Masami Cookson:	Welcome to "Fearless Thinkers," the BTS podcast. My name is Masami Cookson and our host is Rick Cheatham, head of marketing at BTS.
	Today, Rick has a conversation with Brad Chambers, PhD. Brad has deep expertise developing valid, legally defensible selection systems for some of the world's leading organizations. Prior to joining BTS, Brad's experience includes being the Chief operating officer at Polaris Assessment Systems and an assistant vice president at Aon Hewitt.
	So, Rick, what do we have for today?
Rick Cheatham:	Masami, I'll be honest with you — it's one of those times where, at least for me, self-care could not be more important, at this strange time of year… I think for most leaders, where we're really really focused on delivering the current year, but we're also having to prepare and think about next year. While balancing both of those things, trying to maintain a reasonable life becomes a challenge.
	But anyway, to the task at hand. Brad gives us really great insights into how talent acquisition has really changed and how the process and the mindsets of talent acquisition leaders must shift in order to get top talent. We've gotta start selling the candidates on the job from the posting forward.
Masami:	Makes sense.
Rick:	Anyway, great chat with Brad, let's dive right into it.
	Hey, Brad, welcome to the show.
Brad Chambers:	Hey, Rick, thanks for having me.
Rick:	Of course, of course. So, man, what's been going on in your world?
Brad:	Well, my wife and I just got back from a long weekend eating our way across New York City, it was great, great time.
Rick:	Gosh, you hit me where I live, eating my way across the city is my idea of a perfect vacation.
Brad:	It was wonderful.

Rick:	Well, hey, we've got a lot to talk about. With the news over the last couple years, the great resignation, the low unemployment, there have to be a lot of shifts going on in the world. I'm sure our audience would love to hear a bit of what you are seeing.
Brad:	A good way to think about this is if we sort of put ourselves into the position of a candidate, right? And let's kind of imagine, if you would, that you're looking for a job, and you're surfing the internet one evening and you come across a posting for a company that looks like it might be promising. So, you click on the the apply button, and you read through the information provided. And you really don't learn a whole lot about the company or the role, but again, you still sort of proceed through the application process. And as part of that process, you're asked to complete an online assessment and then a few days go by and you don't hear anything, so you just start to assume that you probably didn't make the cut. And then you fast forward a week and you finally hear something from the company and it's a very sterile email message with the sole focus of scheduling you for an interview with somebody from the HR team. And so you go to the interview, the interviewer is pleasant they ask you some good questions, they tell you that you'll hear from them soon regarding next steps. And you realize after you leave the interview that you really don't know anything more about the company or the role than you did before you went into the interview. And so, then you fast forward another week and you finally hear from the company again, it's another sterile message asking you to schedule another interview. And so, you go to that second interview and you realize it was very much like the first, even covering some of the same questions, same topics and you leave the interview and you kinda ask yourself is this really the kind of company that I wanna work for? And ultimately, you decide to exit the process. Unfortunately, this is common especially when the organization is focused on their side of the equation. And ultimately this leads to problems as we can see, we lose talent.

Rick:	Wow, yeah, there's a lot to unpack there. And especially taking it from the candidate's perspective. It brings to mind a couple of trends that we see, and that's the consumerization of everything and how people today expect a high service consumer level experience in all of their interactions. If that's really what we're seeing, that is a terrible process.
Brad:	It's absolutely a terrible process. Yeah, it's a very one-sided process. And ultimately, when you paint the wrong picture, you either hire the wrong people or you get people into the organization only for them to realize this isn't what I signed up for and then they leave.
Rick:	Yeah, and there were a couple things in your story that really popped out, and you're touching on one of them. From my perspective, the first kind of being that historically we've just accepted a level of ambiguity, in "What the heck this job actually is, what am I gonna do all day? And how would that, how does that work? And the second being how effectively an organization is communicating with their candidate pool. So, maybe start to give us a little bit of a different picture, how we can potentially build a clear vision for this is what it's like to be part of our team.
Brad:	So, if you think about the different steps of the hiring process, all the way from just attracting the candidate to even look at the company, look at the job, all the way through you've hired them and now you're onboarding them. You think about the next step of that process which is the application itself. And again, taking the opportunity here to really explain for people what success on the job looks like. That can take the form of realistic job preview videos. Think all of those times in the hiring process where we are gathering information about people. Rather than just asking people to answer a bunch of questions about themselves, why not take the opportunity to paint the picture for them of what life is like in the organization and the role?

