

[00:00:00] **Intro:** Welcome to the Collective Intelligence Podcast from IPG. We deliver marketing insights that help modern brands thrive. In this episode, you'll hear about the latest perspectives featured at intelligence.interpublic.com. Listen then log on to find new opportunities for your brand to stand out.

[00:00:25] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Hello and welcome to another episode of CI Conversations I'm your host Jen Sain, and I am so thrilled to be joined today by Danielle Cornejo Calhoun, Rebecca Roussell, and Freddy Sheffield. Would each of you please introduce yourselves? And Rebecca why don't you go first.

[00:00:38] **Rebecca R:** Hi everyone. My name is Rebecca Roussell. I am a Senior Vice President of D E I communications at Current Global. I've been at Current Global for about two years, and I am responsible for leading all of our diversity, equity, inclusion, as well as accessibility internally, as well as counseling a bevy of our clients within our portfolio that spans from corporate to consumer healthcare as well as tech. I'm super happy to be here today.

[00:01:11] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Danielle, why don't you go ahead.

[00:01:13] **Danielle C:** Thanks. Hi, I'm Danielle Cornejo Calhoun. My pronouns are she, her, and I'm at Weber Shandwick and I've been here for nearly 10 years. I'm Vice President Inclusive Practices, which is a part of our people team. And for a long, long time before that, I was a platform strategist, and then in 2020 had the opportunity to pivot to this new role. And I'm so happy I, I say that I'm sort of in-house for Weber Shandwick focusing completely on diversity, equity, and inclusion for our own people.

[00:01:43] **Freddy S:** Hi everyone. Uh, I'm Freddy Sheffield. I'm really excited to be here. My pronouns are he, him . And so I'm a researcher at Truth Central, which is McCann Worldgroup's Global Intelligence Unit. Um, and I work on everything from large, large scale, qualitative and quantitative research to, uh, trends, tracking, to insights. Um, and as a group we've offered a large number of global studies ranging from youth culture to wellness, to beauty. . Um, and ultimately we're, we're all about finding the human truths beneath these topics. What's really exciting for me as a person with disability myself is that we've focused a lot recently on accessibility and inclusion by tracking a large number of disability demographics. Yeah, I think that's a really exciting development, and I'm looking forward to the conversation ahead.

[00:02:45] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Yeah absolutely, I just feel like each of you just brings such a great perspective and I, I just, yeah. I just think it's gonna be a wonderful conversation to just kind of anchor us. Over 15% of the world's

population have some form of disability. By no means a comprehensive look at stats, but just some. 400 million are with severe hearing loss, 300 million individuals are visually impaired. 200 million people live with a cognitive disability. 18 million with a speech or language disability and over 1 billion need at least one assisted product and Interpublic has made understanding disability a core focus. It's something we're all working on and in fact, IPG and its agencies were highly visible at this year's AdColor awards in Los Angeles. The network demonstrating its commitment to accessible communications as the official community partner of disability at AdColor and indeed at the AdColor Awards, along with several other colleagues throughout the I P G Network. One of our panelists today, Danielle Cornejo Calhoun, was nominated, so congratulations on your nomination. Would you be able to tell our listeners a little bit about what you were nominated for?

[00:03:55] **Danielle C:** Yeah, absolutely. Um, and thank. Thank you so much for mentioning it. I just, obviously I love AdColor. Um, I've been a part of the community for a long time now, and this year I was so happy to be nominated for the Rockstar Award. And essentially all that means is that I've had a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout my career as I've been rising up and, you know, AdColor's really focused on rise up, reach back. And so I've really personally had a focus on not only how do I myself rise in my career as I hope all of us are focusing.

But also reaching back. And then what does that mean in terms of helping mentor the next generation of underrepresented talent? And you know, myself as a Latina and as a person with a disability, I'm just really sort of obsessed, especially at that career entry level. And what does that mean of getting from college into the industry? And that's always been my focus. And so to me, that's really the heart of AdColor and why I was just so thrilled out of my mind to be nominated for the Rockstar Award.

[00:04:57] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** That is so, so fantastic. So congratulations again.

