

00:00:03:27 - 00:00:24:02

HOST

Welcome to the People Property Place podcast with me. Your host, Matthew Watts, founder and managing director of Rockbourne. This is a podcast where I share the stories, views, opinions and career journeys of the movers, shakers, innovators and leaders in the real estate industry.

00:00:24:04 - 00:00:32:11

HOST

Welcome to the People Property Place podcast. Today we're joined by Chloe Prince, who's an asset manager at Catella EPAM. Welcome to the show.

00:00:32:12 - 00:00:34:00

GUEST

Thank you. Thanks for having me.

00:00:34:04 - 00:00:43:17

HOST

No. Well, thanks so much for coming to our podcast studio. So, Chloe, a place I always like to start is how did you get into real estate?

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GUEST

So I got into real estate in a really unconventional way, actually. I did French and Spanish at university, and as part of that I did a year abroad. So I spent six months in Paris and six months in Valencia. And during my time in Paris, I really wanted to find a job. So I was, like, desperately scrambling to find any job that I could.

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GUEST

And then I just came across this property management internship. I had no idea what it was, had no idea what commercial property was, but I just wanted anything. So I went for it. Was found completely in the deep end within a commercial property office with loads of French speaking people, and I've never done that before. I had a massive culture shock.

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GUEST

French people very different to British people as well, so there was none of that politeness or anything like that. So I got really stuck in. But I absolutely loved it. I loved looking at the architecture. I loved dealing with property in a way that I'd never seen it before. I mean, most people always think about residential property, and I just knew nothing about commercial property, and I just really enjoyed it.

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GUEST

So that's when I kind of decided that I wanted to go into it. So I got back to the UK, did my final year at university and started looking at graduate schemes because I was a non and I had to do a part time master's and if I'm honest, that were kind of less opportunities to do that because only certain companies offered that.

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GUEST

So Savills was one of them. JLL was another one. So I applied to as many as I could that offered that, I actually didn't get in the first round. I got to the interview stage, but I didn't get through. So I decided that I really wanted to do it anyway, and I'd go for a different sort of route.

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GUEST

So I just applied for a residential lettings job at Savills. So I did that for about nine months, tried to network as much as I can, and then, I met some of the graduate recruitment, applied for the graduate scheme and got into the commercial graduate scheme.

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HOST

And was that a year after I was at the intake?

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GUEST

Yeah, year after year after.

00:02:43:01 - 00:02:55:17

HOST

So you didn't take no for an answer? No. I just thought I'd join the business. I know that they can facilitate this. I'll prove myself in in one way or another. Yeah. Network. And then, you managed to to position yourself where you could get on the on the scheme.

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GUEST

Yeah. I was a woman on a mission official.

00:02:59:12 - 00:03:05:28

HOST

So having done that, what seat did you move into. And was it a rotational program getting your back.

00:03:05:28 - 00:03:33:23

GUEST

So, I decided to take a commercial valuation. See? So as part of that, I could have got most of my competencies through just valuation because it's so multifaceted in the sense that you deal with investment, valuation development. So I got quite a lot of competencies through that. But I had to do a rotation out. So I also did a rotation in industrial agency, and I did leasing of industrial units and investment as well.

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GUEST

So I got quite a well-rounded experience doing doing that. Yeah.

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HOST

And which parts of that did you enjoy the most?

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GUEST

I really liked sheds and it's weird. I speak to my family about in there. I why do you like schedule so where it's like, it's just, I just again, it's another part of property that you would just never really think about if you went in there. And I really like dealing with all the occupier occupiers, seeing how logistics work.

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GUEST

I just found it really interesting and I got to meet so many different people as well. I got to meet sort of people in larger companies and, you know, people who just work in, in ways, but they've actually made so much money. And I just found that really interesting.

00:04:16:10 - 00:04:33:02

HOST

Yeah, I feel like when you drive up and down the motorway, there's absolutely massive big boxes. Yeah. And to the uninitiated or untrained eye, despite how big they are, it's relatively easy just to kind of drive by and, you know, not think too much of it. Yeah. But actually once you open up that that segment and that world, it is vast.

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HOST

Yeah. So yeah. And fascinating just from a, a macro perspective in terms of, you know, themes in the way that customers are buying products so, and how they're fulfilled. But from that, did you, do you qualified at sales, did you move into a team.

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GUEST

So, what actually happened was during this or because I was technically on a permanent team. So I'd been employed by a team and they were going to take me on once I qualified. Yeah. But during that, one of our clients, who's London and Oriental, emailed me and was like, we think you'd be really great for the team.

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GUEST

Do you want to join us and go into asset management? Didn't really know what asset management was, but I'd valued so many of their assets and they dealt primarily with, central London offices. And yeah, and I kind of thought about it and I just thought it was an amazing opportunity. So I took a massive risk. Didn't technically qualify, I suppose, and finished my APC there.

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GUEST

So I joined there and I entered the world of asset management and then qualified over there, and I'd literally just finished my Masters when I joined as well. So it was quite a hectic time.

