

Research and Innovation Podcast – “Work in Progress”

Episode 5 – Building evidence-based wellbeing strategies: Lessons from the CIA's first chief wellbeing officer

Speakers: Dr Sanjay Popat and Dr Jennifer Posa

[00:00:05] **Sanjay:** Hello, and welcome to the Work in Progress series as part of the Research and Innovation Podcast. My name is Dr Sanjay Popat, and I'm a Chartered Psychologist and Research Fellow specialising in mental health at work. Today, I'm joined by Dr Jennifer Posa, who is an organisational psychologist and the founder of 3P Productions, a transformational change advisory practice.

[00:00:27] Jennifer served as the first chief wellbeing officer at the Central Intelligence Agency, where she designed and executed the first congressionally mandated workforce wellbeing programme in the intelligence community. Prior to joining the CIA, Dr Posa held multiple leadership positions with Johnson & Johnson, including global head of employee mental wellbeing and workplace effectiveness, responsible for the mental health and wellbeing of 140,000 employees across 77 countries.

[00:00:54] Early in her career, Dr Posa spent 17 years at Mayo Clinic in various business and strategy development roles focused on developing corporate cultures of health. A well-known thought leader in the areas of workplace culture, organisational support, and psychological wellbeing, Dr Posa has been a catalyst for transformation while leading and advancing research agendas, measurement frameworks, and service models to meet some of today's greatest challenges in some of the most demanding environments.

[00:01:21] Dr Posa, welcome to the podcast.

[00:01:24] **Jennifer:** It is so nice to be here with you, Sanjay.

[00:01:27] **Sanjay:** Thank you so much for coming on. I'm, I'm really excited that you're here for two reasons. First of all, you have a wealth of experience in this area, and it's such an honour to be getting to speak to you about something that is so close to my heart. And second of all, a lot of the guests that we've had on the podcast have been individual perspectives on workplace wellbeing, and I think it's really good for our listeners to come at it from the other side to show them that actually organisations also care about the wellbeing of their staff, something that they may not be that aware of.

[00:01:56] So my first question is, what drew you into organisational psychology and wellbeing?

[00:02:02] **Jennifer:** Yeah. It's a great question to begin our conversation around organisations and their interest in wellbeing, Sanjay, because I discovered organisational psychology, in my mid-20s when I was already working within

organisations doing what we called, and still sometimes call today, health promotion. Today we have a much more broader understanding of wellbeing as well as health and how that applies to business success for individuals within their work, but also for organisations. But when I was younger, I was working, as you mentioned, with Mayo Clinic, and we were developing interventions and solutions that organisations would take that IP, if you will, and integrate that IP or the interventions into their organisations. And what was fascinating to me was that they behave differently within different organisational cultures. So I began to be very fascinated with why that was happening. And when I started understanding that further and looking into the disciplines that understood culture, that understood organisational behaviour, the behaviours of individuals on teams, and how you achieve peak performance, not only from a business perspective, but also from an individual personal perspective, I discovered organisational psychology, which really opened my eyes to a discipline that I felt was incredibly important to apply to the science of health and wellbeing within workplaces.

[00:03:48] So that's how I discovered the field and then began my own journey as an organisational psychologist to enhance not only that learning, and education, but also apply it to the work that I was already doing, in that health and wellbeing space.

[00:04:07] **Sanjay:** And you probably get this question a lot, but why should organisations care about wellbeing? So I saw you've done some research looking at companies that adopt a wellbeing culture and their stock value. So is there that business case there in the way that the news is telling us, in the way that the media is telling us? What's your perspective on that?

[00:04:26] **Jennifer:** Yeah. So like you said, I've done a number of different, efforts, whether it be research that's published within peer-reviewed journals or even just qualitative research within the organisations I'm working within, or quantitative research for that matter. And through each one of my experiences, all of the data, including my dissertation data by the way, points to wellbeing being very well connected and correlated with business success and performance. Now, of course, as you know, Sanjay, that depends on the definition of wellbeing and how you're defining it, how you're measuring it, the analysis that you're using. And so we probably don't have time to get into a lot of those details, but what I can share with you is that not only from my research, but also from my operational experience within the organisations I have worked, and applied this science, I have seen the impact of supporting overall wellbeing and achieving business or mission performance. And like I mentioned before, as an organisational psychologist, I'm focusing on the population, so the overall organisation.

