

## Cisco Cloud Unfiltered Podcast Series, Episode 10: Carmen Collins and Casie Shimansky



Today we depart from the technical road for a moment to talk about an admittedly self-serving topic: What it's like to work at Cisco.

- Niki Acosta:** Hola, Buenos dias, good morning, good night, buenas noches, where ever you may be. This is Niki Acosta and this is Cloud Unfiltered. We have some pretty cool guests with us today. I've got culture evangelist and career evangelist. I've got Carmen and Casie. You all introduce yourselves.
- Carmen Collins:** Hi, hello podcast world. Is that the right word?
- Niki Acosta:** Yes sure. I'm Carmen Collins. I am the social media lead for Cisco's talent brand team. What does that mean for those of you that don't know what a talent brand team does? It means we have the most awesome job on the planet, aside from cloud developer. We get to talk about Cisco's culture, and what it's like to work here and we do that by using our employees because our employees already love it and already go out on social media and say it and so we just find them and we herd them like cats and we bring them together and amplify their stories and their sentiment. That's what talent brand does and that's our team. Now, it's over to Casie.
- Casie Shimanski:** Hi everyone. I'm Casie Shimanski and I am a social media manager for our talent brand team here at Cisco. You can usually find me behind our Instagram account, @wearecisco but we are also everywhere, so Twitter, SnapChat, Facebook, all those good places. That's where you'll find us.
- Carmen Collins:** @wearecisco
- Niki Acosta:** It was interesting how I met you all to begin with. Do you all remember how we met?
- Casie Shimanski:** I think so.
- Carmen Collins:** I think we reached out to you to tell your story.
- Niki Acosta:** Yeah, we have these company wide meetings and they had this really enthusiastic guy who's on your team, who got up and said, "Send us your photos," or whatever your crazy photos, and tag them, #wearecisco. I didn't actually have to reach that far to find accessories. I put on a silver firefighter's jacket. It's got a Kevlar lining but it's super silver and big and it has cool buckles.

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Carmen Collins: It had a fun, funny-

Niki Acosta: Yes, furry hat.

Carmen Collins: Yes.

Niki Acosta: I just grabbed these things from near my desk here and threw them on and took a picture. They reached out to me and said, "Hey, what's your story? You look crazy in a good way." That's how we initially met but, I imagine that moving into a social media role, working for talent brand, that you all probably have some pretty interesting backgrounds. Do you care to share your backgrounds in how you got to be at Cisco and in your current roles? Take us back to the beginning. I know there's a farm involved and farm animals.

Carmen Collins: I was born, no. I grew up in a very small town and my grandparents did have a farm, but as any small town girl or guy will tell you, you usually spend your life trying to get out of a small town. I went to the University of Virginia. I had two majors. I studied history. What are you going to do with History? Be a teacher. I didn't want to be a teacher. I went two extra summers and got a communications degree and started life as a journalist, writing for newspapers. I was sports writer. I was the only woman at the time that could spell Krzyzewski, because he's the coach of Duke's basketball team. I went from writing in newspapers to writing for the web, for marketing because that's just kind of a natural flow. I have worked for tech companies and B2B companies ever since. I worked for AOL. I worked for Firefox. I worked for Verizon. I worked for Citrix, and now here I am at Cisco. It's a long and varied career.

Niki Acosta: You got mail.

Carmen Collins: Yes. You know, that's not even a noise, you don't even hear that dial up noise anymore. I kind of miss it. There was something powerful about it.

Niki Acosta: Oh man I remember that noise.

Casie Shimanski: That meant you were going places.

Carmen Collins: Yeah that meant you were signing on. You were on the webs. Yeah, and I consider myself a woman in tech. I am certainly not a developer, but know enough HTML. Social media is a little bit of every job. You have to know a little bit of code. You have to know a little bit of design. You have you know a little bit of UX. You have to know APIs work in the background. You have to be creative. It's kind of a mesh role that we have.

Niki Acosta: Totally. Super important.

Carmen Collins: I totally think of us as women in tech.

Casie Shimanski: I do not have a background in tech. I am originally from a [inaudible 00:04:38] New Jersey. I grew up there and moved to Orlando, Florida when I was about 10 so I'm fairly Floridian now that I've been here over 20 years. My career really started in hospitality being Orlando. I worked in theme parks and hotels and restaurants and all that good stuff. Before I worked at Cisco, I was a social media manager for a hospitality education company. Really started with social media because I was a photographer. For about eight years I was a wedding photographer. Kind of decided I didn't like running my own business.

