

Yurii Lazaruk: [00:00:00] Welcome to the Independent Workforce, the podcast where we explore the now and the future of works through the lens of temporary employment such as freelancers, contractors, fractional experts, you name it. Here will speak with CEOs, recruiters, founders, and industry leaders about how they work with independent talent, the wins, the challenges, and the lessons learned.

My name is Yuri. I'm growing the freelance market at Freelancer Map. An international platform has been connecting top independent professionals with companies for over 20 years. And my guest is Dan Gao, an experienced. Business leader and board director who stands right in the intersection of enterprise transformation and the rise of the independent workforce, who as a co-founder of Pros Europe, helps large organizations tap into Europe's top flexible talent across it digital and creative, and turns freelancers into a real business advantage.

So welcome, Danny.

Danny Gal: Hey, great to be on.

Yurii Lazaruk: Super happy to talk to you. Uh, you have definitely a ton of experience. And before that, [00:01:00] before we jump into your story, you know, on pro Team's website, I saw flexible workforce, external teams, free answers. Independent professionals. So I'm curious, why do you use so many titles for explaining what talents are you working with?

Danny Gal: A great question. I, I talk about this a lot. I, I find it crazy in this industry, there has been no one term that has taken over. Um, and different words mean different things to different people. So for some people, freelancer means super junior, only creative for others. Contractor means, uh, like only use them if you absolutely have to.

And like last, like emergency, we need someone to do something that's use a contractor, otherwise we don't. So there's different, um, views and also as you go around the world, different uh. Perspectives on the language that is used for this whole world. I would love us as a, as a group to agree a consensus [00:02:00] across, across that.

And even internally, we use many different words and different clients use different, uh, language to determine what it is. But I'll, I'll give the feedback back to our marketing team as well. Um, but likely they're thinking about SEO, uh, and, and getting those terms in there.

Yurii Lazaruk: No, it's interesting because Rich Wilson, our previous guest told that, uh, the different words, like they start different budgets in companies.

So for example, a freelancer, it go for a team budget. If it's a contractor, it go for contractor like budget, working with contractors, consultants, total different budgets. So specifically when you talk to a corporate or an enterprise, it also depends what word you use because it depends whether you get projects, whether you get money or not.

And I'm curious, what is your favorite word and why? So

Danny Gal: the reason I started this business and the opportunity I see is every company has a strategy for external workforce.

Yurii Lazaruk: Hmm.

Danny Gal: Uh, and when I say strategy for external workforce, I'm talking about anyone that's not an employee that includes. [00:03:00] Agencies. That includes consultants, that includes IT service providers, that includes freelancers, contractors, everyone that is external.

If you think the companies we work with typically are spending between one and a half to 2.5 billion every year on external workforce, right? One and a half to 2.5 billion, not million billion on external workforce. When you, when you. Look at that whole thing. Um, and my whole philosophy is using the right supplier for the right job.

And right now companies that we are working with and in general are using the wrong supplier for the wrong job for I would say 90% of the work. And that doesn't mean proteins is the right solution actually, for a lot of things we may not be. But my whole philosophy is having a strategy behind external workforce and using the right supplier for the right work that takes out.

People using their friends that takes out using them because they've done their last project with you that takes out using them because they've started the project. So you have to continue using them. Um, [00:04:00] and that's sort of my strategy with this business. And we're on a journey with companies to, to, to do that.

We are trying to do that through procurement teams, so we're trying to get procurement teams. Own external workforce strategy. Mm-hmm. Right now there's a lot of category constraints. There's a lot of misclassification there,

there's a lot of opaque, uh, systems and data. And we are working with quite a few companies now.

A few of them are very far in that journey and a few are quite early on and some haven't even started. Um, but that's the philosophy of this business is external workforce strategy owned by procurement. Um. Having a dedicated team and role that actually is responsible for that irrelevant of category. I think 10 years, I'll still be talking about this.

Why

Yurii Lazaruk: procurement? Why procurement? Why specifically is this team?

Danny Gal: Because procurement are looking for the right suppliers. They're looking at. Cost savings, cost efficiencies. They're looking at [00:05:00] providing value to the business. They're looking at agility and speed.

Yurii Lazaruk: Mm-hmm.

Danny Gal: They're all the things that lead into this strategy.

And we've had many different conversations with the business, with hr. We have different areas. We don't see anyone else who is one capable and two able to, in their organization to actually drive and lead that program. Um, so if it's not procurement, we don't see it being anyone. In reality, and actually the procurement are the ones that are dealing with suppliers.

They're dealing with vendors. They're the ones who have the best oversight of what they're doing on spend and things like that. But now procurement has changed the role from where it was 15 years ago, which was just cost, cost, cost. Now actually, they're looking at how do we partner and provide value to the business?