So let's all dive into the conversation. So we started out by saying over 15% of the population lives with a disability. And that's a lot of people. However, individuals with disabilities have not always been a very well understood group. And in fact, some ways I think perhaps individuals is perceived kind of as a monolith. So I would love to talk about some of the differences and nuances that we should be aware of when it comes to this group. And Freddie, I would love it if you could start us off, but please, Rebecca and Danielle just jump in and let's have this conversation.

[00:05:37] **Freddy S:** Sure. Yeah. So like you said, disabilities, it's often been seen as, um, quite a monolithic group. Um, it's been described as the world's largest minority. But one thing that our research has shown is how complex. It is to truly understand disability. Um, I mean, even within our own research, there's seven different disability subgroups. I can give you an example, just one question that we ask people about their minority status. So we ask people, do you identify as a minority in your country? And first of all, there's a huge difference across those disability subgroups.

So for example, people with a learning disability, a lot of them, 72%. Say that they see themselves as a minority, whereas with people with sensory impairments, only 52% say that. So you can see already that people's perceptions of what being a minority means and whether they're, whether they're identify with that is already kind of at odds. And secondly, when it comes to taking a global perspective, there are some really huge differences geographically. So, for example, if you're living in India, Um, 91% of people with disabilities identify as a minority. South Africa, 86%. If you're living in the US it's just over half. And actually in Germany it's a little bit less than the third.

So again, there's like real variants here and you kind of wanna ask why is it so different in different countries? Um, that I think we can see a trend and it, and it makes sense. Countries that are traditionally you, you expect people with disabilities to be more marginalized. They might think of themselves more, more often as a minority, whereas people who are living in a, a country where they have, um, a lot more of an inclusive society where disability is portrayed in the media a lot more, they feel that actually they're not a minority. Because their disability is something that society causes. Um, and therefore they are not disabled in their own societies, and therefore they are not seen as a minority. So actually I think it's interesting because we should probably stop for a minute and think about who gets to call disability and minority if many people with disabilities don't actually see themselves that way. So yeah, I, I would say it's a very complicated question. Disability is probably more accurately portrayed as a minority, but we should look at the bigger picture.

[00:08:22] **Danielle C:** That's really interesting. I'd love to jump in and just to comment on that, if you see yourself represented, I'm sure this theme of representation will come up a lot in many discussions, but to really think about that, especially in our core work, Within our agencies at I P G, we literally tell stories.

That's the definition of public relations and advertising and and marketing. And one big takeaway that I got from this year's AdColor conference was talking

about looking at who's telling the story. And I think that's such a big leap beyond thinking through not only who's represented on screen, which I think we all, everyone in the world needs to do more of.

but then also thinking about who gets to be behind the camera, or who is that content creator, and are we intentionally including people with disabilities to make sure that then their stories and insights are added that then might come to screen in a totally different way than we imagined beyond just making sure we, you know, visually have that representation. But thinking about how do those storytellers get integrated and just to hear that, then that translates to people not feeling like a minority anymore because they see themselves. I mean, what a wonderful reason to do it as if we don't already have a million reasons to do it. But that's another great one,

[00:09:42] **Freddy S:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I think that's such an important point when you're thinking about who's telling these stories, especially in our industry in, um, advertising and marketing, we actually found that three outta four people with disabilities believed that the portrayal of disability in the media is outdated. So I think that's like such a, a big call to action for those people who are behind, um, the camera in the, in the, in the, in the room making strategy decisions. Because actually, like disability is also underrepresented within advertising. So I, I think, um, a recent figure I saw as that just 9%. the advertising industry has, uh, identified with having a disability, um, compared with, I think the number you gave earlier, Jen was 15% of the global population has a disability. But yeah, I think, I think that when you're, when you're thinking about who, who creates these stories and these narratives, it's, it's just a really important thing to to consider.

[00:10:53] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Yeah. Absolutely. Um, Rebecca, I would love your perspective on how we, in the marketing and advertising industry can do a better job of understanding everything that Freddie and Danielle just talked about. Um, and indeed how do we engage with the disabled community?

