



# Video transcript

**Dan Gregory and Kieran Flanagan, Co-Founders – The Impossible Institute**

## Practicing adaptive leadership

**DAN GREGORY:** So, adaptation is really important and what we're really trying to encourage in people is a kind of cognitive agility. In other words, how do you solve problems before the problems show up? How do you design thoughtfulness into your customer service systems before the thoughtfulness is required? So, it's about how do you adapt before the adaptability, is actually required?

**KIERAN FLANAGAN:** And what was interesting about adaptation for us is that we actually find it a creative skill. So, you know, as AI comes into place in all of our businesses, the ability to creatively adapt... If you think about it, if I'm adapting, I'm just creating a new way of doing things, or a new possibility. Creativity is a fundamental skill; resilience is a creative skill. For us, it's not running at a brick wall over and over again – as a leader – and getting frustrated, it's: how do I create new ways of doing that? How do I adapt my thinking? How do I adapt the system? Because this generation of people entering the workforce is different.

We were working with hairdressers recently and they were all complaining that staff want to travel all the time and that they have trouble getting apprentices. And we were having the 'behaviour by design' conversation with them, and saying: 'well how do you adapt your model? Rather than saying: there's something wrong with them.' Could you build hairdressing salons that have people that are guest hairdressers – that are in from New York, and London and LA – and they come, and they spend a year with you and then they move. So again, if we adapt our processes, we can get a much better result.

**DAN GREGORY:** So, rather than making the Gen Y's and millennials wrong: how do we change the system so that we actually design for loyalty, with variability in terms of where they work? So, they become employees and they stay with us over a long period of time but there's a freedom of having an international exchange – with a hairdresser who might want to come here and work from Spain, for instance.