



We need to demystify digitalisation, says Belen Moscoso del Prado

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**We need to demystify digitalisation, says
Belen Moscoso del Prado**

Intro [00:00:06] Welcome to OECD Podcasts, Where Policy Meets People.

Kate Lancaster [00:00:11] Today's digital transformation is already affecting the ways and nature of our work, the skills we need, and how we do business. While you may worry about your job, rest assured: new jobs—but ones requiring new skills—are also being created. In fact, between 2006 and 2016, 42% of all new jobs were created in digitally intensive sectors. Many people say we've been here before, whether the industrial revolution, the advent of the car, or the arrival of the Internet. All of these transformations have changed the world of work, too. So, will the digital transformation be any different? In fact, in many countries, more people are at work today than ever before. But jobs are changing and will continue to do so. Over the next 10 to 20 years, some 14% of jobs in the OECD are highly likely to be automated, and another 32% are likely to change significantly. Are we ready for such profound shifts? Perhaps not. Today, six out of 10 adults in OECD countries lack basic computing skills, and many are not receiving the training they will need, particularly low-skilled workers. So, how are businesses responding to such challenges? Are they changing their strategies, their skills demands, their research and development? How do they see the future and the public policies needed going forward? I'm Kate Lancaster. To consider these issues and to get a business perspective on the challenges and opportunities of the digital transformation, I'm speaking today with Belen Moscoso del Prado Lopez Dirigo, chief digital and innovation officer at Sodexo, a global leader in quality-of-life services provision and facilities management. Welcome, Belen, and thank you for being with us.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:01:57] Thank you.

Kate Lancaster [00:01:58] It's my pleasure to have you here. So let's start [get] right into it. How is technology reshaping how companies do business? How is it enabling greater and perhaps even better innovation than we've seen before?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:02:09] Technology is certainly reshaping the business at Sodexo. It's certainly already influencing the experiences and the offers that we are bringing to our clients and to our consumers. This is for sure. It's also impacting the way we operate today our business, because it allows us to do it much more efficiently. And certainly we are taking this wave to influence our strategic agenda, because we believe that technology and data will allow us or bring us, and it's already doing [this], new business models and new offers and new services. And let me give you an example. If we think about our main business, which is food services, today, we can see already how in the past years we have shaped the experience that we are bringing to our consumers. We are offering thanks to technology, new services such as click-and-collect or click-and-deliver. Today you can, thanks to digital, get deliver a meal from FoodChéri, which is one of our partners. So overall at Sodexo, what we're trying to do is making sure that we embed technologies into our business and that we enhance everything that we propose to our consumers and our clients.

Kate Lancaster [00:03:25] I'm sure you're not the only ones who are grappling with how to use technology to bring more to your clients, bring more to your business. I know that you're very involved in Vivotek. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:03:36] So, yes, it's the third year that we are at Vivotek. And we joined Vivotek at the very beginning. It has been for Sodexo, a great place to feature how technology and data was [were] impacting all these businesses. This year, this specific year, we're going to focus it on data—data as an ingredient to the optimisation of our businesses.

Kate Lancaster [00:04:03] Can you give me another example of how you're using data to optimize?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:04:07] So for example. Well, data is something that it takes time. It's a new science and it's a learning curve. But for example, one of the things that we have managed to do and we are very proud of, is proposing to our site managers—that's how we call them—prediction[s] on the frequency that they will have on the site that day. In terms of numbers of people. This is very important for us to operate much more efficiently. But it's also very important for something that at Sodexo is very important, which is the waste.

Kate Lancaster [00:04:43] Well, it's interesting what you say—“learning curve”—because I think this brave new world of work is a learning curve for everyone, not just for firms, but also for individuals.

Kate Lancaster [00:04:51] What do you think people need to succeed in today's digital world?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:04:55] I think what we are seeing today is that we need to demystify digitalisation. It's there. It's the future. So we all need to learn how to work with something that is coming. So we are training our workforce, we are using new technologies to do so, and we are training them to demystify all these new technologies. For example, we have created a digital passport. This is a training that is done virtually where we propose [to] our people to learn about these technologies, understand how they impact our business everywhere, show what we are doing today, and get them ready for when they scale up, get them ready to be able to use them. We are also using technologies to do typical trainings that we did before in paper, for example. So we've developed a training using virtual reality where we tackle health and safety on our sites. So it's a module with a real kitchen and we train them over a certain number of things that we want them to do in order to avoid accidents. We started with a pilot, and it's given enormous results in terms of the reduction of accidents.

Kate Lancaster [00:06:14] And you work with educational partners as well, don't you? You provide a lot of services to the educational sector.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:06:19] We do. We work a lot with education. And there are two subjects that I want to give you as an example so that I share with you these. The education sector, we have consumers that are very tech-savvy. They're far more advanced, the students, than what we can put into it. So we had the case in our campuses in the US, where the students were asking us to deliver them food to the rooms, late, at dinners, and where maybe our food courts were closed. We decided to deploy robots—a robot to deliver the food from our kitchen to the rooms. We were not sure how our workforce would accept this change, and how our students would like this change. And everything happened very smoothly. We did spend a lot of time in the sites, training our workforce on how they worked, and it's a real success. We plan to now get this out in more than 400 maybe universities in the USA.

