

Scientific Approach to Green Buildings with Chris Pyke | Transcript

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Introduction: Welcome to Green Building Matters, the original and most popular podcast focused on the Green Building Movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED Fellow . Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. Settle in. Grab a fresh cup of coffee and get ready to find out why green building matters.

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Charlie: Hi everybody. Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters podcast. I'm your host, Charlie Cichetti. I've got Chris Pyke with us this week. Chris and I have seen each other, we joke, in different locations than really where we both home base. Chris is outside of the Washington, DC area. I'm in Atlanta and we even ran into each other a few months ago and all places out in Munich, Germany, kind of their green build Europe, if you will. I have been wanting to talk to Chris and hear about his story, and that's why I invited him on. Chris, how are you doing today?

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Chris: I'm doing great, Charlie. I appreciate the chance to be here.

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Charlie: 100%. I've just seen you in so many different ways. We'll talk about your time with the USGBC and getting us all the way to where today you're senior VP of product and Arc Skoru. Tell us the origin story though. Where did you grow up and where did you go to school?

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Chris: I appreciate the chance. I grew up in Arlington, Virginia, actually not that far from where I live now, but I had no expectation of being here when I was in my late forties. I grew up in Arlington, in the D.C. area, and then I was one of those kids that got to be 18, piled everything in the car, drove down to Waynesburg, Virginia, went to William and Mary, and had the opportunity to spend what amounted to five years there. After that time, I kept going west, mountains and running and rock climbing and that kind of stuff. Over the intervening ten years he kept moving to Boulder, ultimately to Santa Barbara before having family and stuff that brought us home. And so that's the big picture story.

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Charlie: All the way west and then came back, I love that man. I know you did some post-grad work while you're out there at UC Santa Barbara. Connect those dots, if you don't mind, your undergrad this journey where you what kind of work were you doing and then maybe even going back to school? Can you tell us about that?

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Chris: It's a weird story. I'll bring you back to the beginning. It's like one of those things on Tic Tok where you see someone up to their waist in mud and you're like, "Huh? How, how did they get that way?" When I left the D.C. area, I had this opportunity to go work as a research assistant at a place called the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Before long, I literally found myself up to it in the dark, up to my waist, in mud, emptying nets and weighing fish and measuring crabs. I got really lucky in that experience at this place called VIMS, where the work was literally at the intersection between the built environment, land use and natural habitats like wetlands. We were in wetlands, so we were climbing through backyards before, emerging into lush grass all the time. The bottom line is that really got me into environmental science at this literal intersection between the stuff going on in the land like development, like shopping centers and homes and that stuff, and what was going on in the bay. We were out there paddling and

fishing and all that kind of stuff. I had that experience and I made these friendships and relationships that I carried with me from that point forward. I really got into that way of thinking about the problem. I went from biology to ecology. I ended up studying the forest in Panama and I ended up back in California ultimately. But one way or another, I've always been interested in that fundamental intersection between land use, the built environment and natural systems. My whole tour has been that. Ultimately that ended up being in California studying geography of all things. Honest to God, the real story is well before I got to grad school, geography, I didn't even know what the hell geography was. This is just between you, me and everybody listening. I was studying geology because I liked hydrology and it turned out when I looked in the course catalog, geology is next to geography and I started looking at their courses and I'm like, Whoa, those are a lot more interesting. I got into GIS remote sensing and as is indicative my very first day of grad school I showed up at UC Santa Barbara. My advisor walks in on me and he literally hands me a stack of reel tapes like the old magnetic kind. He basically plops them in my hands and he says, "Hey, tell me. How much carbon is in the forest?" I was like, "Great." A lot of windy stories there. The bottom line is all of those things are held together with this idea of the intersection between the kind of built environment and natural systems one way or the other. And that's been the kind of common thread through all that.

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Charlie: I'd like to follow up with how did you get that sustainability kind of itch you just told us about? Connect the dots for us.