And that's a really exciting opportunity. I, my, my background's in compliance, and I saw this with the compliance, like compliance used to be this back office function hidden in the cupboard and you sort of. Only went to them when you absolutely needed to. And in the last 15 years, what we've seen is compliance being a C-suite role actually, when you're [00:06:00] going to a new market, delivering a new product, you get compliance involved early.

And actually it's an innovation rather than, and it's an opportunity rather than seen as this thing we have to do as an, obviously for some companies it's still seen like that. But I saw this transformation of the compliance function, and I'm seeing it again in procurement. And I'm seeing there's a real opportunity for procurement to do exactly what they're there for, which is adding value to the business, ensuring the right suppliers are used.

Looking at cost efficiencies and looking at speed, flexibility, and agility.

Yurii Lazaruk: If procurement is the team that owns this process that kind of like make it happen, what are the teams that starts the process?

Danny Gal: I think it's procurement. I think it's procurement. The innovators in procurement from CPO to the head of indirect, which is typically our main contacts.

Um, they need to start this process. Hmm. They cannot rely on the business. They cannot rely on any other function to start this process. It needs to be driven and [00:07:00] owned by procurement, but it needs to be a very, very step by step. What they shouldn't do is day one going, Hey, we're gonna drive this huge strategy and transform the world.

It needs to be start small, prove small test. Success. Grow a little bit, grow a little bit more, grow a little bit more. In five years time, you'll see that actually what you've done is drive an external workforce strategy in your organization step by step by step what the worst thing to do, which, which some people come to me of is we'll work on a business case and we'll look for budget.

And I say, no, don't do that. It won't work. You'll be here five years time saying, actually we never got business case approved. Actually, we never got the budget approved. So, um, I've got a lot of experience working with procurement, um, over the years, and I'm very clear with them of what works and what doesn't work.

Um, and I've seen it not work. 'cause for some procurement people say, no, I'm gonna do it this way. 'cause we have to. Okay, well we won. It won't work. Largely, I go on the 80 20 rule. Right? 80% [00:08:00] of the time it won't work. 20%. It might work. I I stick with the 80 20.

Yurii Lazaruk: Yeah. It's always, I feel like the whole life is 80 20, so you never, you never know a hundred percent.

And I'm curious, so, uh, you told about the right solution for. Was the right work? And what kind of companies are you working with? What are, what kind of companies pro teams is working with?

Danny Gal: Yeah. So we're exclusively only working with the largest companies in the world globally. So look at the top 20 global market leaders.

We're working with, the majority of them, uh, look at the top 50. We're working with the, the majority of them. Um, so the largest companies in the world that are global are our clients. Um. And we've been quite focused on that. And a lot of times we say, oh, there's so much opportunity. Look how many startups need proteins.

I say There's a, there, there is. And there's lots of providers that already service that market that are very good. Um, I'm very big on focus and we, we wanna stay focused on where we are good at. There's lots of other platforms. There's lots of other providers. [00:09:00] Um, it's good that there are good solutions for those other areas.

Um, but yeah, we're very focused on, on that area

Yurii Lazaruk: and also it's a huge gap between working, working with such companies that you mentioned and startups because in such companies there is like, I dunno, how many layers of decision making, like 10, maybe 15. It depends. And in startups, like every one person can solve.

Brett, almost everything. And from your perspective, like from your experience, what are the biggest concerns that companies that you are working with Raise before working with freelancers and while working with freelancers?

Danny Gal: So the biggest concern, the biggest thing we need to deal with is change management.

Yurii Lazaruk: Yeah, I

Danny Gal: hear this so many

Yurii Lazaruk: times. Exactly.

Danny Gal: Yeah. Politics, bureaucracy. Well, I've worked in big corporates as well, so I, I've seen it and lived it, but the biggest, um, issue is like, why would I

put my neck on the line when I know there's gonna be lots of challenge? And some people are like, Hey, I see the value.

I see the thing. [00:10:00] I'm gonna bit my neck on the line. And that's the way they are. That's certainly the way that I was when I was in a big corporate and others are, Hey, I don't want to upset the, the ship. So I'll say it, I'll mention it, but if there's not, if there's not a strong push, then I'll, I'll back away and continue doing my job.

And, and, and so we are normally working with the people that are happy too. They see the value, they see the opportunity, and they're happy to sort of challenge the status quo. Happy to look at when they're successful. They're very successful. I say most of the people we work with get promoted within 12 months.

They, they get a pay rise, they get a, like, we've got very good proof of this. Like all of the people, I would say probably 80%, again, 80 20, but 80% of the people we work with have been promoted within 12 months due to the program that they've driven in their organization. Um, which is pretty exciting and it transformed their career and they've become an expert in.

Um, by looking at better ways and challenging, um, in the right way. Again, this isn't about challenging for the [00:11:00] sake of challenging. This is about opening people's eyes to opportunity and looking at all at different ways than you've been doing for the last 20, 30, 50, a hundred years.

