

One Knight in Product - E52 - Kim Scott

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SPEAKERS

Jason Knight, Kim Scott



Jason Knight 00:00

Hello, and welcome to the show. I'm your host, Jason Knight. And on each episode of this podcast, I'll be having inspiring conversations with passionate product people. If you like what you hear on this episode and fancy a bit more, why not pop over to the website OneKnightInProduct.com and dig into some of my other fantastic episodes with authors, thought leaders, practitioners, and those just starting out. Oh, and don't forget to share with your friends. On tonight's episode, we pivot away from product management practices and go deep on creating a fair and just workplace. As product managers our work touches all parts of the organisation and the best product teams are diverse and inclusive. We absolutely should not accept bad behaviour and should work actively to reduce it. So tonight we speak to someone who's literally written the book on how to reduce workplace bias, prejudice and bullying being an upstander not a bystander and what to do when the rot comes from the top. For this and much more, please join us on One Knight in Product. So my guest tonight is Kim Scott. Kim is a speaker, coach and author who started a diamond cutting factory in Moscow as the Soviet Union was crumbling before going back west and working for some of the biggest tech giants in Silicon Valley, including Google and Apple. Since then, she has been an executive coach at a glittering array of tech companies learning so much along the way, she felt compelled to set up a typewriter and share some of our learnings with the world. Kim taught us all to care personally and challenged directly back in 2017. With her first book, Radical Candor, and having encouraged people to talk to each other, she found that even more complicated questions to answer. So now she's back with a new book, Just Work aiming to foster a workplace free of bias, prejudice, and bullying. Hi, Kim, how are you tonight?



Kim Scott 01:45

Great. Thanks so much for having me. It's exciting to be here.



Jason Knight 01:50

Well, we'll see how excited you are by the end. But thank you for the kindness. So first things

first, the new book came out literally last month. I will confess I haven't finished it yet. But I'm definitely enjoying it so far. But how's the reception been in general? Has it met your expectations?

 Kim Scott 02:08

The thing that has most pleased me about this book is getting getting notes from people who are putting the ideas in the book into practice. So for example, I got a note from a senior tech leader in Silicon Valley. And he said, You know, I just hired a woman on my team yesterday. And he said before reading your book, I would have asked her what her salary at the previous company was and matched it. He said, After reading your book, I asked her what the men who are her peers were being paid. And I matched that. I was like, Yay, success. I got a I got another note from a from a man who is the CEO of a really big media company. And he said, You know, I read your book, and it convinced me to eliminate alcohol from company. I'm the least popular person at that media company. But I really I really appreciate I tried to write a book that would help people know what they could do. So when people are actually doing stuff as a result of reading a book, I count that a great success.

 Jason Knight 03:15

Yeah, and that's obviously every author's dream merely if they're writing a book, this as practical as this one. But I'm assuming that there's also a certain type of person who will probably react a little bit negatively to this sort of book because they think it's all okay already. And everyone's just a bit too sensitive. Do you get negative feedback from that type of person? Or do they just kind of ignore the book?

 Kim Scott 03:35

I was expecting a lot of that, but I haven't actually gotten too much of it. I'm sure it's coming. I'm waiting. I'm bracing myself. But I've been pleasantly surprised. I mean, even my father was talking about the book with some of his friends who are maybe people you might expect to be part of the year two sensitive cry. And they read the book, and they read about some of the things that had happened to me. And first of all, I mean, to be fair, these are my father's friends. So even if they are, even if we don't always see eye to eye politically, they were predisposed to be on my side. But by the end of the conversation, they that they were trying to identify what went wrong. The first job I had out of college, which I described in the introduction, and a lot of things went wrong, and they wanted to sort of identify who was the bad guy in that story. And they realised there wasn't one bad guy and one of them said, you know, it was kind of a systemic problem. I'm like, yes, if these guys are saying systemic injustice, I have done something

 Jason Knight 04:40

So yeah, that's that's obviously again, something that I can imagine made you feel pretty good, but there were quite a lot of stories in the book so far, like you say personal stories about things that have happened to you which, even on their own we're kind of toe curling and I met

him, obviously toe curling for me so God knows how you felt at the time. But was it pretty painful going through some of those examples and dredging some of that back up? Or did you kind of have that compartmentalised and just kind of looked on it fairly mutually, as a past thing?