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Chris: I'll give you two vignettes about that. One is what I ended up doing when I was at UC Santa Barbara, I ended up doing my dissertation on climate change and land use in the Central Valley of California. Literally the intersection between urban sprawl and climate change and land use and endangered critters. What really interested me was what was driving urban

land use? Why did it grow the way it did? How did it work? And so for me, that related to this passion for what I thought of is going down in scale. I wanted to know why cities grew the way they do, and I wanted to work on something that can make a difference in making them grow in a better way versus a worse way. I went off to the US EPA, my wife got a postdoc and I had a fellowship from the Nature Conservancy. We went back to DC. After a couple of years I ended up in a perfectly great career science job at the US EPA. I studied air and water and their impact on land use and ecosystems. But I wanted to do something at a finer scale. My friend Heather Rosenberg, who is a longtime champion of the green building industry, works at air up today. Heather Malcolm Lewis at CTG Energetics recruited Heather into his then 30 person engineering firm in Irvine, California. Heather and Malcolm pulled me out of a totally, perfectly comfortable government research job to do fly by night, green building, consulting. There's no logic behind that and this was like 2006 or something like that. I remember right about that time as an indicator of that moment for some of the folks who have been in our industry a long time. Malcolm was a father figure. He was the embodiment of a sort of practice centered firm. A lot of people in our industry have had a moment with him. I remember riding an elevator with Malcolm and Bill Browning up to the old Mass USGBC office, and the doors literally opened and there were all these cool people in there. I was like, "Whoa, this is for me." Anyway, the bottom line is Malcolm made a huge difference. Heather made a huge difference in changing the direction of my career. And things probably never were the same.

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Charlie: Wow. I love it, man. Those are some really good early influences. Have done a lot for the green building movement and and thanks for connecting how you got into green buildings literally there and then and then some time at the US Green Building Council. I do want to ask more mentors. You just named a couple. They had some influence. Anyone else open a door for you or you looked up along the way?

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Chris: Yeah, that's a great question. I feel like there is a family of folks who kind of my foundational family in the green building community are folks related to the CTG community. We've all gone on to have this alumni program. I like each place that I've had the privilege of working, has kind of created this by playing it forward. I really value my EPA colleagues and they continue to open doors. I'll take your question all the way back. My very first boss mentored things at that old Virginia Institute of Marine Science. I got to say, we remain friends. One guy in particular, his name's Kirk. He was my first boss and he opened doors to both personal and professional opportunities that lasted for decades. I value that. At that time, I was probably an 18 or 19 year old kid and providing a positive, a positive set of experiences with what we would now call sustainability, environmental stuff and kind of providing a runway over time. I've really had that in the back of my head as I've had the privilege of working with students and interns and associates over time. How do we give that launching pad in that sustained engagement? There's so many things I could call up, but that one seems the most foundational and really taking someone under your wing. A lot to say about that. But that's there. I got to say that those things matter.

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Charlie: I love how you weaved in the personal introductions. Look back and there's probably just a handful for all of us in our careers. I really needed that at the time, whether it was encouragement or a door opened or a little nudge or Come on, what are you thinking here? Let's talk a little more about that career timeline. Tell us about your early time. The US Green Building Council and how that's got you into some other things. How was it back 2009 -2010 at the US Green Building Council?

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Chris: It was a good time. I got into it when I was with CTG. I spent about two years consulting, as many people do to the Council for various things.

And so that got me in with Brendan Owens and Jason Harkey and Carol Kizer and Rebecca Flora. These folks who were around in that 2007, 2008 time timescale, and it was kind of salad days. It was exciting. We were doing dozens and dozens of LEED workshops. I got in the early days of consulting for Brendan, particularly Owens in the early days of LEED 2009. I was part of the consulting team that basically did the analytic basis for 2009 that included the Tracy impact categories, the credit weightings. We did spreadsheets, we did all sorts of really fun stuff. And I thought, this is really cool. And at the same time as everyone knows, the other part of our business, like GTG, which was consulting to master master plan developers in 2007. That was not so fun. I was on a frickin plane to the West Coast, really intimately involved in school and all kinds of stuff. Scott Hausner, Rebecca Flora came to me and they said, "Would you like to take over," the then research program for the USGBC? They all can do what they said you could. It has a budget of one and a half million bucks a year. The only thing we ask you to do is stop doing what we're currently doing. You don't have to commute to Irvine, California, and you can run this program. I was sold. I came into this fun time and took over that program. We did a bunch. I met a lot of the fun people in our industry, whether it's the Center for the Built Environment, our colleagues at Oregon or Colorado or CMU and Vivian Loftus and all these awesome people who were in the research side of the green building community. And how's that going along? We had this idea for a green building information gateway and G big became the thing that kind of ate the research program. We spent years basically developing this idea of, G big and so some folks know what that is. It still exists at GBig.Org. About that time I started having a great collaboration with Nils Cook, who was the founder of Grasp, and he was looking to Spin Grasp out of Maastricht University. Nils and I had hatched this plan to meet his needs and to connect USGBC and GBCI to the growing world of ESG. We basically orchestrated this idea to GRESB out. And, and so that was the next big chapter for me was going on to be chief operating officer of GRESB and to try to merge together the ideas of g big and GRESB spent the next bunch of years doing that and I would love to

