

Day as a Dev Episode Transcript - Cultures of Inclusion with Nina Baliga

Kevin Lesht: Welcome to the Day as a Dev podcast. I am your host Kevin Lesht, and my guest on this episode is Nina Baliga. Nina is the CEO of Diversity, a company focused on pairing technology candidates with healthy organizations. Companies focused on inclusion, on diversity, and who demonstrate a growth mindset. On the show, we move through all of those topics. From exercises that you can bring to your teams tomorrow, to foundational principles for building successful and inclusive systems. I really enjoyed this one because we got to dig into a lot of topics that you just can't find much coverage on. I learned a ton speaking with Nina and I think you will too. So now, my conversation with Nina Baliga.

Kevin Lesht: 78 degrees and sunny on this summer day off of Pearl Street. I actually saw someone juggling with fire batons walking in today. The Flatiron Mountain's outside, Nina Baliga is my guest. Nina, welcome to the show.

Nina Baliga: Thanks for having me.

Kevin Lesht: Absolutely. I am so happy that we were able to align schedules. You just returned from ACT-W Portland, the Conference, Advancing the Careers of Technical Women invited you to speak on, your topic, was Creating Space For Mental Health In The Workplace. I thought we could open by learning more about what the talk was about.

Nina Baliga: Yeah, definitely. I have this startup called Diversity. When people think the word diversity, they tend to think race and gender, right? When I think about diversity, I really think about all the different ways people are underrepresented. Me, I'm a woman of color, but I'm also neurodivergent. So when I talk about neurodiversity, it's the way that people's brains are basically made up different. It could be related to mood disorders, or being on the autism spectrum, having ADHD, being bipolar, these are all types of ways to be neurodiverse, and I'm also a neurodiverse individual.

Nina Baliga: So whenever I go to conferences, what I want to see is if they're going to talk about diversity, we need to go about it and say that diversity isn't just race and gender. The talk that I brought there was talking about mental health in the workplace because that has to be an important part of the diversity conversation. I specifically went there and the name of my talk was called Logging In, Creating an Inclusive Place For Mental health In The Workplace.

Kevin Lesht: Yeah. I do love putting light on that too because admittedly until I joined, I would say the real workforce, prior my experience came from a bunch of internships at true startups, like only a few people. But admittedly, I say diversity as like just race, and maybe age in there, and then obviously gender as well. But to your point, yeah, there is such a broader spectrum that is I think very easily forgotten unless you're just exposed to that line of thought.

Nina Baliga: Exactly. That was exactly what I was trying to go for when I went and spoke about it. I actually spoke twice about it. They had an achieving equity summit

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followed by their national conference, and I spoke at both events. The main thing I wanted people to walk away from this talk was that, one, knowing what neurodiversity is, but then two, knowing how to get those conversations started at your company. And if you were a person in power are a person in power, if you're a manager, a director, the CEO, how can you start implementing changes at your company to actually create inclusive spaces for the neurodiverse?

Nina Baliga: Because one of the things I've learned since I've started up Diversity is that if you're from any kind of underrepresented group, there's a high intersection of needs, wants, and values amongst all people from underrepresented communities. If you create an inclusive environment for one group, you've inherently started creating inclusive environments for all these other groups.

Nina Baliga: One of the things that we don't talk about is that nearly 50% of people in tech are neurodiverse. It's a very high percentage, and yet it's a conversation we're not having when it comes to the diversity conversation. So I wanted to bring that to the table. And when you start creating inclusive environments for the neurodiverse, which every company should, if 50% of your employees are neurodiverse, then you started creating inclusive places for people of color, for women, for people with visible and invisible disabilities, for the LGBTQ community, et cetera.

Kevin Lesht: Yeah. I think you mentioned on the Boulder podcast, the Boulder Tech podcast too, and it was something that really jumped out and is another, yeah, hard too... I think, hard thing to have in the front of your mind is those invisible disabilities, whether they be anxiety or anything else that that can absolutely have an impact on someone's daily working life. So much to talk about here, but you hit on a couple things that I would love to dig into while we're still on the train of thought. One is things that companies can be doing to best foster just a comfortable atmosphere for whatever a given person might need to have accommodated.