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HOST

So you're doing your masters part time and a full time job. Yeah. And doing your APC. Yeah. So you had a lot on your plate. Yeah. And then an opportunity came up to move client side. Yeah. Did you have anyone advising you from a career perspective on that move.

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GUEST

No I so I, I feel like I'm quite a free spirit in the sense that if I see something that I think I'm really going to enjoy and I see an opportunity, I just think go for it. Because where I are now, I would I would not be without the connections that I've made, the people that I've met and just taking a bit of risk.

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GUEST

And it has really paid off for my career. Yeah.

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HOST

So to tell me about London Oriental then.

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GUEST

So they are an asset management and development company and they focus primarily on central London

offices. So they have a big scheme in Victoria which is a mixed use scheme office, a bit of retail and residential. They have a couple of other offices in the city. And when I was there I was looking at acquisition of new offices, doing the development appraisals, some of the digital agents.

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GUEST

I was also doing sort of daily asset management, so leasing of the offices and the retail and the residential. But it was a I absolutely loved it. I mean, I learned so much. I'd, I'd done a lot of the consultancy side, but I'd never really done the side of pushing deals through negotiating the best terms for a client.

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GUEST

And I just really enjoyed I really enjoyed working on offices, actually. So.

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HOST

So you've moved from industrial to central London offices?

00:07:20:02 - 00:07:21:09

GUEST

Yeah. Very different.

00:07:21:09 - 00:07:32:29

HOST

I've had quite a broad exposure. Yeah. From investment to asset management to development as well. Yeah. And then talk to me about the move to to iPam. Why and how did you know it's the right time to leave London Oriental.

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GUEST

And so London Oriental was great. But I did move when I was a graduate. There were three people in the business, including me, and I just think from going from such a large organization, such as I was to three people was just too much of a jump, especially at my career, where I was still quite junior, and I just thought that I didn't necessarily want to go to another big company, but I didn't want to be in a company so small wasn't still kind of getting to learn everything and trying to increase my exposure as much as possible.

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GUEST

So when I came across KTLA, it kind of was the sweet spot between a really big company and a small company, because it still had that small company feel of knowing everyone in the office and getting stocking and everything, but it was large enough where I feel like I could really develop my career.

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HOST

Yeah, there was enough avenues or enough infrastructure in place. I guess the benefit of a really small businesses, there's nowhere to hide. Yeah, and so you have to be able to turn your hand to lots of different areas. You get some really great exposure to senior decision makers and probably get thrown in the deep end. Yeah, but if you do want a bit more kind of structure and maybe more training and, you know, you know, a bit more around you, then I can understand maybe the need to make that move.

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HOST

So you decided to to move to iPam.

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GUEST

Yeah.

00:08:54:06 - 00:08:59:13

HOST

And tell me about what are you doing at APM. And tell me a little bit about APM as well. For those that don't know the business.

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GUEST

So APM is also known as cartel at any time because cartel Group took a 75% stake in APM. And they're a European business, so they have a lot of offices and Stockholm, France, Spain, etc. so we're kind of part of a larger group, but we still have our UK identity. So the best of both worlds, and we're an asset management and investment management company.

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GUEST

So there are different teams. I sit on the asset management team. So I deal primarily with retail, but we have a bit of office and residential as well. So I'm looking at two shopping centers and a mixed use scheme which has offices, retail and residential. And we have an analyst team who sort of do all the number crunching.

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GUEST

Look at potential investments, acquisitions, disposals with the asset management team. How thing, there's a property management team that works on property management mandates that facilities management. So we kind of like to see ourselves as a one stop shop for clients if necessary, so we can offer them as much as we can, really.

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HOST

So vertically integrated.

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GUEST

That.

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HOST

Provider. Yeah. Full service. Yeah. But from an asset management perspective. So you're responsible for implementing and execute that business plan.

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GUEST

Exactly.

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HOST

And so everything from leasing to rent reviews. Yeah. To refurbishment.

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GUEST

To lease within.

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HOST

Three years.

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GUEST

Yeah. Yeah. It's it's what I love about asset management is that you can really take ownership of what you do because I mean, every asset manager will tell you that they see that property is that heavy because you oversee everything and you just you kind of have to make a decision. And I think that was the biggest jump from when I was a graduate in valuation to moving to asset management, just having the confidence to make a decision and get on with it and provide the best advice to the client based on that.

00:10:59:24 - 00:11:06:04

HOST

Amazing. So you've got a really broad remit that you really enjoy. What do your friends and family think about your role?

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GUEST

If I'm honest, I still don't think they know what I really like. My friends always mention Selling Sunset when I say I'm in property. I think I've got this really glamorous like real estate job, which I mean, I sold to a retail warehouse in Cork the other day, so it's definitely not as glamorous as those lines. But they.

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GUEST

Yeah, they think that I'm just a residential estate agent. My parents and my family think that I kind of look at roofs. They always ask me, do you like, knock on walls and see the material? And I know that's a beautiful thing. I think that, but yeah, they don't really they don't really get what I do, but they know that I enjoy it.