Yurii Lazaruk: I feel like the, it can be a really, really good incentive for this promotion thing because people are usually want to get more money to get more authority and stuff.

And once again, you know, I, I really love the word that you used, like the phrase, neck on the line, putting your neck on the line. And I think there are not that many people who are ready for that. How do you find them? How do you identify these people?

Danny Gal: Yeah. Um, one is you can see how long they work there.

Normally, if they've worked there for 20 years, they're probably not the one that's ready to cause a lot of change. And actually everything that's in that organization is, they're probably, they're doing, so a good sign is someone that's been there six months, 12 months. Typically, they're brought into. Roll out new things, bring in some change in innovation to the business.

Typically, not always, but typically. [00:12:00] Um, so that's a great signal of, of that. Um, but also someone that's moved into a new role as well. But honestly, it's a bit of a numbers game. You can go to 10 people, no one says interested find the one person. They say, oh my God, our business needs that. You're like, whoa.

Your 10 colleagues all said they absolutely would never touch anything like this. And then we meet you and you are so, um, I mean, you've interviewed a few of the people on this. This podcast as well that we've worked with, um, or they saw, and some of those are driving change in their businesses, but they're few and far between.

Um, some of those are happy to. They know it's the right thing for the business and they can see where the world is going and other people see it as a threat or see it as a risk or et cetera, et cetera. So, um, quite quickly you can tell what type of person you are working with, uh, within the first few minutes, um, and figure out whether they're gonna drive something.

They're going to say, I'm happy for this. I think we work with a lot of people and they go, I love it, but I'm not gonna do anything about it. They don't tell [00:13:00] us that, but, but you know, they're not gonna do anything about it. You just know from the conversation. Um, they're not ready to drive change in their business.

They think it makes sense. They think they need it, they think it absolutely is the right, right way to go. However, they're not gonna be the one to drive that forward, and that's okay. Um, they're a supporter. Um, we work with lots of those types of people too,

Yurii Lazaruk: but on the other side, it's such a huge opportunity for business, you know, bringing this independent talent into business.

It gives you speed, like smaller time to hire. It brings you exact like, experience of the market. It brings you like entrepreneur within your company who's ready to deliver, who's ready to. They focused on tasks, they're delivering the best because their life basically is on this task. Their professional life, if they deliver shit task, no one will hire them.

If they deliver amazing tasks, they'll get more and more projects. And I'm curious, yeah. From company perspective, what, what advice would you give? Like how, how to raise such kind [00:14:00] of leaders that will be open to do this change management?

Danny Gal: I'm now gonna say something very controversial. Most people, they care a little bit about their company.

They're the ones who are employing them and they're the ones that are paying them. But actually, that's not what's driving them. What's driving them is their personal what's personal to them and what's their personal ambition, what their, what's going on in their family life? What's going, what they're trying to drive in their personal life.

Um. And that's the important thing for us to uncover, not what is, I mean, it's important what is the business goals and how we can align to that. But actually sometimes it can be so obvious from a business perspective why this makes sense. But the reason they do nothing is because it doesn't make sense to them personally.

And I do most of my work on what, what, what's important to that person, not what's important to the business. Most people like, yeah, they'll leave that company, go to another company, and the business will tell them certain things. So what matters for most people is themselves and their manager. [00:15:00] Who's appraising them, giving them a promotion, giving them a bonus and themselves.

So my typical questions are, what's important to you? What's your priorities and what does your boss care about? And if I know that it's it, it is interesting when we ask about, but your company and things like that. But actually that's, I'd say a very small percentage of what really matters in the conversation.

Yurii Lazaruk: I feel like they definitely know the answers to all those questions. And it doesn't mean that they will always tell you the truth. You know, they can tell you some stuff and then you know, wait for your reaction and then keep the conversation going. And I also know from my personal experience when there is a big task, I don't know how to tackle.

It can be hard. It can be like very hard. Oh my God, it will take all my day or like two days, whatever. Then when I start, I understand, ah, it's an hour, it's half an hour. It's not that hard that I was thinking about. So what is this kind of like the hardest part? What is the blocker that the company [00:16:00] face?

Is this compliance or maybe contracts or communication or owning the talent? From your experience, what do you see as the biggest blocker that prevents companies from starting working or starting like this process of like dealing with a freelancer?

Danny Gal: Yeah, so Verly, if we look at, I talk a lot around procurement, but if we look at procurement teams in the organizations we work with, I dunno many that say I'm not busy and I'm not overworked, and I've got lots of capacity.

So all of them are very busy. They're, they're under resourced. They're asking for more budget and, and often getting, no, uh, we, you cannot, and they're doing normally one and a half, two roles, maybe like per person. So the first thing is, is how, is how, how is by taking on this new project, driving this forward, gonna help them and their capacity.