Kevin Lesht: I'm wondering what you have seen in your experience building Diversity. You mentioned that you've been growing your team recently. What I really enjoyed is something you mentioned, was accommodating different working preferences. And the things that jump out to me as working preferences are maybe working from home, working remotely, or having flexible work hours, whether it's maybe you've got core hours, going from 10:00 to 4:00 to accommodate the maybe late riser or the parent that needs to get to soccer practice.

Kevin Lesht: But the one that I'd love to hit on would be, so working from home. We've got a very generous work from home policy at the company that I work for, and I take advantage of it all the time. And it's as simple as... We use Slack, the chat program, simple as jumping into Slack in the morning, maybe for whatever reason you're just not feeling 100% you don't want to make it into the office. And it is as simple as just dropping in, "Working from home today." That's it.

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And you can always expect tons of support, it's just thumbs up emojis, everyone understands.

Kevin Lesht: But at the same time, and I've worked in such an awesome atmosphere like this for about three and a half years now. But still, every time I drop that note into Slack, there's just, I don't know where it comes from, but there's just a little underlying anxiety. Like, "Oh, is it okay that I'm doing this?" Yeah, I just wonder from an individual's perspective, what can you offer to best help someone like me, best broach those kinds of things. Maybe it doesn't even have to be specific to working from home, but other kinds of workplace needs that someone might need to raise up.

Nina Baliga: Yeah. I 100% relate to what you're saying. When I have held the traditional Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 5:00 job, and there are days where it was really hard for me to get out of bed. There are days where... And it was largely due to my depression and anxiety. And the more high stress the work environment was, the more it triggered a lot of this stuff. It was hard to call in, so I would call in sick. The thing is, there's something about the company corporate culture that says if you call in sick, you need to explain what kind of sick you are. There's something that's been built into our culture to ingrain that.

Nina Baliga: So my excuse was... Because talking about mental health was so taboo and being depressed was just not considered a brain thing, but more of just you're lazy, I was really scary to disclose it, so I would just make up stuff. Like, "Oh I have a migraine today." Or, "Oh I have this really bad flu." And for some reason that's what made it feel okay to me. And I don't know if it actually made my bosses feel better, but it felt better for me to say that than to say I'm really having a bad day today-

Kevin Lesht: Sure.

Nina Baliga: And let's talk about my depression, which I didn't really want to go into. Because I knew that I was going to get discriminated against for this. This is the early 2000s when I was experiencing this. I actually met Lance Powers about two years ago, and he's the founder of a non-profit organization called Open Labs. What they do is they've created a community where they talk about neurodiversity in the workplace.

Nina Baliga: Lance told me about this really cool idea called the traffic light check-in. So what I started doing with my team when I started building my team was... The idea of the traffic light check-in is that one, when I onboarded my team, we immediately started talking about neurodiversity and saying on day one, "Here's how Slack works, here's how we do our email communications, and also here's this article about neurodiversity and recognizing that we all have different ways that we work. And this is an open conversation and you should be talking about this. You can talk about this with me. About what do you need, what are the

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accommodations that you need for you to perform at your best?" So that was onboarding.

Nina Baliga: So then when I introduced the idea of the traffic light check-in, which was also introduced during the onboarding process, it was a way to say, every day when we're doing our daily check in, we're going to let the team know which of the three lights we are. So green means I'm sharp, I'm good to go, I'm ready to hit the ground running, I'm in a really good space. Yellow means I might not be at my optimal today, but I can still function and I can still do all my duties. Red just means I am suboptimal today. And that's it. That's all you really need to know.

Nina Baliga: The fact is, when we did our traffic light check-ins, the simple act of saying we're red, green, or yellow was one word that didn't have to say the why's behind it. Because the whys at the end of the day aren't really anybody's business. What we need to know is how best to work with our teammates at any given day. So when certain team members were saying having a red day, then the other team members already felt invested and helping them out because every day we were doing that check-in.

