

EPISODE 1492

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:00] SPEAKER: This episode is hosted by Mike Bifulco. Mike works as a Developer Advocate at Stripe, and is also the cohost of the API's You Won't Hate Podcast. Follow Mike at mikebifulco.com.

Zigi is an AI powered personal assistant for developers. By managing your dev workflow and handling all of your mundane non-programming tasks across multiple apps directly from Slack, Zigi helps you focus on code creation and innovation. Zigi connects to all of your cloud tools, such as Jira, GitHub, and your calendar in order to get a 360-degree view of your daily workflow. Zigi then analyzes and cross references all of that data in real time to automate manual work to keep you fully updated about your tasks and priorities. Nir Benson is the co-founder and CEO at Zigi and joins us today to discuss what he and his team have built.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:01:00] MB: There comes a time in every software developers' work life where they get overloaded with things and at some point, you find yourself having more on your plate to do than you can handle or even the correct amount of tasks becomes overwhelming because of the amount of work you need to get done to start work. As someone who's worked on quite a few different software teams and product teams, over the years, I've experienced this in many different forms. And if you work on a software team, you're probably very familiar with this yourself.

We all have our sort of life hacks and tools and tricks that we use to try and make our workday a little better, and to try and be productive as much as we can. And those work to varying extents, and certainly the more experienced you are, the more likely you are to have something that you try to make work for you. So, enter Zigi, zigi.ai is a work productivity tool designed to help software teams be more productive in the work that they're doing right within the tools that they're using automatically. It's got some great AI features to help learn how the users of the tool are working, to learn how individuals on a team are productive, and how they get things done. I'm here today chatting with Nir Benson from Zigi to talk a bit about that story behind Zigi and things that led us to where we are today with the product. Nir, how are you doing today?

[00:02:12] NB: I'm great, Mike, thanks for having me. Excited to be here.

[00:02:15] MB: Of course. Really nice to have you here. To get started, why don't you tell me a little bit about yourself and maybe your career before you co-founded Zigi?

[00:02:22] NB: Okay, so I had an interesting career. So, I was always into computers ever since I was in high school. Then in the university, I studied computer science, but mix it up with business development, because it intrigued me to do both sides. Since then, I've been pretty much in building products in the last 16 years, I'm embarrassed to say. Started my career as a software developer, moved on to becoming a team leader, then became a project manager, a lease manager and managed big teams product used by millions. Also spend time being an Agile coach and moved several organizations to Agile, we thought that will help, and the overhead we have in our day to day, then I will say to the to the downside, open the customer success department. Lead says the business development in startups in large enterprises.

Also, this is actually not my first startup. The first bootstrap startup in Israel was one hell of a ride, and lots of lessons learned. We ended up selling up out of a local retailer. So, tried a lot of things. But always the rounds after.

[00:03:39] MB: Yeah, got it. I'm a past startup founder myself. I've been through a couple of bootstrap startups that I started and took on that roller coaster. I think I'm the first to tell you that that's the best way to get the best learnings from the school of hard knocks when it comes to building a product and building a team. And certainly, I'm sure you've internalized some of the things that came from that. So, you've built a bunch of products, you've worked on a bunch of teams in business development, you've been an Agile coach, you've done all these sorts of things. Obviously, some of that work must have led you to where we are today. Maybe can you give me the elevator pitch for Zigi? What's the short pitch for someone who's never heard of it?

[00:04:10] NB: So, in short, Zigi is a developer workflow assistant that helps automate all those mundane on coding tasks and connecting with workflows, and the fun fact is, it does it all from Slack.

[00:04:24] MB: Oh, that's really cool. So, right within the tools that these teams are probably using to be productive, they kind of get some bonus from the benefit of Zigi. So, why don't you tell me about how you got there? What was the story behind how Zigi was started?