Niki Acosta: Don't lie, it was the bridezillas. Don't lie.

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Casie Shimanski: No, I actually did okay with them. It was the whole business part that was tricky. Just sort of decided to pivot a little bit and I only have a two year degree. I'm actually pretty proud of that because most people will tell you that you can't do much with a two year degree. I've done quite a bit with it. That sort of kind of made me look at what I had in my wheelhouse, and say, what am I capable of? It was writing, photography, and social media. Because of that photography business, I had been on Twitter. I had been on Instagram fairly early on, on all of those and sort of led me to here. Actually, because of my last job, I met Carmen at a social media conference here in Orlando.

She gave a really cool story about how we met and we just sort of got to talking on Twitter ahead of the conference, wound up randomly sitting next to each other at the conference, with no idea who the other person was, and hit it off. We have a lot in common. We liked Harry Potter and the Tonight Show and Jimmy Fallon and all these geek things. About a year after that, maybe a little more, is when she asked me. She Twitter DM'd me and said, "Hey I think I have an opportunity for you."

Carmen Collins: That's career advice number one. Whether you're in cloud or social media. Use social media. Make connections with people because Casie and I were first social connections. Then we were IRL, in real life. Now we're colleagues.

Niki Acosta: Rule 1.5, don't post anything you wouldn't want a potential employer to see at a later date.

Carmen Collins: Yes. We call it the would you show it to your mama rule. If you would show it to your mama, then you're okay. If you wouldn't show it to your mama, then you don't want your boss it see it and the internet never forgets.

Niki Acosta: Never forgets. Oh I saw something funny online the other day. It was a guy who said that someone else cut him off, as he was waiting for a parking space. Someone like zoomed in front of him and parked. He goes in his office and he sits down and he gets ready for an interview, and guess who walks in but the guy who just cut him off. I'm like well, Karma for you.

Carmen Collins: The world has Karma. That is a thing.

Niki Acosta: You all do some really neat stuff as far as the We Are Cisco and talent branding stuff and careers. As someone who came through Cisco through an acquisition, and worked at start ups and RackSpace, which is kind of a newer company, my impression of Cisco was that it is an old school networking company. I mean, I knew that they made WebEx. I knew that they did networking stuff and sold hardware. I was a cloud girl so I was like, man am I going to fit in here? I think there's probably a lot of people out there that think the same thing. Oh it's Cisco. It's a stodgy old networking company but I don't think that's really accurate. I think you all do a lot through your efforts to help promote the real Cisco. Tell us about some of the things that you all have done and why my initial assumption, which I don't believe in, by the way anymore.

Carmen Collins: I know you don't. We've seen your social page. A lot of people call us a corporate dinosaur. We've heard that over and over and over again. When our talent brand team formed a little over two years ago, we knew what we were up against. We knew what the perception was and how we had to change it. We thought that we wanted to make personal connections with people. There's a statistic that LinkedIn says that the first thing someone does before they take a job and the last thing someone does before they take a job, is talk to an employee at that company and sometimes you don't have access one on one to an employee. We try to put our employees out there, get you as close to them as you can get, to see what they're saying, because who cares what Casie, other than we are employees, and when we talk about Cisco as employees,

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we're being truthful and honest. Most people don't trust brands, what brands have to say. A brand, who cares what we are Cisco says about working here.

We put the employees out and we just have a new careers website and encourage everybody to go to [cisco.com/careers](http://cisco.com/careers) because again we're trying to put those employees in front of you. Go look at the site. Our manager likes to say, not a stock photographer was harmed in the making of this website, because they're all pictures of employees, or by employees. The cover image on our homepage right now is a girl with pink hair. Look at Casie's hair. She's got purple hair. I know Niki likes her tattoos. I want a tattoo badly. I'm so chicken. I'm allergic to pain. I still want one. We talk about how you can be yourself. It's really not, if you listen to employees long enough, if you look at the Instagram page, which is all photos, employees send us. Twitter, all photos employees send us, our blog, [blogs.cisco.com/lifeatcisco](http://blogs.cisco.com/lifeatcisco), all employee stories. None of them say that Cisco is a big T-Rex with little arms, right? We're not this dinosaur. We have a cool culture and the people are amazing. How we met Niki, like she said. Somebody said, "Go take a goofy picture," and she did and the first thing Casie and I did was tweet her and be like, oh my god. Send us the picture. Tell us why.