Nina Baliga: So it wasn't a question of like, "Oh that person's red, they're not going to be able to contribute today." It was like, okay, well, we're already talking about what are the list of things that need to get done. And then the other team members are like, "I think I can step up and help with this, or I can step up and help with that." Or the person who was having a red day said, "Look, I'm going to be in spreadsheet mode today, I'm not going to be able to give you lots of creative thinking. So if you can hand off some of that work to me, I can do that better."

Nina Baliga: And the thing is everyone's different, and everyone's green, yellow, and red is different. And if you start doing these traffic light check-ins, you start getting a sense of what does that mean for each person and how best to work with that person, and how the team can work together to ultimately achieve their goals. Honestly, my team was neurodiverse. My team has both visible and invisible disabilities, and the vast majority of the time it's green. But it was good to have that space where you could say you were yellow or red, and you didn't have to say the why behind it.

Kevin Lesht: I love that practice. And that is called the traffic light check-in?

Nina Baliga: Yeah.

Kevin Lesht: Lance Powers Open Lab?

Nina Baliga: Yeah, Lance Powers from Open Labs.

Kevin Lesht: Okay. I will have to look into that more because yeah... To relay a story there. So I think what you hit on, which is not having to give the why I think is such an

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important element of that because so many different reasons that you might go from like a green to a yellow to a red and just not having to carry the stress of maybe expanding on those things. I think is such an important element, and it's a very natural... I feel like even as an individual, certainly is going to be different from person to person, but for me at least, it's very natural to just expand on why I'm feeling one way or another.

Kevin Lesht: But then you have to take a step back too and realize that depending on what you're saying, those could give off perceptions or maybe connotations to other members of the team that could have cascading effects. One example being, when you talk about these, whether it be anxiety or any other invisible kind of disability, I don't want to say taboo, but there's almost like an underlying suppression of talking about these things sometimes. One that hits me sometimes is just candidly mental fatigue.

Kevin Lesht: So a developer that I worked with I think framed it very well, but it's sometimes for me comes out of pairing sessions with candidates. The traditional practice of just being an engineer is very isolated and that you're just working in front of a computer and there's a lot of things happening in the background, just background processes. But then when you pair with someone, you have to turn, you have to vocalize everything, you're constantly, not necessarily defending, but collaborating, maybe a better way to say it, your work and just bouncing ideas off of each other. And that's a very taxing thing.

Kevin Lesht: And when you stretch that out over the course of maybe a ticket that runs a few days, maybe a whole week, a big feature, that carries a weight to it, and then it's like, yeah, you might release that ticket and you ride the high of finally getting the feature out, but then you crash off that realizing just how spent you are coming out of that kind of session. I think then being able to have a supportive and open space to say like, "Maybe I might not be able to get anything done today, or if I am getting something done, it's going to be by myself."

Kevin Lesht: Depending on you voice that, you could easily send the impression that you don't like pairing or something like that. And for me, that's not the case at all, I love pairing. It's just you might need some breaks, some gaps in between those things. So to be able to just go through the traffic light check-in and just signal where you are at based on just a very almost binary reliance of good or... Or not even framing it around good or bad, but just like, "Here's where I'm at." I think that's a valuable tool to have. I love that exercise.

Nina Baliga: Yeah. And if it's part of your daily check-ins, then it doesn't become a big deal. You start realizing that every single person has days where they're just suboptimal and there are certain days where they're going to be more than optimal. And it's about figuring out how to take advantage of those times, and how do you support your team in the process of doing that? So like in that case you described, you guys knocked it out of the park because you were pairing. That's okay for you to have a day where you're exhausted because there are

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going to be other members of the team who can step up or work together to figure out how to get to that end goal.

Kevin Lesht: So as far as building a supportive team goes, I think there are, well I'm sure many more, but the two that jump out to me as far as elements to build towards are just having a strong candidate pipeline, and then also having a strong idea of how to keep the group that you already have engaged and have just a growth mindset for diversity, for inclusion, and for everything else that comes along with that.