Rick:	The whole concept of actually giving people the opportunity to try on the job, and not only gather information for you as the company, but potentially giving them the opportunity to go like, "Oh gosh, I didn't realize that this is what this was, I am out," on one end of the spectrum, or on the other end of the spectrum, if I'm understanding you correctly, you could actually build some significant enthusiasm by giving people more clarity.
Brad:	That's exactly right. We have different ways that we can do this. We can create actual simulations, for example that allow people to really perform the job in a very controlled environment, of course, because they're not our employee and we need to do it in a pretty short amount of time.
	But think about, actually posing business challenges to them that they need to solve and engaging in, role played conversations with trained and certified assessors, that are playing the role of maybe a peer that they need to negotiate with, or a direct report that they need to have a conversation with… Right? So, an opportunity for them to really, truly try on the job for size and how you what they can do and at the same time see what it feels like.
	And admittedly, you wouldn't create a simulation like that for all levels of hiring, that might be more for some of your senior levels, but even at more junior levels where we can create a fully automated online assessment that sort of still tells a story.
	And we create what we call moments-based assessments. And really, what we do is we describe these moments, these situations that individuals would likely face on the job and we ask candidates how they would likely deal with those situations.
Rick:	Very cool, very cool. So, let's go a little bit deeper into how onboarding has become an expectation or something that actually has backed up a little bit into the selection process.
	I know I was hiring several consultants here at BTS and every single one of the great ones whether we ended up hiring them or not, was asking about, "Okay, and what's my onboarding gonna be like?" The kind of assessment that you're talking about here could actually help me tailor my onboarding to the specific

	needs of a candidate as they become a new employee.
Brad:	Absolutely, nobody wants to... Well, maybe I shouldn't say nobody. I would assume I have a hard time imagining somebody would wanna go through a bunch of onboarding modules or steps that just teach them what they already know. We know a lot of information about a candidate based on everything we gathered from them during the hiring process. And if we've aligned that hiring process to the realities of the job, meaning we've measured those things that are really important for someone to bring with them to the job — well, we already know then where they might align really well with the job and where they might, have a little bit of room to grow. Let's take that information we have about them and use it then to tailor that onboarding process so that we're using their time as efficiently as possible and really only addressing those areas where they have the greatest room for growth.
Rick:	That makes a ton of sense to me, actually, as I've done a fair amount of hiring through the years. There's a pivot point where I switch from screening — potentially being a little standoffish, a little distance — to: "Okay, this is a person I actually really want in my organization, and now I need to start selling them." If I'm hearing a theme through all of this, it's that that old paradigm couldn't be worse for today's environment, and that there really is an expectation in today's candidate pool that we're really engaging them and creating value for them throughout the process.
Brad:	Very fair summary there. There are different ways that we can provide value to candidates. One of which is if we can help them make a more informed decision about whether this is a company and a job they wanna join: that's **providing value to them**. The employment decision is a two-way decision, it's not just about the organizations making a decision, the candidate is also making a decision. So, if we can help them envision reality and what life would be

like, that's providing value to them.

Regardless of whether we hire them or not, candidates want feedback, and historically, though, particularly in the United States, employers are often concerned about lawsuits. We are, as an industry, very hesitant to provide feedback to candidates, but I think we can still provide value to candidates through feedback simply by telling them, "Look, this is what we've observed, and here are the positives of those tendencies and here are some of the watch outs."

And if we provide that balanced feedback without saying "so therefore we are going to offer you a job or because of this, we're not going to offer you a job," if that's providing value to them.

Rick:	That's really awesome.

| Brad: | Or, if you think about a candidate who's applied to, let's say, a sales job — if we know that they're interested in sales, then maybe during that talent acquisition process, we give them access to some learning modules on sales — cold calling, or overcoming rejection, or overcoming barriers or gaining access to the influencers or the decision makers. And whether they go through these assets has no bearing whatsoever on whether we hire them, and we make sure that they know that, but we're just doing something to provide value to them.

And that can then ultimately be, I think, a differentiator for organizations, and it shows the candidates that we're not just interested in sucking as much information outta them as possible. Instead, we're interested in treating them as a human. And I think it also conveys to them then what life, again could be like as an employee of that organization. If they're that willing to give me valuable developmental information as a candidate, wow — what are they going to do for me as an employee? |

| Rick: | I've often said that, if you're only telling me I'm wonderful, you're either lying or not paying attention. So, I think that that's a really great gift to give to people.

Well cool — really, really great stuff. This is a place where I almost always end: I think of the person listening while driving or on the treadmill or |

	whatever right now, thinking in the back of their head, hey, this is all really cool, but I can't, either because of my power or my timing, overhaul my talent acquisition process overnight. What's your best advice for what that person can go do to make a difference in their world today?
Brad:	I think the best advice is looking at each step of that hiring process. Look at every single one of those steps through two lenses.

One is the organization's lens, and what is it that we need to get out of the process. Ultimately, we need to make the right hiring decisions as quickly as possible.

But you also have to look at all of those steps from the candidate's perspective, what is it that we're conveying? And I think if you do that, if you think about it through both of those lenses, you're going to improve the process.

And so, you're right, Rick — overhauling the process overnight isn't realistic, but I think it's making those minor tweaks here and there that can ultimately have a pretty big impact. |
Rick:	I think that's a great place to start. Well, Brad, thank you so much for the time today. Really appreciate it, we'll be talking again soon.
Brad:	Great, thanks, Rick.
Masami:	If you'd like to stay up to date on the latest from the "Fearless Thinkers" Podcast, please subscribe. Links to all the relevant content discussed in today's podcast are in the show notes or you can always reach us at bts.com, thanks again.