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HOST

So awesome. But that's the main thing, right? Yeah. So something you're really passionate about is diversity and inclusion and reverse mentorship.

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GUEST

Yeah.

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HOST

Can you just tell what is reverse mentorship?

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GUEST

So reverse mentorship is essentially where a junior member of staff mentors a senior member of staff. So as everyone knows, traditionally it's been the other way round. So a junior member of staff will kind of learn about the senior members of staff experiences and kind of help with their career progression, etc. but it flips the script in the sense that a junior member of staff is meant to show a senior member their experiences and entering the real estate industry.

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GUEST

Now, how it's changed, what we can do to improve retention, what young people are looking for. I mean, I

see so many articles that say, how can we attract Gen Z? What are they looking for? And I always say the best thing to do is just to talk to them. Yeah. And that's kind of what it is. It's it's bridging the gap of perspective because someone who's been in the industry since, since the 80s is growing a really established career will have a completely different understanding of what it's like to someone who's joining as a graduate in a different generation.

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GUEST

So I think it's so important in multi-generational businesses so that people can be more on the same page, and there's not a massive discrepancy. And sort of understanding.

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HOST

This is it's not a new thing.

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GUEST

Reverse mentorship. No, I mean, I think it's one of those things where there probably have been instances where people have done reverse mentored mentorship and not realize that it's reverse mentorship or called it that. Yeah. Because I think just by having conversations with different people, you're kind of, inadvertently mentoring them all the time. But it's come to the forefront now because it's such an easy and quick initiative for every company to implement.

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GUEST

I mean, it's also free, so it's kind of a win win, really.

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HOST

So how would a company go about doing that.

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GUEST

So that, a number of ways. I mean, I've done it twice now. So I'm currently reverse mentoring the head of planning at Montagu Evans. And I also did disabled. So I was reverse mentoring a board leader. And I think that needs to be, structure in place. So with salvos, the diversity groups came up with it.

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GUEST

We had a representative from each group. So I was in the ethnicity group. We had a representative from the gender, representative from the LGBTQ plus group, etc., and disability, and then paired them with board members. And we just had an agenda of different things to talk about. Just so that we can help steer the conversation as well.

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GUEST

I mean, we kind of met once a month, but it's at the discretion. So people could meet me more frequently if they wanted to. But once a month was the minimum just to keep momentum. And it was just in a coffee shop or over teams. I mean, I did it during Covid, so it was over a teams then, but now I'm doing it as in person and if I'm honest, in person is better just because you can really connect with someone in person.

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GUEST

And yeah, we just I mean, every time I've done it, it's just been really easy because you just get chatting and you learn so much about each other and the reverse mentee that I have at the moment has said that

he just didn't realize that the things still go on that I've experienced. So I think it's just important to understand different people's perspectives.

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HOST

Yeah. Whatever your background or whatever your situation. Yeah. Being able to have these open conversations and, and open up someone's view of what someone else is going through, what they can do to help. So there's clearly lots of benefits for the mentee. The senior mentee. Yeah. What is the benefit for the individual who is kind of running or has been a mentor?

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GUEST

The benefit for the mentor is just that it's so important for confidence. So I've never had a relationship like that with someone so senior supports I never have a relationship with the head of planning once you Evans. And it really, really improved my confidence. And it kind of makes you realize that they're just people, too. And in order for it to really work, you have to be transparent.

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GUEST

It has to be a safe space, and you have to be honest. And I think there needs to be that mutual understanding between both parties, which I've had and everyone that's done it has had every single time. And I've spoken to so many people that were initially like, oh, I'm too scared. I don't want to be super honest.

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GUEST

I want I want to be as respectful as possible. And by the end of it they said no. We spoke about absolutely everything. And and yeah, they really, really enjoyed it. So it's just great for your career profile as well.

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HOST

Yeah. I mean it sounds like an absolute no brainer frankly for everyone. And have you seen a snowball effect in it's happening.

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GUEST

Yeah, 100%. I mean once I did it salvos. I saw so many other companies do it. And especially in the real estate industry, it does seem like there's there's a push because as I said, it's quick, it's easy and it's efficient, and it's probably one of the best diversity sort of initiatives a company can do because it's just about people.

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GUEST

And people are learning about how other people think and their experiences and I think there probably is a bit of there, a gap of that in the industry, just because there aren't as many diverse perspectives as there probably could be. So using that to a company's advantage is a no brainer. Really?

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HOST

Yeah. No, it makes complete sense. But it's not just it shouldn't just be constrained to diversity and inclusion. Narrow topics senior leaders can benefit tremendously from Gen Z is or people who who aren't quite Gen Z come in with a different perspective and have an unforeseen that that conversation. Are there any industries, you know that you look to that do this really, really well, that real estate can look to and and and learn in.

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GUEST

Terms of diversity and inclusion?

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HOST

Yeah. And also reverse mentorship.