Niki Acosta: Yeah. Look I think I certainly had been I'll say at some of the Cisco events in the past, and it seemed to me like okay. Maybe I'm seeing a narrow window but I see a bunch of, I'll say no offense, middle aged men with khakis and polo shirts on. Then I realized that's just all tech conferences pretty much, with the exception of the developer conferences where jeans are cool. I shouldn't say that. That's mean.

Carmen Collins: It's right.

Niki Acosta: I definitely see a shift happening at Cisco. I mean, there is definitely, everything from the way that we're building products, to the way that we're positioning ourselves, to some of the sort of branding work that's going on with our corporate brand. There's definitely sort of this, I'll say revitalization of the Cisco brand to help people understand that hey, we're just not only a networking company. We do cloud and we do collaboration and we do internet of things and we do a bunch of other things that people wouldn't necessarily associate with Cisco.

Carmen Collins: Exactly. I feel like I'm doing all the talking. I want Casie to talk too. We have this new video that we just uploaded to YouTube last week. It talks to that space specifically. It talks to cloud developers and security coders and this new business line. We actually have two videos. The first video is a group of people. There is an older person in there with khakis on. There is a younger person. There is an athlete. There's a photographer. They start the video with saying, "This is who I am personally. This is who I am. I'm a photographer. I'm a cook. I'm a mom. I'm a dad of two awesome kids."

Then it takes them into the office. They're like, I'm a coder. I'm a cloud developer. I'm a customer success manager. Then the end it says, be you, with us. We are Cisco. That's our new mantra. Be you. Be your goofy self with the Kevlar, not just the Kevlar but your fun hoodie, the purple hair. I'm a big, I just saw the Wonder Woman movie this weekend and I am so empowered and now I'm a big Wonder Woman geek. In 24 hours I turned into a Wonder Woman geek. You can be yourself, just come on in and work with other goofy, geeky people who like to be themselves. We are Cisco. We do some big stuff, big stuff that you, that's to routers and switches.

Niki Acosta: How old is Cisco now? There was an anniversary since I've been here. 30 years?

Casie Shimanski: 30 years when I started, which was 2015.

Carmen Collins: So we're 32.

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Niki Acosta: I might be dating myself here but it definitely seems like at least in my lifetime, just looking at my parents that sort of the roles that people play sort of at work because of the technology that we have is completely changed. It used to be cookie cutter. My grandmother worked for Bell Telephone Company, running switchboards. My mom was a stay at home mom. Then later when into the workforce when we got older. It's a different world it seems like. It's interesting to see there's a lot of people who have been at Cisco for a really long time, but why do you think that is? Why do you think people stay at Cisco for a long time?

Casie Shimanski: I think a lot of that has to do with the culture. When we met you actually, I think that was the kick off to our love where you work contest, which we run every February. We just encourage employees to tell us why they love where they work. Every year that we do this, we see it consistently that it's the people. The people here, what we're doing, the giving back element, you don't see that in a lot of companies. You don't see that in a lot of big, corporate companies, where they're giving us our birthdays off and they're giving us five days of our own time to go give back how we want to give back. You look at things like that and I'm an older millennial, so I know the statistics like to job hop and all these kind of stereotypes in their workforce, but you look at companies like this, like Cisco, and how they're developing that culture. That really retains people, because you know that it's not out there.

Niki Acosta: Tell us a little bit about the giving back thing, because this is something that I think is at least some of it has been born since I've been here, as far as like giving you days off to do volunteer work, whatever kind of volunteer work you want, which is pretty cool.

Casie Shimanski: This is one of the big elements when Carmen told me about Cisco, I didn't know anything other than it was the logo on the telephone on my desk at my old company. I barely used that phone. I had to do some research. I went to the internet obviously and the Cisco website and I saw the giving back element there. We didn't have our volunteer days then. That was kind of still in the works I guess. Now, we're given five days to give back. We can do that however we want. That was a huge element to kind of incentivize me to really want to work here, because I had been a volunteer with a children's cancer research company or organization for five years at the time. To be able to now dedicate those days, and still get paid, which was kind of nice. I didn't have to take a whole two days off. It was nice to have that incentive from the company to say, go do this. It's important. Because it's important to me, it's important to them.

