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“every lawyer should be collaborating with their clients to create small innovations”

Takeaways from Ed Andrew talking with Michele DeStefano.

Ed Andrew talks to Michele DeStefano founder and director of Law Without Walls (LWOW), professor at University of Miami School of Law, visiting professor at Harvard Law School and author of Legal 'Upheaval'. LWOW brings together students from over 35 law and business schools around the world and their mission is to train future lawyers, retrain current lawyers, and create innovations that solve problems at the intersection of law, business, and technology.

Michele shares her insights and research into what is happening in the field of legal innovation, her thoughts on law firm incubators, access to justice and what students are considering now in their careers. LWOW is in reality a hybrid virtual university teaching skills that lawyers and entrepreneurs need to learn to be successful in today's business ecosystem. Skills which are not taught at school and creativity which has been often neglected. Michele gives thanks to her mentors and discusses the strong collaborative community minded business that she has created.

- LWOW - developing projects to increase access to justice (2.45)
- Explaining her Why for LWOW? following on from Start with Why by Simon Sinek (3.45) and the gap that LWOW it fills.
- The two parts of LWOW blended learning and virtual, both developing solutions to solving access to justice , explaining the 3.4.5 method (5.00)
- On their virtual program (6.25)
- Blended learning - all hacking in one room. LWOW was developed to hone skills that cannot be taught in traditional law school format, emotional intelligence, mentoring, entrepreneurship, ideation.
- Commercialising the projects and who owns the IP - some of ideas are coming to fruition Ithaca sponsored by Janders Dead and has been incubated by Fuse at Allen & Overy and the only one with an access to justice bent (9.30)
- On incubation. Working with HSBC, Legal Zoom, Microsoft, spotify - building relationships and partnerships (12.15)
- "Lawyers are creative problem solvers, proven by research but the problem finding, ideation, listening and creative side has become more forgotten" (15.45)
- "It is not just about learning new things, it is unlearning some things" - building more diverse and eclectic networks, bringing diverse vantage points and new approached to problem solving (17.45)
- Diversity and what goes on inside and the diversity of skills regardless of skin colour, race religion gender, MIT studies and empathy, multi level listening - (18.45 and 20.30)
- On cultural incompetency (21.45)
- On teaching at Harvard law School Executive Education program, why leaders should not speak first (23.00)
- Law is still aspirational - we are now seeing a rise in the number of law school applications again (27.20)
- To code or not to code? Any skill outside of law will add value to any team you join (29.45)
- The main pressure points for law firms, the firms that start to think about value not financially but how to add value for each client will continue too prosper (30.45)
- Every law every law firm has to start thinking about making incremental changes (32.15)

- On her book legal upheaval - to inspire lawyers and legal professionals to embrace innovation practices even if they model is not broken, on Amazon by June. (32.45)
- On her mentors - "I would not be here or a professor without the mentors I have had David Wilkins Professor of Harvard, credit him for everything successful she has done, LWOW is built on mentoring every and every team has 4-6 mentors (39.25)

Suggested Books (35.30)

Stone Soup by Heather Forest
To Sell is Human by Daniel Pink (for lawyers)
Ready Player 1 by Ernest Cline
Start with Why? by Simon Sinek
Legal Upheaval (author)

To contact Michele please click on the links below



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