[00:05:56] Because oftentimes people will just assume it's quite simple, right? Wellbeing is associated with business outcomes. But as I mentioned before, the definition of those are incredibly important. And something that, I've shared, you know, very broadly and certainly use within my practice today as I work with organisations, is there are specific constructs that we can use that have decades of evidence that support them, that tie to business results. And oftentimes when I'm structuring an

initiative, I'm using those evidence-based constructs and research to have an underlying methodology around the implementation of the work.

[00:06:44] So in layman's terms, what that feels like is, and I'll give you one example, there's a construct called perceived organisational support. It was a construct that was developed in the 1980s by Dr Robert Eisenberger at University of Delaware here in the States. And what that construct and that research has done, looking at the construct over the last four to five decades, has been associating POS, perceived organisational support, with pretty much every business outcome you could imagine. And there's a positive correlation. So oftentimes what I'll do, because of the strength of that research and that evidence base, I will ensure that the methodology around any initiative that I'm working on pays attention to perceived organisational support, which means "my organisation values me", i.e., they value my wellbeing. And when we can demonstrate that and prove that within our approach, we actually measure it, document it, and look at the data. We know that the business outcomes will be impacted. And then over time, you measure that within the organisation's data, and you prove that that construct continues to be true because you've actually developed a programme around evidence. You've measured it, you've applied it, and don't get me wrong, sometimes you think that if you do one thing, employees will feel as though you value them.

[00:08:25] You might actually find that it's the other thing that's happening or what you're doing that actually enables them to feel valued. So the bigger question here is to rely on the evidence and the research to say, "What should I be paying attention to?" In today's environment, the best question that organisations can ask themselves is, "Do my employees feel valued?" And there are many organisations now that actually use that simple question in survey data and pulse surveys and sentiment surveys to really just measure whether or not the employees feel valued. And if they don't, that's when the real work begins because you understand why is it that they don't feel valued or why is it that they do feel valued. And then we create a strategy around improving that perception so that we can drive our mission performance or our business performance. So that's a really simple example of how you can use evidence, apply it to the work of an organisational psychologist or a team within an organisation, oftentimes that falls within human resources, that's focused on driving business results or driving mission impact by using data and science behind that.

[00:09:48] **Sanjay:** I really love that. And you were talking about qualitative and quantitative data, and I wanna come a bit more into that. But before that, what do you do if you get pushback? So I've been in organisations before where I've spoken to C-suite executives, and they say, "Well, if we create a wellbeing culture and we're asking about support and value, then that reduces the accountability our employees will have for their work, because any kind of minor challenge will be dismissed as a mental health concern."

[00:10:16] Or "if we hire an organisational psychologist to find out about what's wrong, everybody's going to say there's too much workload, and we can't just reduce the

workload." So just playing devil's advocate there, what would be your responses as a former C-suite executive yourself?

[00:10:32] **Jennifer:** So you asked me a lot of questions in that one, but let me take them one by one. You first mentioned accountability, and I will tell you that this is a really important thing to address and be very, very intentional about if you are an organisation that is looking to drive performance through wellbeing. And every organisation should be doing that because there's decades of research that proves that it's valuable and important. I just mentioned one, only one body of research.

[00:11:04] So when we talk about accountability, this is where I will give the agency as well as Johnson & Johnson and Mayo Clinic, all three of the employers I, I worked within for the last three decades, a lot of credit, and any other organisation doing this. You need to have a senior executive that is held accountable for wellbeing, for safeguarding and protecting the health and wellbeing of employees. Now, that seems obvious, Sanjay, that an employer would want to do that, but what an employer really does need to do is not only say that, but actually demonstrate it, and they're demonstrating it through everything that they're doing within the organisation, which is the strategic approach.

