

Now you're talking! The power of cross-generational conversations

Webinar 2

Jo	<p>Hello everybody and welcome to the TCS webinar. It's a really short snappy half an hour probably over your lunch time today - Now you're talking - The power of cross generational conversations. Let's have a look at the tool that we are using today. They are nice and simple and the main one is the chat window. You've probably got that open already but if you haven't just have look at the very bottom of your screen. You might need to wiggle your mouse to find it and just click on the speech bubble, there's a chat icon there. You might also have a q&a button as well if you want to ask questions in our particular q&a panel or you can ask them in the chat window and it will be our job to have a look at what questions and comments you've got. Also, what's really important again if you haven't already is changing the settings. It might be set to panellists that chat window in which case its only me and Emily who are going to see it, but what we'd love you to do is change that to all attendees and everyone can have a look at what you're typing and have a really great conversation. Also what we've got is a twitter handle so if you're on twitter and you're thinking actually there's something I'd like to share with people or you just want to retweet what @convospace are doing, you are more than welcome to go and do that and there's a twitter hashtag today which is #reversementoring that is the topic of our conversation today. So do go and join us on twitter. Let me do some introductions first of all. My name is Jo Cook I'm going to be your host today and it's my job to focus on the webinar and the smooth running and making sure that if you've got any problems I can help you in the chat window and that's what I do at Lightbulb moments is focus on webinar skills. Far more important than me though if you look to the side we've got Olu and he is a customer and digital analyst ay KPMG UK and the reason he's here today is a little bit later on we're going to speak to Olu on webcam about his role as a reverse mentoring partner at KPMG. And also what I want to do, I'm really delighted to introduce you to Emily Cosgrove. Emily is the co-founder of TCS and what Emily and Olu are going to be doing is really exploring the impact of having much more engaging conversations. I'm not going to say any more about that. Emily you are the expert as far as I'm concerned! Tell us a little bit more about reverse mentoring and all of this stuff that's going on.</p>
Emily	<p>Thank you so much Jo what a lovely introduction! I am really excited to be here today talking about cross generational conversations and reverse mentoring in particular because, I was thinking about this, some of my best conversations and mostly insightful, inspiring and challenging conversations, happen when people who are really different ages to me. Just as an example outside of work my 3 and 6 year old nephews, I love my conversations with them.</p>

	<p>I always learn something new and then there's my 96 year old grandma and a whole host of colleagues who span four different generations of work and I love those conversations. They really matter to me and make a difference and we talked about the fact that there are 5 generations at work now and you may well have read or seen about this recently there's a lot on it at the moment and the fact that of course this brings lots of opportunities as well as lots challenges for us at work and in this webinar we are really interested and at TCS we are really interested in the power that having those cross generational or indeed any cross difference conversations can make not just to the creativity and innovation in our organisation but also to the effectiveness of them. And you know the workplace is really changing and if you think about those conversations with these people who are different from us, it can make them feel uncomfortable and they can be tough and it's not just the workplace that is changing but the world is changing. We are more happy to speak up, we are more likely to challenge now and because of that we are able to innovate and if you think of that, some of the social movement that has happened in the last year, even less than 12 months, we've had Times Up movement, we've had Me 2 and there's something about listening to different voices speaking their truths which really requires us as leaders to have willingness to shift how we do things around here. Interestingly we were working recently with one of our leading retail clients who have a new CEO and we were on stage with him and were fascinated and delighted to hear him use the words love, care, trust in the context of better conversations and what we say at TCS and truly believe is that for thinking leaders really understanding that there's never been a more important time to think about how they connect with people through their conversations and an example of this is Javier who is CEO of Volkswagen in Spain recently said leadership today is about unlearning management and relearning being human and you'll see this slide here demonstrates the importance of how we create more space for these kind of conversations and once we start deconstructing those long standing traditional forms of communication which tend to be command and control, then actually there's more space for different voices, being more connected, having more diversity and inclusion in structure and really this is where reverse mentoring comes into the picture.</p> <p>So what do we mean by reverse mentoring? Well I'm going to share with you the definition that we have pulled together and we say that reverse mentoring is a relationship and that it reverses the traditional mentoring set up and that is usually by pairing more junior staff with more senior leaders to mentor them and by doing this, what we do is we provide those senior leaders with different perspectives and insights and we also empower the younger people who otherwise may not have the opportunity or confidence to engage in those kind of conversations. And really the power of reverse mentoring is that it builds those one to one relationships and when we are able to engage with somebody and find out more about who they are as a person rather than who they are as their role that they've got or the title that they have and we more able to connect and listen to them and hear their voice. Getting to know them in this way helps us to bridge that gap or bridge the difference that otherwise might be getting in the way. So Jo I'm going to hand back to you because I can see stuff going on in the chat room and I'd really love to hear what's going on there.</p>
Jo	<p>Absolutely there is. Ellen has said "so grateful for this and she's focussing on the values of leaders connecting the love, care, trust element" so I think that's really important. Please do use that chat window to ask any questions, share any thoughts, share your experiences and challenges as well. So I think its probably about time we bought in Olu! So Olu let's get you on webcam and ready to go. Olu was the first mentor to be selected on a reverse mentoring programme with the executive committee of KPMG. The programme aimed to build an inclusive workforce by connecting partners with ethnic minority to provide fresh perspectives and insight on their culture and business issues. The aim of course is to broaden the experience of the partnership group working with people who don't look like them. Olu is a graduate and is mentoring the partner of KPMG. Through the insight and success of this mentor relationship, KPMG are now expanding the programme to more senior partners in the firm and Olu has a vision that the scheme will eventually reach 100 partners being mentored by 100 ethnic minorities. So Em and Olu lets have a little bit more of a chat about this fascinating programme.</p>