talk about that. It was super fun and it was literally from the earliest days of grass when we first bought GRESB, it was a literal two bedroom apartment in a residential apartment building. We were literally working out of the kitchen and the dining room and since then it's gone on to be what it is. I stepped away from that because I had a startup itch. I went and joined a company called Alamo to focus on air quality sensing. I learned a lot and talked about mentors and other ideas about where IoT and Proptech and those kinds of things came from. I came back to run ARC and basically said, "Hey, I think ARC is going to be fundamental to what happens next for the Green Building movement, and that's kind of the big picture." Big picture research program, G Big, GRESB and now at Acoma and then ARC, that's that's a big picture.

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Charlie: Quite the resume there. Chris, a lot of those tools my company uses every single day. I appreciate everything you had a hand in. Hopefully you look back and you're kind of proud of some of that. My next question is, when you do look back, what are some accomplishments that stand out? Anything personally you've accomplished? What are a few things on the highlight reel?

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Chris: I got a 13 year old and an almost 17 year old. That's an accomplishment. That's the number one, the top of the deck. They're happy, well-adjusted. God bless. Professionally, the things I was reflecting on your question and I love what we did with GRESB. There's a certain purity to what we do with grass, particularly in that time when it was going from an academic startup to a real company. Some of the things that I had the most direct involvement with now basically we needed someone to build the infrastructure assessment, which is now about a third to A, to A, to A to about a third of GRESB today. I basically sat down with a white sheet of paper and my. He is from a working group and wrote that thing out. I feel really good about where that went. We did something very similar with both

the health and the resilience modules and GRESB and those tools. It's so tangible and so quick. We wrote the first one when I sat down with Kelly Worden and wrote the first draft of the health module for GRESB. We went from blank sheets of paper to things in the field being used by 150 companies in 90 days. And that that kind of impact is something that I just love. We did something very similar. We repeated it in this case with Heather Rosenberg with the Resilience Module, again, from a blank sheet of paper to things in the field in 90 days. Hundreds and hundreds of companies have used those and those ideas are reflected in the main line grasp assessments. I feel like, I hope that we made a small contribution toward elevating the issues of health, elevating the issues of climate risk and resilience in the way that property companies and funds work. At a minimum, they were fun to do because ideas to impact were pretty damn quick.

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Charlie: For those listeners that maybe aren't quite as familiar with GRESB, The global real estate sustainability benchmark. It's not just how green is your portfolio and your real estate fund, but the things that you've had an influence on. And that health module is before the pandemic and now look at it. It's a part of what we do and talk about and then resiliency right behind it. So that's cool. That's on your highlight reel because I know it affects a lot of my portfolio real estate clients. It was nice to see that you move quickly on that. Anything else? You've worked on a lot of different projects too. Whenever I have someone that's maybe done consulting, it's hard to pick just one, but they're just a fun project that you really enjoyed working on over the years?