 Kim Scott 05:12

You know, it's really interesting. When I started writing this book, I thought, well, I'll have to do a lot of interviews with people, because I haven't really had that many bad experiences, my career, which will seem shocking. Once you read the book, once I started thinking about it, I suddenly it dawned on me that I'd had a terrible experience every single day of my career. And not all of them equally terrible, but and I had more good times and bad times. I mean, don't get me wrong, I overall had a great career and was lucky to have a lot of success. But I think that it was really for me, it was therapeutic to write the book. And it really helped me process a bunch of stuff that I had been in denial about. And sometimes in the short term denial, it's sort of like shock when you're injured, it helps you get through something. But in the long term, if you don't process it, it does a lot of harm. And so it was, I was really grateful that I had the opportunity to spend that much time processing the junk that had happened. And I hope that the time I spent processing will help other people process their experiences more efficiently than perhaps I did.

 Jason Knight 06:23

The full title of the book is Just Work - Get Shit Done, Fast and Fair.

 Kim Scott 06:29

Yeah, the US title, the UK title is more polite to get it done.

 Jason Knight 06:34

Yeah. So I was gonna say... I saw that. And I was very curious about that. Because even the Shit version has the little modesty asterisk there to kind of save our feelings. But so the Get It Done version was the UK thing or European thing?

 Kim Scott 06:49

Yeah, it was, I'll be radically candid about why. It was to get around the censors, in certain countries where the UK version gets published, I think shit might have gone down okay. And the UK itself, but yeah, I mean, I can imagine that there are other. Yeah. And in fact, Amazon in the US, we didn't know this, but Amazon won't let us advertise because of this shit. So anyway, if I had known that I might have gone with it in both the US and the UK versions.

 Jason Knight 07:21



Jason Knight 07:21

That's fair enough and slightly weird, obviously, the some of the attitudes towards you know, words with styles in your dimension, and we could probably live with that. But at the same time, I can also imagine my kids asking what that meant. But yeah, if we go back to radical candour, you've got a four box diagram and the obnoxious aggression quadrant. And I understand you originally going to call that the asshole quadrant? Yeah. But you felt do I guess you you thought better that? Yeah. So there's kind of a pattern going on here of using carefully chosen curse words. Do you think that's a good strategy to kind of get people's attention? And really underline points? Or do you think, aside from sensors that it could potentially put people off?



Kim Scott 08:02

It definitely can put some people off. The thing about that title is that it puts more people on and off. And there's there? There's a question. I'm not sure we debated long and hard about what about that subtitle? And I'm not sure honestly, we made the right choice. I think that the the immediacy of the language sort of pushes people towards Oh, this, you know, she's going to speak, she's going to have some real talk. She's not going to choose every word. Although, of course, it was chosen carefully. But it leaves people with the impression that I'm just talking.



Jason Knight 08:39

Yeah. So yeah, very low, almost like you're just having a chat like we are now just, you know, friendly chat around stuff and just happened to be talking about very important things that could change people's lives.



Kim Scott 08:49

Yeah, there's been Bob Sutton tweeted recently, another author who wrote a book called The No Asshole Rule. So he's struggled with this as well. And he tweeted some research recently that showed that people think you're telling the truth, people are more apt to believe you're telling the truth, when you curse them when you don't for whatever reason. That's not why I did it. But I found that research kind of interesting.



Jason Knight 09:14

Oh, that's, that's an interesting one. I'll try and avoid too many more curse words in this interview, though, just in case the kids are listening.



Kim Scott 09:20

I know my children, my children. Really... They gave me some about word for using that word.



Jason Knight 09:29



Jason Knight 08:22

That's fine. I can always get my bleeper Yes. But in a new book, you say that Radical Candor was a really good start. And it really helped to get people communicating better, which obviously the point of the book, but that didn't really work for everyone. Because for example, when women are radically candid, or minority people are radically candid, they themselves get judged, maybe in a way that the white guy wouldn't get. He almost seen that that was the precursor then to just work becoming a thing. But was that long period between the two books, or did you have to like did you have to get like loads of stories like that coming back to you before you decided to write the new one? Or was it kind of in your mind from the point that you published the book in the first place?



