



Good Things Happen Podcast

Episode 2_Future of Work

The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Citigroup Inc. or its affiliates. All opinions are subject to change without notice. Neither the information provided nor any opinion expressed constitutes a solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security. The expressions of opinion are not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results.

Jorian Murray ([00:01](#)):

It's fair to say that the global pandemic upended most of our lives, especially in the workplace. As we emerge from the restrictions Covid-19 caused, it's clear the way we work has changed forever.

Jorian Murray ([00:25](#)):

For many, this transition has been a welcome one. Reduced commuting time, fewer late nights stuck at our desks, attending status meetings in our pajama bottoms. But, at what cost? Days stacked full with virtual meetings, significantly less human interaction, and the loss of a sense of team.

Jorian Murray ([00:43](#)):

The rapid adoption of new technology has made remote work more reliable and accessible than ever. But, what other changes should companies be looking for? How do they adapt to, and embrace hybrid workspaces for the better? How will it affect the recruitment and development of young talent? And, what will it take to build and maintain company culture?

Jorian Murray ([01:05](#)):

On this episode of Good Things Happen, we're exploring the evolving world of work.

Jorian Murray ([01:10](#)):

Hello, and welcome to Good Things Happen, the podcast. I am your host, Jorian Murray. I help businesses tell better stories. Today I'm joined by two wonderful Citi people, with expertise and insight into the working world. Naz Vahid, who has served the legal industry with banking and investment services for over three decades at Citi, she now heads up a global wealth management team that's dedicated to serving individuals and their firms from a whole range of elite professions. Scott Stimpfel, formerly an investment banker, he entered the world of academia, which he still does part time at the NYU Stern Business School in New York, and his day job is running HR for Citi Institutional Clients Group's Business Solutions Team. He is also an executive in residence at the University of Southern California's Race and Equity Center.

Jorian Murray ([02:01](#)):

We've brought these two bright, informed minds together to make good things happen, as we take a look at the changing world of work. Before we start, Naz, tell us a little bit about you. How did you get into finance and banking? Was this something that you told your mother at four years old that it was what you wanted to do?

Naz Vahid ([02:19](#)):

Absolutely not. I wanted to be a journalist. So, you ask me why I got here, I think that I overslept one day that I had to sign up for classes and by time I went to sign up, I had to take an economics course, because that was one of the few things available. And, once I took the economics course, I was literally on the edge of my seat the whole term. And, I realized I love this, and hence I switched to economics, and went onto go and get my degree in it, and then go and get my graduate degree. So, in the process, I ended up becoming a finance person and working at Citi.

Jorian Murray ([02:57](#)):

And, does it, kinda, surprise you when you look back at, you know, when you were at college, that you're in a bank? And is a bank not what you thought it might be?

Naz Vahid ([03:05](#)):

No, absolutely not. I thought I was gonna be traveling all over the world, and cover wars, and dictators, and be this feminist individual who was going to absolutely change the way the world was gonna see its leaders.

Jorian Murray ([03:21](#)):

Well, we'll come onto this, 'cause I think from within a bank you can certainly effect change in the world.

Jorian Murray ([03:27](#)):

Scott, how about you? What did you want to be when you were a little boy?

Scott Stimpfel ([03:31](#)):

The thought of a career in business didn't really cross my mind until I was in a meeting with my academic counselor at Pasadena City College. She was very to the point. She said "Do you want a job when you graduate from college? And if so, you should go to the University of Southern California and major in business because companies are giving out jobs to those graduates." At the time, getting a job was the primary reason I was going to college so she sparked my interest in business.

Then she asked the strangest question. She said "do you like nice cars?" I didn't have a nice car but living in Los Angeles and needing to drive a lot, the appeal of having a nice car was something that I often thought about. She said take a look at the license plate holders on nice cars. They all say USC Business Alumni. For the next month or so I looked at these license plates and she was right. She knew that getting a degree in business would put me in the best position when I graduated to get a job. Which was my primary purpose. And so, I have to admit the dream of owning a car also provided additional motivation.

Jorian Murray ([04:12](#)):

Have you bought a nice car yet?

Scott Stimpfel ([04:14](#)):

No. Not at all. My wife will not let me.