Niki Acosta: There's a lot of matching too for certain orgs right?

Casie Shimanski: Yes.

Carmen Collins: Casie found some her peeps. Again through hearing employees talk in social, she met other people that volunteer for St. Baldrick's and I think it was Raleigh. Wasn't there another location Casie?

Casie Shimanski: Raleigh was the main one this year.

Carmen Collins: Okay. Then they all got to talking and but Cisco not only matches your donations up to a certain amount. They match your time.

Casie Shimanski: Yep.

Carmen Collins: If you go in and say, "I volunteered five days for St. Baldrick's," which is your charity has to be vetted as a legit charity, and all that stuff through Cisco systems, but it's a pretty easy process to get them through. They match it. It's amazing. That's what Casie talked about before we had our five days off to volunteer. Cisco as a corporation, we have an

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entire group of people dedicated to our corporate social responsibility. It's a big deal at Cisco. The statistics are I think, 56% of millennials think a company should take a stance and have a giving back philosophy, but for those of us who are slightly older, Gen X, we're not that far behind. We're at like 52. Okay the millennials beat us in the percentages, but that's something that people think companies should really do, and this company I mean, it's a foundation of who we are.

We have this story. It's our most commented blog ever. Another woman in tech, and she was talking about how when she was growing up, she didn't really have a family. She was in the foster care system. She didn't know what family was. Then when she came to work at Cisco, she realized that when she went through a tough time, her Cisco team was her family. I dare you to read it without crying. You can blame it on cutting onions, whatever you want to blame it on, folks. That's really what it feels like sometimes. We just had a baby shower via WebEx, via technology because we are in a global org and we have teammates in Israel and Bangalore and where else were we? The UK, so we had a baby shower for one of our team and she's like. This is the baby shower? I didn't think I was getting a baby shower. This family did it. That's the kind of people who work here and they're really cool. She's really cool.

- Niki Acosta: I will say, shucks. This is not something I probably share that often but recently someone in my family, very close to me was diagnosed with cancer and it has been, this is news that came just like within the last couple months. It can be a little bit overwhelming. You go through a stage of shock and then you go through these other stages of wondering, Googling what the survival rate is or whatever. Very quickly, somebody in HR wrote me after I submitted or talked to my boss about it. Somebody sent me a bunch of links. They said, "Look. Here is this program. Here is that program. Here is the cancer support mailing list." I emailed that mailing list and within an hour I had like all these people pinging me, telling me, oh my wife just had that type of cancer. Here's what we did. Here's our website. Here's what worked. Here's what didn't. That was really cool. It was not something that I expected but it's crazy what brings people together. I was really shocked that people who never met me before are just willing to tell me all this stuff. It was definitely appreciated. It's scary.
- Casie Shimanski: Yeah, on a similar note to that, we had recently end of last year gone through a similar thing, and I was stunned. My fiance and I are not married yet. We were not even officially engaged at the time, but we have been together. We live together. To know that Cisco counted him and his family as my family meant so much to me, because I don't know of another company. I really, truly thought like, I don't think we're going to get this because we're not married yet. But because we live together. We actually wound up getting him my insurance, which at the time we had no idea but it was the fact that he counted and his family counted. I was blown away. I had no concept that that was even a thing. You know?
- Niki Acosta: Last week I saw a letter on Facebook. There's some crazy stuff going on in Texas. When is there not crazy stuff going on in Texas? Anyway.
- Casie Shimanski: Texas and Florida.
- Carmen Collins: Florida can't say anything about Texas because there's a whole Twitter account called Florida Man, that just takes headlines from Florida newspapers that's like, Florida man tries to wrestle alligator. Florida is crazy too. Texas is crazy.
- Niki Acosta: Is crazy transmitted by mosquitoes or something?
- Carmen Collins: It must be, plus the heat.
- Casie Shimanski: Mosquitoes and heat, yeah. Yeah.



Niki Acosta: I forgot what I was going to say in regards to-

Carmen Collins: Something happening in Texas.