[00:04:35] NB: Well, sure. So Zigi actually started for my own career path, being a developer, managing big teams, and also seeing it throughout the years. How the R&D environment has become so much complicated. We started working in fragmented teams in different time zones, and as products evolve, there's so much more dependencies between one another. And out in the environment, also got consumed with so many new tools that got into the workspace. I found out that, we all want to be productive. We all want to work great as a team, and we all want to get recognition. But the current way that we actually work, doesn't really enable us to be productive. We are actually overwhelmed by all those endless notifications, status meetings, context switching, making a day plan in the morning, stepping out of the room and seeing you all the plan bears.

So, that really led us to starting Zigi with understanding that if we want to do a good job and be happy, I must say, then we need a way to manage this work environment. It was also important for us to build something that makes work fun again, because I worked at small teams, and that was an amazing experience, then I moved to larger teams. And then I found out that out in the environment as it goes, starts to feel a bit, not as nice anymore, and a bit overwhelming. So, we want to make the process fun, and enable us to build together in a fun way, because we are doing amazing things.

[00:06:20] MB: Yeah, I think now, especially a lot of us work on teams that are either remote or distributed, with some people being remote, and some people being in person, that's had quite a bit of impact on the way that work gets done. I think you've probably heard, like I have over and over that work gets done better in person, and in the office, people do a lot more productive things. I kind of gripe with that. I don't know that that's necessarily true. I think it's maybe more the opinion of the people paying rent in some cases. But I'm curious, so what was the very, very first version of Zigi? What was the first thing you built to automate with Zigi?

[00:06:51] NB: Well, to be honest, since I've been doing it for 16 years, and I had past experience, I wanted to give it a try and make sure that the concept actually works and benefits people before writing a single line of code. So, what I actually did was I reached out to a very great big company, big cyber company that I know, and I told them that, "Listen, I have this idea for Zigi and I want to give it a try."

And they said, "Okay. Sounds nice. So, why don't we give you one team leader on our team, and let you play with it for sprint." I said, "I will grab this opportunity."

So again, there were really, really nice, so they bought me a laptop, to be able to connect to all of those systems. What actually happened was that we started with one person, with this team leader, and in the first three weeks, it actually grew to more than 50 people that will be using Zigi on a daily basis, which was amazing. What was not amazing in this experience was that actually did the Zigi MVP manually, right? So, what was the actual MVP was that every morning, developers, team leaders got a Slack message from me with the daily checklist. Everything they should be aware of today, the next action items and stuff like those, and it was an amazing experience. People inviting me back, thank you for that, thank you for lighting the way, or I can't do work in the morning, and I wait for Zigi to tell me what to do. So that was an amazing experience on the one hand.

On the second hand, every night doing all of that manually, it took me something like two hours for every team to do this manually. And there was like five, six teams. But that was really how sick he got started and we worked with him for six months, got a lot of feedback to understand now this is something that has a positive impact on their life. When we saw that there's so much great feedback and excitement around what we're doing and the type of assistance that Zigi provides, then we decided it's time to build a company around it. So, that's actually how Zigi got started.

[00:09:12] MB: Sure, there's a lot to unpack there. First of all, it's very cool that you were able to just reach out to a local company with an idea to start a product and to go build something and to just test it out. And that they were open to giving it a go. I'm not sure that's something that I've encountered before as a success story, at least. It's really interesting to hear. I think I've also heard the recommendation quite a bit that one of the best ways to build a product is to do the hard work yourself manually until it becomes too cumbersome and tiresome to do, and then to start automating from there. Because that sort of helps you identify the problem to solve, to have a better feeling for what the work is and what we're really solving rather than making assumptions about what the automation should do what your product should provide. So, it sounds like, at first really, Zigi was the man behind the curtain. It was near doing the work and scaling beyond one person to multiple teams, to 50 people at once.

[00:09:59] NB: Yeah, that was amazing, and actually this company, that really understands the value that Zigi provides, and the need, we need to invest in the way that we work together, there are still

customers today working with us, and spread around their entire R&D. So that's amazing. For me, also, the magic moment for me to Zigi was, I was doing this type of work as a developer, as a manager for so many years. And suddenly, when I took this way that Zigi connects the dots, I suddenly felt like I have superpowers, that I didn't have before. Walking in every system, monotone, trying to understand, make sense of it all, to understand what's next for me, and suddenly, everything revealed itself to me. So, that was an amazing experience as well, to get started.

