benefits, by the way, of remote work is that it doesn't privilege people who are exceptionally tall or exceptionally short. So I think there's some advantage to doing this, you know, having people on camera. Which goes to my first point, when you are doing remote work, we need to be able to turn on our cameras and be able to look at people and see them face to face. Another thing I think is important with remote work, and it's something that I struggle to do because I'm very task-oriented is to – when you get in a conversation with someone who is working remotely – is to ask them how they're doing, what did you do over the weekend, to take that effort to build rapport. The third thing I would say is communicate, communicate, communicate. You need to be relentless in terms of talking about where you're going, why you're going there, and also how are you helping the people that are doing that work for you, grow. And then the fourth thing that I would say is now that COVID is over, we do need to find ways for people to get together, but we need to be really intentional when they get together so that it becomes this special moment of people feeling connected to each other, wanting to help each other, when wanting to move up that S-curve together. So I think it absolutely can work and in some ways I do think there is a benefit of remote work because when you and I are in an office together, we sometimes make the assumption that we have communicated because we're walking past each other every day. When we're working remotely and we can't see each other, we don't make that assumption. And so we're actually more likely to do the work to make sure that we're understanding what each other is saying and thinking and feeling.

Spencer Levy

A couple of more quotes from your book. Forgive me, I could speak for hours, but I'm just trying to get the highlights for our listeners. *Building an A-Team*: building a high performing team culture, build on people's individual strengths. So I'm going to make a statement. When I'm trying to build a team, I would rather have a smaller team of highly motivated folks than adding another person that might not share that point of view. What's your point of view?

Whitney Johnson

Agreed. Agreed. I mean, it's something that we are spending a lot of time on our team of, you know, when we bring someone in from the outside, making sure everybody has an opportunity to be able to interview them and make sure that they're not only capable, but they also are going to be worked - able to work together. And what we have found is that when we bring people in and they aren't able to work together, we don't get anything done. Things stall out because in order - you know, there's this wonderful quote from Scott Miller, who was formerly the CMO at FranklinCovey, and he says, "It's

not the people, it's the relationship between the people that is your company's most valuable asset.”

Spencer Levy

So last question and then we'll wrap up. We talked a lot about the individual and their career and contributing to the team. In very basic terms, what would you say are the attributes of a great leader?

Whitney Johnson

I love how you ask that question as the last question.

Spencer Levy

Should have been the first question.

Whitney Johnson

Yeah, it should've been the first question, but then we would have spent the entire time on that question.

Spencer Levy

Yes.

Whitney Johnson

I would say a great leader has the moral authority to lead. So a great leader says “do what I do, watch what I do.” Number one and number two, a great leader is a person who not only is absolutely determined to move forward, to be willing to disrupt themselves, both Big D and Little D, but they make it possible for other people to grow. I remember a few years ago I was having this conversation, one of the very first podcasts that I did with a leader, and he said, One of my proudest moments is when I look back and I see where all the people are that used to work with me, or for me, are today. And I think that's what makes a great leader, is that when you can look at the people around you. And when it was time for them to jump to a new S-curve, you graciously made it possible. Sad, though you were, because you knew it was time for them to continue to grow. And that to me is you walk your talk, but then you allow other people to walk and grow as well.

Spencer Levy

Well, I can't think of a better way to end it. And I just want to thank Whitney Johnson, the CEO of Disruption Advisors, author of half a dozen fantastic books that we could have spoken about for days. Thank you so much for joining The Weekly Take.

Whitney Johnson

Spencer, Thanks for having me.

Spencer Levy

For more ideas and information that might disrupt your way of thinking, check out Whitney Johnson's books and also visit our website CBRE.com/TheWeeklyTake. You'll

find related content and more about what's coming up on our show. Next week, we continue to follow this theme of disruption, and we follow the money, too, with an episode about the evolution of capital raising. We'll explore how real estate funds have changed over the years and may continue to change in the economic conditions of our times. Meanwhile, don't forget to share this show as well as subscribe, rate, and review The Weekly Take wherever you listen. Thanks for joining us. I'm Spencer Levy. Be smart. Be safe. Be well.