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ExecEd: Following up on what you're talking about in terms of Silicon Valley, we know that a lot of the teams that reside in these companies move on. They move on to the next great thing. What lessons have you learned in your research and how do you advise the organizations to do a better job at retaining the talent that they've nurtured?

Homa Bahrami: This issue of retention is always a hot topic in Silicon Valley, and many people say that Silicon Valley has more of a mercenary talent pool people come and people go. There's certainly some truth to that. I mean, as we know, we have many different companies here. The life cycle of an employee is much, much shorter in Silicon Valley compared to many other locations and industries, so I would say the first thing is that you really have to assess what we call the 'Cultural fit' between the employee and the company. Not everybody is suitable for a company at every stage of its development. I was just talking to someone who said "I loved being in this company when it had less than 500 people. Now, we're 1,200 people, and this is not for me."

I think step number one is you've got to acknowledge and accept that you're not going to keep everybody forever and you have to really zoom in on this fit question. Not just culture fit, but stage of life fit. If you have young kids, do you want to have somebody who's got to travel all the time? This is probably not going to be a good thing. The first thing is really determine what the reality of your organization is, and then identify candidate pool that is going to be more of a cultural and a life cycle fit for your organization.

Secondly, I would say Silicon Valley uses a lot of contingent employees, a lot of contractors, consultants, temporary workers. The second thing is you have to develop a flexible talent pool. More recently, as you know, many companies like

Netflix, Adobe have started having generous maternity, paternity leaves because they want to create the condition so that their employees at different stages of their life cycle can really deal with their life, and yet stay with the company. The second issue is really put yourself in the shoes of the employees you want to keep, and what do they want. It's always not about more money or more stock options. It's not about the money most of the time. It's more about lifestyle consideration.

Then thirdly, view transient workforce as also an opportunity for adaptation. I know this is contrary to popular wisdom that you've got to keep everybody at any cost, but I find adaptation is obviously enabled when you have fresh eyes, set eyes on a new project, a new situation, a new context. By bringing fresh blood in, you can start looking at things in a new way. I would say turn the transient workforce as long as it's not extreme into an opportunity for fresh out of the box thinking. I know not many people talk about that or think about that, but I think certainly, from an adaptation point of view, fresh eyes are going to be a key enabler for new thinking and innovative thinking.