'cause what you don't wanna do is you are already doing two roles, is now take on a third role. So. They've gotta firstly see this as, um, the ability to reduce that [00:17:00] workload, not increase it. My whole thing is, is we've gotta drive value and solve for pain point for them personally. 'cause if it doesn't, they're not gonna take it forward.

Their biggest challenge is. Convincing other people, this is the right way to go. So it's the internal politics again, is their biggest challenge. I need to go to tax, I need to go to legal, I need to go to hr. I need to get all of these other people, stakeholders, potentially on side to this solution. So what we often do is, again, similar to what you talked around, is we bite-size those, we, we, we go, let's, let's take these step by step.

Let's not try and do a big. Program rollout. This won't work, right? This big, like over like taking over the world type thing. It's never gonna work. Let's look at adding some value and let's looking at solving a small problem. And from there we'll solve another small problem. And in six months, maybe 12 months, we'll solve 10 big problems.

But let's take them small by small by small, and let's get stakeholders engaged early and involved in the [00:18:00] process. They shouldn't be you. So we often get those people in meetings with us. We are not suggesting you go off and go and speak to all these people and you're now having to sell this concept and convince other people yourselves, no, we should meet with them.

We should meet with legal. We should meet with tax. We should meet with all of these people and understand, uh, what things their, what things their, their questions are. But they need to understand the model and why this is working and why this is working for other companies. And the compliance and the legal start side of it is obviously so critical for big companies.

We need to make sure they're truly satisfied and not just like, oh, I have a question. Here's an answer, which is sometimes the case. So we've done this many, many times now. We, we only work with large multinationals. They all have the same questions. Uh, so you can, you can expect Yeah. What they are. Uh, we just onboarded a new client yesterday.

Again, before we onboard you, these questions, two questions. They were, one was around compliance and process. The other one was around handling of tax in US and uk. Uh, like those types of questions, [00:19:00] but they, they're all very similar, um, questions that the, the, the big corporates have that we work with. Um, so yeah, they're the biggest, um, biggest area that we're, we're helping our stakeholders through our champions, through, um, and assisting them with that process.

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Just direct access to verified experts and opportunities across the globe. Visit freelancermap.com and start building your next success story. Today you have a big elephant and you try to eat it by small pieces. Sometimes it seems like elephant is still there, nothing changing, so. Are there any milestones or wins or like small results, like how does this process work?

Like what people who [00:20:00] are driving this process, who are driving these changes, how do they, um, share these results with their managers or with the teams? Like how, how do they celebrate it?

Danny Gal: Yeah, really, really good question. Firstly, for anyone listening, never eat an elephant, uh, at all. But the, the, the concept, uh, is there, which, um, so for us, what we do is we try to say to procurement, you need to not have an ego.

You will do all this work, and we need to make the business look good because as soon as the business look good, they'll start sharing this internally. So what we do is we share. Business success stories and guess what? Their peers see their success stories and they go, oh, that's amazing. You have a better way of doing this.

Great. And you used it and it worked. Oh, great. So what we do is we do a lot of promotion of the business stakeholders and of the project success. And of how it helped them with the challenges they had. Cost, speed, agility, flexibility, [00:21:00] uh, high quality work, all of those typical things. And that really works.

And we say to procurement, I know this is gonna be all your work, but we're gonna make you in the shadow. And they say, I don't mind. I don't, most of 'em say, I don't care about that. I'm just looking to. Build better relationships with the business and add value to them. So if that's great. Um, and that's the way this grows because the business, there's still this sort of, it's funny in most big organizations, business still don't have generally the relationship with procurement that we would like them to have where procurement and business are seen as working together.

Adding value to each other, et cetera. The business still see procurement as when I need a solution or service, I have to go through this process. Procurement then challenge me a bit and then they say, I'm gonna go and do an RFP or look at vendors. And um, so it's still this sort of. For most organizations, still the business haven't built up this relationship yet with procurement.

I think that's gonna change definitely, um, as procurement changes their role [00:22:00] within the business. Um, so yeah, so as, as that, that role changes between procurement and the business, um, you'll see that they see the successes and then other business peers strive off those successes and they go, I want some of this, um.

Yeah, we just had a, a new one this morning. We just started working with a, a new team with an existing client. We'd done two projects, super successful. Guess what? This morning new request in came from the boss. Um, and again, what we're doing is sharing success stories with the wider business. And they're going, cool.

I don't need to speak to procurement. I don't need to speak to pro teams. I'll go and speak to the business person that I know very well. And that's worked, um, really well. The other thing we do is we make sure procurement are super looped into everything that goes on. What we often see is vendor goes in, they get procurement to sign off, and then they never speak to procurement again.

And some procurement teams want that and they're set up in that way. We think that's quite old school. Uh, what we do is work very closely with procurement on the [00:23:00] ongoing and the ongoing value that we are driving and they're

seeing the results and then procurement are able to share with their boss, look at what we've done, look at how this program that I was pushing for and look at these successes.