Emily	<p>Thank you so much Jo, that's great and welcome Olu. It's lovely to be in this conversation with you here and I was reflecting back to when we came in to talk you about reverse mentoring at KPMG and in that conversation and actually, in every other conversation you and I have had since then, you're clearly very passionate about reverse mentoring and the impact that reverse mentoring has and the changes in effect. So it would be great just to explore a few questions and hear your experience of being a reverse mentor and then it would also be great if we could take some questions from attendees from the chat room. So if you're happy could I just start by asking you, one of the things we're interested in is assumptions and how they can get in the way of any kind of great conversation so it would be really nice to hear from you about maybe before you became a reverse mentor, the kind assumptions you may have made about people like Phillip your mentee and other people who are leading at the top of your organisation.</p>
Olu	<p>First of all I just want to say thank you to TCS, Emily, Jo, Sara for having me today and this short webinar. My name is Olu as you know and I've been at the firm KPMG for about 3 years and I'm a graduate. I started the reverse mentoring I guess 2 years ago now and it's been a long journey and I guess to answer Emily's question about assumptions, so Phillip Davidson is the managing partner at KPMG. He's basically one below the CEO and my assumption when I first joined the reverse mentoring programme was all those people at the top. The senior leader of the firm, the exec committee, the board of directors at that level, I initially thought private educated, maybe possibly conservative, Oxbridge and I probably didn't think that they had a lot of interaction or engagement with people that look like me because of how senior they are.</p>
Emily	<p>That sounded really familiar actually. We are working with another professional service company at the moment, running a sanctioned programme there and we asked the same question of the reverse mentors and they had a really similar view up front about the partners there too and all actually assume that they had been to university as well so it is quite interesting to try and bust those myths and actually get the partners to talk about what is the real story rather than the story the mentors were making up about them. So, I'm interested Olu, about how being a reverse mentor has helped you to shift those assumptions.</p>
Olu	<p>I guess starting off developing a relationship with Phillip my mentee. What I had to do was in order to change my perception because we all have assumptions, I had to start asking questions to deal with those assumptions so there's a saying "your answers are only as good as the questions that you ask", so for me I had to take time to learn about my mentee and he could learn about me, how to be open and I had to make sure I wasn't using assumptions as short cuts but instead literally taking the time to have regular meetings with him so that I can develop trust, a strong foundation of now that I know you, now that you know me, let's get into the nitty gritty so to speak. Also just to take a general interest in not just his life but my life and how we both can help each other because mentoring whatever it is, reverse mentoring, traditional mentoring, there's a two way relationship and what helped me shift my assumption was knowing that this isn't just about me, it isn't just about him and also there's a bigger picture to it. We're doing this because there's a reason why we want to develop a stronger relationship, make leaders more inclusive and that allowed me to shift my assumption but understanding the bigger picture what we're trying to do here.</p>
Emily	<p>Brilliant. I just want to pick up on a question that's comes from Katherine because it links on to what you're saying. She was interested in what you meant when you said that he may be not interested or have conversations with people who look like you. Is that around, age, race? What was that around?</p>
Olu	<p>So that's both. Junior as a junior colleague because he's so senior. He wouldn't spend 45 minutes every 2 months speaking to somebody as junior as me because I'm a graduate. Then secondly race as well. I don't think he would be spending that amount of time as well for a junior colleague and a black colleague who is in totally different business worlds to him but having that conversation, that is 1:1, that isn't in a group setting. It's a 1:1 situation or conversation that we can really get to know each other so I would say for him that would apply.</p>