Kevin Lesht: So I'm wondering, as you've been scaling up to your platform, Diversity, if you could relay what strong attributes you and the team have been looking for when vetting, interviewing for a role. Then also for the team that you already have, what practices you're putting in place to just really build what is a supportive group.

Nina Baliga: Yeah. I mean, I think company culture is everything. Are you putting people above all else? That was a core tenet of our company when we first started. It was that, we know that companies that value diversity and inclusion are more profitable. That means that there are going to be times where we forego short term profitability for the making the case for the long term. And so that means investing in people very early on, being really transparent about where we are, and what we're doing, and how we plan on getting there, so that way everyone feels the mission is not just the mission of the CEO, but it's their mission too to try and get us there. I think that that played a pretty big role in terms of everyone getting onboard and feeling invested. Not just in the company, but in each other and recognizing that the success of each other also leads to the success of the company.

Nina Baliga: But this kind of thinking has to come from the C-level. I think too often companies tend to be like, "Oh, after we've already built the company, let's think about diversity and inclusion." And then they go to the HR, and HR says, "Okay, come up with a diversity and inclusion policy." It's so much more than that. Inclusion is about how are you building the company culture from every single level? It's not just a side thought on just one piece, but how is it built into your hiring practices? How is it built into your onboarding practice? How is it built into the company culture on a daily basis? How is it even being built into your exit interviews?

Nina Baliga: And so everything has to be thought about in all of those ways. That message really only gets conveyed to everybody if it's coming from the C-level. That's the common theme I've seen. Is that if you relegate it to HR, there's usually only so much power they have to do stuff. And granted, I have seen HR departments do a great job with it, but in general, it's really most effective when the C-level says, "This is a priority for us and we need to make sure that our sales department is bought onto this, or marketing department is bought into this, our tech team's

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bought into this, that every single vertical and every single channel has this built into their blood."

Kevin Lesht: Yes. So investing in people, as you said, I think is the most important attribute to just, as I've seen from my experience, establish a strong culture. At Home Chef where I'm employed, fortunate that Matt Pulley, our CTO puts such a strong focus on it. And I think as you mentioned, it has to come from the top down.

Kevin Lesht: So some history of Home Chef, Pat Vihtelic, our founder, he came out of a program called Starter League, which was a bootcamp, I think in a sense aim towards launching startups. So had a technical focus to it. But I want to say it also carried some business knowledge as well. And so from the very beginning, he, Matt and the rest of our technology and executive team have really put a strong emphasis towards growth from within, hiring those apprentice junior level candidates and then graduating them up. And then you hope that you're just leading them in the right direction. I think that retention and expanding the team into more mid-level and senior-level engineers does demonstrate that.

Kevin Lesht: But then as part of that growth too, you want to make sure that you're maintaining that inclusive atmosphere. But yes, as you said, I think just investing in people and having that message be communicated from the top down is essential for these things to take hold and to have success with them.

Nina Baliga: Yeah. I mean, the turnover rate in the tech sector is really high. I remember going this tech conference and one of the people there were saying that, especially in the engineer's space, there's a 20% turnover rate. They just built it into their plan. That we're going to have a 20% turnover rate, so that means they're constantly in recruiting mode all the time. That's exhausting, and that's also just a huge amount of resources that the companies are spending on just recruiting.

Nina Baliga: And the thing is that the apprenticeship model I think is a really interesting thing. And I've seen this work at a couple of different companies, where if you bring folks in who typically wouldn't have had that chance to get in the door, and you say right from the beginning, "We value you, we hear you, and we're going to train you, and we're going to help you build the skills." The retention rates just skyrocket. I mean, the folks who get in from the ground with that mindset of this company cares about me, it shows them that they have a path to success, they have a path to growth.