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GUEST

If I'm honest, I wouldn't say I haven't seen I've seen a particular industry that does it amazingly. I think it really is down to the company. I mean, I've seen different companies in different industries do it really, really well. For example, Montagu Evans have been really, really forward thinking and I've been really, really impressed with them. And I'm basically doing it through a company called We Rise In, and it's an initiative which is meant to elevate black professionals to senior leadership positions in the real estate industry.

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GUEST

So I think traditionally there's been a focus on just kind of getting everyone and getting diversity in more junior positions, more diversity in graduates, in admin staff, etcetera. But there's still kind of a lack of focus of pushing diverse candidates into more senior roles. And we rise in basically focuses on that. So it's it's a niche in that aspect.

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GUEST

And Montagu Evans have I mean, we've all been in a room with the mentees and the mentors speaking about these issues, having really difficult conversations, and they have been so open to listening and understanding. And, and that's I think that's all it is. It's a willingness to understand and not be closed off and to be honest with each other, because these conversations aren't always going to be comfortable.

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GUEST

But that's the only way that we're going to see an improvement. We can't pretend that this doesn't exist. Could have because it does. But understanding different people's perspectives just helps that. So yeah.

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HOST

And listening and understanding is great. But actions got to follow that.

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GUEST

Yeah.

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HOST

What have been the actions that follow those conversations.

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GUEST

So I got a really good example of this actually. I had a friend who was doing the reverse mentoring who was Muslim, and he was fasting during Ramadan, and he was saying, to his mentee that he feels like his bosses don't really understand the impact that fasting is having. They haven't really noticed. They haven't really acknowledged the.

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GUEST

And he's getting really, really tired. And it's just been really difficult. And the first thing that his mentee said was, I'm so sorry. We had no idea. We would never want anyone to mate. We would never want to make anyone feel uncomfortable, but they just didn't realize. And as a result, they implemented a fully flexible working policy. During this time, for all Muslim staff in the company.

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GUEST

And I think that's just a great, a great example of how reverse mentoring can affect change, because that was just through open conversation. And, you know, I speaking to my friend and he was like, it wasn't that the boss was a bad guy. I mean, not at all. He was lovely and compassionate. He just didn't realize he hadn't thought about it.

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GUEST

He was a white, middle class man who didn't know many, Muslim people, didn't just hadn't had that in his circle before. And this made him think. And then he made an action to change it. And as a result, I mean, my friend still at that company, he's really happy there. And he said it's made a massive difference in his productivity and how he views things.

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HOST

So so he'd still have his kind of objectives and work task that he needs to do. Yeah, but he can take a bit more ownership in terms of when he does that, when he's able to do that rather than just within a set. Normal working. Yeah. His fasting.

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GUEST

Time. Yeah, exactly. I mean, he, he came in when he felt that he was strong enough to do so, but then he just he just likes knowing that he had the option where he could work from home, where he could work slightly more unconventional hours. And he did work his contracted hours in terms of the number of hours, but he just did it more unconventional times, and it really helped his productivity.

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GUEST

And obviously, I mean, you know, we work in the real estate industry. There's inspections as client meetings, and you do have responsibilities and you can't get rid of those. But just facilitating the way that people work, it's so important. And I just think that's a really good example of that.

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HOST

So what message would you say to someone who's listening to this who is passionate about a particular subject, but feels like the senior leadership team does not understand the situation? What message really sent to them in terms of maybe initiating or investment conversation or scheme for the wider business.

00:22:12:05 - 00:22:32:11

GUEST

So I would say to them that that first point of call, I mean, depending on how big the business is, if they have a diversity group within a larger business, then definitely recommend reverse mentoring to them. If it's a smaller business and there's not those sort of structures in place just because it's too small, then go to H.R.

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GUEST

I mean, I've spoken to, the head of H.R. At a time about doing it, and they're really keen. Cattell are also really keen in the wider European business. So I think just speak to someone who's more senior that can implement it and just go from there. I don't see why company wouldn't want to do it. I'm on it.

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HOST

So yeah. Amazing. So let's talk about diversity and inclusion in a kind of broader sense outside of reverse mentorship. Just in terms of the real estate space. Yeah. Where do you see the bottleneck being? Is there a bottleneck? And you know, what can, what can the real estate industry do to promote diversity and inclusion on top of, what it's doing already?

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GUEST

So I think I always say that diversity and inclusion need to be seen as two separate things. Diversity is getting people in from different backgrounds and, having a more diverse workforce. But inclusion is about retention, and the two go hand in hand. There's no point having a huge diversity drive the that they're in an environment where they don't feel comfortable and eventually they will just leave and vice versa.

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GUEST

There's no point having a really, really inclusive environment for a particular culture, but not for every culture. So I think the to go in hand in hand, and I think that the bottleneck, I would say, would just be focusing primarily on diversity but not focus, focusing on the retention part. Because I do think in part that is why there aren't as many seats for example, black people in senior leadership roles as there should be because the retention is not there.

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GUEST

So people just end up leaving, dropping out of the industry, which is just a shame because that's such a lack there, such an opportunity to get different opinions in at the top, and I just don't think that's necessarily there at the moment.