Jorian Murray ([04:18](#)):

(Laughs). Very good. Very good.

Jorian Murray ([04:19](#)):

So, I think it's fair to say, without any sense of hyperbole or exaggeration, that the last two years have been the most disruptive that any of us have experienced, but, particularly with the world of work.

Jorian Murray ([04:31](#)):

Naz, let's start with you. You run a big, amazing team, big offices, obviously, that's all over the United States. What were your fears two years ago when lockdown was happening? Were you worried that suddenly the world was gonna stop?

Naz Vahid ([04:44](#)):

Oh, absolutely. I mean, look, I have been somebody who's grown up working in an office environment, thinking that the only way we can do well by our clients is to serve them together, in an office environment. And, the day we went in, I remember, we were gonna go off for two weeks, and we were gonna beat the curve. And, you know, here we are two years later. I thought, how are we gonna manage this for two weeks? You know, how are clients gonna do it? And, are we gonna be productive?

Naz Vahid ([05:11](#)):

And here is the most amazing thing. Today, the Naz that would have said to you there are jobs that could never be done from home, actually doesn't exist. I have realized, our people worked from home, they were extremely productive, and it was a different way that we communicated with the clients, and each other. So, it's funny, what was my fear actually turned out to be a blessing and we did really, really well in many levels over last two years.

Jorian Murray ([05:38](#)):

Scott, I'm sure you'll agree with that and you would've heard this time and again. What do you think happened from a, kind of, almost, a psychological point of view? What was it that made people react and become so much more productive, do you think?

Scott Stimpfel ([05:50](#)):

You know, I think we all came together. It was a time of crisis, and we had wonderful leaders that brought people together under a common cause. And, I think everyone was experiencing something that they hadn't experienced before.

Scott Stimpfel ([06:03](#)):

And so, there was a sense of community that we were doing something as group, as a team, as an organization. And, I think that helped us and to get through, as Naz was mentioning, some of these initial hurdles, or mental blocks, of how are we going to do this? And, we were in a space that we didn't have answers to, it was very ambiguous. You know, the team work, the collaboration, and the positive mindset that we brought together each day, through collaboration.

Jorian Murray ([06:33](#)):

And obviously technology, or the adoption of technology, has accelerated, and, honestly, we're conducting this podcast through Zoom, I'm looking at you through my computer. We're, sort of, well used to doing this now. So, there have been many advantages with the changes, but what might we have missed, being, kind of, separated, albeit, we are connected by video conferencing. Naz.

Naz Vahid ([06:52](#)):

You know, it's interesting. We've hired a lot of people in the last two years, and I always, as a manager, was proud of myself for getting to know people, getting to know them beyond, like, their resume, and where they went to school, and what they studied, but more as who they are, what makes them happy. You know, somebody we had to hire two years ago has aspirations to be an actress. And, I like that about her. And I wanted to know that.

Naz Vahid ([07:15](#)):

So, we missed some of that as a conversational piece. We also really missed learning from each other. I learned, as a more junior banker, how to speak to clients by listening to more senior bankers around me, in a real situation. So, I was worried. And, at times, I'm still worried about the loss of ability to be an apprentice in this situation, for each other.

Naz Vahid ([07:38](#)):

You know, how we deal with that going forward, it's gonna be seen, and we are all gonna take different tasks, and ways to get to the right answer.

Jorian Murray ([07:48](#)):

Scott, I'd love to get your perspective with your academic hat on. I know that you teach graduates, undergraduates, and, what do you hear from them that they're looking for from the world of work, in the way that we would never have dared think about when we were first starting out?

Scott Stimpfel ([08:04](#)):

I think undergrads have more similarities in the workplace with previous generations than differences. Almost every employee values a workplace where they're treated with respect. With an organization that is engaged in societal issues that matter to them. Where they're connected to the purpose of the organization and where they're happy with the work life interface. Undergrads and early career talent however, have put a higher prioritization on these factors. Undergrads want to achieve similar outcomes to other generations currently in the workplace however, the process to achieve these outcomes is a bit different. Think about talent development. Research shows that talent development opportunities are one of the most important why undergraduates select an employer.

