

POLICY SPEAKING PODCAST

Episode 18: Getting the Future of Work Right in Unprecedented Times Part 2

With Dr. Wendy Cukier and Pedro Barata

Welcome to Policy Speaking, a podcast from the Public Policy Forum. We focus on the ripples, waves and tsunamis radiating from this extraordinary health and economic crisis and what can be done about them. Policy Speaking is hosted by Edward Greenspon, President and CEO of the Public Policy Forum, and former Editor in Chief of the *Globe and Mail*. You can subscribe wherever you get your podcasts or head over to ppforum.ca where you can also find PPF research and writings.

Edward Greenspon- Hello, I'm Edward Greenspon and welcome to Policy Speaking. As you know, we've started looking at the formerly known 'Future Work', increasingly known as 'Present Work' challenges that all advanced economies face. Here at PPF, we've been thinking about the workplace and the future work for a while now. We recently held our second Brave New Work Conference. It delves into basic questions about the part governments, employers, unions, learning institutions and individuals must play in preparing us and themselves for the future work. The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated changes to work, and in a recent episode of Policy Speaking, we spoke with the Future Skill Center and Ryerson Diversity Institute about how skills gaps and other barriers to work have been intensified by COVID-19. Some of the initiatives to do better regarding a future of work that's fairer and accessible to people so that we don't run into the problem of people being left behind. I have Wendy and Pedro. Wendy Cukier, Founder and Academic Director of Ryerson Diversity Institute and Pedro Barata, the Executive Director of the Future Skill Center back with us again, because the first conversation was so good and covered so much ground, but left so much ground to be covered, that we thought we would do it again. So welcome back to Policy Speaking to both of you.

Guests- Thanks for having us back.

Edward Greenspon- Pedro, let me start with you. As Executive Director of the Future Skill Center, you're talking to employers on a fairly regular basis and I note that one of the Skills Next papers that Public Policy Forum has done, in conjunction with both the Diversity Institute and the Future Skill Center, says that while there is no clear consensus on whether government or corporations should be responsible for upskilling and reskilling, many corporations are taking the lead. Now that was written before the COVID-19 crisis and when the labour market was very tight. I'm wondering, in your consultations, do you see the same order to take the lead?

Pedro Barata- We're seeing that business increasingly is seeing the need to do that. The challenges are right in front of us in terms of displaced workforces and in terms of business models that remain uncertain. In all of our conversations, we're seeing sectors that already have a history of significant training and investment in their workforces, now beginning to think about, what next, and how technology can enable that. We're also seeing other sectors where perhaps training and the skilling agenda may not be as pervasive. Now, looking for new solutions that can keep their workforces anchored and that can also create some new platforms and opportunities for workers to be part of the conversation about how their industry is changing and have some access to emerging training and emerging jobs. I think when you look at the evidence around how employers, how businesses, are providing those opportunities; we just did a survey with the Diversity Institute and Inveronics again, show that only half of the employers are providing those training opportunities. When you ask workers or workforces about the value of that training, overwhelmingly people say, 'Yeah, this is important' and actually learning on the job and learning from my peers, is some of the best experiences I've had, in terms of my own personal growth. Certainly, what we're hearing, is that there's a lot of interest in figuring out how is it that we can shore that up, and it's the role of employers to certainly lead that. I think that there's a Public Policy wraparound in incentivizing that kind of leadership and providing resources to allow for those beachheads to be built. That's certainly a lot of the work that Future Skill Center is now involved in; is trying to support industries and sectors to build better labour market information, build digital platforms, and just ensure that there's broader engagement and that everybody's in the same conversation at the same time.