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HOST

So they need to be treated as two separate. Yeah, separate parts. One is diversity and trying to get in people from different backgrounds. Yeah. To challenge check, innovate, move things forward and create a more productive, innovative, better represented workforce. Yeah. But then it's the inclusion part in terms of keeping them, training them. Yeah, fast tracking them, you know, and giving them the opportunities to kind of progress to senior leadership positions as well.

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GUEST

Yeah, exactly. And I think the real estate industry is really trying. I mean, I've been in the industry for about for four years now, and even in the short time that I've been in the industry, I've seen a massive difference in terms of when I started and now. And that does seem to be a genuine push to try and improve, but people just don't know how to do it.

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GUEST

And it's a complicated subject, so there's not an easy answer to it. So companies really need to evaluate what they want to achieve. I mean, I always say that the one of the best things about diversity is diversity of perspective, you know, getting people to think differently. And that's ultimately going to help a company's growth. I mean, there's there's obviously the moral side of diversity and just wanting to create equal opportunity, but it is just good for business.

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GUEST

Having different opinions creates creativity, innovation. And that is ultimately how business is going to grow.

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HOST

Where where does the line stop? Because I think you're absolutely right that the intention across the real estate industry is, is nothing but positive. And I think across the board people are really keen to drive a change. And I think that there have certainly been conversations with a broad range of different disciplines, because there's a lot of different entry points into real estate.

00:26:09:18 - 00:26:31:26

HOST

And historically, you know, if you look at it from a general practice perspective, going to university and becoming Rics qualified can be a surveyor. And then kind of your increasing increase in your career that way is one route. But increasingly the conversations that we're having with clients could be recruiting people from banking backgrounds, accountancy and finance backgrounds, fashion, you know, in terms of retail agency.

00:26:31:26 - 00:26:48:15

HOST

Yeah. Placemaking. So, you know, suddenly widening the pool, maybe a grassroots level, but also trying to attract people from, from other industries. Yeah. But where does the line stop with diverse shortlists and representation when you're recruiting?

00:26:48:18 - 00:27:15:27

GUEST

So historically the industry has been on diverse just because of the lack of awareness. As I mentioned before, all of my friends just think I'm a residential estate agent, and that's all the way I kind of think I and because of the structure of how to get Rics qualified, having to do an Rics accredited degree, having to know about real estate when you're 18, which most people from diverse backgrounds just don't.

00:27:15:27 - 00:27:36:19

GUEST

I mean, I went to a state school in south London. I had no idea what a surveyor was, and neither does anyone. I know that's not in the industry. And I think in order to to change this, we do need to increase the awareness. We need to go into schools. We need to go into colleges and just tell them what real estate is.

00:27:36:19 - 00:27:57:09

GUEST

I used to do this all the time where I went into schools from sort of more working class backgrounds, and the kids were so, so intrigued about it. They were really excited and passionate and they they just said they had no idea. They'd never thought about it. And I do think that will create a real drive in. The real estate industry is doing that a lot more.

00:27:57:11 - 00:28:23:08

GUEST

So basically, I don't think it's going to change overnight and there's no point trying to force change overnight. And I think that's probably where the line does stop. We can't force change overnight. We need to see it as a gradual process that we're all working towards, because I think it will eventually change if we do continue to push short of these initiatives and increasing awareness around the industry.

00:28:23:08 - 00:28:26:29

GUEST

But it's just not going to change overnight, and we can't pretend that it will.

00:28:27:00 - 00:28:44:10

HOST

Yeah, we are speaking earlier. There's been some press recently and a slightly separate industry. So the Royal Air Force have come under fire for, making mistakes by prioritizing ethnic minority and female candidates over white men to hit impossible diversity targets. Yeah. What is your view on on that.

00:28:44:10 - 00:29:05:05

GUEST

So as I said before, I think they tried to come up with an easy solution to a really complicated problem. At the end of the day with DNI, it's not as I just said, it's not going to change overnight. And I think they kind of did that. They tried to to push loads of candidates in roles that just weren't necessarily suitable.

00:29:05:05 - 00:29:27:06

GUEST

And that's not good for the business or the individuals. And again, I'm sure I'm I'm not sure how that situation is going at the moment, but I can imagine that a lot of those individuals left and aren't happy. And that's again, the retention point. I mean, there's just no point having this, this drive if you're just going to end up with a business that's not working and people leaving.

00:29:27:12 - 00:29:54:24

GUEST

So there needs to be a balance. But qualifications are important. But I do think that we need to not be so bound by qualifications, especially in more junior positions or more senior positions. Obviously they need the experience. They need the qualifications. The there are so many people that don't necessarily have qualifications, but so many other skills. So if we kind of create a balance between the two, I think that's when we can really see change.

00:29:54:27 - 00:29:59:07

HOST

Yeah. I think that's a really interesting point, is assessing candidates in a fair and equitable way.

00:29:59:07 - 00:29:59:18

GUEST

Yeah.

00:29:59:25 - 00:30:09:09

HOST

So that you can hire the best talent regardless of their background. Yeah. But then also have the training, the infrastructure to really develop them.