Emily	Just going to pick up that you said there 45 minutes every 2 months. Olu, is that enough?
Olu	Probably. We didn't start 45 minute every 2 months, we started every month. Sorry, every 6 weeks for 45 minutes, that's what we initially did and we did that for a year and then after the year we then went down to every quarter. But there were times when Phillip, my mentee, he scheduled extra meetings at the beginning so that we can pick up the pace a bit, get to know each other a bit quicker and not lose momentum, summer breaks, xmas breaks, so he just added a few more meetings in.
Emily	Brilliant. So, I want to ask you what the impact has been for you I suppose. How do your conversations, how has your relationship evolved but also what impact have you seen, for you but also for the organisation because I know that's really important to you?
Olu	About me then the firm as well. I guess for me I can be honest and say its changed my life and I can say that with confidence and with conviction because I've seen the transformation that I've gone through over the last 2 years just being on the programme and the reason why I said its changed my life, last year was probably the best year for me because after being on the reverse mentoring programme for maybe lets say a couple of months by then, a lot of people knew me. First of all because I was the first mentor/mentee relationship, but then I was able to start suggesting to Phillip what ideas we can do and then after that I was able to then start literally working on those ideas and bringing it to life so I was able to then, at the end of that year, 2017, I was able to get on the annual reports to share my story. I was able to be ambassador for One young world?? which is junior???? kind of thing, that was in Columbia, that was amazing. I was able to move teams as well because I finally found what I was good at and that was through reverse mentoring. So reverse mentoring opened doors for me to really understand what am I good at at the firm and Phillip helped me move teams as well.
Emily	Brilliant. Really quickly could you share with me the headlines, maybe the top 1 or 2 things you've seen it have an impact on in terms of the organisation.
Olu	One thing is that we went from one mentee/mentor relationship to 40 or 45 across the UK so that is a measurable impact where you can say that wouldn't happen if it wasn't for us so we've now expanded the programme across the UK and we've had quite a lot of interest from other companies to, who are interested in how to grow an RM programme. The second impact is a personal impact on Phillip himself. He said to me, I asked him what was one of the things you've learned from our relationship and he said 2 things. One that within the 20-25 years of being in the business he finally understood what it felt like to be a black colleague at KPMG, what it felt like to be a junior colleague at KPMG. Secondly, inspired by how I approached our relationship, was quite honoured to be part of the programme and that made me feel happy and valued. I feel like he personally gained from it and he was able to use our discussion in his inclusive leadership board meetings and he's able to engage better with ethnic minorities and diversity issues and it was noticed by his colleagues as well.
Emily	Thank you Olu, you've just answered a question from Kirsty. She asked how you feel you're mentoring impacted on Philip and you've just given us an answer for that one. There's one last question, which is a question from me but I can also see it's a question from Sean, which is what other tips or practical tips you might have for other people wanting to set up a programme like this in other organisations or to help these cross different conversations.
Olu	Three tips, we learn in 3's! One, you don't need to have all the answers in the beginning, you just need to start, that's really important so you don't need to have an official program. It depends on your objective, but find somebody who doesn't look like you, or is from a different world to you, or if you're targeting women, trying to improve technologies, or ethnic minorities, find an interest or an area that you want to grow in and then you can just develop a relationship with that individual and go from there. It doesn't have to be an official programme. Two, get a senior leadership sponsor so Phillip's second, he is a managing partner so once he's a sponsor whatever he says pretty much happens. If he's sponsoring it,