Edward Greenspon- Let me probe one of those points a bit more deeply because you say certainly the responsibility of corporations of businesses and employers to lead that. The quote I read at the beginning from the report says, 'there's no clear consensus on whether government or corporations

should be responsible'. I want to know, where should various responsibilities lie? I don't want to create this as a dichotomy; I want it on a continuum because that's the reality of the world. I think it's only fair for listeners to know that Canada has a pretty bad record of trading at the corporate record. That the OECD has us way down the charts of investing in training, so who should have what responsibility? And how do we make sure when acts on that responsibility? Wendy?

Wendy Cukier- Well, if from my point of view, businesses are primarily focused on making money, but corporate social responsibility is a factor and that shapes their behaviour. Most businesses are primarily interested in how to make more money. I think there's really good evidence that investing in upskilling partnering with organizations, some have been mentioned, groups like Empower, but also post-secondary institutions and so on, to make sure that there is a pathway to employment, it's in their best interests. I think that one of the things we need to do more, of is focus on the return on investment that's associated with upskilling and with building pathways for diverse employees. There's lots of really good work that shows that people with disabilities have higher have lower turnover rates and despite stereotypes and expectations, make extremely good employees. We've seen on the diversity front that you can demonstrate the so-called 'business case', but I think we have to do the same thing with upskilling. Large, successful corporations around the world AT&T comes to mind, big consulting firms, IBM, the banks and so on, where their bread and butter is basically a function of the talent that they have at their disposal. They have invested billions in very intentional upskilling programs. AT&T retrained almost half of its workforce over a matter of years; it invested over one billion dollars. Evidence that that improves, is performance.

Edward Greenspon- So are you saying there that we're kind of we are amid a sea change here? Clearly, the OECD numbers show that we have not done very well on training. Indeed, I think one of the major reasons is that corporations will say, 'Well, we don't necessarily get a return on investment. We may train people in the leave, they'll go elsewhere, and that might be good for the economy as a whole, but it's not good for our business and therefore, we think it's more of the responsibility of government'. But you're saying there's an attitude shift going on here, is that right?

Wendy Cukier- Absolutely, and the evidence is clear. Canada does not fare well, globally on several metrics. Productivity is one of them, innovation is another and like it or not, the United States does outpace us in many of these areas. I think they're pretty good at and that's partly a function of the

structure of the economy, but it also is tied to the fact that corporations in the US invest more in training and partly because their public education system is so weak, frankly; they take far more responsibility. I would say in Canada, corporations rely very heavily on public institutions, but as I said in the last episode, we need to shift the thinking at post-secondary institutions and we need to build better collaboration so people aren't training people for jobs that don't exist. Coming back to what Pedro said, I don't think it's either/or. I think we talk a lot about the skills and employment system in Canada and we talk a lot about the education system, we have no systems. We have a lot of fragmentation and a lot of duplication as well as inefficiency. That's where I think the work of Future Skill Center is focusing now; how do we develop systems that bring together the key holders and players where everybody is doing their part, but we really are doing a better job of bridging supply and demand both for entry-level employees but also, once they get into corporations. Technology, which people talk a lot about as part of the problem, and the increased potential for disruption, and the hysteria in the echo chamber around robots not just taking our jobs, but stealing our children as well; yet there's lots of evidence to suggest that technology is creating disruption but it can be a really important part of the solution. Thinking about new models and new approaches and a new platform and reducing fragmentation; we have more organizations working together rather than reinventing the wheel, I think is part of developing a coherent, high functioning, training and employment ecosystem in Canada and we have the tools to do it. One of the reasons the US can't, in my view, get as much traction as we have, is because of fragmentation, because of the huge discrepancies between public and private institutions in the cost of post-secondary. We have the makings of an incredibly robust and powerful training and employment system that really could if we got it working a bit better, take us into a leadership role. In the world, right now we have one of the highest rates of post-secondary graduation, but we are not seeing it translating into productivity, innovation and global domination.

Edward Greenspon- Pedro, pick up on that for a second because; first off, I think Canadians who always think that we do better than the United States would be surprised at perhaps our investments on a corporate level and in human capital are higher. Although Wendy says that may be a necessity also of their structures. Do we have the right structures in place in Canada and are we developing a culture of lifelong learning and expression that I have heard for my long life? Is that actually happening?