00:30:09:09 - 00:30:10:00

GUEST

Yeah.

00:30:10:02 - 00:30:28:07

HOST

I was talking to a client recently who who really wants to increase but just get different types of individuals into their business. But when the push came to shove, they weren't prepared to commit the training time effort resource into upskilling people. Yeah. And so kind of defaulted back to someone who came from a little bit more traditional backgrounds.

00:30:28:07 - 00:30:54:09

HOST

It reduced the friction. Yeah, but I do I do think that whether it's headhunters, whether it's hiring managers, you know, we need to be equipping people to effectively screen competencies, future skill sets for real estate, future of tomorrow because, just because someone doesn't have the letters and Rics after their name doesn't mean that they won't be an absolutely fantastic investment manager or fund manager or valuer or whatever it might be.

00:30:54:13 - 00:31:20:05

GUEST

Yeah, exactly. And I mean, not as a shameless plug, but I'm I'm kind of an example of that. I mean, I, I didn't have a traditional property background at all. And one of the things that when I was interviewing that they really liked is that I could speak other languages, and I just think that's such a huge opportunity for getting different skill sets into the property industry.

00:31:20:05 - 00:31:35:02

GUEST

You know, having someone who maybe did history at university or having someone who did languages and, and just getting, again, a different perspective, they'll look at things differently. And I think that's just completely, valuable in a business.

00:31:35:02 - 00:31:54:12

HOST

So but also you, you, you forced yourself. You didn't take no for an answer that made that non you know, you pushed it and you took a risk and you push yourself. Something else we were talking about is the idea of seeing, seeing someone in a position of seniority that you can relate to. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

00:31:54:14 - 00:32:17:27

GUEST

Yeah, sure. So when I was, looking for a new job, a Pam did really stand out to me because, I saw the head of property manager management at a Pam was a black woman, called Rose, and I've never really seen that before, and I, I looked through the, the team and I saw a lot of diversity given the size.

00:32:18:03 - 00:32:42:02

GUEST

And that actually made me want to join. And I think representation is so important. And, you know, I've done so many of these talks in schools and, and talking to young people and they they love the industry. But as soon as we start looking at the site and looking at the information in a bit more detail, they're just like, I don't see anyone that looks like me.

00:32:42:02 - 00:33:08:11

GUEST

I don't see anyone that talks like me or represents me, so I just don't want to join. And it's such a shame because we've missed out on some talented people for for that reason. And I just think that, you know, I, I was very aware that when I joined Stavros that there weren't that many black people, but I just wanted I actually saw it as an opportunity to create change.

00:33:08:13 - 00:33:35:29

GUEST

And, I got involved with as much as I can, very articles. Network for people and try to drive these initiatives and, I've, I've actually really enjoyed trying to create change and that is why I'm passionate about social mobility etc.. So I think there's an opportunity for, for young people who maybe don't see themselves in these companies to join and create change for the future generations going forward.

00:33:36:00 - 00:33:56:27

HOST

I think it's such a yeah, I think you're spot on. I talking with like with a lady recently and helping her decide career options and moving jobs and one of her reservations was, was, oh, the company that I'm looking to kind of join doesn't have a good female representation across their business. And there's always that balance between, yes, that's an absolutely fair comment and they clearly need to do better.

00:33:57:04 - 00:34:12:05

HOST

And you can either decide not to progress with that opportunity, or you can make it easier for the next lady by making that move. And giving someone else a ladder to to bring that in. And I think that's a really important factor to, to think about is to sometimes be the change you want to see.

00:34:12:05 - 00:34:30:07

GUEST

And it's really hard because you don't necessarily want to put that expectation on people. And ultimately it is up to the individual individuals. They're like, you know what? I just don't think I'm going to be happy here. That's completely fine. But in history and in civil rights movements and how things have changed has always been the person to spur that change.

00:34:30:07 - 00:34:47:05

GUEST

Right. So, you know, Rosa Parks sitting at the front of the bus, she was the first, first woman to do that. And she just said, enough is enough. And, if you want to do that, I think that, yeah, I think it's just a great, a great opportunity, like he said, to see the change that you want to see.

00:34:47:07 - 00:35:07:23

GUEST

And the real estate industry is a lot more receptive to it now. I think Gen Z all quite outspoken. And they will just say how it is as well. And I think, you know, maybe there's a generational shift in the sense that people do just want to be more honest about these things. I do just feel more comfortable talking about it.

00:35:07:23 - 00:35:16:28

GUEST

And I'm hoping that as we see more of the younger generations going in, that it will just change naturally. But we'll see. Yeah.

00:35:16:29 - 00:35:27:01

HOST

What, what is a headhunter? What can I do and what can I do to try and help or improve diversity, inclusion, or reverse mentorship in the real estate market?

00:35:27:06 - 00:35:50:08

GUEST

I think it comes down to, again, the point about not being bound by qualifications. So if you do see a really good candidate that doesn't necessarily have marks or, I don't know, five years experience in the real estate industry, but they tick every other box, you can just tell that they'd be really enthusiastic and bring something great to the role.