[00:10:50] MB: Yeah, it sounds like some of the magic behind what you're doing early on, and certainly what it's extrapolated to today is that Zigi is something that cares about the person, right? It's trying to make your life easier by getting rid of friction, in your own experience that you may not even understand it's there. Because you're so used to going and doing your daily standup or doing your combing through a giant list of things in JIRA to see what you should do next, or what you've forgotten update and things like that.

[00:11:12] NB: Yeah, and I must say about that, part of that process as well was I interviewed dozens of developers from so many companies, and what I found was that the ones that engage and motivated and empower that role, part of organization that really understands the value of using data to bridge the gap between everyone that are involved in it. So, I found that these developers actually feel much more engaged and motivated because they understand the impact of their day to day work to the business goal, to where the company is headed. So, I said, "Okay, we really need to make this process more data driven for everyone." So, that was also very interesting for me.

[00:11:58] MB: Yeah, I'd imagine once you're plugged in, there's quite a bit of data you can pull from various, the various things that developers tend to interact with and software teams used to get things done. With that said, can you tell me a bit about the tools you use to build Zigi? What's your stack look like?

[00:12:12] NB: Okay, so we made changes as we evolved, which was also a very interesting experience. We're on Google Cloud and we started Zigi in Python, we started writing Zigi in Python, for that to make sense to us. Actually, what we moved on along the process was we shifted completely to Go, which made the experience so much greater, the performance is amazing. It's like 5% of the time. It took us on Python, and the memory consumption as well, and that's so important for what we're building. Because as we are providing a service and assistance to developers, which are the most

incredible audience in the world, but also the most advanced, so you want to be always up, you want to give them a very good experience from day one.

So, we made those changes in order to be able to support them. We did that, obviously, we use the tool stack, and we use Zigi on ourselves. This means that we use Slack for communication and for collaboration. We use GitHub and Bitbucket to manage our code and JIRA to manage our tasks. And based on that, Zigi's also been growing. Also, based on the feedback within our team.

[00:13:35] MB: Yeah, wow. So, it's nice that you're able to use it yourselves, as you're building into I'm sure that gives you a lot of empathy for the folks who are consumers of Zigi. So, let's imagine for a second that you and I were building a product together and some other team were on a software engineering team, and we're adopting Zigi, we're starting to use it, what changes in my work day as an engineer on the team, once we turn Zigi on?

[00:13:55] NB: So, we're really focused about how can we actually help you and how can we actually reduce all those noise and friction from your day. So, most of Zigi users, when they start, they can actually pretty much go ahead and mute all those endless notifications, from JIRA, from GitHub and others, and Zigi, cherry picks, just the right information for them. A good example for that, that I like to give is let's say, I'm caught up at work, I'm doing – I'm actually building and someone just change the description of the task in my backlog. Why should I know about it right now? Well, I shouldn't. But on the other end, if someone just pulls my code to production, I should know about it right now. Okay, so that's pretty much always Zigi walks about, how can we contain and aggregate all of those information and filter out what's not important? What's less important or I should know on a general level, maybe this is a good candidate for my morning message, just as an FYI. But definitely not something that you interrupt me in the middle of the day. So, these are the way we consume about how can we really make a difference in our day to day lives and reduce the noise.

[00:15:17] MB: That makes a lot of sense. So, if I'm a dev on your team, and we're working together, is Zigi a daily check in that that shows up in the mornings for me? Is it something where I'll get notifications throughout the day if they're important enough? Is it a mix of the two? What does it actually look like from the Slack integration side?