Kim Scott 10:13

So I was giving a presentation I think it was a few months. So the book came out in March, Radical Candor came out in March, and by June I was writing this one. Wow. And here, here was the one moment where I think things really crystallised for me. I was giving a radical candour presentation at a tech company in San Francisco, and the CEO of that company had been a colleague of mine for the better part of a decade, and she is one of two few black women CEOs in tech. And after the presentation, she pulled me aside and she said, Kim, I really like Radical Candor. I think it's gonna help me build the kind of culture that I want. But I gotta tell you, it's a lot harder for me to put it into practice than it is for you. Because she explained as soon as I offer even the most compassionate candor, I get slimed with the angry black woman stereotype. And I knew this was true, I knew this was true. And it made me realise three things at the same moment. The first was that I had not been the kind of upstander that I wanted to be. I've not been the kind of colleague that I saw myself as I had refused to notice the ways in which she was unfailingly pleasant, never seemed even the tiniest bit annoyed, even though I knew she had what to be mad about in that in that period of time. And second of all, it made me realise not only had I been in denial about the things that were happening to her, I had been in denial about the things that were happening to me as a woman as a white woman in the workplace. And last, but not least, certainly, it made me realise that I had not as a leader, I had often not created, the kind of workplace that would prevent these sorts of things from happening to people like her and people like me. And I really, I felt bad about that. And I really wanted to explore it. And that was what prompted me to start reading this book.



Jason Knight 12:11

But you just touched on it, then. And you also mentioned it fairly early on in the book as well around how, whilst obviously, as a woman yourself in the workplace, you've certainly had your share of the stories, for example, that you've told already. But the you yourself are still fairly privileged in many ways. So you're, you're white, you're cisgender, you're straight, you've had a decent upbringing, you've obviously had a good career. Did that make you feel hesitant at all? And worrying a little bit that maybe you're kind of the white saviour voting and and the horse type affair? Or did you feel that the message that you had, and the points that you had to put across and the advice that you had was something that was fairly universal, and that you didn't worry too much about the credibility of of that of your privilege that you do have?



Kim Scott 13:00

It worried me a lot. It was it at times, it almost made me wonder whether I should be the one writing this book, because, you know, I was born on second base, and, you know, yeah, privilege only compounds over time. Yeah. And so the advantages that I was born into, gave me more advantages, which in turn gave me more advantages. So it helped me get into a good college, which gives you a giant unfair advantage. And especially in the US, it's a it's a problem. But I think you have some of that problem there in the UK as well. Yes. And so I Yeah, so so for me to talk about injustice. I mean, by and large, the injustice I have experienced in my life is getting more than my fair share. And so I worked really hard to acknowledge that, while at the same time, not undermining the fact that a number of really unfair things had also happened to me. And I also worked with a number of people to make sure that I to point and not just make sure that I wasn't to point out to I knew that I know that I'm biased, I know that I have any number of biases. And so I worked with a number of people who had read the book and point them out to me. And I'm sure there's still some in there. I mean, one of the things that I talked about in the book, for example, Breeze Harper is is one of my bias busters. And she read the book and she pointed out to me, my ableist sight metaphors, and sort of sloppy sight metaphors, where I would say I see when I would write I see when what I really meant was I understand or I noticed or something like that. And I really cared a lot about changing this because I care about language like I'm a writer, I really believe to my core that words matter and choosing the right words matters to me. And I also cared about it because one of the other people who was helping me to edit the book is a guy named Zack Shore, one of the great editors of all time. And he's, he's blind. And so I didn't want and I care about Zach, I like him a lot I the last thing in the world I would want to do is to use language that would harm him. And so I thought I had really gotten this. And then right before I sent the book to my editor, I did a quick search. And then a 350 page book, I had used sloppy site metaphors, ableist site metaphors 99 times after I had gotten the feedback. And so I think it's so important to realise how difficult it is. But also it's not impossible to identify these biases, and to eliminate them.



Jason Knight 15:48

Yeah, it's interesting, actually, because there are so many terms that we use day to day and not just about seeing things, but like various words that would use to describe people as being a bit dumb that actually turn out to be effectively conditions that people can have that just that's the name that they were called back in Victorian times or something like that. Yeah. And it's obviously, I mean, the way I see it, at least is it is not necessarily a problem that you didn't know something like, for example, the word creatine has been, obviously a problematic one, because it meant you actually refer to a specific condition. But if you keep using it after you're told, then that's when it becomes a problem, right? And that's where I think this bias thing comes in, that you talk about, it's like, you have to learn and accept not do what some of those people we were talking about earlier, would do, which is learn and then push back and say, Oh, you're just too sensitive. Yeah, because you're right. words do matter. I obsess over words all the time.