Pedro Barata- How can we ensure that the rubber hits the road, on that great concept, and use the opportunity that we have in front of us to look for purposeful but incremental changes that will widen

the circle of adopters among employers? One of those places is in advanced manufacturing, where there's a lot of shifts going on, even within the industry of advanced manufacturing. Of course, there are parts of the industry that are on the decline, others that have a lot of opportunity. Diagnosing where training, upskilling can really make a difference and bring ROI and not just approaching a generic way can be quite powerful in understanding that this is not one size fits all, it needs to solve business problems. One of the challenges in advanced manufacturing is that the C suite knows that winning when it comes to advanced manufacturing in Canada means, that you have to figure out how AI and automation are really going to leverage your business model. So, the C suite may get that, but once it gets to middle management in terms of implementation, it's what I certainly heard from the industry is that not all of the skills are there to be able to turn those concepts around what we need to do from a business model into the actual driving and implementation as part of the business. So, if you're going to take limited bandwidth in terms of where are you going to put your dollars, where are you going to partner with post-secondary education institutions? Maybe try micro-credentialing, maybe bring in some government support, focus in on which part of the transformation of your business is going to bring your greatest ROI, and where the investment is going to last. The upside of that, too, is that if you are in a race, investing in your workforce now and giving them the skills that they can apply for a successful career, in a business that's moving quickly, will perhaps lower the chances that you're going to jump and go somewhere else. It's a matter of finding where those opportunities are, and they're there throughout the economy, even within healthcare, for example. We know that AI is increasingly capable of making diagnostic decisions in all kinds of areas, but it comes with real challenges as well around knowing how to use it making the right decisions, feeling comfortable within that model and understanding the ethics and values piece that's embedded in that. Primary frontline, primary healthcare workforce is not equipped yet to be able to adopt those technologies; yet, it's going to be fundamental in terms of the sustainability of our model moving forward. So, if you have limited bandwidth within healthcare, you must figure out how you are going to drive a learning agenda around your workforce. That space, which is very much forward-looking, and which is going to help your business model the long haul, may be where you invest. At the same time that I am all for, sort of the broader principle of driving toward a learning nation of ensuring that we get to 100% of employers that are investing in education, I think that there's also a purposeful incremental journey there to look at where the greatest opportunities are that build momentum and show ROI.

Edward Greenspon- Let's go down the road for a moment of both different types of employers and employees. We'll start with employers and understand the particular sectoral challenges because if there's anything that I think you guys are about, and we should all be about, is the granularity that one size doesn't fit all in terms of analysis, what's going on, or policies or programs that will be required. Future Skill Center has just issued a new call recently, for proposals for how to better deal with specific reference to the hospitality sector, the healthcare sector, which you were just talking about a moment ago and technology industries. Can you just tell us why though? What are the particular challenges those industries need to mitigate? What are the new opportunities that they have can be leveraged to the advantage of future workforce? Why those three in this given proposal?

Pedro Barata- Those were just examples and I think that the challenges and opportunities are, of course, much broader. What we're trying to do is three things through our call; number one is to mitigate particular challenges that are facing in industries that are seeing mass displacement; hospitality is certainly one, retail is the other, and we can talk about that a bit.

Edward Greenspon- These are two of the hardest-hit industries from COVID-19, so this is a post-COVID lens as well that you're looking for right?