[00:11:50] I'll talk a minute more about that in a second. But then last, and most importantly, is a senior leader or team of senior leaders needs to be the accountable party. Because if you implement anything within an organisation, wellbeing aside, and there's no one in the senior leadership team that employees can go to to say, "You said that you were going to protect and safeguard my wellbeing. This is something I feel as though that's at risk for. Can we do something about it?" You're not actually enabling the organisation to hold themselves accountable.

[00:12:23] The second point on accountability, and so when I was a chief wellbeing officer, obviously the agency designated a senior-most position to do that. So that speaks volumes because people could reach out to me, they could talk to me in the hallway, they could send me an email, they could call me on the phone, and they could hold me accountable. And not only was I accountable to the employees, I was accountable to the leaders within the organisation. So I was responsible for defining and executing a strategy, but also providing the leaders within the organisation all of the data, the information, as well as the guidance on solutioning or solving for different problems that they were having related to wellbeing. That was my job. It was 100% of my job, and I had an office, with expertise and staff to help me execute that.

[00:13:14] So, for example, if we needed to build more skills around what we called the performance trade craft, then we would build greater training and development curriculums around that. That's a level of accountability that is absolutely essential whenever you have a strategic priority within any organisation.

[00:13:34] So the accountability, as I mentioned, comes from not only a senior executive and leadership that takes that level of responsibility, but it also comes from

throughout the organisation that there are embedded either, like I said, training programmes, it could be your rewards and recognition, how you're recognising that wellbeing is important. It could be policies that you're putting in place, systems, the way that you're structurally sound and, maybe even the decisions get made. Processes are something that are really important because if our process is actually driving risk to wellbeing, we want to correct that. So that's how I would answer the question on accountability.

[00:14:21] Your second question was around mental health and whether or not people might use wellbeing as a crutch, if you will, or maybe an excuse or some relation to mental health. I will tell you that my definition of wellbeing, and there's many out there, so there's not one that you should abide to. You need to identify what the definition is for your organisation, because that's actually a very, very important first step if you're going to build a strategic priority around wellbeing within the organisation.

[00:14:54] In, in many of my positions, I've looked at wellbeing as multi-dimensional. So for example, it would be your physical, mental, emotional, social, financial, spiritual wellbeing. So if you think about that, those are six different areas of wellbeing and if we use that definition, for example, for our conversation, mental wellbeing is part of that. In order to have mental wellbeing, you need mental health, which then brings us to the other side of the healthcare continuum, which is treatment or a diagnosis, treatment and care. And there really does need to be an awareness that, that I'm going to call it sick care versus preventive care aspect, the entire population health continuum needs to be considered in the strategy.

[00:15:48] So as a chief wellbeing officer, I would partner with my clinical experts, which could be a chief medical officer, it could be the CHRO, the chief human resources officer, chief people officer, it could be all sorts of leaders, but when we're talking about health, it would be you want your clinical team, and then you want your wellbeing preventive healthcare team. And what we really do want within every population is we want 80% would be our goal of individuals that fall on the healthy side, the preventive focused. And then you do always have a need for managing chronic conditions or even acute issues that might come up, and they may be mental health related. So the job of the chief wellbeing officer, and even my job as the global head for employee mental health and wellbeing at Johnson & Johnson, was to ensure that we reduce stigma, we made sure people understood what are those popular mental health ailments and conditions that we need to be aware of, anxiety, depression, things such as that.

[00:17:04] And we educate our leaders to make sure that if they're seeing that there might be a change in Sanjay's behaviour and performance levels, we can help them to have a conversation that's appropriate and then make sure they get the right resources that they might need. So Sanjay, if I'm your manager and you have worked for me for the last five years, and you have always arrived to work on time, you've always done a great job collaborating with your colleagues, and you've achieved your performance goals for the last five years that we've worked together, and then this month, all of a sudden, I

start seeing you coming into work late, getting in arguments that may not be needed with your colleagues, and maybe your performance level is just decreasing significantly. Maybe you're asking for lots of time off, and you've never done that before, and I can have a conversation with you. I used to coach the leaders at Johnson & Johnson around this, where I would say, "You know, the appropriate thing to do is walk up and say, 'Sanjay - how you doing? Are you doing okay? I've been noticing that there are a couple things with, you know, you that have changed lately. I just wanna check in and hear how you're doing.'" And the first step of that is to really assess, is Sanjay okay?