[00:15:31] NB: Okay, great. So, to get started with Zigi, it takes two minutes. All you need to do is go to our website, zigi.ai register to our banner, you will get an email from us, probably within one business day or less, with a link to get started. You just add it to your Slack connected Jira, and GitHub, that will take you probably around two minutes, and you're good to go. You're good to get started from this point on. We aim to be by your side, help you throughout your day. So, Zigi really starts for you in the morning. I'm a big believer of daily checklists. So, every morning, Zigi really aggregates all those action items that are waiting for me, in the single list.

Because when I was a developer, most of what I cared about when I got up in the morning was getting back to coding, right? But I still needed to make sure that no one shifted my player with these, they there isn't any action items or friends waiting for my attention, or I don't have any tasks that are waiting for others and all those things, and I also needed to come prepared for the daily stand up and try to remember whether to actually do it yesterday, and make sure I'm validating what I'm going to do today.

So, in the morning, Zigi provides me this daily checklist based on my specific workflow, which Zigi absorbs automatically. Then throughout the day, Zigi continues to be by my side, and provide me just the right information related to what I'm doing right now and be very actionable about it within Slack. And then, at the end of the week, Zigi also summarizes the week for me, meaning what did I actually do this week, which areas of the code I worked on, others that correlate with it. If I'm a team leader, it's how we move the needle as a team. If I was the top of – you're on my team for this week, then I'll get curious about it.

This is the type of help that Zigi is already providing. As we move forward, the goal is really to streamline the entire way we work as a development team. All the communication we have between developers and team leaders, and all that.

[00:17:47] MB: Yeah, it sounds like there's quite a bit there that helps everyone along the process. For developers who haven't worked in a sort of large enterprise team, or maybe even are looking at their first job in software engineering, it can be subtle, how important it is to be able to get your work done, but then also later, explain what you did. Oftentimes, this is from the perspective of what did we get done in this sprint, but it can also be once or twice a year, you might have to write your review for yourself saying, "Hey, here are the things I got done. This is why I'm on the track for a promotion or why

I should be in line for a promotion this time, or why I deserve a raise or whatever the case may be.” It really, really can take quite a bit of time.

I've definitely fallen into the pit where, you know, it gets to let's say November, and I know I have my review is in December, and suddenly I have 11 months' worth of my work to go sift through and figure out what the most important things were and go collect all the feedback from those and try and summarize it with numbers and give impact descriptions and things like that. That's very, very time consuming, and the further away you get from something in time, the less resolution there is in your memory. You can't remember exactly how well it when or what the real story was behind it. Having regular check ins with that and a historical record generated for you is something that would be incredible.

My personal workflow right now is that that's something I do on Friday afternoons. I try and sit down and write, here's the big things that happened this week, good, bad and otherwise, and then the things that I'm grateful for and thankful for. I can tell you that I would love to have at least some of that automated in particular, if the AI memory is better than mine. I'm all for it. That sounds really great.

[00:19:14] NB: Exactly. I'm trying to get the guys to make it Zigi for me as well, because I'm not coding anymore, but they are consumed and passionate about the need for developers. So, I need to do it for myself.

[00:19:26] MB: Yeah, sure. And it makes sense up and down the chain too, right? Let's say the business in sort of quotes with capital letters, they people who, that your engineering team is building something for, probably want to know how productive your team is being and what things are being addressed. If there's feedback coming from end users, how that's being addressed, and if bugs are being closed and all that, and having sort of automated reports for those things from your team is a fantastic thing to be able to provide.

[00:19:49] NB: The way I look at it, especially for big teams and there was so much – as I said, I was an Agile coach. I know quite a bit about that and this and this, anti-HR manifesto, and stuff about, the way that we work. I mean, Agile is great. It's a great concept, although I always told teams I worked with. It's not the Bible, it's a concept. You should take the principle out of it and adjust it to the way your team actually works. What I found is that, part of the reasons, the data and the environment for big

teams doesn't really feel nice anymore, is because it feels like there's so much micromanagement within, and I believe that's also because managers, they feel insecure, because they have no real data, because there's no data on that in the environment. So, they poke us and interrupt us developers in our day to day job.