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Chris: It reflects my idiosyncratic career path I love. I really enjoyed working on the early days of LEED 2009 as a consulting project for CTG. It was really a white sheet of paper. It was sitting down with cool people like Brendan, and we had folks at Harvard, we had folks that had these really

interesting tag moments at that point in time, and we really thought about re-envisioning how LEED works. I don't know if we learned a lot of lessons, good and bad, in that process. But the idea of conceptualizing a quantitatively based, impact driven rating system with a fairly white sheet of paper and working through B and C, ITC, O&M and DX and the whole thing was really fun. I also call out the early days of G Big, we had a huge amount of fun. We worked with our partners at Green River, Michael Knapp, Aaron Michael R, the Brattleboro Mafia. We really created a fun platform and we experimented with these ideas about how you make the market more transparent? Again, we learned lessons pro and con. That was a huge respect for that Brattleboro Mafia of allies in our community. We also did a lot with this on the Green Health thing, so we did something called the Green Health Partnership and we really thought hard about how to embed health in green building. And my colleague Matt Trowbridge at the University of Virginia now at Idbi, we had a five year plus adventure in thinking about green building and health. So the bottom line is whether it's G Big and the Brattleboro Gang or whether it's the Charlottesville gang working on Green Health Partnership, these have been pretty fun times on some of these projects. You know, we always want more, but they're fun times.

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Charlie: Absolutely. And I'd like to introduce GBig.org to our listeners. We'll put a link in the show notes. Let's go to the present day. Tell us a little bit more about ARC, your role there and what's keeping you busy.

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Chris: Yeah, so I came into Arc to be honest, I came into Arc about three years ago, two and a half years ago, and I told Mahesh I would take this on if we understood that it was a bit of a turnaround project. I believe let's see if we have some shared beliefs. We believe that measured real world performance is the future of the green building industry. Check. We believe that we haven't worked that out yet in terms of how we are delivering and

embedding that solution, we said, check, check. I'm like, okay, I've got it. I teamed up with Dave Wittek, who is my partner in crime as our chief operating officer. What we did was really re-envision arc as a business, as a business model and the most important thing we did was make it a freemium model. We believe that every project everywhere should be able to measure track and score performance period. That is a mission mandate from a USGBC perspective. We did that and it took about a year to get a true freemium system. And then we said we want to support ourselves by providing value added stuff for projects and portfolios. We wanted to have a new model for partnership so that we could say we want to work with all sorts of organizations who are aligned. Find on this journey. Now we've got about two dozen of these organizations. My passion in this is the reason I'm into ARC is that I want to shift our engagement to what I think of as scale. I want to use performance to engage entire organizations, entire portfolios, literally all buildings in, and make sure that we have a solution for every building. I'm sure, like you probably, I know a lot of people feel like I do. What I hate about the green building movement is I drive down the freeway and I pass a zillion buildings that I have nothing to offer to on my way toward a beautiful trophy LEED Platinum Building. I want to have something to offer to every building to make it better. And that's what I think we're trying to do with ARC. The thing that is also motivating us in parallel is I think that greenwashing is the issue of our moment where we have all these audacious claims. The next part of those claims is we're going to walk those claims into reality. Where the green building movement should stand up and go, "Yeah, this is our thing. We are the embrace, accountability people." The two things we want to do is make it accessible to everybody and provide an overarching performance based outcome sort of thing. Those things get me going at the end of the day. There's a lot of other things like ESG, finance, decarbonization, electrification, yadda, yadda, yadda. All the things we work with, all of us work on every day. It's those big things, engagement at scale and this and putting and using performance to fight greenwashing to get me out of bed in the morning.

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Charlie: I love that. For those that maybe aren't having their buildings in order yet, I believe, you can score the energy and water for free. Put your buildings in and get compared to that data set really globally. I know you have thousands and thousands of buildings in there and it sounds like getting the power users to put lots of their portfolio in. Tell our listeners if you have a building and you want to get it scored, let's let's get in there. We'll put that.

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Chris: Energy, water, waste, transportation, human experience. For folks who might have not seen this in a while, we also have a growing list of building performance standards, not just the arc benchmark, but whether you're looking at local law. 97 crim climate bonds, something else. Where do you stand against those things today and where are you going to stand in the future? Again, like you said, it's totally free. Check it out. If you're a consultant and you're working in that space, what I love most is we have consultants who are now bringing hundreds or thousands of their clients projects in without us helping them at all. It's a service they're providing to others. God bless. I love that part. If I wake up and I see 1000 new projects that someone put in that I have no idea that I have to go look up the company. That's a good day.