[00:18:25] Now, health is not something that managers should be managing, right? So we want the manager to focus on the work and the clinical staff to focus on the health issue. But that assessment part of how is Sanjay doing, and do I need to reach out to my colleague who might be in, let's say, a global health services role, who might actually give me information on resources or support that might be needed?

[00:18:50] That's when I say, if you say to me, "You know, I'm struggling. I've had a death in the family. It's really taken me, you know, aback. I didn't realise how much I was being impacted, but I could use a coach. I could use, you know, time with a therapist," and you openly tell me that as your manager, I immediately, without hesitation, say, "We have a global health services team. Please take advantage of it. Please know what your resources are." And maybe I even highlight, "You know, Sanjay, when my mom passed away, I realised that talking to an employee assistance counselor helped me. Here's the number." So my job as a leader isn't to get involved in managing the health, but my job is to know what the resources and support are.

[00:19:37] Now, say the conversation when I ask you how you're doing is different, and it sounds like you don't say anything about health. You say, "You know, ever since we took on that project from manager Ben, my workload has increased exponentially. I can't get the work done, and I'm finding that I'm very much feeling very stressed about it. And some days I'm walking out and I'm exhausted mentally and physically. I've had to take a couple more days off of work because I don't have the recovery time I need, and I'm starting to feel a little bit negative about the project and the work. I've loved this company for the last five years, but I'm feeling as though I can't do it anymore. I don't know if I'm gonna be able to do this job. I'm really worried about my success and my long-term commitment to the organisation."

[00:20:29] Well, as a leader, my job is to say, "Okay, let's dig into this. I didn't realise that the work was so much beyond your capacity. I need to get additional resources. We need to talk about this. I don't wanna lose you. You're a really important employee to our team, and you've been a phenomenal producer and performer for the last five years."

[00:20:49] Those two conversations are so different, but what we really need to understand is what is, and you need to have that hard, difficult conversation of assessing what does Sanjay need to actually perform at his highest potential again. So the summary of that conversation is my job as a leader is to not only ensure that you

perform as an employee, but my other job is to develop and grow and support you as an individual employee, and I need to understand how to have that conversation, as well as how to make sure I know what resources or support you might need.

[00:21:26] So something that is an easy question to ask for leaders is: "how can I better support you?" And your simple answer might be, "I think I need a little bit of support on the health side," or "I think I need some help managing and re-scoping my job responsibilities." And then all of a sudden, in five minutes, hopefully, you have the answer, and you know as a leader where to go.

[00:21:49] And then your last question was around reducing workload, and what I tried to do is fold that answer into my response on work. So wellbeing overall, Sanjay, is around supporting the human potential of the employee to perform at their highest level for, of course, performance of work of the job that they're in, but also as an individual. Because when we perform at our potential at work, we then go home or into our personal lives, and we perform as an individual in our life. And that's really the magic happens at that point because then the employee comes in fully energised and recovered from life to perform work. And then we also send them home at night or during the day, whenever their shift ends, to actually go back to their lives and embrace their life and perform whatever they wanna be doing in their free time and their, their life.

[00:22:53] **Sanjay:** So where does the data fit into this? So earlier you said this is at the population level, the, the company level. When you go into a new company like the CIA, how do you tend to use data to inform your overall strategy? Where do you like to use the qualitative data, so the wordy kind of stuff, and where do you like to use the more quantitative data, the numerical and statistical stuff? What works best in what situations?

[00:23:18] **Jennifer:** Sure. So, I always feel whenever I'm working with another organisation or a new organisation that I'm not familiar with, and even when I am, because this is an iterative process, I really appreciate a mixed methods approach, which is both the quantitative and the qualitative, with many situations that I've been brought into where "Oh, we have a problem," or, "We would like to have a full scope prioritisation initiative around, you know, wellbeing," I'll go in, Sanjay, and I will start with qualitative. And the reason is because I believe that when you start with quantitative, it's a survey that you as the investigator or principal, you know, researcher are designing, but it's not designed by the employees and the participants of, you know, your initiatives and your strategy.