Nina Baliga: And the thing is that the mid and senior-level engineers who are also helping to apprentice them, they're also seeing that path to growth too, because that gives them an opportunity to teach and teaching is one of the best way to learn. And when you're giving every person at the level that... When the folks at the higher levels are seeing the company values people at all levels, the retention rates will also skyrocket. I've seen this at multiple companies already.

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- Nina Baliga: So what I want to see is more apprenticeship programs coming into companies. I would love to see more companies say, "One of the ways we're showing that we value people is by recognizing that we can bring folks in." And it doesn't necessarily have to be someone from the outside. I've seen this where companies have brought... taking folks who are working in IT, and then asked them if they were interested in doing this six months software engineering apprenticeship inside their company, and now they're full-time engineers. Those are all just great ways. And those engineers, I've asked them, "Well, how do they like working there?" And they're like, "I can't imagine myself ever leaving. I love this company."
- Kevin Lesht: I think there's a loyalty built there. And so I'd love to play off that to give you a story back. So we have brought a number of team members over from customer support to other areas of the company. And those team members are so valuable, the most valuable. They've been the closest to the product as far as just fielding, customer calls and emails, and having to work with these customers through the bugs that we may release onto the site, who are like whatever other tricky workflows might be in place. They know the web product inside and out. They know the physical product, they know the logistics of the company and it's just awesome to... Yeah.
- Kevin Lesht: Whether the apprentice is coming from outside or inside the company, I think you nailed it in that when you demonstrate and show off that there is a vertical, there is a path, others have done it, and it's just on you to really make your way there, there is just a tremendous amount of, I think not only respect, but just drive that comes with that to know that the opportunity is available for you.
- Nina Baliga: Absolutely.
- Kevin Lesht: So as far as... Once you've got the team together, maintaining it, one of the elements towards essentially fostering that continuous growth that we caught up a little bit about before the show is that of employee resource groups. I'd love to know, so when I thought of an employee resource group before I had more exposure towards them, I was really just thinking of maybe a book club or something like that. Very narrow mindset. I was wondering if you'd give us some more examples of just what an employee resource group is to begin?
- Nina Baliga: Yeah. I mean, I think the purpose of an employee resource group is not just to provide... Well, I think it's got multiple purposes. One of the reasons that an employee resource group is important is one, it creates a safe space for people with a shared identity to get together and be able to talk about any issues they want, whether it be outside of the company or issues inside the company as it relates to their identity. That's really important because if you are from an underrepresented group and you are the only person on the team from that underrepresented group, you could start to feel really lonely.

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Nina Baliga: And so if you have a space, especially if your company's large enough, where there are going to be multiple employees from these underrepresented groups, then having that place to go and say, "Hey, we both know what it's like to work here." Even if it's sharing stories, like, "Here's what's happening in my department, what's happening in your department?" "All right, well, how are you approaching it? Maybe I can approach it that way or approach it a different way. Or maybe we can go at this together." If the employee resource group's big enough, that's when there's this huge opportunity, and this is the second reason why ERGs are really important. Is that it provides an opportunity for advocacy inside the company.

Nina Baliga: So as a group, when you have all these voices together saying, "Hey, this company's really missing out on this opportunity to be inclusive of our group," for example, then you have this gathered voice that's got power to go to the C-level and say, "We need to make these changes." And if the C-level is smart, they'll listen to those ERGs and say, "You're right, let's figure out how to do this." And then those conversations then start happening.

Nina Baliga: I think the other thing is that when companies are thinking about starting off ERGs, there's so many different types of ERGs coming out. I know that there tend to be race-based ERGs, you talked about Home Chef having one for parents. A lot of the places that a lot of these companies start off is having ERGs for women. But one of the things that I was talking about, neurodiversity ERG. Given that 50% of your employees are probably neurodivergent, creating an ERG that allows that space and discussion to start can again bring up awareness around things that folks in the executive level might never have thought about. And by doing that, they can create these new policies, practices, maybe bring in trainings on how to create a more inclusive culture for everyone.