00:35:50:10 - 00:36:07:11

GUEST

Convincing your client to look past that and just, kind of have faith in them to give them a short statement and interview stage. Obviously, if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out, but at least just having more of an open mindedness about it and convincing your client to do so, I think that will really help.

00:36:07:12 - 00:36:25:12

HOST

Yeah, I think that's a really interesting point. And we're certainly talking about it as a business internally. It's something that I think we can focus on. It's like setting up a search or a recruitment process really well from the start. Yeah, I was talking to a white middle class candidate the other day and he happens to be an agent, and he's quite keen to move to the client side as an asset manager.

00:36:25:17 - 00:36:39:17

HOST

And one of his frustrations are with recruiters is he just gets typecast as just an agent. Yeah. And he gets you know, they just think that he's going to come in and just want to do just leasing and he's just going to be deal orientated, and he's not going to get involved with all the other areas of asset management.

00:36:39:17 - 00:37:00:23

HOST

That's a real frustration for him. And I think something that we can do is Headhunters is really setting up a search at the start to ensure that we are running a fair, equitable process that is driven by quality and is driven by the best person for the job, regardless of their background. But we've got the the room and the time to really search that market.

00:37:00:26 - 00:37:21:18

HOST

And that marketplace might be quite a niche marketplace, but it might be that we're able to assess and get other candidates in from a slightly more diverse background, because at the time and effort that we have got and the way that the search is set up, rather than it be just driven on a on a speed perspective and who's available, because that's quite easy just to churn things, but it's not actually going to have a lasting impact and, and change.

00:37:21:20 - 00:37:37:09

HOST

So you've had quite a varied career to date. You're clearly, you know, really, really passionate and you've done a lot of work in this space, which is absolutely awesome. But what what is your biggest challenge today that you've overcome?

00:37:37:12 - 00:38:00:20

GUEST

My biggest challenge today, I would say, was doing a part time master's, a full time job, an APC. I'm moving job at the same time. It was really tricky. I mean, I knew that it would be a lot of work. I was really determined and motivated and I just I wanted to be qualified and it was completely worth it.

00:38:00:20 - 00:38:41:05

GUEST

As soon as I found out I was qualified, I was over the moon and I looked back and I was like, all of those sleepless nights and no social life was completely worth it. But it was really difficult. And just balancing everything and not getting overwhelmed was was really hard. I've kind of come through my career journey on my own and maybe haven't reached out for help as much as I can, and sometimes it I did feel overwhelmed and didn't really know who to speak to or who to ask for advice, and I think that overcoming that has just made me a much a better and well-rounded professional.

00:38:41:05 - 00:38:54:10

GUEST

So it was a challenge, but I really don't want to put anyone off who is going to do the same thing as I do. When I was a graduate, one of my friends sadly committed suicide, and that.

00:38:54:10 - 00:38:56:06

HOST

Was really hard.

00:38:56:10 - 00:39:34:21

GUEST

Because I was doing my APC was still doing, my master's are still going to work, and I had that on top of it and I worked with her. And if I'm honest, I just found it really sort of difficult to carry on with everything. I just wanted to stop and and just kind of withdraw. And if I'm honest, that experience is another reason why I'm so, so passionate about a passionate about diversity, inclusion and mental health and how we can create a really, inclusive and comfortable workforce because you just have no idea what people are going through.

00:39:34:23 - 00:40:05:22

GUEST

Mental health has been neglected and it's so important, and I think we can we were all so caught up with what we're doing day to day. I think sometimes we just need to step back and evaluate everything, realize what's important and and just be there for each other, if you know what I mean. And I think that, again, mental health is kind of an inclusion point in the sense that people are going through things but don't necessarily want to talk about it.

00:40:05:22 - 00:40:17:06

GUEST

And we just have to make sure that we create a work workspace, which doesn't demonize it, and where people can be as open as, as they want to be. So yeah, that was pretty tough.

00:40:17:14 - 00:40:39:01

HOST

In terms of reverse mentorship or mentorship in general. Hopefully that is one step that will open up the dialog. So senior leaders have got more transparency on some of these issues and can then help out as appropriate. Yeah. So in terms of advice, if you have someone entering the property world now, you've obviously come at it from a slightly different background in the sense that you've come in as a non cog.

00:40:39:06 - 00:40:57:23

HOST

It doesn't have to be that way. It doesn't have to be, you know, doing a full time job, doing a master's and an APC at the same time. What advice would you give to someone who stumbled across this across this podcast. Or he's walking down Regent Street thinking, wow, this is amazing. These buildings are incredible. How how do I even get into this space?

00:40:57:23 - 00:40:59:14

HOST

What advice would you give someone?

00:40:59:16 - 00:41:20:06

GUEST

I would just say to anyone that wants to get into the industry, particularly if they don't have experience, just don't be afraid to go for roles that you may not think, your ideal or dream role straight away. Just try and find a way and speak to people. Get experience, free. More unconventional routes if you need to.