[00:11:10] **Rebecca R:** Sure. And so it, it goes definitely, um, in addition to what, um, my colleagues were talking about, I think it also just expands to, once we talk about that representation, and you talk about seeing yourself now, it's really the engagement piece and that accessibility. How are you able to make the experience, whether it's reading a piece of content, whether it's viewing a piece of content, whether it's attending an event, how is that experience made better for a person with a disability? I don't identify as a person with a disability. . But through this work and the initiatives that we have done specifically at Current Global, it has really opened my eyes, um, to really, really seeing and

understanding the additional and intentional, I would say, steps that are extremely important. I'll give an example. Like for at AdColor, that was my first opportunity to attend AdColor and I had an amazing time. , but also, this was kind of one of my first events since we were all back together since Covid. But I could really see like the different things that were done at AdColor to ensure everyone was made inclusive.

Um, for example, all of the sessions had an ASL, um, interpreter. Um, and then there's also, there was also what we did, um, specifically I P G. And McCann as well as, uh, Current Global in all of the gift bags. We actually put a pamphlet together that talked about all of the research that we've been talking about today, but then we also did something, which I think was a first, honestly, what we talked about it was we had a braille card that actually. Had information, um, that was printed in braille that really led everyone to our various websites with our different research. So I, I think that as we, in all facets of diversity, equity, and inclusion, really literally focusing in on that engagement piece is so important. And at Current Global. That's what we've really been trying to do with our accessible by design initiative.

Really ensuring that every piece of content that we do internally, that we also submit for our clients is something that is accessible because there are people that may have multiple. Disabilities that we have to really make sure that we are thinking about too as well, and we're really excited about that because it really is a game changer. Honestly. It really changes the trajectory of how people with disabilities have been. I would say left out of the experiences that people that don't have disabilities experience every day. And so just to go that step further and be more inclusive, I think is is a world of of difference maker. We're not all the way there yet, but I definitely see the strides. That are being made. And I definitely would say a champion at IPG is definitely a leader in this space and will be continuing to be a leader in this space with all of our collective agencies as we work together to really continue to champion, um, accessibility.

[00:14:39] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** You know, one of my dearest friends in the world is disabled. you know, she saw when we were really in the thick of the pandemic, all of a sudden, how many accommodations are being made. You know, work went remote. Concerts were being performed in the metaverse. Companies that didn't traditionally sell online were suddenly selling online and just a whole host of things, and then kind of as the world, quote unquote, went back to normal. She saw a lot of those things dissipate and it was kind of like, Hmm, well it can be done , so you know, why isn't it being done so that the playing field. A bit more level and, and I mean maybe not even the playing

field, the living field where just folks can, you know, live their lives regardless of disability.

So, You know, you were talking a lot, Rebecca, about, you know, these initiatives at AdColor and in your work at Current to reach people with varying abilities. Danielle, I'm gonna direct this question initially to you cuz I would love to talk more about the operational level of inclusivity to people with disabilities within the corporation. Cuz I mean, it's not just the advertising or marketing industry. Of course there's a stat that says, although 90% of organizations claim to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Only 4% provide offerings inclusive of people with disabilities. So I'm just curious what, in your work at Weber Shandwick you're doing, what you've seen in general on a corporate level and how operationally we can make the workplace more inclusive for those with disabilities.

[00:16:04] **Danielle C:** Yeah, that's such an interesting stat. And just to follow up on what you were saying with all of the accommodations that sort of suddenly came to life during the pandemic, I think. To me, that's sort of the hopeful spark that a lot of companies, you know, at least to your point, maybe a lot of concerts aren't in the metaverse anymore, maybe.

But I do think that so many companies now that they've unlocked that people can be productive working from home. That to me was a huge move in the right direction for then people who physically are unable to come to the office that often. I myself started working from home years. because of an accommodation need. And at first it was very hard. No one, I, I didn't know how to really work with people in my remote status that, well, it sort of wasn't done that often and now we're also used to it. That I think that is at least one thing that in my mind, I hope sort of paves the way for, you know, all the future generations to not maybe not have that struggle as strongly. Uh, not to say that's the only thing, that's my one, like big positive that I always think about. And then beyond that, you know, at least what I've seen within IPG and within Weber Shandwick is that we do really intentionally, purposefully think through what are all the dimensions of diversity. And to try really hard, not to lump it into one big thing like this is our diversity initiative, but to really tease out what are the unique needs of each underrepresented group and then specifically for people with disabilities.

