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## MEET GAME CHANGER JESYKA NICOL SIMPSON



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OF CONSCIOUS INCLUSION



### MEET JESYKA NICOL SIMPSON

Meet Jesyka Nicol Simpson, founder of Alchemy Talent Consulting and a thought leader, who continues to push the boundaries for talent practices to be meaningful, engaging, and to create purposeful and sustainable change. She speaks with Soni K. Basi about Diversity & Inclusion and shares her words of advice. Learn more about Jesyka and her consultative offerings at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jesykansimpson/>.

### THOUGHTS ON INCLUSION

**Soni:** Jesyka, let's start with definitions. So often we say "Diversity & Inclusion" in the same breath – what's your perspective on the definitions of these words?

**Jesyka:** Inclusion is so important and it does stand alone from Diversity. It doesn't do it justice to be said or managed as an afterthought. Inclusion is about the environment, the culture, and the experience we want people to have at our company – it is as much intentional, as it is a reflection of the organization's culture. A culture of Inclusion has to be intentionally designed or created, it doesn't happen by default. If it is by default, then it tends to be reflective of the majority group's thinking, which can be damaging, because then you're not fully supporting your Diversity agenda. If we're designing an experience for the least represented in our company, then we are creating an environment that works for all. When you do this, you demonstrate that you are ready to welcome diverse representation to your organization.




**Soni:** This idea of intentional design of experiences, which then becomes the company's culture is so powerful. We know some companies are much stronger on Diversity -and Inclusion -than others. So let me ask you: Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? Diversity or Inclusion?

**Jesyka:** A culture of Inclusion and designing intentional experiences is the ticket to the game. You have to earn the right to have diverse talent at your organization.

**Soni:** So many companies are trying to get this right today. What advice do you have for others who are trying to move the needle in this space?

**Jesyka:** I will share two pieces of advice that I have found to be critical as I've partnered with my clients. First, do your own work on an individual level, if not before, then simultaneous to the organization's work. Too often we think in terms of what we need to be doing, but not always who we are being while we're doing it. A lot of this is personal work, behind the scenes work, that needs to be done, to move the needle.

Second, get clear on your intention, the why, both as an individual and as an organization. What's the difference you're trying to make in this world? If you don't have answers for this, then your Diversity & Inclusion efforts may not result in the outcomes for which you're hoping -they can even become more harmful than helpful.



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