Mm. And look, here's an example where business owner. Provided referral business owner shared this internally. So look, I am good. I am doing my job. And guess what? They get promoted.

Yurii Lazaruk: It sounds like procurement teams are a little bit of left out, kind of like siloed out there in the business structure.

Danny Gal: Um, not really.

I wouldn't, I wouldn't say siloed, I would say, um, the past of procurement, the past role of procurement was they were brought in when a service or product was needed, and their job was to then. Be the hard people that negotiated a contract. That was also my previous experience with procurement for, for 20 odd years.

Right. And, and procurement is changing their role. They're becoming a C-suite firstly, which they've never been before. Um. [00:24:00] And they're adding value to the business and they're actually working with the business on strategy and objectives and how they achieve that. And then procurement are proactively, again, this is happening, but I'd say in a much smaller scale than we'll see over the next 10 years.

Um, I. So yeah, you've still got some procurement people that work in that same old school way. They only get brought in to do an RFP. They only get brought in to negotiate a contract. They sign a contract and they never deal with a vendor again. Right. Um, so we see a lot of that still. Um, and, but it's definitely the ship is changing.

Or

Yurii Lazaruk: Tan. We see a lot of old school organizations that are still not working with freelancers in any kind of independent talent, which is kind of like weird kind of, and still it's changing. And, uh, I hear a lot of, uh, things and not just me talking about this, but like, um, a lot of experts, a lot of companies are.

Already doing this, they're using this blended workforce, which means that you have full-time experts, you have independent talent, you have ai and all these three parts [00:25:00] that are like making the company grow, making the

business grow, making, like bringing you ma much forward because otherwise you can, you know, be left behind.

And I think that it's not business really wants and. Also, I see that, um, there are some expectations from company side, especially if you were working just with FTE experts. You have this thing in your mind. This person comes to my office from nine to five. They sit specifically and they place, they do what I tell them to do.

And it's totally different with freelancers. So from your perspective, from your what here, from freelancers, from your clients, what are the biggest misalignments between expectations, company expectations, and freelance realities?

Danny Gal: Yeah, firstly, so we are working with very big organizations. I would say every single big organization is using freelancers somewhere in the business.

However, there's no structure, strategy, or compliance for a lot [00:26:00] of those areas. So what we're finding is we're coming across and they're going, oh, we just found out we're using a hundred of these for these types of activities. For the last 20 years, we didn't even know about it. And we're actually paying them directly.

They're not doing any compliance check. There's no onboarding, actually. There's a huge risk to our business, and we're saying, yeah, we need to sort that out. Right? As an, as an urgency. Um, so what we're finding is there's a lot of accidental use or random use or, um, or yeah, non-structured or people didn't know about it or hidden or.

And, and that, and that's where a lot of the compliance risk is. There's not a proper process or structure, which goes back to my point. If you have an external workforce strategy, you look across your whole external workforce. Uh, the other thing is, is a lot of people go, well, we're using a marketing agency.

Well, actually they're using freelancers to do all the work for your client. And actually there's no real difference or using a big consultancy. And actually they're using freelancers to do all of the work. And again, these companies going, oh, well, they have a big logo and badge, and we think it's [00:27:00] fine.

Actually, no, you still need to be making sure there's compliance with what they're doing from an IP and ownership or like a, a compliance process. So, um, we are seeing a lot of, uh, uncovering probably is the best way to describe it. Um, but you're right, there is, there is a, there is a lot of people say, we would never work with freelancers.

And I say, you do realize you already are. So it's funny you say like, you've, you came with a very definitive statement, but you already are both within your team and as a business. And they go, uh, how do you know that? Where, where are we? And then you share with them and they go, oh, we didn't realize that that would be classified like this, or like that.

Um, so yeah, we're definitely seeing, um, a lot of areas for change improvement, um, and yeah, better ways of working within that. Um. I think to answer your question, the question more specifically as well, we are seeing, um, value, like, so firstly, it's harder to get, um, full-time employee headcount. [00:28:00] Now someone leaves your organization, it's not like you can automatically replace them.

So what does that mean? You either keep people that are non-performers because you go, well, as soon as they, if I fired them, I wouldn't be able to get a head count. So it's better to have a bum on the seat than not, which is completely the wrong. The wrong, uh, the wrong strategy. Um, but definitely in big corporates, that's what happens all the time.

Hey, if I need to get rid of all my non-performers, I'm never gonna be able to replace them. So, hey, they're at least performing a little bit better than no one, so let's keep them. Okay, well, that's not the right mentality, but that happens. Um. Uh, but what, what we're seeing is where they are starting to do to utilize, sorry.

So where I was going with that conversation was firstly, it's harder to get, um, an FTE headcount. There is obviously a very big focus right now in the industry on costs, but there's also a big focus on needing to do more is less, which is always the, every year we hear that same thing. There's also the big thing of the AI and technology, uh, automation and areas like that.