You know, another thing that's really come to life in these, the last, really in the last year. Is that we launched our own business resource group, specifically centered around people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. And it's open to people who identify with that as well as our allies. And it's an amazing group

that really brings together anyone who, anyone who identifies, we say, you're welcome. If you identify in any way with this group, there's no sort of standard that you have to meet. But if you identify as someone who wants to be a part of this group, you are welcome. And I've just heard again and again, how many people say, I have been looking for something like this my whole career. I can't believe this exists. And we just, we just kind of talk shop. We mostly just compare notes about how do you work with your, you know, colleagues for the first time after disclosing a disability, or, I haven't disclosed with a certain team yet. How do you think I should do it? What if they say this? What if they say that? And just to even have to not feel like you're alone.

I think that's the biggest thing. Is that because there isn't historically a focus on disability in the workplace. In that way, each person can feel so much like they're carving the path for the first time, that they might be the first person to deal with these issues. And in many cases there's not, but, but it's hard to find each other. And so I think that's the other big thing that I wanna highlight that I think is so important that I hope more and more companies do, is to include disability as a part of your ERGs and BRGs or affinity groups, whatever you call it. because so much can happen when people just connect with each other.

[00:19:13] **Freddy S:** Yeah. Thanks Danielle. I think that's such an interesting point. Well, a lot of points you've made that, but, um, I would say what, what you were just speaking to about community, um, is something that we've looked into a little bit in our research. Um, and I'm really excited by. The possibilities with, uh, digital spaces because like obviously working from home in a post pandemic world has, has been, um, revelation for so many people with disabilities. But also I think the online world and the, um, digital environment, there's so many opportunities that we can explore, um, from a disability perspective. And we can see, for example, from our data that people with disabilities. Are significantly more likely to have found love. Um, joined, joined a digital community and made new friends online than non-disabled people. And we've seen at the same time, we've also seen in culture, uh, we've seen pushback against this. So these days, like, you know, among younger people, there's um, there's a sort of insult that goes around, um, calling people chronically online, um, and telling people to get outside and see the real world. Um, implying that people who are spending time online are living less of a life somehow. Um, but I think that it's really important to consider that there's so many opportunities available to people with disabilities online. Um, and actually like, I mean, there's a lot of cynicism around the metaverse. But I think sharing a point of view from a disability perspective, like it's, it's such a, a big area of opportunity and people with disabilities are also more likely to be early adopters to metaverse platforms because there's that sense of excitement.

They're looking for places where there are less barriers, they can express themselves the way they want to, and they've really latched onto this as a, a. Place for them, a home for them in a lot of ways. And I guess from a, from a brand and business perspective, this is a group that's like really at the leading edge of digital connection, uh, especially when it comes to building communities, looking for innovation, looking for inclusion. So, um, yeah, I just wonder like why would the brand not want to speak to this community and, and understand more about this real opportunity area. They're, they're kind of exploring it, they're discovering it, they're, they're innovating in it. Um, so yeah, I think it's a really big, um, opportunity for growth.

[00:22:14] **Rebecca R:** I'd like to add a little bit to what Freddy was saying, um, as it relates to just brands not speaking to that community. And I know you talked about it earlier, Jen, with some of the, some of the insights, like 15% of the global population, uh, are people are disabled. But also adding additionally to that, their buying power is 13 trillion dollars. So for brands to really ignore that type of buying power, um, that's a significant amount of money that if your brand is not accessible to. A person with a disability, you're leaving that, um, actually on the table. And then even in some of the research that we've done, we definitely have seen that brands that are not accessible, Are not favorable within the disability community. And that in turn is like a ripple effect. And if it's not favorable to one person, then they will also share with their friends and their family or their networks and say, this particular brand is not accessible. And so, you know, you have to think about that as a brand. That you are pretty much detriment to your own growth and you want to be as inclusive as possible when dealing with all consumers. And that's really the end. Um, at the end of the day, really being inclusive to everyone, um, is so important.