Pedro Barata- Right, but we're also seeing there are emerging opportunities and when you talk to employers in sectors and biotech, for example; even within manufacturing, as hard of a time as many parts of manufacturing are having, there are also openings and we need to look at those. The tougher conversation, but one that we're hoping to also get to, is the bridge between industries that are on the decline, and industries that are on the ascent; and how is it that we can move to a conversation beyond occupations, to a conversation around skills, because a lot of skills will be transferable. How is it that we ensure that we're providing the right pathways for people to move from where they are now, to where they're going to need to be six months and two years down the road? That sort of cross-industry, cross-sector conversation, much more focused on skills and building those bridges, is that is a tough one, because nobody wants to lose their workforce. Nobody wants to see a decline in terms of all the investments that have been made in very skilled people, but it's a conversation that we need to have and that we need to approach. We're also in terms of how is it that we leverage technology within the field of retail? A very lively conversation about how we build a resilient supply chain. We think a lot about, for example, moving from bricks and mortar model to more of a digital model, there's a whole

wraparound of skills that needs to be there for that model to work. It's not simply about putting up a website, you have to be able to do the right kind of analytics in the background, and you have to figure out how your marketing strategy will be impacted. You can leverage the products that you are going to have on your web store with the right kind of tools, but it's more than just creating a website. There's a whole infrastructure behind it with skills that are necessary and that are going to help you succeed over the medium to long term and we don't have those models at the moment.

Edward Greenspon- I think that's a very important and perceptive point of view. I say this as someone who has spent a good part of my career in digital and in the news business, trying to be a reformist and introducing digital since the Founding Editor of globeandmail.com. So, I've been on this since the late 90s, and one of the classic mistakes that's made here is you just throw your old business model online and your old skill sets online. The great maker of that mistake perhaps was Encyclopedia Britannica that thought, 'Okay, we'll knock Wikipedia right out of the ballpark with our superior knowledge on our old model'. That doesn't work, having something that doesn't work, how are you going to help? How do we ensure that those digital skills are in place to relate to a new economy, a new society a new way in which people are connecting?

Wendy Cukier- That's a good question, thank you for asking it because it's my life's work. One of the things that we must understand is what digital skills are. Often people equate digital skills with science, technology, engineering, and math. I've worked for many years in the tech sector, and of course, we need computer scientists and engineers; but when you're talking about digital transformation, it's important to understand what innovation is. Innovation is not making new tools and technologies; innovation is doing things differently. As we've talked about, when we look at what it's taken to transform healthcare, government education in the COVID context, the tools have been there for a long time, but they have not been used. So, if you want to drive digital transformation, you have to understand that you're not just looking at automating things that you're currently are doing. You need to think about business models. What that requires, is a deep and nuanced understanding of corporate strategy and what the environment is and what you're trying to accomplish. It requires people who understand business processes reengineering, so they're not just looking at a hammer running around searching for nails; they're analyzing what the organization is trying to accomplish, how it's going to do it, and who's required. The processes around user experience user-driven methods, which we've

known about for more than 30 years. I worked on Don Tapscott book; I think it was 1995 called *The Digital Economy*.

Edward Greenspon- And I have it on my bookshelf, Wendy.

Wendy Cukier- You can look up my name in the foreword. Those skills are not just about building the technology' it's about using it intelligently to accomplish outcomes. Those are also digital skills. When we talk about digital skills, we're talking about basic digital literacy. You want your entire workforce to be able to use the internet intelligently and to be able to learn new applications as they become important. Of course, at the top of the pyramid, you do want those people with deep technology skills, who can build things and program applications. Ironically, we've been driving coding earlier in the life cycle, some people are teaching coding algorithms to their unborn children. The fact is that technology is advancing in such a way that you don't need coding skills to build systems anymore. For me, the sweet spot is that middle group of people who on the one hand, understand what the organization is trying to accomplish, and on the other, understand technology tools and how to use them. Too often in our tendency to equate stem with innovation and to equate stem with digital skills, we've ignored that very important part of the pyramid. Those typically are the people who can drive digital transformation; people who have a deep understanding of the business, and enough understanding of the technology to be able to ask people to develop the kinds of a system that we need. Why that's important is that it opens a lot of space for people in a variety of disciplines. We know that the biggest impediments to technology adoption have not been the absence of technology; it's been users willing to use them, organizations willing to invest in them, and policymakers providing frameworks and infrastructure.