Um. [00:29:00] And we are seeing the cost of having employees is only increasing, right? In all countries. Pretty much like the cost of employing people is only increasing. The other thing is, is there's more project type work than ever before. There's more, Hey, we need to test this. We need to POC this, we need to pilot this.

We need to implement this. There's lots of things that are. What I call short term, there's a beginning and an end. Um, and therefore for those beginning and an end, you don't need an FTE because there's an end. And you, unless you know what the next project is for them, when they finish that, which you shouldn't do because that probably means, um, you're not resourcing correctly, then you've got a lot more projects to manage.

And so all of this lead into it makes sense to have a more flexible way of delivering those projects as a business, um, than you probably are. The other thing is that we always know is it'd be great to have, I know exactly when my projects all are a year in advance and I plan my year in, uh, it's funny, I speak to every client.

They say This year, the year we're gonna know there's gonna be no last minute request. There's gonna be no like. Uh, I need [00:30:00] something by yesterday, everything's gonna be planned. And they say, cool. You tell me when that happens. I will, I will buy you. I don't know, a boat. Um, yeah. But, uh, so we are seeing, um, all of these lead into the need for more flexibility.

So the real thing is, is um, starting small, proving success and then them going, I want more of this. And that's been our way of success, uh, so far with every business we work with.

Yurii Lazaruk: It's, it's, it's like buying a gym membership on the 1st of January that you are ready to do this. Never again. I'll be working out every day and then I will like lose how many pounds you say, but then no, it's not like that.

You'll still get into this. And also you reminded me, uh, one of my favorite saying of Grace Hopper, it's easier to apologize than it is to get a permission. And I feel like that the companies, it's easier to hire. Than it is to build a hiring system for freelancers because it scares people like five years [00:31:00] project.

Just to do something like very simple, like I will just have a freelancer right now, they will do it for me. I will get my results, I will get promoted. No way. I will go and build the system. So what is the easiest, smallest step for companies to take to start building the system of working with independent talent?

Danny Gal: Yeah, good question. I would say to my team, as long as you're doing ethically, morally, legally compliant, uh, other than those break all the rules, IE um, as long as you're not doing an and you know, it's the right thing.

Like, as long as you're doing it with the right intent, you're not doing it to harm or you're not doing it to, to, to be disloyal.

Um, yeah. The job of us is to be able to challenge and to show the opportunity and, and, and also for the people we work with, they're very much of that mindset as well. Um, so yeah, definitely. Yeah. So the first step in this process is it's very easy. Find a pain point, find a need, no matter how small [00:32:00] or tactical.

Okay. Find a pain point, find a need, solve a problem. Let's not try and put a solution into something that doesn't need a solution and try and convince people. The worst thing to do is try to convince people of something that is not needed. So of course, that'd be great. Let's, let's go out there and convince everyone this is a great idea, but it's really hard.

Um, and you're not probably gonna be successful in doing that. So what you need to do is find something that is challenging. It could be a cost challenge, it could be a speed challenge, it could be an agility challenge, it could be a ways of working challenge. Whatever that challenge is, find that. The next time there is a request, say, Hey, I'm gonna include pro teams in this next project.

You don't have to work with them. You get a proposal from them. That's all I'm asking. And then once you typically see a proposal from proteins versus your traditional. Ways of working. Maybe not on the first one, but the second or third one, you will [00:33:00] use prote Sometimes on the first. Yeah, normally actually on the first, but it might be the first or second or third.

And the reason why you would use it is you would look at it compared to your traditional and you would say, it makes sense to, to, it looks good. Let's, let's qualify. But it looks good. They use it and they go, it was good. I wanna now do more. I wanna tell people about this because it actually saved money, was more agile, was more flexible, was compliant, all of the things you're trying to drive in your business.

So yeah, it's a very simple thing is all of the people we work with, whether the business stakeholders or the procurement stakeholders find that project or test case, whatever you want to call it, and. Um, get a proposal, get an option from us, and you'll then use it on the first, second or third go.

Yurii Lazaruk: Let's bring a little bit of fear of missing out for companies.

So if they don't adapt their processes for flexible talent, for free answers, [00:34:00] contractors, whatever you name it, like any words in the world, what risks do they face in terms of agility and competitiveness?

Danny Gal: Yeah, it's a really, it's a real, like, it's a very interesting question. I don't want to scare among people of saying, if you don't use this model, you will go bus tomorrow.

Like of course we're, we are working with very, very successful global, big companies that are already doing lots of this stuff, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Okay. So we are not we, yeah, they're already doing that. They may not have a strategy around it. They may not have a structure around it, but every company is using.

As I said, 1.5 to 2.5 billion on the companies we're working with, um, is a big number. So they're already doing something around that. The question is, could they do what they're doing better? Could they be more effective? Could they be more agile? Could they be more flexible? Could they save more money?