[00:24:10] And when you start with the qualitative, you end up understanding what the pain points are. And so when you start with a qualitative, it might be focus groups where they're small enough that people can have conversations, so no more than 8, 10 people. You would have rigor around that and have specific questions that they're asking, making sure time isn't too limited, so you can allow them the space that they wanna go in and share what their pain points are or what comes to mind with those

questions. And then those patterns and trends that evolve from that qualitative end up informing your quantitative survey, which then becomes more of the longitudinal approach, or even better yet, now that we have AI, we can actually have even beyond sentiment and pulse surveys, which were really popular during COVID, but we can actually start to integrate them into our work processes in place and resourcing that we're using to manage efficiency and workflows right.

[00:25:14] So I think to answer your question, if it's a needs assessment and you're not sure of where your pain points are, where your drivers are, and what's driving the wellbeing of your population, I would recommend starting with qualitative and then creating your quantitative that ends up being that steady stream of data that you, you can capture over time.

[00:25:36] Because you and I both know that we might both feel wonderful today, and we feel like life is grand, no stress, no, you know, workload is fantastic, you know, my, my leader is, is great. We have a super relationship. My home life is peaceful and everything. There's been no traumatic events like deaths or divorces or moving homes. And then all of a sudden in a month, there's this... life happens, and this is what I talk a lot about, Sanjay, which is readiness. And I think as, as an organisation, we need to make sure that our employees are ready and prepared for anything that might happen- external environment or our immediate relationships.

[00:26:22] **Sanjay:** And what do you do if you can't collect hard data? So I would imagine in the CIA there were times where for access reasons, for security reasons, you're not able to get your hands on a kind of representation of what the, what the workforce is saying. How do you then create a strategy around wellbeing when you don't know or you don't have the hard data at hand?

[00:26:42] **Jennifer:** So I actually think this has happened for a long time. So wellbeing began in organisations as programmes, and a lot of organisations are still just doing a programmatic approach because they don't have the ability to, to take this from a strategic perspective, which is with the data, with the research, making sure that you're using that data to inform your strategy and drive, and then measure the impact and get the results.

[00:27:09] And it's okay that some organisations aren't there. I wish all organisations were there because that's really where the return on investment comes from. But if you're still at a programmatic level, I think the easiest way is individuals who are participating in those programmes, you're asking them. So if you have, for example, a gym or a programme that is encouraging physical wellbeing, which is usually the most popular and easiest ones to implement. Maybe it's a walking group that is happening, or it's even an employee resource group that's saying, "we wanna, you know, start a running club or a biking club," or something like that. You could just ask those leaders to say, "Could you just ask the folks that are involved what it is that they want more of? What's helping them? What do they feel like is impacting their wellbeing?" So this

doesn't have to be overwhelming. You can start by just asking the simple question, like I mentioned before: "How can we support you more?"

[00:28:08] And then the other thing that I would share with you that say you don't have a department at all, you don't even have a group that, you know, oversees wellbeing. If you're a leader individually, you can make an impact, and you don't need to do, you know, all of this research. All you have to do, Sanjay, is say, "How can I support you more?" . That's the simple, simple question for everyone.

[00:28:32] So I would say that every single leader, I would have two pieces of advice for, to ensure that they support the wellbeing of every individual that reports into them. The first would be to ask that question: How can I support you further? The second question would be: "What do you need from me, and what is the barrier or challenge for you to protect your wellbeing?" So you're asking about the barriers and the challenges, and you're asking about how can I actively support you. And what is most important for leaders to understand is what you often hear around the challenges and the barriers are actually organisational things. It's not individual things.

[00:29:20] So if the process, if the structure, if the system, if the technology, if those organisational items that the organisation decided should be in place are actually driving risk for wellbeing, it's the leader's responsibility to elevate that within the organisation. And if they have control over removing that barrier or challenge, they can take that action, or they can go to their manager or their C-suite to say, "Listen, this process is really taking a lot of time, and it's causing a lot more overload than what's needed. Could we consider simplifying it?" And actually removing some of the barriers and the challenges is actually where I've seen some of the greatest impact.

[00:30:08] **Sanjay:** I, I really love that. And we spoke before about this holistic kind of perspective, not just the barriers, but also the positives, and I think that's really where your work is pioneering in this area.

