

John Westworth

Former Director, Microsoft Garage Vancouver

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & AI ADOPTION · INNOVATION & DISRUPTION · FUTURE OF WORK · ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE · DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION · LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

THE PITCH

Turning AI, Innovation and Big Ideas Into Real-World Action

FULL BIO

Every organization wants to innovate. Every leader is talking about AI. But how do you move beyond the conversation and actually make things happen?

John Westworth has spent much of his career answering that question.

Over 26 years at Microsoft, most recently as Director of the Microsoft Garage in Vancouver, John worked at the intersection of technology, innovation and people, helping employees and leaders experiment with emerging technologies, challenge conventional thinking and turn promising ideas into practical solutions.

The Microsoft Garage was the company's global innovation program, created to give employees the freedom to experiment, collaborate across disciplines and develop ideas outside their traditional roles. Its initiatives included Microsoft's Global Hackathon, which brought together employees from across the organization to solve real-world challenges.

Through his work with hackathons, AI adoption, design research and leadership teams, John developed a firsthand understanding of what separates organizations that talk about innovation from those that actually make it happen.

And it isn't always the technology.

It's the people. Their willingness to experiment. Their confidence to challenge assumptions. And the environment leaders create to encourage new ways of thinking and working.

Today, John brings those lessons to audiences navigating artificial intelligence, digital transformation, organizational change and the evolving future of work.

His presentations offer a rare behind-the-scenes perspective on innovation inside one of the world's most influential technology companies, combined with practical strategies organizations can put to work immediately.

Rather than simply predicting what's next, John helps audiences understand what they can do about it.

Because the future of work isn't just about adopting new technology. It's about empowering people to do things they never thought possible.

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SIGNATURE KEYNOTES**From AI Curiosity to AI Capability**

Turning Artificial Intelligence Into Practical Workplace Action

AI is transforming the workplace, but there's a big difference between giving employees access to new technology and helping them actually use it.

Drawing on his experience with innovation initiatives and hackathons at Microsoft, John explores how organizations can make AI more accessible, build employee confidence and create opportunities for meaningful experimentation.

This keynote moves beyond AI hype to explore how leaders can encourage adoption, identify real business opportunities and help people at every level embrace new ways of working.

Key takeaways:

- Turn curiosity about AI into practical experimentation and adoption.
- Build employee confidence regardless of technical experience.
- Identify worthwhile problems that AI can help solve.
- Encourage collaboration and continuous learning.
- Make AI adoption a people-driven initiative rather than simply a technology rollout.

Innovation Is Everyone's Business

What Microsoft Can Teach Us About Creating a Culture of Innovation

Innovation doesn't belong to a department, a job title or a handful of creative thinkers.

Drawing on his experience leading the Microsoft Garage in Vancouver, John takes audiences behind the scenes of a global technology company to explore how organizations can unlock creativity, encourage experimentation and empower employees to contribute ideas.

He challenges leaders to rethink the conditions they create for innovation and demonstrates why some of the most valuable ideas come from giving people the freedom and confidence to try something different.

Key takeaways:

- Build a culture where innovation is everyone's responsibility.
- Break down silos and encourage cross-functional collaboration.
- Create space for experimentation without losing business focus.
- Empower employees to challenge assumptions and contribute ideas.
- Turn promising ideas into practical outcomes.

The Future of Work Starts With People

Leading Through AI, Innovation and Organizational Change

As artificial intelligence reshapes the workplace, organizations face a challenge that goes far beyond technology: helping their people adapt.

Drawing on nearly three decades at Microsoft, John explores the human side of innovation and technological change, offering practical lessons on leadership, adaptability and building confidence in an increasingly AI-powered world.

He examines how organizations can prepare their people for what's next, encourage new ways of working and create environments where change becomes an opportunity rather than an obstacle.

Key takeaways:

- Help employees navigate technological change and uncertainty.
- Build adaptable teams that embrace learning and experimentation.
- Connect innovation initiatives to meaningful business outcomes.
- Encourage participation across roles, departments and experience levels.
- Lead change by bringing people into the process.

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PORTRAIT

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