Could they add more value to the business? Yes. So this isn't, uh, revolutionizing the world. It might feel like that for some of the businesses, but actually this [00:35:00] is just improving. Um, your goals. A lot of the time we're saving 30 to 50% costs, sometimes 80% costs for procurement. That's a massive win. It's a big number as well.

Um, so that's a big part of their bonus back to the personal goal, their promotion, back to the personal goal, but it also helps the business, which is often right now, trying to look at cost savings, trying to look at rationalization, trying to look at all of those things. Um, so again, our message to, to the people we work with is start small.

Make it, make success happen, and then let that grow over time naturally. And then we start to build it into a proper strategy and like business case type thing later on. Um, but if you are not, you will be missing out in terms of your peers are already on this journey. And if you're not recognizing you need to be, um, then you, then you as a business will be missing out.

Um, you'll be missing out on a better way of working and [00:36:00] that does obviously lead into, um, yeah, we're seeing like that from a personal perspective. We're seeing redundancies happen. We are seeing cost rationalization happening, so that could obviously impact you, but as a business it's the competitive.

You've got other companies that are being more agile. Delivering more and more and more quicker. Um, so that is obviously gonna take away from share price. It's going to, uh, take away from profitability, from revenue, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Um, but it's, yeah, I mean, I, I'm not as, uh, as harsh as saying if you don't use someone like proteins, you are gonna be on the floor tomorrow.

No, we are working with very, very successful businesses that will carry on being very successful, but they need to be aware. That they should be starting a proper journey behind a strategy for external workforce.

Yurii Lazaruk: You know, I usually not also the proponent of saying such things. And I also see how technologies and the contingent work workforce is growing.

And even though I dislike saying it, sometimes I say it because it's a [00:37:00] reality and I really want to help people to get the most of like how they run the business to get like everything, you know, in place. And, um, yeah. So. If you could remove just one blocker that prevents companies from like building this trust and adoption system for freelancers worldwide, what would you, what, what, what would you remove?

What would it be?

Danny Gal: Um, yes. It's a great question.

I think a lot of the, um, the, the blocker is related to. Scarcity, like, so governments have come up with legislation over the last 20 years in this space and they've not been, they've been quite gray around what that means in interpreting that how you like, so in some countries it's very black and white, and in most countries it's gray and down to interpretation.

And so what that means is. Like, certainly as I saw things like IR 35 [00:38:00] came out in the uk and obviously there's, there's very other similar what some companies done. They said we can't work with external freelancers, contractors blanket ban. And then over the last five years they've gone, oh no, we can, we just can't disguise employment and do what some companies done where they had these people work for 35 years as a freelancer contractor, uh, and, and stuff like that.

So. A lot of what I would take away is the, um, the grayness as been put in place by governments. And actually what governments do want is they want comp companies to grow. They want companies to use experts. They want

companies to use flexibility, but what they don't want is them to disguise employment.

So you need to make sure that you've got the right partners and compliance processes in place. But this isn't about, like, not using or using, this is about. When, when it makes sense, back to my point, at the very start, the right supplier for the right job, sometimes it makes sense. Hey, we are not the right supplier.

You need a FTE to come in and do this. This is a 15 year [00:39:00] project that you're gonna need the same personal group of people in for 15 years. That's not us. Um, so yeah, so a lot of, uh, a lot of what we're doing is, is actually being clear of where we fit and where the market fits generally, um, to say who is the right supplier for that.

Job.

Yurii Lazaruk: It's very amazing that you mentioned that because sometimes people are there as, as you've said, either black or white. You either work with freelancers or you work with full-time experts. It's always like either or, but it's, and it's, and you work with them. And with them you bring this independent talent, external experts to supercharge your team to help your team grow faster.

And that's how it is.

Danny Gal: Yeah. We've done a lot of, um, a lot of work. On essentially, um, a decision log logic, um, like tree. So imagine you think of the outcome on the deliverable you want, you need X, y, z delivered. And imagine based on that, you say, this is the type of thing I need delivered. This [00:40:00] is scope, this is the work that I need done.

You tell me what the right supplier is, and imagine it then says, Hey, based on your requirements, these free providers are the best ones for what you need. Imagine that across your business. And that's actually what we're implementing. And that's why when I refer to external workforce strategy, that is some of the stuff that we are implementing.

We are not just a, a service company. We've also got technology in our, in our platform to help around some of these things. And that's when you're actually changing the. World in terms of how they're, they're, they're leveraging the right supply for the right work, um, which is really exciting. The only challenge is

we're only, we're, we're doing this in, in very few of our clients because there's, there's too much bureaucracy to actually all companies going, wow.