And I'll just share a personal example of an analogy around talent development. A couple of years ago when my son was four years old, he came to me and wanted to learn how to ride a bike. And I went out and purchased a bike with training wheels and he was really upset because he wanted to learn how to ride a bike using a balance bike. And I told him, I said riding with training wheels is the best way to do it because that's how I learned when I was little. And he was really upset and I thought he was actually too demanding.

It ends up a balance bike was a new, more effective way to learn and my methods were outdated. He reinforced a very valuable lesson to me at that time which was this generation, the next generation, is going to learn differently. Many organizations are still using their versions of training wheels because that's what they're leadership used to develop and undergrads don't want training wheels. They want the most innovative development opportunities and they want to be able to leverage the best tools and research. Companies that listen and companies that engage with early career talent not only give them a seat at the table but have them as part of the conversation around their learning and development will understand these needs. I believe that companies that embrace this approach will win the brightest minds and those that do not may find themselves at a competitive disadvantage.

Jorian Murray ([09:36](#)):

Naz, both you and I have our own millennials at home who are starting in the world of work. I think they get a bad rep from our generation for being demanding, and, and what have you. What's your thought as a business leader recruiting? Does it get frustrating that, hey, they want so much, and they're demanding? Or, is this an audience and talent group that we can learn from?

Naz Vahid ([09:56](#)):

I think it's both. I have two kids that would be considered, into their 20s, right? So, I'm learning from them, like Scott is learning from his. And, one of the things I'm learning from them is that they grew up in a generation that got feedback a lot more regularly than, let's say, I did when I was growing up. Both from parents, from teachers and they want that from the environment that they work in. They wanna know if they're doing right, what they should do differently.

Naz Vahid ([10:23](#)):

In the past, they would get that if you built a relationship with your mentor, your boss, your manager. Today you have to seek that differently. But, I do believe that the new generation actually knows how to do that a lot better than I did. They're not shy, they actually go out there, they find the right people to ask questions. You know, believe it or not, I get so many analysts put time on my calendar, not people who report to me, just people who wanna get feedback and idea of how to succeed.

Naz Vahid ([10:53](#)):

That is a wonderful thing that this generation has that we don't have. There was also this, almost, silly version of life that, people who trained me made me work really hard, do pitches that they never used, just to make me work really hard. And, they thought that is the way they were gonna train me. And, the reality is, that is not the way we need to train people. That we can train people in a real situations, we can allow them to come on Zooms and be a silent participant, and hear how we talk to clients. We don't have to do it the way we did it in the past.

Jorian Murray ([11:28](#)):

So, the whole structure of the working week has changed, hasn't it? I remember my mom thinking, when I resigned from my first job she was shocked. It was a job for life, and, you know, we talked about nine to five, obviously we never did nine to five, we did a whole lot more than that. You'd never get messages at the weekend. But, these blurred lines, Scott, is this progress? Is this a good thing? Or, is it a health hazard?

Scott Stimpfel ([11:49](#)):

It could be a health hazard if we don't monitor it, and we're not intentional. And, I think we have to be mindful of keeping a balance in our lives. And so, as organizations, we have to think about, and especially as leaders and managers, when do we have conference calls? You know, when can those start?

Scott Stimpfel ([12:09](#)):

You know, there used to be a time, Jorian, where we would commute into work, and that was time, that was free time for our minds to, kind of, have that space between home and work where we could collect ourselves. And now, conference calls start at 6:30, 7:00 AM, right? And so, you don't have that time to separate. So, it's important to make sure that, as a manager, as a leader of teams, that you give people that opportunity to collect themselves in the morning, and to be able to energize and get ready in the right mindset for work.

Scott Stimpfel ([12:39](#)):

And so, the days do blur together, and we have to make sure that we give ourselves that time, that we take walks in the morning, that we take breaks during the day to meditate, to, you know, just even get up and stretch, 'cause sometimes, as we all know, we could be in Zoom calls all day. And, one thing I've done with my teams is said, "Look, we do meetings for 15 minutes and 45 minutes, but we don't go the full hour." That's the other thing. At work, if you're going into a meeting, you might have to go into an elevator, so you might get 5, 10 minutes in an elevator to go somewhere. At home, you go from Zoom call, to Zoom call, to Zoom call without having a break. So, it's really important to take that mental break so that you can reenergize yourself throughout the day.