	there's a lot of buy-in already from leadership so that makes it easier to start programmes and easier to create a business case of why you need resources, money and people to get the programme off the ground. Lastly, to be clear on your objective, why are you setting up an RM programme? What is your objective? Once you've nailed your objective, you can easily set up the programme because quite often mentoring programmes do fail sometimes because the objective is not clear and then it fizzles out over a couple of months or years.
Emily	Thank you, thank you so much. I'm going to hand over to Jo to see if there are any further questions that people want to ask you.
Jo	Thanks very much, really fascinating and some good comments coming through. So, Olu, the last question coming through is from, Sade, they say "what do you see yourself doing in the future, what's your main career goal?"
Olu	Everyone always asks me that question! My two answers are - one I just want to make sure I create an impact in the world so I have a big ambition to change society, change communities by setting up programmes like RM, creating better relationships and second I'm quite big on social ability so I want to make sure I'm able to create programmes relating to getting people from disadvantaged backgrounds or backgrounds where they might not have a lot of opportunity into places where there are a lot of opportunities so I guess 5 years' time I want to be close to that ambition. Probably will still be working at KPMG but hopefully would have some opportunities to use the work that I've done at KPMG to set me up for success by being able to get those initiatives off the ground, maybe working with the government to start those programmes.
Emily	Wow, I'm laughing Olu because you're getting offers already in the chat room! Fantastic, thank you so much, that's absolutely amazing! Jo is there anything else or shall we carry on?
Jo	I think let's carry on because I know you've got some practical tips and other stuff to share. Olu, thank you so much, do jump into that chat room because you're getting loads of amazing comments.
Emily	<p>We're really keen to make sure you have practical tips and I know obviously that Olu has shared some with you. He shared his three so I'm going to very quickly share my three. So obviously, we've mainly been talking about RM in terms of helping have conversations that are different. Olu said just get on with it even if you don't have a formal programme and he also said that its critical to understand the objective. I totally agree with that. if we don't know what the purpose is for RM its much much less likely to happen and ideally, get on with it but also if you can support with the framework, its even more likely to be hugely impactful. That's what we've done at RSM and one of the ways we supported it was with the launch day bringing together the mentors, the RM's and mentees and really helping them explore how do we make the most of these conversation but also supporting them as the programme continues with check-in booster calls that we do at 3 and 9 month point and the mid-point session where we get everybody together at 6 months so this is 12 month programme and I'd really like to share with you, a picture from the mid point session, which you can see here. These are all the mentors and mentees and from this midpoint session it was really interesting, we asked all the mentors and mentees to give some thought to how they could use these conversations to help perfect change in that organisation and one of the things that came out w around having a shadow board and the managing partner there in the Birmingham office that we're working with took that idea to the national board and CEO is really keen to get it rolling you can see it has already had a significant impact from holding RM,, from having a supported programme.</p> <p>The second tip is really to check in on our assumptions. Olu and I have talked about this a little already and we know that these get in the way of us having different conversations with people who are different from ourselves and I want to share with you on the next slide, a tweet that we saw, we came across this probably in the last year and I'll read it out to you but you can see it for yourselves there. So, the person who wrote this was waiting to start their very first RM session and the conversation went like this so, the other person, the mentee said,</p>

	<p>“are you hear to fix my laptop and my printer?”, Mentor, “No, I’m here for the mentoring session”. You can see the rest, you can’t make this stuff up so for us its hugely important to check in on your assumptions and that’s one tip you can take away and start using straight away. What is it that’s making you ask the questions that you’re asking?</p> <p>OK, finally our last tip is developing your conversational skills so this is what were all about at TCS and what were really passionate about and what we believe is at the heart of being able to make the most of cross difference, cross generational conversations because its all well and good setting them up but we really need to be able to grow our muscle to have the skill to make the most of them when we are there in those conversations. What we use is to be able to do that is what we call Conversational Wisdom® and this is a model that we have created it emerged from our award winning research called Mastering Conversation and I’m going to share with you a link if you want to and have a look at that and the Conversational Wisdom® model encourages us to make the most of our conversations, to be the best in our conversations, it helps the quality of our thinking and adds clarity to decision making. It really helps us show up authentically at work. This is where you can find our research, its on our website and I’m going to hand back over to Jo just to recap because I’m aware were nearly at the end of webinar.</p>
Jo	<p>We are, thank you so much Emily. Gosh there’s so much in there that has been shared. I’ve posted the link for the research into the chat window so you can click on that anytime you like.</p> <p>So, our conclusion then, we’ve looked at the current context of multiple generations working together and that shift by traditional workplace, that hierarchical model into much more collective organisations and network organisations and listening across those differences. We’ve explored RM, we’ve heard from Olu who has done amazing work and got great experience of being a reverse mentor and shared some practical tips for those on growing those conversations across differences and also, I love the idea of just go and find somebody who is different to you somehow and start having a conversation with them.</p> <p>Let me tell you about our next webinar that’s coming up at TCS and this is going to be all about strengthening client conversations. Bit of an interesting one. Let me share the link for you so that you can go and sign up. More details will be available soon and it’s available on the 14th November is when TCS will be running that. Again, a lunch time session. So absolutely our pleasure everybody. The very last thing I want to do is share our contact details. So, you’ve got our next webinar, get in touch. Also, if you want to join up on our newsletter at TCS, you can do that and you can go and have a look at some more information there. So, our contact details so you can get in contact, lets share those, through twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook. You can email Emily or anyone else on the team because this is such an important area. So Emily, any last thoughts to wrap up?</p>
	<p>I think the last thing I would say is to echo what Olu said. Go and find somebody different from you, who looks different from you, different age, different in some way and be bold enough to invite them to have a conversation. Go and have a coffee with them, go for a walk with them if its not too cloudy or rainy and just get to know them because that is how we make a difference and I think that’s all that I would add.</p>
Jo	<p>Brilliant, thank you so much. Thank you, Emily, and thank you also of course to Olu and to everybody who was here. Great lunchtime session, I hope you got something from it and we hope to see you on the next one with all your questions and comments, you’ve been absolutely brilliant, thank you very much.</p>