Edward Greenspon- I think, Wendy, it's even worse than that. I dare say one of the great impediments are organizations tricking themselves into thinking they're disrupting themselves, but the changes are so incremental.

Wendy Cukier- One hundred per cent, we know some very sad cases of how that has happened. You need that mindset which understands digital skills and digital transformation as a business issue. I think people fall into the technopheliacs, who think technology will do everything we need; and the technophobes who think we can keep doing the things we've always done. You need some middle ground, but also need people with diverse perspectives on these issues. I've often said, technology's too

important to leave to the technologist. You don't want the people who love technology, making decisions about how it should be used; you need more perspectives to draw information. I don't think we've talked enough about in this conversation, some of the issues facing small-medium enterprises because small-medium enterprises are often left out. A lot of the pundits who talk about skills and CEO's who are talking about what's needed are coming from very large corporations, banks, IT companies and so on. We often completely ignore small-medium enterprises even though they account for more than 80% of the employment.

Edward Greenspon- Let's take that to Pedro for a second because one of the characteristics of the structure the Canadian economy is the heavy presence of small-medium enterprises; which probably has to do with other factors as well, like proximity to the United States and branch plant companies. Pedro, what are those particular challenges of small-medium enterprises, and how are you going about addressing those?

Pedro Barata- Well, having the infrastructure and being able to pool resources to be able to invest on the backend of some of these solutions is certainly a challenge that we're looking at within retail, for example, and within hospitality as well. Our hospitality partnership recognizes that a lot of hospitality providers are SMEs that don't have the backbone infrastructure to think digitally or to think in a more sophisticated way about their digital assets to connect to different labour forces. They have a very limited training capacity and perhaps limited connections as well to PSCS that might help them with that agenda. In some ways, what we need to do is to create infrastructure for SMEs to actually have more scale in terms of their ability to keep up with all the changes that are happening around them, and also to connect with workers. That work of capacity building through thinking more about intermediaries and some of the infrastructure that needs to be in place, I think is going to be key moving forward. I should say though, as part of this technology discussion, I'm with Wendy, of course in that technology, is an essential tool as we move forward; but when you look at the fundamental shift that's happening, for example, in Alberta's economy around oil and gas, and we think about skills like we talk a lot about technology, but that's not the only thing that it's about. Over in the oil and gas industry in Alberta, it's about thinking about jobs that have perhaps been tied to extraction. To now think about transferable sectors that are not that far away from the job that you were doing before. Thinking about things like petrochemicals, cleantech, renewables, industrial construction, and what the

pathways are to reskilling and to the redeployment of some of those skills. Some of that has to do with technology, but the conversation on skills is much broader than that.

Edward Greenspon- But even within that industry, there are transfers of skills going on with upgrading into more technology skills. I mean, a geologist does not do what a geologist used to do. Frankly, if you're working drilling wells, you're not doing what you were doing five years ago, 10 years ago, and 20 years ago. Even within that, the skills evolution is profound.

Pedro Barata- Absolutely, we're doing some great work with Energy Safety Canada to try and imagine what those scenarios might be and to provide tools for workers on the ground. Not just to understand, this is practically what you need to do in terms of your skills, but also here are the places, somewhere else in Alberta or in Saskatchewan, or in BC, where some of the demand is on the rise and try to provide a picture. Not just about the piece of paper or the certificate that you have in your inbox, but it's also about what will your life look like? Where might you go and live? I think that thinking about skills pathways more comprehensively, gives people more choices and gives them more confidence about making decisions.