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Charlie: I love it. Oh, man. There's some other things you do, too, though. It says the right lecture there, Georgetown. I know you're on some other committees. Besides the normal professional work, what else are you doing? What are you going to teach?

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Chris: The other big stuff for me is I do teach. I've taught urban planning for life. I'm a geographer who has kind of scaled down and found my niche teaching in urban planning. I taught at George Washington University for a

number of years, and the last five plus years I've been at Georgetown School of Continuing Studies, teaching in urban and regional planning. I got lots of friends there, whether it's like Whitney Austin Gray. She teaches the same program. We've had others and it's run by the well-known UVA Brandeis used to be with your ally. It is a great little program and now we're up to about 80 students kind of cycling in there. I teach sustainability now twice a year plus an urban innovation class, which I'm teaching right now. I really do love. I appreciate the really diverse, interesting set of students we get and they keep me motivated. It's a great engagement. It is definitely a side hustle. It is my once a week thing but it's the thing that keeps me reading new stuff, interacting with new people and moving down the field. I couldn't I value it as a little bit of a 10% verge 25% a side hustle.

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Charlie: I love the man. All right. So this one of my favorite questions to ask a green building guru like you is, what's next? What should we be reading up on now?

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Chris: In terms of reading up on I'll go right there I it's the two things tied together really. I teach this summer innovation class and it's been a lot of things over the years. But right now it's we're reading what I think of as the classic literature on innovation and scale. There's the three biggest, the three most foundational things to read. I've read them many times, but I get more out of them each time. Everett Rogers too. Vision of innovation, Jeff Moore's Crossing the Chasm and Clay Christensen's Innovator's Dilemma. I read them as a set, and I think about our moment and each one of them has something to offer as we think about how to bring our movement to scale. And if I had to call one out, I think that Clay Christensen's Innovator's Dilemma says a ton about where the green building movement is right now. I realize we're talking about books that are 20 years old, but if you look through the kind of outdated examples and go to the core ideas, it's spot on. If people want to think about it, I would love to have more people in our

industry having those thoughts and thinking about how to overcome those challenges.

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Charlie: You already gave us three great book recommendations. We'll link to all of those and I'm sure you do. But the BlackRock CEO there and Larry Fink, his letter every year and really doubling down on climate and how our associates with finance and financial risk. And his last letter in January said the next 1000 unicorns will be related to decarbonization. I think it's kind of what you're saying is we need more innovation here around all things sustainability and you can build quite the business around it, too.

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Chris: You're totally right. There's a lot to say about where ESG is and where those Larry the Larry letters and all that kind of stuff. But the bottom line about the fact that we need that innovation and we need to go from a self referential conversation around the top of the market toward an all in is the heart of the matter. Like if we're going to build those unicorns, we're not going to do it in the top one, five, 10% of the market. We're going to do it by engaging a lot bigger slices than we have to date. And that's where those conversations come home to roost.

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Charlie: Let's get a further peek into you and what helps you, Chris, day to day. Many good habits, routines, rituals.

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Chris: I was reflecting on this one. I grew up as a competitive runner and I still run. I got to say that when I can run an eight running essentially every day or something like that, it clears my head, it focuses my mind. I practice my presentations, I develop my arguments, I write some letters, I do stuff when I'm out there. And actually it works so well that I often have to tone it down. I come back in the door and sometimes I'll pound out something and I'll go, You know, I've got to just let that wear off just a little bit and double

check that because it definitely fires up sometimes that's a bit overwhelming. But that's my number one. Go if I need to process something and sometimes if it's a really hard problem, there's a bunch of runs in it.

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Charlie: You have certain routes you like to take or just distance or time just give.

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Chris: I'm generally a time person at this point in my life, but I do like exploring different cities. SWhen I travel, one of my favorite things is to run like I liked when we were both together in Munich. I had eight runs up through these parks in Munich. The defining thing I kind of admit is that I judge most places I travel by how good or bad the running is. I was just in Minnesota and I got to say, I thought about a green sports alliance, and I was really pleasantly surprised that it was really awesome running in downtown Minnesota.