[00:23:38] **Danielle C:** I'll add just quickly to that, I wanna borrow something that Ardra Shephard shared with us. We brought her in as a speaker last year and she's the host of a TV show focused on fashion and disability, and she said disabled people by lipstick too. And that really stuck because I think so often it's, it can be very easy to think about, well, which healthcare brand can we engage with? Or what, you know, what can we do more for this, you know, accessibility focused pitch, which is great. We should absolutely do that. And to everyone else else's point that there's this buying power, this community exists. And you know, we don't on, I don't only buy canes, you know what I mean? I buy toasters, I buy lipstick, I buy everything. And so the more I see brands that are saying even, you know, through their imagery or through how accessible their website is, the more I see a brand even try to take that step toward being more inclusive, I think, well, that's who I wanna give my money to. And it doesn't have to be a healthcare focused product to do that.

[00:24:37] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** So before we go on, I just have to say, Freddy, what you said about the stigma of being chronically online and that real life is outside, that really just blew my mind and that's just gonna be kicking around in my brain for a long time, and I just needed to presence that. But anyway, on another note, to go back to what you said, Danielle, about the fact that, you know, disabled people buy lipstick. So recently at CES, I know that Current supported two new products, um, from L'Oreal. Rebecca, can you talk a little bit about that?

[00:25:17] **Rebecca R:** Yeah. Um, so, uh, the team, this was actually another super exciting impassioned project for the L'Oreal, um, account team. And we've supported L'Oreal's launch of Innovations now for about four years. And so for this year at CES, we helped support these two really innovative devices. That are accessible. And so the first device is called Hapta, and that's H A P T A. And that is a device that allows users with limited hand and arm mobility to steadily apply lipstick. So the second innovation was Brow Magic, and it is a brow tool that uses AI to achieve perfect brows.

Who doesn't want perfect brows? And now you can do it at home instead of going to multiple brow appointments and all of those tedious microblading appointments too. And it's also very helpful for those with mobility and stability issues too, as well. And so, again, like you're really looking at brands that are being extremely inclusive in ways that you probably wouldn't even thought. Applying makeup is something every day that we do, everyone, um, who wears makeup, but you don't necessarily think about a person that might have some of those mobility issues, the challenge that it might have for that person. And so L'Oreal, I think, is definitely a trailblazer as it relates to debuting this type of different technology, different product. Again, that is really inclusive.

[00:27:11] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** I mean, I think that's awesome and I think that goes back to what Danielle was saying, shouldn't just be in the healthcare space that, you know, I mean, it's exactly what Danielle was saying. You know, people who use Canes wear lipstick.

[00:27:19] **Rebecca R:** Yeah. And I, I think we go and, and think that we equate disability with healthcare because, so for so long, and I know Danielle and Freddy can attest to this for so long it has been seen as sort of that other group thinking. Outside of healthcare, people within the disabled community aren't people as well and aren't, they don't do fun things. And so again, like we're starting to really see more conversation around the importance of this particular inclusion of this community because they are people as well, like everybody else. And so should be able to enjoy everyday life like everyone else.

And I think, again, I go back to. Every time I just talk about diversity too. I say diversity does not mean deficient. And just because you're different doesn't necessarily mean that you should not have the same opportunity or the same exposure, or the same access to other things. And for brands and for companies, anything, it's just a little bit more effort that you have to put in. and a little bit more intentionality. And that, uh, requires when you're trying to reach a diverse group of audiences. And I think once we, again, all just start to understand why that is so important, I think we will definitely be in a better place.

[00:28:49] **Freddy S:** Yeah, that's, that's so interesting, Rebecca. Um, I would just like to speak a bit about failure that I've noticed as someone with a disability. Uh, you know, when I see ads, like they often highlight the disability and not the person. And exactly what you were saying, like, people are multifaceted. Um, they've got a lot of different, they've got so many different things in their lives that they can talk about and, and stories to share. Um, and in other spaces, like there's a big focus on intersectionality. Um, but I think in disability, that's been less of a focus. and like some campaigns that I've really loved seeing were, for example, um, the campaign that they created around Paralympics in 2021, um, where they did some really great work in terms of normalizing those everyday experiences, disability, um, whether it's, I don't know.