Kim Scott 16:47

Yeah, yeah. And there's so many phrases. And I think one of the things that's useful about talking about bias, more generally, is that we all we all use bias. Every single person listening, I promise you, you're using all kinds of bias, I'm still using all kinds of bias words. And, and so when we focus on different kinds of biases, then we're all united in our effort to identify them.

And it can be fun. You learn a lot, you change your language, your language gets better, you get more precise, you communicate better. And, and it's great. It's like, it's not this onerous thing. It's actually, it's fun to eliminate your biases.



Jason Knight 17:34

Yeah, I think it's the difference between people who are just so set in their ways. And they just feel that any single thing that you bring up is just another example of political correctness gone mad, versus people actually wanting to improve themselves.



Kim Scott 17:46

So yeah, and and I think part of the problem is that sometimes we can fuse bias with prejudice. And so sometimes when you point out a person's bias to them, they think you're telling them that they're being prejudiced. And then they get defensive. Yeah. And it's, you know, it's not the job of the person pointing out bias to tiptoe through someone else's, someone else's defences. But I think it's that's why, in the book, I talk about the importance of differentiating among bias, prejudice and bullying, because they're three very different things. And so we need to respond to each one differently. And when we learn to distinguish between them, it means that when someone flags your bias, you're less likely to feel like that profound sense of shame, or defensiveness. And you're more likely to have a growth mindset, oh, thank you for pointing it out, I'll work on changing it. And also, I think we need some patience with changing our biases. Because, as with that, the sloppy sight metaphor problem that I have, even after you're aware, it can take a while to these are deeply ingrained habits. And so being patient with ourselves and with others, in changing these habits, and just flagging them sort of interrupting the bias over and over and over again, it will eventually we do get better, but we're not going to get better the first time.



Jason Knight 19:18

So what are some of the approaches that you would recommend or have recommended to calling people out in a way that is constructive and can maybe reduce that shielding that they try to do to back off?



Kim Scott 19:31

Yeah, so I think it's useful to think about what's our role? Are we the upstander? In other words, we observe something going wrong and we're gonna stand up to it, we're gonna point it out, or are we the so you want to be an upstander? Not a bystander, obviously. So are you the upstander? Are you the person who is harmed by the bias, the prejudice or the bullying? Are you the person causing harm or are you the leader? So one of the things I want to do is help people obviously who are harmed by workplace injustice. So let's start there. But I want to also remind folks that if we put all the burden for fixing these problems on the people who are harmed by the problems, that's that's, that's itself a problem. Yes, it is. So so we'll also talk about what leaders and upstanders can do. But if you feel that somebody is saying something to you, that's biased, one of the things you can do is use an if statement. And an i statement, I