Niki Acosta: Yeah, yeah, Texas. Someone posted a letter that had been signed by a bunch of employers in Texas and big employers and one of those employers just happened to be Cisco. Chuck Robbins signed with the likes of IBM and Amazon and Google and some others, Dell, that said, hey some of these discriminatory practices about bathroom laws are kind of bad for business and we encourage you not to do it. I was really proud of that. I was really, really proud of that. I mean, look, no matter where you fall on the spectrum without getting too much into politics, religion or ex-wives, it's nice to see your company taking a stance, to the benefit of its employees. I think that's really cool.

Carmen Collins: Yeah Cisco puts its employees first. Take politics out of it. Several months ago Cisco's first reaction was, our employees with Visas. Are they okay? Where are they? What do we need to do to help them? That was their first reaction. It wasn't, where do you take a stance on the political scale. It was, where are employees that are affected and how can we help? That was their first reaction. First, before anything else. That was pretty impressive too.

Niki Acosta: It's really awesome to see your company going to bat for you, like on a personal level. No doubt. Tell me about some of the other things you guys have done. You talked about the branding stuff. We do internships a lot. We're hiring a ton of people. Give us some insight into those things.

Carmen Collins: Our [inaudible 00:23:18] just started in the US. In each geography the interns roll in and out at different times. We always have interns. We had some really cool things like rotation programs. In HR when you're in college, and you're doing your internship during the summer you get to try different things. Then when you are given an offer at Cisco to come back when you've graduated, they take seven or eight months rotation, and they learn what they want to do before they get tied into a job and they're like five years from now they want to leave because this is not what I wanted to do. When you're 21, who knows what you want to do with your life? I've changed that 10 times since I was out of college.

Casie Shimanski: Only 10?

Carmen Collins: Yeah, probably more than that. That's a really cool thing. We work with high school students. We have a program called Net Academy. Getting people interested in STEM, science, technology, engineering and math. Did I get that right? We like acronyms at Cisco at sometimes I totally forget what the words stand for. We have high school programs. We have one of our employees has a son, I forget how old he is. He's a maker. We featured him on one of our blog posts that he, or do you know? How do you say that Niki because you're the-

Niki Acosta: [inaudible 00:24:34]?

Carmen Collins: Yes, built a watch and got sponsorship from some big tech companies and he could probably come work for us now. What's he in the fourth grade, fifth grade? We're like, come on in.

Casie Shimanski: He's under 10 I think.

Carmen Collins: It's because his mom is a strong role model and his dad also who does not work with Cisco, but is also a strong role model, this kid is changing the world. It's because of Cisco's influence.

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Niki Acosta: He's helping his kids produce fidget spinners and they do like custom colors and he figured out a way to hack the bearing so that it's silent. He's been posting on Facebook. I think they created a whole website or whatever. I was like, how cool. He's like dude I've been dealing with this 3D printer all night long trying to get a mini spinner.

Carmen Collins: This is what Cisco people do. Last year at Cisco I think it was GSX Casie, was it the conference? It was either Cisco Live or Cisco GSX.

Casie Shimanski: Yeah one of them.

Carmen Collins: Their badges they had these really cool badges that turned colors. When they turned the light down for the show, they could say turn your badge green for this and turn it red for this. What did our engineers do? They hacked it. I don't know much to the chagrin of the event people, I suppose, but that's who Cisconians are. You see a problem, you go tackle it and even in HR, Casie and I sit in our HR. Our chief people officer, which I love her title by the way, her name is Fran [inaudible 00:26:04]. She has an event, I think it's twice a year now, where we break HR. I want you to look at HR. I want you hack it. Break it. What's not working? Come up with a new way. A lot of teams do that. We had a blog post about a hack-a-thon just a couple weeks ago on our Life At Cisco blog. They spent 36 hours with no sleep eating pizza and coming up with big ideas.

Casie Shimanski: The pizza part of that sounds okay to me.

Carmen Collins: Yeah. I don't know if I could have made it. I can't make it 12 hours without needing a nap.

Niki Acosta: Are you watching House of Cards? One of the candidates, without giving away on the show, does a 24 hour Q&A online. 24 hours.

Carmen Collins: I had to stop watching House of Cards. It kind of got too dark for me. I love Kevin Spacey. He's amazing.

Niki Acosta: It's pretty dark still.

Carmen Collins: Yeah it got pretty dark and I'm like this is hitting too close to home. I have to stop watching.