Going shopping or being a parent or, um, having fun with friends. Um, and they kind of pivoted, I think from traditional associations, which are much more in terms of stereotypes. They're seen as, uh, putting people with disabilities on pedestals, creating that kind of sense of difference. But I think we started to see that in other campaigns too. um, that was a great advert recently from Apple in their, in terms of their accessibility tools. Um, again, just representing their everyday situations. Yeah, I think that's, that's such a big call for, for more brands to, to take up because, um, at the end of the day, like disability is just one aspect of your, your life and the more people realize that, the more they'll be able to understand it. Disability will hopefully be represented in much, much more, much more spaces.

[00:30:51] **Danielle C:** I'll add to that, that something I read recently. Um, I just finished Rebekah Taussig's book, sitting pretty, and she makes such a great point that at one time or another, everything was an accommodation. When stairs were invented, it was so we didn't have to like scale a cliff anymore, and someone had the great idea to build stairs to make it easier. and that's an accommodation for the majority you know of, of people and anyone who then can't use stairs. What a wonderful thing that ramps and elevators are. But that always seems like the extra step that buildings would have to do, or sort of a

special accommodation. And it's interesting if you think about that every human needs an accommodation to live as comfortably as we do on this earth. And I think that kind of helps unlock a little bit that it's. We're not so different. It's not this other community, it's just sort of a different next level that you have to unlock to make it really comfortable for everyone and not just those who identify as what we term able-bodied. And one campaign came to mind as we were talking to that I wanted to share.

I know that, uh, our Weber Shandwick teams got to work with UNO when they launched their new color ad deck. That helps people who are colorblind be able to play UNO. And that it just came to me because I was thinking, to me again, it's like this, this wonderful game that so many, so many people grew up playing and it's such a fun sort of pull outta your closet almost anyone can play it. But what about the colorblind? And that's such a not, I won't say that it was an easy next step that they did. I'm sure it took a lot of planning and a lot of creativity to come up with this new deck, but what a wonderful way to say, let's try to make this a game that even more people can play. And so if we had that same sort. Lens of remembering that stairs were an accommodation at one point. I think it almost makes it easier to think about, well, okay, well then what's our product missing? Who else can we bring into the conversation? Rather than feeling like, Hey, let's make this special edition for this special group, but rather, how can we make it so that when we think everyone plays this awesome game, who is everyone? Who are we missing and using that as kind of the starting point for our convers.

[00:33:06] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Oh, I love that so much. And I didn't know that my husband's actually colorblind, and we like to play UNO when we're camping and it's very difficult. So that, yeah, on a personal level, that's awesome. And you know, just speaking about like these accommodations that, you know, you have relevance to the majority. You know, Freddie, you might be able to speak to this cuz I think I remember, um, reading something out of a, a Truth study that everyone at some point in their life is, becomes disabled or there, you know, something changes. And that could be from, I don't know, breaking an arm to, you know, having a baby on your lap while you're working. I mean, A whole spectrum of differences and how, I don't know. And I guess what I'm trying to get at, does that raise awareness? Does that accelerate the business imperative to think like that, like UNO did? Like not just targeting, you know, this to a certain group, but rather just making it more inclusive so everyone can enjoy it.

[00:34:00] **Freddy S:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, um, so there's a great concept which is used across a lot of accessibility work. Which is inclusive design. Um,

it's very simple. It's a design process which creates products and services or environments where they're as usable, uh, as possible for as many people as possible. And that's like the gold standard for the approach when it comes to accessibility, because in fact, when you're designing for that standard, when you're designing for the, the widest possible group of people, that's where you hit on those innovations and you can kind of innovate without even realizing it. So I love, I love the story that text messaging was actually designed way back when for, um, people who couldn't speak on the phone, who had hearing impairments, and that took a little while to filter through. But obviously we all know what happened afterwards, and I think you're right, that we should think of disability. um, not, not some other group that's separate from us, but it is, it's something that probably everyone in their life will encounter one way or another, whether that's having it themselves, whether that's, um, acquired disability, whether that's disability in old age. What's, what's also, um, a really important group to, to consider is the friends and the family of people with disabilities. Like Rebecca was saying earlier, I think that network is so, Close knit. Um, and if you're a business and you are looking to, um, design products that are, that are gonna be usable by people with disabilities and their families and, and that group, then that will create such a strong sense of loyalty. If you can, you can, um, enable them to do these things and, and use these products, uh, where they haven't been able to.