Imagine implementing that. That would, that would really help us. But, uh, for a lot of companies with a lot of bureaucracy on getting that off the ground. But that's certainly the future that I see versus I know someone at this consultancy, or I know someone at this IT service provider or this. Freelance platform, so I'm just gonna go to them.

Actually, they might not be the right supplier for [00:41:00] that work.

Yurii Lazaruk: I wish it'll change soon. I feel like we are in the space that we're working with a lot of mindsets, especially changing them, and I think that we are getting there at least. I hope so. I believe so. I don't know for sure. But I have this, you know, spider sense that, uh, something is, is moving in the right direction.

And I really wish to have the sky is the limit. I have so many questions, but time is the limit. So the final question, what advice would you give to companies just starting to use freelancers and to freelancers entering the market?

Danny Gal: So to companies, I would say, um, ensure, firstly, you're using the, there, there's a lot of suppliers out there that do this type of stuff.

So ensure that you're using the right suppliers. Um, firstly, and do your, do your due diligence on what that means in terms of what you're actually looking for. Um, I would say build internal success stories. Build certain internal success cases. That's your easiest way to grow this. Program in [00:42:00] your business, um, and get your business to be sharing those success cases with others, right?

This is about how you make the business look good, not how you make yourself look good. And by that you will look good as a result. So that, I mean that there, I, I talked to a lot again along, or some of my secrets of what I suggest companies do, um, throughout this conversation for freelancers, um, my main thing that I see is, is.

Um, a lot of freelancers say they can do everything when I say everything, everything within a scope of work that they can do. And I would say what you need to do is be very specialist in the areas that you're actually really strong on. Yeah, I'm sure you are good at 20 things, but you're probably really, really good at three things.

Specialize in those three things rather than sometimes see like. Profile of people. They're like, I can do anything and everything. Yeah, I'm sure you can. Especially it in the IT world, which we work with a lot of course, because the answer is you can, obviously you can do anything but actually what, what needs to be really clear is where are you best [00:43:00] in breed?

What, where are you the best on the planet or in the top 20% on the planet for? And that's, um, that's the big thing from my experience. Freelancers want a few things. They want to get paid quickly. They wanna work with cool companies, and they wanna work with cool projects. They're the three things they want.

Other than that, there's no loyalty, right? I always say this, there's no loyalty to pro teams of the people working with us, and there's no loyalty to other platforms. They want core projects. Core companies paid quickly. And that's okay. That's, there's, there's not an issue with that. That's absolutely how they should be focused.

Um, so that's what we are trying to do is ensuring we are giving them that platform to be able to work on core projects, core companies, and pay quickly.

Yurii Lazaruk: Now to your point, I sometimes talk to different platforms and, uh, when. Speak about like what Freelance Roadmap does, and maybe we, some have some intersections and they say, oh, no, no, no, no, we don't want to collaborate, we don't want our people to know about other platforms than we are.

I'm like, are you sure that freelancers do not know about [00:44:00] other platforms and they're not using them? Are you really sure about that? I feel like it's, it's, you know, the best. You take it. So if you are bringing them the best project, they will stick to you. If you stop doing this, they will stick to anyone who will do this.

So it's never like either we or either them, et cetera, it's always end, you know, once again, as, as, as in in companies. Free full-time with freelancers. Same as here. There are different platforms. There are different communities that are working together. And last but not least, name two people I should reach out to to talk about the independent workforce.

Danny Gal: Um. Yuri, I can think of a couple of people, but I can also see you've got many of them already on your podcast. But let me, let me come back to you. I've got two people specifically that I can think of that would be great for you to, um, to interview and speak to, but I'll come back to you on it.

Yurii Lazaruk: I'll definitely follow up.

And what is the best way to connect with you?

Danny Gal: Sure. So pro teams.com [00:45:00] is our website. Um, Danny ga at Pro Teams on LinkedIn, um, as well. So please connect on LinkedIn. Um, and if we build a relationship, WhatsApp will always be the easiest way at some point in time. So let's, uh, let's get connected.

Yurii Lazaruk: De thank you so much for sharing your experience.

I clearly see the passion and energy in your eyes when you are talking about how procurement team, how to, how to deal with all this stuff, how to build the processes as this change management thing, how to talk to other teams, how to share your successes. And you know, you make me really happy seeing such people in the freelance world because I totally understand that with people like you.

We're getting there. We're building this world. We are making, we are changing the workforce, and we are bringing the best talents to best businesses in the world. And, um, let's see what will happen next. Great.

Danny Gal: Thanks so much for having us on, and definitely the next 10 years in this industry is growing at a rapid [00:46:00] growth.

So yeah, I'm excited to be part of it.

Yurii Lazaruk: Thank you very much, Danny, and yeah, see you in the freelance world and for listeners, thank you for joining us on this episode of The Independent Workforce. I hope you've taken one step closer to working smarter with freelance talent. If you enjoy this conversation, subscribe to learn even more.

And share it with your colleague. And remember, the future of work is now.