Kate Lancaster [00:07:26] So you must have had to also train the workers to work with the robots in collaboration.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:07:30] Totally, totally. And it was OK. It's just a matter of spending the time to teach how this change impacts what they were doing before.

Kate Lancaster [00:07:41] There is so much stress out there about technology. You know, you have people worrying, is my child on a device too much? Is my virtual assistant at home listening to everything that I say? Will robots take our jobs? There can be really negative feelings around technology. But at the same time, technological advances just have so much potential to improve well-being, to improve the quality of jobs. So how can companies navigate this?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:08:06] I think the question is more about using this technology right, like you say. If I think, for example, I have a girl that has had dyslexia. She's working with technology and it's super fine. And thanks to technology, everything is working really well. I have a son, elder son, and he spends his time playing, and I spend my time getting upset with him, because I prepared for him to spend his time socially with the family.

Kate Lancaster [00:08:34] Yes, I know that story personally, very well.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:08:38] So I think that the success is how to use it, how to use it well. And this is our goal at Sodexo. For example, we know in the world there are more and more people that are concerned about and become vegetarian or not eating meat, or not eating a certain number of things. FoodChéri allowed us to deploy this in Paris, and to offer in our sites this type of food through food delivery. This is a very good way of using technology.

Kate Lancaster [00:09:11] I would imagine there's almost a medicalized side to that too, for people who can't have a diet with salt, or certain kinds of things because of allergies.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:09:18] Totally. Another example is if we think about the pain point that I told you before, about in a restaurant, when, the payment moment, where there is a lot of queues. This was a real pain point. We are very happy to have found a solution that uses food recognition. A Chinese company that we invested in. This could bring a negative side—and we were asked the questions many times, OK, but does this mean that there would be less work for those people? And our answer to that is, of what we are seeing, is that, No. Technology is good. What we are doing with these people is making sure that they are trained to do a different job, like going into the kitchen or being coached as [a] nutritionist. Or taking a community role inside those restaurants.

Kate Lancaster [00:10:10] So technology is not eliminating the jobs, it's changing the tasks.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:10:15] That's it. If I think about my children, I realised that they would be doing jobs that probably don't exist today. And it's OK.

Kate Lancaster [00:10:25] Well, I wanted on that very positive note, I wanted to ask you also about another interesting and exciting thing that I've heard about Sodexo, which is Sodexo Ventures. And I understand this is a new initiative, where you're bringing together Sodexo experience as a well-established global presence, and taking that to start-ups, partnering with start-ups to do new and interesting things. So what does this been like so far, and what are you learning from this? What are they learning from you?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:10:52] So for me, Sodexo Ventures is a real success. We created it because we understood that innovation was not only inside of Sodexo, but outside, and that we needed to create the way to partner with start-ups and to support start-ups. We've done already five investments in the US, in France, and in China, and we are understanding that Sodexo can bring—obviously from a business point of view, scale—but we can also bring a lot of expertise to these companies, because we have a lot of experts in different materials. So it's very positive to them to have us as partners. On our side, they are totally complementing the offers that we are bringing to our consumers or to our clients. Let me give you the example. We know that coworking is something that is evolving. It's happening. So we invested in Neo Nomad, which is a platform that offers coworking. And this is something that in France, our consumers and our clients can already find in, you know, quality-of-life application.

Kate Lancaster [00:11:59] And by coworking, you mean coworking spaces where if you're an independent worker or a small start-up, you have access to Wi-Fi [and] business services.

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:12:06] Yes. Or even when you are in a company and you decide to work outside of the office and you need a space, you can reserve it directly. And the second example is Klaxit, which is shared cars to come back home. This is another service that we understand that brings value. We also invested in a health and wellness company in the US, Life Dojo, and in a nominee channel of SaaS solution called Wind, on top of AI, which is the solution I told you [about] for our restaurants.

Kate Lancaster [00:12:41] What are you learning from the start-ups, as a company? You can always say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but I think we can all learn from each other. What are you learning from them?

Belen Moscoso del Prado [00:12:51] We're learning everything from them. They are super agile. They take very fast decisions. They take risks, and they focus with a lot of agility to deliver their ambitions. I think where we are learning the most is how to work together. This is the most challenging part of this partnership. I do think that it's bringing a lot of value to a company like Sodexo.

Kate Lancaster [00:13:25] Thank you very much for being here with us. It's been a pleasure to talk to you and to hear more about what Sodexo is doing. I'm Kate Lancaster.

Outro [00:13:32] To listen to other OECD podcasts, find us on iTunes, Spotify, Google Podcasts and soundcloud.com/oecd.