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Charlie: It's a great time of year to be in the Twin Cities, too. Thank you for giving us that peak and what really kind of grounds you are there? What's your specialty, your gift?

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Chris: I'd like to we all want our gift to be like, I'm like Usain Bolt or LeBron James. Unfortunately, I don't have either one of those. What I make do with is a degree of enthusiasm, passion for mission and a work ethic. I hope that my gift is being flexible, adaptable. I'm pretty numerate I like and that I like to think about the way the world works in numbers. The bottom line is, I think what people come to me for is that I have an enthusiasm and passion for the fundamentals of what we do, and that seems to be the tie that binds

it together. I've got some other characteristics, but that seems to be the one that keeps popping up.

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Charlie: Giving us a peek into the geology and then the geography. It's almost like you might have should have been kind of more of an engineer, but you went this way because, you know, I'd say you're kind of a renaissance man here, well rounded with all things sustainability.

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Chris: I think about that. I think one of my things, one of the reasons I've been successful at us to the degree that I have the USGBC, is that I came at it as a scientist. I got to say, I do identify with that. Basically, I'm trying to ask questions and test them with data. If I had come into USGBC as an architect, as an engineer, as a planner, I would have been locked into a tribe. I think because I wasn't from any of our food groups, I didn't have a natural affinity to one of our tribes. Actually, I didn't even know the baggage. I hadn't been through architecture school. I didn't know what that was about. I wasn't a facility manager. In some ways my own ignorance and kind of weird angle on the problem gave me a degree of agnosticism that I think still matters because I'm not any of our normal food groups. I am both humble in that I don't know squat about designing buildings but I also and I've got great respect for those who do, but I also understand that what we're trying to do is a little different. Bottom line is that breadth and that lack of alignment with our traditional food groups has been something I've gone back to time and time again.

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Charlie: What great self-awareness I second that now that you've connected it 100%, that a lot of the products we use might have been totally different if you didn't come in with that scientific thinking first and what is possible. I'm inspired by that. For anyone listening though, if you're at a conference and Chris is one of the speakers, you have to speak

because he is one of the best speakers I've ever heard in our green building circuit, and I really mean that. A lot of it is you can back it up with real data, you can digest, but over here just your enthusiasm, like you can't fake passion. I always enjoy hearing you speak at any of our conferences. Chris, I appreciate all of that. A couple more personal questions here. Bucket list. I'm a fan of the bucket list. There are one or two things maybe you could share on your bucket list.

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Chris: I'll give you two, one personal and one professional. I mean, on the personal side, my wife and I have our bucket list. If I want to, I would love to do 50 skiing days when I'm 50. I've got a couple of years left to afford that. But I would love to get 50 ski days in on my when I'm 50. My personal bucket list. Professionally, you can also tell I like that. If COVID and monkeypox are 50 and 50. The other part is, I've never scratched my GBig itch and I got monkeypox and a big itch. I have never scratched that. And I think that our industry needs a thing like GBig that makes it easier to find the people and organizations that contribute to high performance outcomes. That's what I wanted to do. That's what I thought we needed. We've never got a chance to play it through. I continue it's on my mind today because we put it, I put a proposal in for a grant last week to try to. I'm still pushing it and I'm not done pushing because I still think it's the right idea. And so my bucket list, I got a lot more things on my bucket list, but 50 and 50 and a real good whack at big.

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Charlie: That's great, man. Thank you for sharing. You've shared a few awesome books about innovation and even technology with us. Is there another book that you have to be about the built environment you'd recommend to our listeners?

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Chris: I do find myself reading a lot. I've gotten back into maybe it's kind of a we talked about Everett Rogers, we talked about Jeff Moore, talk about Clay Christensen. The more contemporary version is a bit of the Malcolm Gladwell tipping point and some of those things. Obviously it's in a theme. I got to say that if I can skip halfway through like a tipping point and just sort of embrace the conclusions about how ideas move through social systems, I get excited about that. If folks and when I think about our social system as a green building industry and what does it take to get ideas through it and how does change happen and what are our roles? I can get really excited about that. So if people haven't, maybe you haven't, maybe you glanced at that before, or if you have time to listen to Malcolm Gladwell's TED Talks or some of those things that I would recommend to folks because I think it helps me to understand the moment that we're in right now. If you haven't read the Ding IEA 2050 decarbonisation roadmap, you should read that too, because that pretty much says where we're going.