like to say invite someone in to understand the situation from your perspective, rather than calling them out. So you're not saying, you know, you sexist pig, you're saying, when you refer to me as pretty girl, I don't think you're going to take me seriously. And so it's it's kind of more of a neutral, or it's really an invitation to the other person to, to understand things from your perspective. And upstanders, by the way, can use an if statement as well. So for example, friend of mine, went into a meeting. And she was with two colleagues who are men, and they sat down at the table. And then the people from the other company that they were meeting with file then and the first guy sat next to the guy to my friends left, and the next guy came in and sat across from the next guy to her left. And then they file on down the table, leaving her kind of dangling at the end, and sort of an unconscious bias in the in the seating arrangement. And then it turned out that she had the expertise that was going to win her team the deal. But when she started talking, the people on the other side of the table just would turn to her colleagues who are mad, they would just say it was as though she hadn't opened her mouth. And this happened once it happened twice. It happened a third time. And finally her colleague realised what was happening. And he stood up and he said, I think Aileen and I should switch seats. That was his eyes statement. And lo and behold, as soon as they switch seats, the whole tenor of the room change, everybody realised what they were doing, and they stopped doing it, they started including alien in the conversation. So much easier for him to do that than it would have been for her to do that. So that's an i statement in the in the case of bias. Now when it is prejudice. So bias is sort of not meaning it I mean, there's a lot you can define it endlessly. But let's just call it not meaning it. Prejudice, I'm going to define as meaning it. And there's a lot more to it go read Gordon Albert's book the nature of prejudice, but meaning it's intentional, it's a conscious belief. And people can believe whatever they want to believe, but they cannot impose their belief on others. They cannot say or do anything they want in a work environment. Oh, they can try. They sure can. And they do. And so if it is prejudice, you want to use an if statement. So my colleague, my the person who I founded this company just worked with Tria Bryant was in a hiring meeting. And the most qualified candidate was a black woman. And she was wearing her hair out naturally. And the hiring manager and the hiring meeting afterwards said, Well, she has all the qualifications, but we can't hire her because of her hair was ridiculous. Wow, believe me, yeah, nowhere in the hiring documents was hair. And so So anyway, what is in it statement that you can use in the face of that you can say it is illegal, which it is in California not to hire someone because of their hair, you can say it is an HR violation not to hire someone because of their hair, or you could appeal to common sense like it is ridiculous not to hire the most qualified candidate because of their hair. So that's sort of the the if statement be it statement makes it clear where that boundary is between one one person's freedom to believe whatever they want, and another person's freedom not to have that belief imposed upon them. So that's the ID statement. And by the way, if you're a leader, you need to write a code of conduct to make it clear where that because it's easy for me to say, oh, yeah, you know, there's this line, but but defining that line is another matter. It's hard. And then what if it's bullying, bullying, I'm gonna define as being mean. And one of the things I learned from my daughter is that you don't want to use an if statement. If someone is bullying you, you don't want to invite them in. So my daughter was being bought. She was in third grade, she's being bullied on the playground. And I suggested to her why don't you tell this kid I feel sad when you blow. And she looked at me like I was 10 off my mind. She said, Mom, he is trying to make me sad. Why in the world would I tell him he's succeeded? But gosh, why would you you shouldn't actually and so a use statement sort of pushes the if an if statement invites the man to use statement push them away. And you're sort of you're in an active pose when you're saying you can't talk to me like that. Or if that feels like it might escalate things too much, just say what's going on for you here like you can you can offer a little bit of compassion

for the person who's bullying you, but, but you got to make it about them not about you. And so those are some simple things you can do in the face of this stuff. I statement, it statement for prejudice use statement for bowling.



Jason Knight 25:26

And you mentioned it before as well, the concept of upstanders and having allies that can stand up for for you, maybe when it's not quite so comfortable for you to do it yourself for where you need backup or whatever the situation calls for. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. But obviously, it's not one or the other, it is a really well known phenomenon that most people will just kind of stand there and sort of look at their feet, sit there and look at their feet. And probably the more people that you have in the room, the less likely it is for someone to stand up because they all they all differ and expect it to be someone else's job. And it gets worse in those sort of situations. How are some ways that we can encourage bystanders to become upstanders?



Kim Scott 26:09

Yeah, by the way, I think there's there's some debate around that research, there was that case of the woman who was killed in a turnout, a number of people had called the police actually, Oh, wow. Not that not that calling the police is always such a great response in this country, unfortunately. But we've all been in meetings where something gets sad, that's kind of egregious, and nobody says anything, or does anything. And so one of the things that leaders can do to make it more likely, like that, the story I told about my friend, and he's and her colleague stood up like that never happens. That's like, you noticed, that's one of the stories where I had to tell someone else's stories. So I didn't have a great story about someone standing up to bias. So for me, some someone being an upstander, I had a good one for prejudice, which I'll tell in a second. But anyway, I think one of the things that leaders can do to make it more likely that upstanders will stand up is to create what I call bias interrupters. And this is really uncomfortable. So it requires it requires some some leadership. But if you if you're a manager, and you go to your team and you say, Look, I know that there is bias being expressed in every meeting we have every day, every week, what are some of the things we can do to interrupt it so that we can get better? So you come up with a shared vocabulary, and then a norm about how to respond. So the shared vocabulary can be anything, some teams we've worked with, have said, bias alert, my editor and I would say yo to one another. And I knew he said Yo I just said something that was bias. Tria, and I have a purple flag, which I will wave here.