I mean, we talked about it in the daily stand up meeting this morning, why are we talking about this one again, and stuff like that. And we believe that in order to make this process a bit more data driven, and everyone has the input, they need the data they need to drive their work forward, then we're actually creating a more empowering and healthy R&D environment. So, that's what we're passionate about. We definitely, we don't really buy into the fact that we can just create analytics on the development environment, and because in our view, in what we're doing, we're building product, this is creative work, that is done by multiple team members with dependencies.

So, analytics, it's not a real factor. Analytics alone, we don't really believe that's the way to go. We believe that if you want to be productive and work better, as a team, it's all around automation, and AI, and really taking away everything that can be automated from the way that we work together. That's what we're passionate and focused about.

[00:21:47] MB: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. I think analytics tends to pander to our human nature to want to have something easily measurable, to be able to point out that. "Hey, I we had wrote 10,000 lines of code this month." Or, "We closed 53 bugs." But those don't necessarily capture the true impact of something or the qualitative impact of something, whether or not it's actually making the world around you better.

[00:22:07] NB: Exactly. The way I see it, what is actually productivity. This is a hot potato, right? Especially, for creative work, such as development, my belief is, as a developer, as a manager, it was always around a great developer, productive developer is someone that is accountable. Meaning, I come in tell you, "Mike, listen, this will be done next Thursday. It will be ready by next Thursday." So, do I live up to that? Or do I raise a flag if it doesn't, and let you know about it? It's about quality. Of course, if I know I bought with action, that's a problem. And it's mostly around teamwork. The way we build together because we don't do it alone.

So, these are the values that we promote as a product, because this is actually what moves the needle. And now, analytics, lines of code means nothing, number of tasks closed also doesn't mean much. We can really learn from that, on our productive we are as a team, especially we can learn from that as an individual. We all want to take our train forward and we have a vision of where we want to go to, and we have no really data that helps us facilitate that.

[00:23:25] MB: Yeah, I really love that you described this as a creative process and that teamwork is at the heart of building good products is a really important fundamental thing to understand that is often the difference between something that just works and something that feels like you want to include it in your life and make it a part of your workflow or keep it installed on your phone, or whatever the case may be for. So, let's shift gears a little bit. I would love to hear if you are talking to a team who's considering using Zigi, what's one feature that you would recommend to the developer to that team, we have never used it before they try it, what's the first thing they should try?

[00:23:57] NB: So, the first thing they should definitely try is the full facilitation we are doing to the entire pool request process. So, that's something that we found involves team work and something we deeply care about, and there's so much friction around it today. So, this is the first thing a thing that Zigi offers is always at every single point of time, alerting me on stuff that really needs my attention, cherry picking those and enabling me to understand in real time when someone needs my help, and be able to provide it. Also, alerting me for example, it's in the small details, because it's so much time consuming, it's part about days. So, for example, someone requested both of us to do a review and I was out for lunch and I'm back and we I get this notification that that was requested. But Mike, you already did this review. So, Zigi will find that out for me and let me know, "Okay, no worries Mike did it." So, that's one thing.

Another thing that we found was people actually, sometimes even embarrassed to do is ask for reviews, ask colleagues to do those reviews. And I heard so many stories about teams that feels embarrassed about it, if someone just wanted, they create a pull request, I think down in the Slack channel for the team. Can anyone assist me? I don't really enjoy asking their colleagues to do that. So, what Zigi does here is automatically help us helping us to find reviewers within the team that are qualified to do this job. Or let's say that, as for your review yesterday, and you didn't do it yet, then I have an option within Zigi for a friend to send you a friendly reminder, to ping you, we call it ping

reviewer. So, that's something that is extremely useful to identify those PRs that are waiting for attention.

So, I'm proud to say that what we are seeing now with our users that we've been able to reduce waiting time for reviews to almost zero for users, and when I look at our Zigi users, and this was amazing for me to find out was we are actually cutting down cycle time for pull requests by over 50%, which is astonishing to me. So, definitely try out Zigi's full facilitation for pull requests. It really does an amazing job.