00:41:20:06 - 00:41:45:17

GUEST

I mean, I entered through through admin and, that's that wasn't what I wanted, wanted to do when when I graduated, I wanted to be a graduate surveyor straight away, but it just took me a bit longer and it was so worth it. So if you see see a job in a company where you feel like, you know, you might get experience in the field, but not necessarily the exact thing you want to do, just just go for it.

00:41:45:17 - 00:41:53:07

GUEST

Really. And shameless plug. Just talk to me if you want to. I can try and kick you out for I think.

00:41:53:09 - 00:41:59:14

HOST

And and who who else would? As well as coming to you to talk directly to you. Who else would you recommend people go and talk to?

00:41:59:16 - 00:42:21:00

GUEST

I would say talk to recruiters and recruiters. I actually got my first job through a recruiter, the Savills residential lettings job, and I told her about my sort of ambitions, and she advised that it would be a good way to sort of get my foot in the door, speak to people who are in the industry and just messaged people on LinkedIn.

00:42:21:00 - 00:42:50:18

GUEST

I mean, I message so many strangers on LinkedIn and it's scary, but it's so worth it. People generally are really nice and and open, and you get a few people that are too busy to reply and that's completely fine. But, you miss every shot you don't take, right? So if you see someone's career journey on LinkedIn that you found really interested, that aligns to what you want to do, just message them, see if they respond, go for a coffee or teams or even just to have have an email and I'm sure they'll give you advice.

00:42:50:18 - 00:43:02:20

GUEST

And I have people messaging me. I know a lot of my colleagues have people messaging them and they almost always respond. So LinkedIn is an amazing way to sort of get your name out there and build your profile as well.

00:43:02:22 - 00:43:18:15

HOST

Awesome. So as we draw to a close, Chloe, a question I ask everyone is if you had 500 million pounds and you don't have to wear your investment management hat here, you had 500 million pounds to other people. What property and which place would you look to to deploy that cash?

00:43:18:22 - 00:43:44:14

GUEST

So I would always look to London as biases. That may be. I'm a born and bred Londoner. I've seen, how much the city has changed since when I've grown up, and I think there's endless opportunities to create amazing buildings. I do think that developers have to have more of a social conscience. So I would, I, I think there's a around sort of gentrification and development.

00:43:44:14 - 00:44:02:27

GUEST

There's always a negative perception, especially those who live in the areas. But I just think it has to be done properly and I feel like I would be the person to do it properly. So I'd look at London and I'd look at sustainable buildings, I'd look at things we actually have this at work, a sort of brown to green strategy.

00:44:02:27 - 00:44:35:12

GUEST

And I think that is the way forward, looking at buildings that are not sustainable, distressed assets and improving them and create and creating amazing assets that aren't just amazing in terms of sustainability and all the best credentials and that carbon zero, etc., but also have a social purpose. And for example, I'd, I'd love to create a building in the City of London which has offices, for example, when the top

companies in it, but also has a social mobility charity that maybe rents the floor for free.

00:44:35:13 - 00:44:53:25

GUEST

And then in that social mobility charity, you get these companies meeting people who, from sort of more working class backgrounds and that they, they have an in with those companies and they're all in the same building. So I would create a space like that in the City of London. That's all. My dream is going.

00:44:53:25 - 00:44:59:24

HOST

To be a pretty big space with 500 million pounds. Who, who are some of the people that you would assemble to come on that journey with you?

00:45:00:01 - 00:45:29:01

GUEST

So I would assemble. There's this guy called Wesley Ankrah, who is the head of social value and Community investment at dominance Group and a really good friend of mine, and he has amazing experience in the space. I don't think I pay him 500 million pounds, but he's definitely one of the people that I'd bring, bring along, and I'd look at people who weren't actually in the property industry just so that they can bring a different perspective as well.

00:45:29:01 - 00:45:56:23

GUEST

So I assemble a couple of people from from work using all of their amazing investment and asset management expertise. But I'd also look at people like Akala, and I don't know if you've heard about him, but he is a rapper turned intellectual turned author. Akala has written a lot of books about sort of historical, novels about colonialism.

00:45:56:25 - 00:46:15:06

GUEST

And his experiences and what he thinks the UK needs to do in order to be truly equitable. I think he's absolutely amazing and he is one of my idols, and I'd love to see his take on my development and what he thinks that I can do to make it really interesting.

00:46:15:09 - 00:46:34:24

HOST

So yeah. Awesome. Well, look, Chloe, thank you so much for coming on the podcast today. I think that, you know, I've certainly learned a tremendous amount about diversity, inclusion in real estate, but also more broadly as well as robust mentorship. And no doubt a lot of people listening to this have done as well. I'm really excited to see what you go on to achieve at iPam.

00:46:34:24 - 00:46:37:29

HOST

And like I said, thank you so much for rum and the chat.

00:46:38:01 - 00:46:45:09

GUEST

No problem. Thanks for having me.

00:46:45:12 - 00:47:05:15

HOST

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further.

00:47:05:20 - 00:47:38:06

HOST

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00:47:38:09 - 00:47:41:03

HOST

Have a great day wherever you are and I look forward to catch you next time.