Edward Greenspon- Wendy, I want to go back to what you were saying about digital a few minutes ago. I want to see if there's a connection here that maybe doesn't exist. A lot of the work that has been done, that both of your organizations have done, that our organization is working on with you, has to do with Canadians with disabilities. One of our Skills Next papers says 'to eliminate barriers to employment for people with disabilities; employers, policymakers, health care workers, educators, architects and engineers must be educated to develop, and I quote, 'disability confidence', which you talk about is the knowledge to know that there are inclusive and accessible work environments. As the digitalization of the economy and the virtual world that has accelerated through the pandemic unfold, does that create a new level of opportunity for people with disabilities?

Wendy Cukier- Absolutely, if you look at that same paper which was written before the pandemic when they talk about accommodations and what people with disabilities need to more effectively engage in the workforce. Some of the things they speak about are, flexible work hours, the ability to work at home, and assistive technologies. COVID has made work at home and flexible hours, kind of the de facto reality of most organizations now. I think it's created a massive opportunity in how we think about different forms of work. At the same time, I would argue that we have to pay a lot of

attention to inclusive design. One of the big problems with the rapid movement to Zoom was people who are hearing impaired but can read lips can function much better than they did in the telephone world, but people who are visually impaired were missing things like translation and closed captioning. So, in the early stages of Zoom, we were creating a more level playing field for people who were hearing impaired potentially for people who could read lips, but not for those who couldn't. We've worked with some amazing companies, like Esite which has a \$15,000 piece of technology that can allow many people to see, depending on the nature of their visual impairment. \$15,000 to me, to get somebody into the workplace, where they don't have to be tethered to a computer with particular features is amazing. Yet, they have faced massive barriers to deploying that technology. They haven't been able to get it approved or certified for government support. If you can spend \$15,000 and create an opportunity for someone to become gainfully employed, you've changed their lives, but you've also generated a whole pool of taxes. A lot of these very weird bits of calculus that I don't think we're making correctly as a society.

Edward Greenspon- I want to stick with this for a second before we go the other because, you talk about a classic distributional challenge that we have, which is that we don't take a whole society or approach. So, we know that this is good for the commons, but who's going to pay?

Wendy Cukier- It's good for the employer as well. I work with companies that spend \$15,000 for a finder's fee to get an employee. If you can spend that money and you've got the employee like, why wouldn't you?

Edward Greenspon- So why can't they see that?

Wendy Cukier- I would argue the same things that impede innovation on multiple levels. We do things a certain way for so long that we seem incapable of thinking about new ways to do things. That's why the disruption that COVID has created, in my view, creates space for thinking about things that are different. We used to outsource IT work to emerging economies because it was cheaper. In the post-COVID world, we can be outsourcing all kinds of things to people who wouldn't otherwise have access. The other piece that's important for us persons with disabilities, and I think the failure of post-secondary institutions is, people with severe disabilities who graduate from university have worse employment outcomes than high school dropouts. What that tells me is that there's something wrong. I think that a lot of the parts of the university which engage with employers, the placement, and the co-

op offices aren't connected to the offices that support people with disabilities. As a result, they finish their first four years of university, they typically haven't been part of those internships or those co-op placements and the other opportunities that build networks and connections, and then they're just dropped. I think post-secondary institutions working with employers, working with third-party organizations like Specialist Stern need to build bridges. I think Pedro's comments tied to this as well in that we need to be taking a systems approach. We need to think about these issues less from an individual job seeker or company or a group of employees at an individual company and we start to try to think about how we can make the system work better so that when people are unemployed in one part, they have easy transitions to other parts. When we think about developing skills, I'm completely supportive of a focus on very particular essential skills and professional skills, but one of the most important skills that we don't do a good enough job of in my opinion is building resilience, adaptation and entrepreneurial skills and innovative approaches so that we can adapt quickly when things change. One of the most certain things in the skills in the skills world is change and we can't pretend that we can predict the future. We know it will be different and the most important thing I think we can do for Canadians is to build systems and people that can adapt, adjust, retool and redeploy quickly and creates opportunities for companies. It creates opportunities for job seekers, and it creates takes the burden off the public sector.