[00:26:21] MB: Yeah, I think that alone would make a lot of developer teams really happy. It's funny that you mentioned the slight embarrassment of asking for review. It turns out, there's like a lot of social pressure to ask someone to interrupt what they're doing to take a look at your work, and then scrutinize and criticize your work, especially you get the feeling that if you're interrupting someone's day, and they're grumpy about it, they might give you a more harsh review. But if there's an intermediary that's sort of objective and unbiased, then maybe it helps that process along a little better in the improvement in time is, your right, astonishing. 50% better is massive for everyone, obviously.

[00:26:55] NB: Yeah. It helps us win as a team, and then on the individual level to show our group photo, that's really –

[00:27:03] MB: Yeah, that's the goal in the end. What about are there unconventional uses of Zigi or unconventional benefits from Zigi that have surprised you along the way?

[00:27:12] NB: Well, I was actually surprised, but happy to be surprised about how much really developers care about their teammates, and about working together anyone, I'm getting those because, okay, so I have my pull request, and I want to get those done. I have my colleagues that request my review. But I want to see also, the surrounding. I want to see a pull request of other teammates, and maybe I can chip in, and help them as well. So, that was really a great experience to see how much we, as developers understand that we are doing this as a team and this is teamwork. So, that was really great for us.

Also, the fact that – I wasn't really surprised about it, but the request to have Zigi as a single stop shop, to manage all everything that is non-coding. I mean, updating JIRA statuses getting notification. So,

really aggregate all that information in a single place. I haven't got feature requests for people saying, I want to get also my meetings, my calendar meetings sent to me in Slack. I'm like, and I'm a big fan of the Google Calendar. I was like, "Why? They're doing such an amazing job." "I want it all in one place." So, the need to have a single place to aggregate in real time, everything that's on my table was surprisingly good.

[00:28:36] MB: Yeah, definitely. I think there's a lot to being to the human part of being on these teams. And remembering that we can return some humanity that to the process by making – one, making your day better is just always, always a massive benefit. But drawing teams closer together, or giving teams the space to be thankful for each other, or to know that each other is participating in a way that's healthy and to grow each other's skills is really, really impactful. That's one of those things that I think along lines, what we were just saying is a super hard thing to measure with numbers, right? That is not a number of issues closed or number of lines of code written or users adopted, but it's something that really, really turns up the dials on the way you're able to produce a good product, to produce a healthy work environment, to sustain what you're doing and to make something that your team and the people who use it are going to love too.

[00:29:22] NB: Exactly, there's so much of that, that is part of our motivators, as individuals and making work fun. Because we're blessed to be doing amazing job and bid awesome products. So, why shouldn't it be fun as well? Obviously, it's reality. So, we really put a lot of focus and also with our beta users about how can we make Zigi fun for you just enter the workflow, which normally, people don't really care too much about the workflow. But how can we help shape a better day to day experience with that? So, this is part of what we're doing now in our beta. We're not perfect yet, obviously, but we love getting feedback from our users on how Zigi can be better for them. And obviously, I invite more people to join the beta and give us feedback on how to make Zigi great for them.

[00:30:16] MB: Yeah, the feedback loop is important as you're growing a product, especially from a new state. It's great to hear that your team is open to that feedback and actively listening and especially like trying to draw new users from, obviously, different walks of life, different teams, who will probably give you varying feedback, will be really helpful. I want to talk a little bit about you Nir, for a little bit if that's okay. I'm curious on a personal level, how have you benefited from using Zigi in your workday?

[00:30:40] NB: So, for me, and I'm actually not writing code too much these days. But definitely, from the perspective of a team leader, seeing what the team is up to, understanding what is stuck, for example. I'm really glad that I know this, because we've gotten our feedback in the last few days. Let's push it forward, or identifying great wins of the team and be able to use that data to give great recommendations. So, Zigi is really great for me, especially not to be part of the problem. Because this is a startup. We want to do so much and to let the work not interrupt them, but still have the full visibility on the business impact, and how we move the needle. So, this is mostly where I get the benefits today. The rest of the team is actually moved, obviously completely do using Zigi, and we're also getting great feedbacks in a form within the team. It's so fun when you're actually using your own product. And we know when get it right, and we definitely know when we got it wrong. Because if you don't use it, no one else will probably use it as well. So, sorry for saying that way. It's a no bullshit process that way. That's amazing.