[00:30:18] And Dr Posa, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask you briefly about being the first chief wellbeing officer at the CIA. I mean, what a historic moment for the CIA, probably for yourself, if I can speak on your behalf, but also for the profession of organisational psychology, right? I mean, this is showing people that our profession matters in a very practical, accessible, and, and beneficial way to society at large.

[00:30:41] I appreciate there's a lot you won't be able to tell us about your time at the CIA, but what did being there teach you about wellbeing that you didn't realise previously? What did you walk away with thinking, "Hmm, this has changed my opinion on this," or, "I didn't fully appreciate that prior"?

[00:30:59] **Jennifer:** So I think what it underscored, because I think as an organisational psychologist, you do learn that the systems and the processes, the structure of the organisation does impact wellbeing. But what I think being in that position taught me

was it underscored not only how you can change policy and have it dramatically impact individuals' behaviors. So in my scenario, we had a policy that was related to wellbeing that was utilised by under 20% of officers, and when we modified that to fully support wellbeing in a much more meaningful, applicable way, we increased the utilisation of that policy and that benefit to over 50%.

[00:31:52] So you can really see the impact when you take the steps that an organisational psychologist understands how to do. So I always joke and say every organisation should have an organisational psychologist. Why? And this is my second point of underscoring what I learned. Because the behaviours of employees within workplaces are oftentimes dependent on the relationships they have with their leader. We know this from the Gallup data. But we also know that it's the relationship they have with the organisation, and I'll go back to that first point I made when we started talking about perceived organisational support.

[00:32:33] So if you think about our workplaces, Sanjay, as relationship places that we want to build neighbourhoods and communities where people respect, care, and support one another, you can actually build a high-performing organisation much more easily in that type of environment. So what I learned when I was at the agency was how critically important relationships were, because I didn't do all the work of the chief wellbeing officer. I, as the chief wellbeing officer, my goal was to empower the leaders that ran the CIA with the information and the data they needed on wellbeing, so they could shift their behaviour, shift the work that they might have been managing in a way that further supported wellbeing to further support mission achievement. And when you have a leadership team that collectively sees that as an opportunity to build readiness and to achieve mission in a more efficient and effective manner, you raise performance levels.

[00:33:58] So what I really was so proud of was the leadership team that I had the opportunity to work with that looked at the data, truly took that data, took action on that data, and then applied it to their leadership approach and what they were doing, and we saw mission performance improve. In fact, the leaders that did this really well, many of the officers wanted to go and work for those leaders, and that's what creates high-performing teams.

[00:34:33] So I really learned a tremendous amount. I learn from every organisation I work with, Sanjay, I'm not gonna lie, because every organisation is different, and that's what I think is most fascinating about being an organisational psychologist because you just continue to learn and learn and learn. And like I said in the very beginning, why was I interested in this field? Because you can have evidence and research and constructs, but every time you place them in a different environment, they behave differently. So we really have to be paying attention to the environments that we're creating because it's not one or the other, it's both. And that's what we all need to do regardless of what role you sit within, in an organisation because employees are leaders too. Employees become the leaders that we report into, so we need to learn how to integrate our

wellbeing into our performance practices so that we can all achieve better performance levels individually and organisationally.

[00:35:34] **Sanjay:** Absolutely. I love what you said there about the kind of relationship aspect. We are all social networks and we're learning from each other. We also have other functions like being friends and mentoring. There's so many functions in an organisation.

[00:35:47] So we've, we have a lot of experts on the podcast, but I also like to ask some more human questions so that our listeners can really get to understand the person behind the expert. So just a few final reflective questions. So this is the Work in Progress series. What part of you is still a work in progress, either personally or professionally?

[00:36:08] **Jennifer:** Oh, every part of me, for sure. I mean, I, you know, I think as you, as you grow and develop as a person and as a professional, you know, you become more self-aware, and I think the deeper you go, the more questions you have. So I'm absolutely a work in progress, and I love the name of the podcast and how the university is, is supporting this podcast so that others can learn.