Jason Knight 27:55

I can see it right now. So I'm assuming I've just said something wrong



Kim Scott 27:59

I'm just showing off my purple flag. And, and so the purple flag means that I've said something or she has said something that is biased. And so as soon as you get the purple flag or the bias alert, tossed your way, you know, you've said something that that the other person finds to be

biased. And so you have, you want to make sure that people know how to respond to this. Because no matter what you do, people are going to feel a sense of shame when their bias has been flagged. And so you want to help people move through that productively and not because very often when we feel ashamed, we respond unproductively. And so you get two choices, you can either say thank you for pointing it out, I'll try to do better. Or you can say, I don't quite understand why that's bias, can you tell me after the meeting, and then you've got to talk to the person after the meeting. And just that simple sort of interrupting bias publicly, daily. Now people are, they're looking out for it. And the more that we build stamina to interrupt bias, the less painful it is, it's like, you know, learning to run, you don't start out running a marathon, you kind of build up to it. But but once you get in the habit of running, then you feel bad when you don't run and so so you want to build good bias interrupting habits. And that requires some effort from leaders very rarely will this happen organically on a team because it's uncomfortable?



Jason Knight 29:38

Yeah, I think that marathon metaphor is actually really, really interesting, actually, the whole idea that you have to kind of build those muscles and keep maintaining those muscles. And I think also I'd like to think that people that that maybe don't put the effort in should probably feel as bad as you do at the end of a marathon as well you know, because should be uncomfortable for them. Right. And I think that's, that's actually really, really an interesting metaphor. But you also talk and you've spoken about the leadership imperative to actually get leaders to come and enable this within their organisations. But then there are some situations where the leaders are part of the problem. And from the CEO down, there's just a culture that just isn't right. And I can obviously making you feel as the person being harmed as like, the whole organization's weighing down on you. So for example, I have a friend who, a few years ago was a work party, the CEO, let's call it what it is drunk, and he tried to sexually assault her. He was called out and he was moved on. But there was lots of talk of NDAs. And yeah, like, try to get people to try to keep it all a secret and company tried to hash all up. And that's obviously a horrible story. And that person is, you know, by implication, a fairly horrible man for doing that. But how does someone in that situation where you're in a company, where, from top down, there's, there's a problem? How do they push back against that, other than just leaving the company?



Kim Scott 31:15

Yeah, yeah, it's really tricky. One of the assertions I make in just work is that power is bad, just full stop power is bad. And the more power you have, the more likely it is that you're going to behave in a bullying way. Furthermore, the more power you have, when you add layer power, on top of a bias or prejudice, you get discrimination. When you layer power on top of a bullying, you get harassment. And when you layer power, on top of touch, you wind up with these physical violations or even violence. And so, first of all, as a leader, you really want to create checks and balances on the leaders in your organisation. And if you're the CEO, you got to make sure that those checks and balances apply to you as well. So but what can what can you do if you're not in an organisation that is characterised by checks and balances? I think one of the things that's really important, you don't have to actually leave, but making sure that you know what your exit options are, is important. And I say this can be discouraging for me to say, especially right now, in the middle of a global pandemic, it can feel really daunting to look for