Niki Acosta: The parallels are astounding. I will say that. Oh this is fun. What else do you all want to talk about? We talked about Randy. We talked about talent. What else did I have written down here, coo things we could talk about? Oh the May the 4th.

Carmen Collins: Oh my gosh. Oh. Here's an example of Cisco's culture. We have all employee meetings once a month and they're called the Cisco Beat. Casie likes to laugh at me because sometimes I'll post videos of myself on Twitter because we have cool music before the employee meeting starts and I'll be dancing. An employee spoke up during a Q&A session, which Chuck Robbins, and kudos to this employee. I would have been so nervous and had to think out my question way in advance and it would have to be the PhD question. He asked Chuck Robbins, our CEO. He said, "Can we celebrate May the 4th as a company?" I think Chuck had to think a minute. Oh yeah, Star Wars day. May the 4th be with you. He said, "Absolutely and I nominate Rowan, one of our other executive leaders to be the executive sponsor of this."

We had this contest on May the 4th. Casie and I were at the Nasdaq in Times Square, and we did a Facebook live from the Nasdaq. We talked about our geeky selves, and what it's like to work here as a geeky person. Whether it's Star Wars or the Walking



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Dead or whatever it is you're a geek about. We took the employee pictures that they submitted and we rotated them on the Nasdaq tower in Times Square. Casie, you want to tell them about the winner because she was so awesome. I don't even think we planned it. We couldn't have planned it any better.

Casie Shimanski: Yeah. We got so many amazing photos in that day. Little videos, boomerangs.

Carmen Collins: Someone built their own R2D2. It was amazing.

Casie Shimanski: Yeah. Cisconians just totally geeking out about Star Wars day, but the winner was she dressed as Rey the latest Star Wars, and her dog was dressed as BB8. They took a photo in I don't know where she was.

Carmen Collins: She was on the beach. She was on the beach in Santa Cruz.

Casie Shimanski: Okay that makes sense.

Carmen Collins: It was really Jakku according to her.

Casie Shimanski: It looked like she was in Jakku. She had her lap top out and Cisco'd it up. It was amazing. When we saw that one come through, we were like, winner.

Carmen Collins: Done.

Casie Shimanski: The dog as BB8.

Niki Acosta: Those are the people that come to my house trick-or-treating and I'm like, oh. Nice. Can't top that one. I have a neighbor that went all out with Star Wars, big blow up things in the yard. They had a little Dr. Who door and I was like, man, they work in tech, for sure.

Carmen Collins: Seriously, she had her connectivity from Jakku. We got so many people on WebEx calls where their whole team was dressed up and they had pictures of the whole team. Like I said, someone built an R2D2 from scratch, brought it in, stole the show.

Casie Shimanski: Things and all kinds of craziness that day.

Niki Acosta: How can people find out about these things? I mean, I work at Cisco and if I didn't know you all, I wouldn't know that this stuff existed.

Carmen Collins: First you need to follow us on social.

Casie Shimanski: Yeah, follow us on social.

Niki Acosta: Follow you on social media, Instagram, SnapChat. You guys do like monthly SnapChat things?

Carmen Collins: We have an employee take over our SnapChat account every day.

Niki Acosta: Every day.

Carmen Collins: It's the scariest thing as a social media person that we've ever done in our lives, because social media people like to control things and like to produce things and make it look really good. You can't really do that with SnapChat but I think that's what makes it

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awesome. If you want to see into what a real life at Cisco day is like, that's the place because it's the employees. We don't give them scripts. They just sign up and say, okay June 7th is Cookie Day or whatever it is, and I'm going to snap about it.