[00:32:06] MB: Yeah, you can't escape that, certainly. One thing I wanted to point out too is I was on browsing Zigi's website earlier, and I think it's really cool that you have a page that describes the benefits for team leaders. Because I think from the product pitch initially, you might think that as a developer, it's going to make my day to day workflow better. It'll make my mornings better, my chickens easier, whatever. But the magic comes with that coalescing of features for individuals and for team leaders where you get a better view of what's going on and you can understand with more confidence that, like you said, you're not stopping up the process, and you're not blocking things as well. That's a very cool feature and that's one of those things that I think you've done a really good job of, on your website, the marketing site here. From the perspective of someone who's looking at the product, and from the perspective of someone who builds products myself, it's really cool to see how you've described it so well. It's one of these things that I think that if you're listening to the podcast right now, for our listeners, you should go and check out the page, it's zigi.ai/team-leader, does a really, really cool job of describing those features for leads. Yeah, just kind of wanted to give a shout out for that.

[00:33:08] NB: For me, it's also important for our experience as developers and as team leaders, because I remember when I got promoted, and you become a manager, and you feel and you do that, in order to manage people, to help them grow personally and professionally. But no one told you before you took the job, that actually you will be an operator, most of your day. You will be stuck between both sides and most of the – they'll be around, what's the status of this one, and over that one. So, we really felt and that we want to make team leaders real managers to do what they're appointed to do and not to

just try to make sense of it all. When I talk to developers as well, and I definitely correlate with that a lot of our motivators, there's the company, and they impact the company does. But at the end of the day, we're humans working with other humans.

So, my relationship with my team was a critical part of my engagement and motivation. If she was busy doing operational work and had no time to see me, then that reflected on me as well. So, that's why we made Zigi command center. With command center, within Slack, for team leaders so they can get an understanding of everything they need to know and still have the time to do what they want to do.

[00:34:40] MB: Sure, sure. Yeah. So, another semi personal question. You work with a lot of people who have presumably gotten some time back in their day. Do you have recommendations for things for people if they find themselves with a spare 15 minutes, half hour in their day for personal enrichment? Things you can do to buy back some of the work life balance or personal growth or satisfaction. What are maybe some things that you do, or that you would recommend for people outside of the work stuff?

[00:35:05] NB: Well, what I found was and the way we that we work before Zigi, there's so many problematic overload and stress, and it's overwhelming. I would recommend, using this time off to go outside, take a deep breath, relax. If we're in the office, because we are now split between home and walk, spend time calling, and use that time to get to know each other better, even have more time to try to understand what we're doing? How does that correlate with what the company wants? Because I really – when I was doing development role, I always was intrigued about, okay, how is what I'm doing correlates with what the business is trying to achieve? How do I have moved the needle? So, I think there's a lot to do – we take all those machines and hardware away for a few minutes, and spend time with each other.

[00:36:16] MB: Yeah, I like that a lot. Personally, a massive fan of being outdoors and spending time away from a screen every day, even just a little bit. I find personally that it helps me to transition between tasks relatively well too. If I have a hard morning of work, and I know I have a hard afternoon coming ahead of me, I like to play an hour and a half hour walk or even just sit outside and drink a coffee, something like that to kind of reset myself.

[00:36:36] NB: That's what we're actually doing, also, as a team. We work hard, we start early, then most of the thing goes, we'll go to the gym for an hour, an hour and a half, and come back with so much energy.

[00:36:51] MB: Yeah. Sure, yeah, that's another one of those things. It's hard to measure, but sometimes not doing work is the best thing to help you do more work.

[00:37:00] NB: Definitely.