[00:36:40] But, you know, Sanjay, I'm, I'm a work in progress from a personal perspective because, you know, I have three young women as daughters and 24, 22, and 17. And as a mother, I'm still learning every day on how to be the best mom that I can be.

[00:36:57] As a professional, you know, and that's just one role that I serve in my personal life. As a professional, I mean, I look back on the three decades of my work and say, "If I didn't have the last five years, I wouldn't be as, you know, informed as I am now," and I can only imagine what the next 10 years will bring me. I've pivoted now from working within very large institutions to now setting up, as you mentioned in the beginning, 3P Productions, which is an advisory firm that I want to build so that more organisations understand how to build a strategy around peak performance through wellbeing and readiness. So I think I will learn a tremendous amount over the next, let's say, five years, because I will then be able to apply my readiness framework into organisations that is, again, built all through evidence, and then see how that is operationalised.

[00:37:57] And I want to partner with the individuals who want to operationalise these things so that I can, if you will, support them in getting there more quickly. So it took me a long time to learn some things, and now I want to give the shortcuts to others.

[00:38:13] I also really want to make sure that the aspiring organisational psychologists, or maybe the younger organisational psychologists in the field, understand how important this work is. It's not about the title that you have. It's about really the work that you're doing and the impact you can have on other people in this type of field.

[00:38:38] It's just exponential because, again, you're dealing with organisations that are struggling to understand human behaviour in the workplace. Imagine if you can enhance relationships for people in the place that they spend most of their time every week. The impact you can have as an organisational psychologist on individuals and their happiness levels, their wellbeing, their level of performance, their level of self-satisfaction and fulfilment. I joke and say I'm the work doctor sometimes, and helping people really understand. And our differences sometimes cause us conflict, but when you identify how the differences can draw us together and create even more effective work practices, it becomes this contagious, exciting environment and culture that you build.

[00:39:32] I talk a lot about bias for action, and so, you know, you create this bias for action within the organisation, and people just come out from every walk of life, every profession, and they say, "Yes, I wanna do this because I wanna work with Sanjay," or, "I wanna, I wanna actually have fun like Sanjay is doing with his team" right? So I think it's focusing on relationships and making sure that I can continue to understand how relationships are more effective within organisations and how, like we can bring data that enables leaders to take action. Because we don't need the data that's, you know, medical and health-related to do that.

[00:40:13] In fact, that's not what motivates people. So let's motivate people with the right data at the right time and empower leaders to have an easier time managing teams through a very complex environment right now.

[00:40:27] So I guess if I were to try to say, what do I wanna learn in the next five years, I'm gonna turn your question around. I wanna really redefine the performance scorecard for leaders and redefine it with relationships, right in the centre so that they can understand how to have better relationships, more impactful relationships with their teams and their colleagues and their partners, so that they can drive their own performance and business performance more effectively. Because if you don't understand the psychology of the workforce, you won't be able to do that, and I think that's been the missing link that we've had for a long time.

[00:41:08] **Sanjay:** Yeah, I think that's gonna be so inspirational for my colleagues, but also our students, knowing that first of all, nobody's ever done. You don't graduate and finish your kind of learning. You can get to the very top as you have, and you're still learning. But also that our field, as we've said, is very practical, and that we can actually help people in these organisations.

[00:41:27] And just related to that - final question, and this is something we ask all our guests, if your life was a book and where you're at right now was a chapter in that book, what would that chapter be called, Dr Posa?

[00:41:41] **Jennifer:** What would it called? You know, I think it would be called "The three R's": Reflection, Reinvention and Relational intelligence.

[00:42:01] **Sanjay:** Wow. I really love that. I mean, so well thought through and it has meaning. Each of those things has meaning, so, I really appreciate that.

[00:42:09] Dr Posa, thank you so much for your time today. I'm sure I speak on behalf of everyone where I've said we've learnt so much. There's so many gems in there.

[00:42:17] Thank you so much for your time.

[00:42:19] **Jennifer:** Oh, it was so wonderful. And thank you to you for doing this. I really love the work that you're doing at the university and in your research. It's super important. Please keep doing it so that we can learn from you as well.

[00:42:32] **Sanjay:** Much appreciated. Thank you.