- Niki Acosta: I can tell you why there's a reason why our program here is called Cloud Unfiltered. I'm hoping that that's enough of a disclaimer to not get me in trouble at some point. We have a good time though. We talk to all kinds of people. Tell us about cloud careers. We're hiring for a ton of stuff in a ton of locations.
- Carmen Collins: Yes, we cannot hire enough cloud engineers, security folks, engineers in general coders. If you like to hack things, and build things, and make a difference. One of the projects that our brand likes to talk about is that we've connected rhinos in Africa so that they can be protected from poachers. I think I saw a statistic a couple months ago that said that poaching is down 98% in the area that we did this. This is the cool. Who would think of that? The fun technology that goes on. We have a partnership with the NBA, so our Net Academy team and others make sure that you have wifi when you go watch your NBA games. We do cool stuff. We even had, for May the 4th, I will tell you this. We even had a job opening for a Jedi Knight. It's no longer open, because it was for May the 4th, but it was to tell people look. You don't have to have a role like a specific. If you're a hacker or if you're a maker, or if you're a coder, come. Let us know you're interested. We'll hook you into the right places.
- Niki Acosta: If you can make stuff move with the wave of your hand, you're welcome.
- Carmen Collins: Yes, use the force for good. Then come on over.
- Niki Acosta: Now I'm already thinking, I need to start planning for next May 4th, fur sure.
- Casie Shimanski: Yeah you do.
- Carmen Collins: You got to top our person from this year.
- Niki Acosta: Yes. I think, there's nowhere I'd rather be right now. I'm really happy. I love how flexible it is to work at Cisco. I love my team. I love the opportunities to go and do different things. There's no one standing above me saying you have to do this, this, and this. It's like, we have intended out comes but how you get there is kind of up to you. I really appreciate that. For sure.
- Carmen Collins: We like working here because we get to meet cool people like you.
- Niki Acosta: Make postings for Jedi roles. That sounds fun.
- Carmen Collins: We just get to talk to all the employees that do these cool things. We had an engineer and an account manager. It sounds like a joke. An engineer and an account manager walk into a bar. It's not a joke. It was after work and they came out and decided to climb Kilimanjaro together, and wrote a blog post about it. Casie tell us some of the other cool blog posts that we've had.
- Casie Shimanski: Oh goodness. We've got some stuff coming up on therapy dogs. We've got the hack-a-thon blog post. There's so many things going on that it's hard to keep up with all the awesomeness.
- Niki Acosta: You have a tattoo contest coming up. Yes?
- Casie Shimanski: It'll be in August, we have a blog post coming out with some of our Cisconians who have tattoos. They've got full sleeves, and not afraid to hide them. They talk about when

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they first started it was questionable, kind of like my purple hair. Is that allowed? Is that not allowed? How does that work? Low and behold they just kind of went for it and now they rock them all over the place in the office.

Niki Acosta: I will not be telling anyone about my Tinkerbell stamp.

Carmen Collins: Too late.

Niki Acosta: Oh man, regrets. There was some statistic about how many people regret their tattoos. It's like a massive number. As someone who has a lot of friends who are tattoo artists, they appreciate it because they get to make a lot of money doing cover ups.

Carmen Collins: Good to know.

Niki Acosta: That does not suck. Any parting words? We know where we can follow you. We are Cisco on-

Carmen Collins: Everywhere.

Niki Acosta: Instagram, everywhere. What are your personal Twitter accounts? Oh dear. I am @thenameiscasie, one S, not two.

Carmen Collins: Yes and I'm @cshirkeycollins. S-H-I-R-K-E-Y Collins. I had a terrible maiden name. I was the last child in the family. Had to keep the maiden name alive for the genealogy people. Yeah. I think I'd love to leave people with a piece of career advice, since I think we work with recruiters all the time. People ask us what advice we would give. I heard a story from one our recruiters that said, I interviewed this person for this role, and were they the best, qualified, person for this role. Maybe not but there was something special about them. They were different. They interviewed with three other people and the same thing. There was just something about this person that was different. They created the role for the person, instead of locking a person into a role, because they said they fit at Cisco. They were super stars. They had these great ideas. Always be yourself. We run into this in social media, Niki and us were talking about it before we started. Be careful when you post to social. Would you show it to your mama? Be you. Do you want to work for someone who doesn't like that you are who you are? If that's who you are applying for, great. I have a feeling that you're going to be coming knocking at another door pretty soon.

Niki Acosta: Inspiring. Carmen, Casie, thank you so much.

Carmen Collins: Thanks for having me.

Niki Acosta: Yeah. For sure. Thank you for tuning into Cloud Unfiltered. If you're watching on YouTube, click that subscribe button. If you're listening to us on iTunes, we encourage you to subscribe and leave us your review. If you'd like to check out earlier episodes, go to [Cisco.com/go/cloudunfiltered](https://Cisco.com/go/cloudunfiltered). Thank you for your time. We will see you next week. Yay!

Carmen Collins: Bye.

Casie Shimanski: Bye.

Niki Acosta: Bye.

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