[00:37:02] MB: Yeah. So, what's next for Zigi? Do you have any upcoming features or projects, challenges, things that you're working on, that you're excited about?

[00:37:08] NB: Well, we have a very clear mission, which is to streamline and help us build together as a team, with each of us based on their specific workflow, and drive it all forward. So, we definitely are going to add the missing elements about CI/CD systems, obviously, to really have a real – to paint the full picture of our day to day work as an individual. And we're also starting to focus more and more about how can we streamline the communication within the development teams, between us and the team leader. So, moving from great value, we manage, for me to understand everything, to update our systems, always know what's next, in order to streamline the way that I communicate with my team leaders and others. So hopefully, we'll do that and more and more features from of community about taking it all into Zigi.

[00:38:08] MB: Yeah, yeah. Oh, that's great. Your mission is very clear. And I think especially probably from the feedback you're getting from your users, the next steps will be clearer and clearer as you're going through here. What about is your team growing? Are you hiring right now?

[00:38:21] NB: Yes, definitely. So, far, we were a small, lean and mean team in Tel Aviv with amazing people and we really want to make Zigi remote first company. We feel that there's so much talent all over the world and it will be so much interesting to work together in different time zones as part of the team. So, we are hiring software developers, Go developers, and hopefully, a product manager, but someone that actually came from doing the work, being developers, doing big teams and understand the pain points about how to do it, then serving it to users. And we're looking for developer advocate as well to join the team as we move – now we are actually out of STEM just a week ago. So, now reach

out to the community, so we have all of those open positions on our website, and we would love for great candidates to apply.

[00:39:27] MB: Sure. Yeah, that's great. So actually, it's a good lead in. If someone is interested in getting started with Zigi, and where should they go? And also, if someone is interested in applying to work in Zigi, where should they go?

[00:39:35] NB: So, in order to get started with Zigi, you just need to go to our website. It's zigi.ai. There's a button, join our beta, it's completely free. It's important to say that we integrate with your system on a user permission level, on a developer permission level. So, you don't need any admin to let you in those. Zigi has the security standard. It doesn't scan your code or anything of that sort. We're already working with public companies, Unicorn, cyber companies and others. And so just, to go to our website, click join the beta, let us know what your tool set looks like, to you understand if we can support you now or in the next couple of months. And then we'll just shoot you an email with a link to get started. We have a community, a Slack community, obviously in Slack. They provide support, that's the way to get started. And we invite all the listeners out there to be part of our beta and help us shape a better way to build software. So, that's what we'll do. We'll find a way to work as a team and build software. Also, on our website, there is our career page with the openings that we have on the team, and we'd love for the listeners to see if this is appealing to them.

[00:40:53] MB: Sure, yeah, we'll make sure that the links that you mentioned are in the show notes here too, for folks to find as well. What about tracking you down? Is there anywhere you're active online, where listeners can come to hear what you're thinking or to get in touch?

[00:41:04] NB: Well, I'd be happy to share my email as well on that. Currently I'm not still very active on social medias. Gonne start doing that a bit more, but in Twitter, we have Zigi's account and we would love to talk and communicate with listeners.

[00:41:26] MB: Yeah, we'll make sure Zigi's Twitter is linked as well. You sound like you've got a great handle on your own personal work life balance, and I'm very, very envious of that.

[00:41:33] NB: I have also, three kids. I need to find time to spend with them, and learn all the new tricks. My 10 years old is now teaching me in my spare time, how to trade in NFT. So, we'll see how that goes.

[00:41:50] MB: Wow. That's amazing. Yeah. Fantastic. Well, thanks so much. Nir Benson from Zigi, zigi.ai. It was wonderful chatting with you. Really interesting to hear about the product that you're building and the way that you're helping developers build better products for their team. Had a really wonderful time talking. We will make sure that your links to Zigi's website and Twitter and all those things are in the description for the show for our listeners to check out. Nir, it was wonderful chatting with you. Have a great day.

[00:42:13] NB: Thank you so much, Mike. Thanks for having me.

[END]