Kevin Lesht: What's awesome about that that I had never considered was just the idea of recognizing these cross-department problems. And essentially I have to imagine too that when those are collected from all angles in a organization and then filtered up towards the C-level, they've got to have such a stronger voice when you've just got allies everywhere across the organization, and probably really good too for just identifying things that are sometimes very easy to miss.

Kevin Lesht: What I was thinking of there was just the idea of building those cross-functional threads. Whether it be... A story I always think about is, Marissa Meyer talks about when she was building the associate product manager program at Google. This was very early in the life cycle of what Google has now become. But she was tasked with basically hiring up all of these junior-level product managers, putting them in charge of very big products like saying, "You are now in charge of ads, go." And she talks about this by the way, we'll drop it in the show notes. But on, I believe it's Reid Hoffman's Masters of Scale podcast.

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Kevin Lesht: She hires up all these junior-level product managers and they're tasked with all these different functions of the company, and they're stumbling through it together. But they're catching up, they're having... they're far across the company, but they're coming together on some cadence and they're talking about the problems they've worked through and just the struggles. And through those conversations, they're developing this just underlying network of threads across the organization. And she saw the value of that grow along with these individuals, as they graduated throughout the organization, they were maintaining those connections. They knew they had allies out there. They were able to have members of other departments with different viewpoints to bounce ideas off of.

Kevin Lesht: Yeah, I think just the idea of having these resource groups be cross-functional is such a valuable thing, and that you're able to get out of the atmosphere that is your own department. You might be entirely diverse within your own department, but then being able to branch out and seeing how other departments function, because it could be in a big company totally different, just offers that another layer of diversity in a sense.

Nina Baliga: Yeah, definitely. I think that's a very powerful part about the ERG model. But it's got to be implemented in the right way though.

Kevin Lesht: Sure.

Nina Baliga: I think one of the common themes I hear from employee resource groups is that they're more of like, they don't get a lot of resources from the company. One of the things I think companies should think about if they're truly invested in ERGs is to think through like how much money are you giving them, and are you giving them enough resources to be able to be effective at what they want to do and what will be best for the company too?

Nina Baliga: Part of it could be actually paying the organizer, because oftentimes when it comes to underrepresented groups, we're asked to do multiple jobs. We're asked to do our full-time engineering job, and then we're also said, "Oh, by the way, you're also going to be our diversity and inclusion person because we don't know where else to go, and then therefore that's going to be your second job." And it's so hard for people from underrepresented groups to say no to that.

Nina Baliga: What a company can do to acknowledge that this is really important is to say, "We will pay you for this. We know this is extra work that you're doing." And so whether it's the heads of ERGs or even the person that if you don't even have ERGs yet, but you're asking that person all the time for their support, advice, work on any diversity and inclusion initiative, then making sure you're compensating that and show that you value it.

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Kevin Lesht: Absolutely. I think that is such an important signal. Just the fact that you need to, from I think the leadership perspective, express that your team members' time is valuable and is accounted for too. Because I think there's anxiety that can come along with that. I think back to... We scaled up the team at Home Chef not too long ago. And what I really appreciated from our leadership team was everyone was being scheduled into interviews near every single day, and we had to, we needed to grow the team. But along with that, we still had tasks that needed to get done and we still had tickets to drive forward. And it was a very open conversation. We've got all the product managers together, and our executive team across the organization was very understanding of this being a long tail play.

Kevin Lesht: Whether it's a hiring push or investing time into an employee resource group, it's so important to have just a communal understanding that there might be some short-term time sacrifice towards driving whatever the initiative on deck is forward, but the longterm benefits are just going to so much outweigh any of that immediate sacrifice.

Nina Baliga: Absolutely.

Kevin Lesht: So maybe coming back full circle to Diversity, we at some point need to play into the name of the show, Day as a Dev. I wonder if... As we get close to wrapping up here, I wouldn't want to go an episode without getting a look at what your day as CEO looks like. Can you give us maybe in however much detail you want to go into, what does a day as a CEO of Diversity look like?