Edward Greenspon- Pedro, I'm going to finish up with one last question surrounding youth. So much of the job damage that we've seen through this crisis has disproportionately landed on youth and even more so if you look at it through an intersectional lens. That worries me because what we saw in the 2008-2009 great recession is the people who didn't get their feet firmly on the ladder might have paid the price for a decade and now, they've got hit by this. I wonder to what extent is that in your mandate, you're looking at. I wonder to what extent has the ground shifted from a mid-career problem when we had a tight labour market to an entry-level problem as well?

Pedro Barata- That's a massive challenge that continues, especially the more historically disadvantaged you are, and I think that spectrum just continues to expand. We're looking at areas where hopefully, economic growth will continue and where that demand-supply gap will be there. We're working with the University College of the North, for example, looking at some of the challenges around hydroelectric infrastructure, and IT jobs and how is it that we can connect indigenous populations to some of those opportunities in a way that's win-win, that recognizes that

people aren't just going to move from the south to the north to fill those jobs, there's 3000 of them ready to be taken. If we are going to engage indigenous populations in the north, it can't be just about the training. It has to be about recognizing other components in terms of the journey. One more example, very practical of a public policy decision we could make, that would ensure that young people would not be left behind from coast to coast and that's the reality that public money can think long term and infrastructure projects tend to take a long time. I think that as we are about to hit another recovery, we're probably going to see that infrastructure is going to remain front and centre in terms of public investments to keep the economy going. At some point in that equation, we're going to see that there's going to be a supply-demand mismatch. How do we begin to plan now to ensure that we have the workforce that's required to build the stuff that our economy needs on the construction side, but also on the professional, administrative and tech side? A lot of young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, are going to be left out of those careers unless we intentionally reach into marginalized communities, provide them with pathways into careers and apprentice in apprenticeships into professional, administrative and tech jobs. We need to bake that into publicly funded infrastructure projects that will be delivered by the private sector and think about it as a win-win. How is it that we create real employment opportunities for young people who will otherwise be shut out, provide the right wraparound supports to make sure that they will be providing value to the employer and anticipate that we are going to get through this? At some point, we're going to return to the reality that we're going to have a shortage of workers when it comes to infrastructure builds. Let's anticipate that this is going to be a pressure that is going to come back and that there are things that we could do right now that will benefit young people, that will benefit communities, and will benefit the industry that will allow us to just get going and build momentum.

Edward Greenspon- I think that's a good place for us to wrap it up. Certainly, we're at the point now where we are in different parts of the country reopening the economy. We're also now at the point as the shock of the emergency lessons somewhat, where we're beginning to think about what will the rebuild of this economy look like after we reopen it. Wendy spoke in our first conversation about supply chains, the Public Policy Forum has a project called Rebuild Canada and in Rebuild Canada, we're saying, 'Okay, what issues have arisen entirely that weren't on our agenda in our sightlines beforehand? And what issues like the future of work? Has the trajectory of them changed markedly so that in both cases, we need to think anew about what we're going to look like and what policy it's going to look like six months down the road, two years down the road, five years down the road'?

I want to thank you both Wendy and Petro, for joining us on Policy Speaking. I think we have covered a lot of territory and we'll be back again in future to continue doing that and we'll be working on our Skills Next project with you. I think we'll all be turning our attention more towards what the post-pandemic future of work looks like and how it's beneficial. Thank you to the Diversity Institute and to the Future Skill Center for the work that you do and the insights that you've imparted.

That is a wrap on this edition of our podcast Policy Speaking I want to thank my guests and also my colleagues at the Public Policy Forum, who I also can't thank enough for the work they put into getting us prepared for this. Thank you as well to our distribution partner, National Newswatch. If you enjoyed this episode, let us know on Twitter at PPforum.ca. I'm Edward Greenspon and this has been Policy Speaking.