another job right now. But I think there are there are company a lot of companies that are hiring actually right now. And sometimes it's true that you're well and truly stuck. And I don't want to pretend otherwise. But more often than not, we're not as stuck as we think we are. And so and also my way goes in the other direction as well. Sometimes a leader is afraid to create consequences for someone who is bullying on their team, because this person has some skill set that is hard to find. And so they think they can't fire the person who's bullying their teammates, but it is your job as a leader to create consequences for bullying. So make sure no matter what side of the equation you're on, you know where the exits are. I think another thing that's really important is to build solidarity too many times throughout my career. I didn't tell anybody, anybody about what was happening to me. And so often I that left me with a feeling that I was the problem not that the people who were harming me were the problem. And so I think building solidarity will really help you avoid getting gaslit I think also documenting the problems. Even if you have no intention of taking legal action. Documenting the problems is really important because it a it helps dispel gaslighting and be it preserves the option if you decide later to take legal action or to write the story. Then you've got the you've got the documentation in one of the first big meat to reckonings in tech was a woman named Susan Fowler. At Now Susan Righetti at Uber. And she documented everything she does, and she also went to HR. And that is why her memo was so strong, because you knew what like she you could tell that that this was it really added to the richness of the story. So document. I think that you it is a good idea to go to HR, even if and I want to acknowledge that sometimes HR has an agency problem so that there sir, they're protecting the interests of the company. They're protecting the interests of the leaders of the company, who are often the people who have done the thing that's problematic. And last but not least too often. There Protecting your interests. So I want to acknowledge it can be risky to go to HR, but when HR is good and sometimes it is very, very good, they will help you solve a problem. And they should I mean that HR should serve the interests of the people at the company. In fact, I like to call it People Operations, not not HR. So often they will help even when they don't help, it's useful to have on record what they didn't do if they don't. So that's a reason to go to HR, especially if you've explored your exit options. And you know, you can pull the ripcord and leave if you have to. Sometimes a direct conversation with the person who caused you harm will actually resolve the problem, says the radical candour author of radical candour. So, I'm a I'm a believer in the direct conversation. But again, it can be risky, and it can backfire. So you want to make sure that you are not I don't want to encourage people to do things that will cause them more harm. But very often people don't realise what they're doing what they've done. So I think a direct conversation can help. Sometimes you, you've got to explore your legal options. And this is where you mentioned the NDA early that like, this will change Mark my words, this will change the way that we use NDAs to silence victims is despicable, and ought to be illegal, and I believe will be illegal before too long. In fact, Ifeoma Ozoma, here in California is working really hard to make it illegal and go support her efforts. So you can pursue your legal options. And also, I think one of the things that gives me optimism is the extent to which people can just tell their story. Now, you know, there's social media has done a lot of bad things for us. But it's also done some good things like I don't think any reporter would have picked up Susan Fowler story. But she wrote it, and then went viral. And now you know, then all of a sudden, it was all anybody could write about.



Jason Knight 37:04

So have a strategy, keep receipts and make sure you know what your options are.



Kim Scott 37:09

Yes, exactly. I mean, I would say the the and this is probably advice from a privilege woman. So So I want to acknowledge that. But the single best thing I ever did was go look for other jobs. Because if you can leave, you know, you can fight harder.



Jason Knight 37:25

Well, the power dynamics shifts as well, right? I mean, obviously, they might not care if you leave depending on your role. But if they care in any way, then then that does kind of equalise or balance the scales a little bit, or maybe even tip the scales in your favour. So absolutely. I think you should have that on the table. Yeah. Now, all good things come in threes. Yes. So is there a book three in the Kim Scott trilogy, or you concentrating on spreading the message from books one and two?



Kim Scott 37:51

Oh, believe me there. I love to write, I love that. I am a writer. That is if you ask me what my job is it is to write. So I don't know if it'll be my very next book or the book after my next book. But I soon I'm going to write a novel. And it's going to be kind of like the Silicon Valley, the Silicon Valley novel, because it is. So it is, there's a lot to be said about what's happening where I live. And it's best explored in fiction, I think,



Jason Knight 38:22

Yeah, you can start making names up and pretending there is no avail as well. But obviously, as we saw earlier, you can see Silicon Valley directly out of your window as well, which is yes, obviously give you a little bit of inspiration as well. Absolutely. And what's next on the promotional rollercoaster for you. You got lots of other events lined up? Have you got any webinars or anything that you'll be speaking out that people come and see you?



Kim Scott 38:45

Sure, absolutely. If you come to our website, just work together.com, you'll see all our appearances. And the other thing that we often do is go and give talks at companies. So we give talks and workshops. And we help people put the ideas in the book into practice, because it's one thing for me to say, create these bias interrupters on your team. It's kind of another thing to do it. And so we're happy to help folks with implementation as well.



Jason Knight 39:16

Excellent. I'll make sure to put that in the show notes so people can come and find out a bit more. Great. Thank you. Well, that's been a really interesting chat. And obviously we could have or certainly I could have spent another two hours talking about this stuff. But I know that

you're, you're a busy woman. So thanks very much for taking the time. Hopefully, we can stay in touch. But that's for now. Again, just really thank you for taking the time.



Kim Scott 39:39

Thank you.



Jason Knight 39:42

Thanks for listening. Hopefully you found the upset, interesting, and it's inspired you to take action to make your own difference at work. Again, I'd love it if you could spread the word and share this episode widely. And check out some of my other great episodes of the website, OneKnightInProduct.com, sign up to the mailing list or subscribe on the podcast app of your choice. I'll be back soon with another inspiring guest but as for now thanks and good night