Nina Baliga: Oh, I man. I mean, I think when you're a CEO of a small bootstrap startup, you are wearing all the hats, right? You're the chief marketing officer, you're the director of sales, you're the chief product development manager. I am the UX designer. I do some of the coding. I have my fingers in all the different pies because I am the person that needs to drive this forward. I don't think that there's necessarily any typical day in the life of what I'm doing.

Nina Baliga: Some days I'm meeting with companies and talking to them about what are they doing around diversity and inclusion, and then other days... We've started offering a training actually. So one of my coders is deaf. And John and I, in the process of working together over six months, we discovered all these cool tools you could use to improve communications between a hearing person and a deaf person. But all of these same tools would actually improve performance of all team communications, even if it's a fully hearing team.

Nina Baliga: And we learned that there are no resources out there for this. There's no resources that really talk about how to work with a deaf in tech specifically. So we put together a training for this that we're now offering companies on how exactly can they implement some of these things, what tools they can leverage to improve internal communications, and how they can find and hire deaf

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people to work on their coding teams. That's just one example of something that came out.

Nina Baliga: I've also been going on speaking about neurodiversity across the country. I'm also deep into product development where I'm working with my CTO on figuring out ways to improve our platform, looking at the Google analytics, the metrics. Looking at all of our dashboards to figure out what's happening, who's coming to our site, how are they using our site, and how can we improve that overall user experience.

Nina Baliga: Those are a part of the things that I'm doing every single day. It's just a question of how do I prioritize my time based on the specific goals of what I want to achieve on a quarterly basis, on a monthly basis, on a weekly basis, on a daily basis.

Kevin Lesht: The ever and ongoing struggle of time prioritization.

Nina Baliga: Yes.

Kevin Lesht: But yes, on time, we do want to get you back to it, higherdiversity.us. We'll have links in the show notes. Such an exciting platform. And even just there, you hit on so many elements that led me to wanting to get you on the show. I'm so happy that you could join. The one last thing to hit on there is just that offering those resources. As we talked about, even with Day as a Dev here, I think it's so difficult as... and especially so for, whether it be student, or a career change, or someone just entering the tech field, to get eyes on just what not only the day-to-day is going to look like, but what the culture of these teams actually looks like.

Nina Baliga: That's exactly what our platform is trying to do. The way I describe what Diversity is, we've built the glass store for inclusion. So it's a place where companies can go and highlight what they're doing to create inclusive environments. Then tech talent from underrepresented groups can go in there and share what their unique experiences are like. The ultimate goal is that we've created a community where you can start seeing where are the best places to work, where are the places where you can be seen, heard, and valued, and where can you find jobs at those companies.

Nina Baliga: So companies that have created profiles on our platform are actually allowed to post jobs. So that way, if you're an engineer developer looking for a job in the industry, you go to our site, not only will you be able to see the job description, you will also see what are they doing around diversity and inclusion through that lens of an underrepresented minority.

Kevin Lesht: Yeah. Having that comfortable fit I think is just so valuable for both sides, the individual, their wellbeing, and also the eventual productivity of the company itself.

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Kevin Lesht: So thank you so much, Nina. This has been great. We're going to bring the episode to a close, but do you have any parting words for our listeners out there?

Nina Baliga: I think it's important for companies to recognize that when they're bringing people on, that everyone wants to be seen, valued, and heard, and everyone wants an opportunity to grow. The message for companies really is, think about how you can make that happen. And then for tech talent, the only way to make more companies do that is to go work for companies that do that. So if you are going to spend your time and energy towards any company, spend it on the companies that are being more inclusive.

Kevin Lesht: Thank you. Nina, I appreciate the time.

Nina Baliga: Thank you.

Kevin Lesht: For show notes and more on this episode, head on up to the site. That's dayasadev.com. While you're there, check out our release notes. This is a short newsletter that we send out about once a week. It includes updates along with all sorts of other goodies packaged up for your inbox.

Kevin Lesht: Thanks for listening. For the Day as a Dev podcast, I'm Kevin Lesht.