[00:36:03] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** Well, this has been such a great conversation and I, I just feel like we could all talk about this for a really long time, but we are coming to the end of our time together. So, um, before we wrap up, what I would love from each of you is kind of one thing to leave us with. So perhaps it's one thing that you would advise your organization or one thing you would advise, advise your clients, or, or just one thing that you'd like to put forth as a, as a human Imperative. So yeah, just kind of maybe one or even two things, um, from either one of those perspectives. Rebecca, would you be able to start?

[00:36:34] **Rebecca R:** Yes. Um, this has been a great conversation and I would just implore people to just simply think about others. I think for, um, so long, we can be self-absorbed. , and at times that is a good thing. I know I'm not saying that you shouldn't focus on yourself, but I think as we continue to move through the world and continue to just interact with different groups of people being kind and understanding and respecting different backgrounds, I think once you do that, you have just such a better appreciation for how you show up in the world. And then also, How you can support others that show up differently in your world. Because at the end of the day, diversity is definitely what makes us successful and what makes us all unique, and that really helps from an engagement standpoint, that helps from just an inclusion standpoint too

as well. And it's really just as simple as being kind and understanding and respecting different backgrounds.

[00:37:47] **Freddy S:** I would say going back to maybe what we've discussed. Earlier in the conversation that the perceptions and the reality of disability are often so different. So I think it's really important for people to remember that actually when you think about disability, you have to take a step back and try and remove some of your biases, your preconceptions and, and, and what the media might have told you. Um, and actually engage with the disabled community. Um, try and, um, Try and see things from their perspective. Um, because actually you'll be often surprised at how, how many similarities there would be. Um, and if we can at the end of the day leverage that and create more of a connection rather than separation, then obviously that's gonna be good for everyone.

[00:38:41] **Danielle C:** And I'll leave this with, to jump off what you said about preconceptions from the media. I think I'll speak directly to anyone who's listening, who is someone with a disability or from any underrepresented group to be able to clear those preconceptions from yourself. And going back to AdColor, there's one, um, I still have, you know, I've written in front of me to remind myself all the time, KJ Rose, who's a coach to many performers and rappers, she said never ask permission again to enter the room or the stage. And that hit me so hard because there are so many preconceptions that you then put on yourself of, should I really be here? Did they really want me to speak? Do I really have anything to say in this brainstorm? And to give yourself that permission and to pre-approve yourself. And that can be so hard when. We don't see that sort of confidence necessarily represented in the TV shows we watched in the media that we consume. And so I, I'd like to leave that for anyone listening who sort of needs to hear that, that you should never ask permission again to enter the room or the stage.

[00:39:45] **Rebecca R:** I love that. Totally love what Danielle and Freddy said. Um, and, and echo those two as well. But if there's anyone that's searching for resources, The conversation that we just had is totally can be daunting to others. There might be people that really want to get involved but don't know the first step. And I think it's important to really showcase again, like we have these resources and these tools that are available. There's a website that, um, Current Global stood up called accessible-communications.com. And on that website there's a ton of research that we've. as well as guidelines that we've done with the P R C A as well as the PR Council too, um, that have been partners in this commitment that we have been able, um, to continue to forge forward. But the guidelines are free. You can download those, those are things that are really just

kind of steps that can get you started, um, and really help you on this journey. So I just wanted to make sure. That, um, I put that out there as an opportunity for resources.

[00:40:58] **Jennifer Sain (Host):** That's a perfect way to close. Thank you all so much. This was an incredible conversation. To all of our listeners, please do find us at Apple and Spotify and all the usual suspects and do like and subscribe. Of course, you can find this podcast as well as a wealth of other intelligence from around the Interpublic network at Intelligence.Interpublic.com

[00:41:21] **Outro:** Thank you for listening to the Collective Intelligence Podcast. For more marketing insights and ideas, please subscribe to this podcast or visit intelligence.interpublic.com.