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Charlie: To resources and I'll put those links in the podcast show notes. Those are awesome. Two more questions here. One is, is there anything you wish you had known earlier in your career? Any advice you wish you had known a little earlier?

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Chris: I wish I'll say I've done some time with startups and I wish I had done a really ambitious startup in my mid twenties and I went to try to do a really ambitious startup in my early forties and I had kids and mortgages and all that kind of stuff. If anybody out there is thinking, "Hey, I'm 25 and I want to go do that ambitious startup, go, go! Do that crazy thing with an 18 month runway and don't do it, just do it. Just make that I mean, more broadly, As someone who's now giving it. To a 17 year old about college. There's the other piece I would say is there's always more options than you think there are. Playing the field as broadly as you possibly can, I never in a zillion years like I mean, there was a time like when I was working for CTG, I

found myself at one point I we were doing commissioning and I found myself in the boiler room of a museum in Arlington and I spent eight freaking hours wondering whether a valve should be this way or that way. That's a path. I figured out that path wasn't for me. But I know that in a real certainty now. I would just say there's more options than you think there are and go do that start up when you're in your frickin twenties like that. Just do that.

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Charlie: Nuggets man. Our last question. Let's say someone is listening to this podcast to get inspired by your story and they're just now jumping into the green building movement. Some of our listeners might be LEED Fellows. They might be doing it as long as you and I have, but there's a lot that are just now maybe making a career move or maybe getting out of school early in their career and they're jumping into this green building movement. Any words of encouragement for them, Chris, as we come to a close?

00:36:12

Chris: I appreciate that. I do. I think this is I know we say this a lot, but this is the most pivotal moment. This is a change point, right? We've been at this for 25 years and we can be super proud. Hey, I think we should be incredibly proud of what we've accomplished because we have in our own industry changed the world. Every so often I did my head out into other industries that are not real estate, that are not infrastructure, that don't. And I like our people, man. I like what we are, a good tribe of people at the same time. We are a tribe of people who are trying to figure out how to have impact across entire organizations, across entire portfolios. We want to go from singles to dozens to hundreds of thousands, and we need to. This moment of figuring that out, we will figure that out one way or another. We're going to figure out how to have that impact at a greater scale. I want our industry to that's my point of enthusiasm, is that we will figure that out. To kind of wrap that together, we should be this is a proud group of good

people that people should be psyched to join because it is distinctively good and it's good in mission. It's directionally correct and it's timely. If we can embrace that. We are those people who are going to fight greenwashing and go to scale. This is an awesome corner of the universe to invest your time into. Now, can we live that aspiration? Can I get 80%? I don't know. But that's so when I think about what I hope motivates people who are thinking about why to devote their time to this corner of the sustainability challenge. Those are things that motivate me.

00:37:54

Charlie: I love it, man. Good by nature. Hey, everybody, take a look. Chris's LinkedIn here. Shoot a message. Let me know what you thought of this. I got inspired today by our conversation, and I know you a little bit, but now I feel like I really got to know this really cool background. I would agree. Now, the scientific approach to all the things you've done at the USGBC and LEED and Crisp and GBig and now at ARC. And thanks for everything you've done for the Green Building Movement, Chris. I appreciate it.

00:38:26

Chris: Likewise, Charlie. I mean, I appreciate you making these stories available. I really enjoy listening to it each week.

00:38:33

Charlie: I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters podcast. Me and the entire team were stoked and just so glad you continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us, straight to you. Thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building Matters podcast at GBES.com. Our mission is to advance the Green Building movement through best in class education and encouragement. Remember, you can go to [GBES.com/podcast](https://www.gbesc.com/podcast) for any notes and links that we mentioned in

today's episode and you can actually see the other episodes that have already been recorded with our amazing guests. Please tell your friends about this podcast. Tell your colleagues and if you really enjoyed it, leave a positive review on iTunes. Thank you so much and we'll see you on next week's episode.