Jorian Murray ([13:21](#)):

Naz, you've run the law firm group for Citi for many years, hugely successfully. You're dealing with, probably, the profession (laughs) that measures everything by the minute. Your business is expanding into all sorts of elite professions. What are you observing from them? Do they come to you for advice about how you run your teams? What changes do you see there?

Naz Vahid ([13:41](#)):

You know, it is really interesting you ask this, because law firms, professional services, all of them are dealing with the same issues that we are dealing. We heard from a group of firms that, like us, had this return to work two or three times already, and then went back home. And, they realized that, even if they say to people, well, I want you in three days a week, if those three days a week mean coming in and just staring at a Zoom in your office, that's not conducive to really good work environment. Actually, people become resentful of commuting and then sitting on a Zoom all day.

Naz Vahid ([14:19](#)):

So, they have to be very direct about how to create communities, as Scott said, and how to make sure that people come in, perhaps on a certain day. You know, one of the law firms that I was just talking to said they were going to come back in February, and they're gonna talk about coming in, you know, maybe a litigation group one day, uh, so that everybody in litigation is in. Or, the next day could be everybody in bankruptcy, and then there will be a day that the whole floor is in, so you get a sense of community in it, rather than to try to say, okay everyone, be really mature and show up to work without realizing what is actually happening.

Naz Vahid ([14:57](#)):

So, I think they are struggling with it the same way that we are struggling with it. I do think the ones that will do well are the ones that understand the need for hybrid going long term. And, that the world has changed, the way we work has changed. It's not what it used to be.

Jorian Murray ([15:14](#)):

And, in the world of professional services, of which banking is a part, rationally, a lot of businesses do the same thing as their competitors, but what really marks a company out, differentiates a company, is culture. Culture is so different. Are we in danger of losing that culture, or diluting that culture, Scott? And, if so, what can we do to maintain it, or build it?

Scott Stimpfel ([15:35](#)):

I don't believe we're in danger of losing our culture. I guess it's a normal, human reaction to feel that we're losing out culture where there are you know, such significant changes in the work place especially in such a short period of time. The one constant is always that change will occur and cultures will evolve. At the root of the question, is whether organizations can embrace tradition and successfully innovate at the same time. And I believe the answer is yes. There are three simple things that we can do to strengthen culture: First, is to highlight the organization's purpose and how to connect employees work to that purpose. Let's say the second thing that we can do is being explicit around the aulities, the behaviors, the expectations that will help drive the desired culture. And lastly, as technology continues to disrupt how organizations work, we can each be a little more human and spend time connecting with one another.

Jorian Murray ([16:43](#)):

And, Naz, I can see you nodding furiously. What would you add to that, and, in your answer, maybe talk to us about, do you think Citi's got the kind of culture that can readily adapt to these changes?

Naz Vahid ([16:53](#)):

I am really, actually, proud of Citi, and this is not a commercial. But, honestly, very proud that we were not the bank that was saying to everybody, come in, every single person has to come in back to the office, and, that is just the way you have to do it.

Naz Vahid ([17:08](#)):

The reason I'm proud of that is because we were listening, rather than trying to just force our own set of older standards in the work will get done. I do believe that that creates a modern version of a new environment that we are all gonna be trained, and build our cultures upon. I agree, Scott. I think that we have to be intentional. But, I also believe that people want us to make those directives so that they come in a certain day so that they're sitting together, that we create opportunities for them to talk in conferences with each other. That we actually make them talk about themselves, not just work stuff.

Naz Vahid ([17:47](#)):

And, if we do that right, our culture actually can improve. Because, we are not just a culture of people in their 50s or 40s, but we are graduating to understand what the 20-year-olds need, too. And, together, we're gonna create something that is for all of us, rather than just fits one group's

Naz Vahid ([18:03](#)):

set of thought processes.

Jorian Murray ([18:05](#)):

Lovely. It kind of brings me neatly on to another area I'd like to open up in this discussion, which is, I guess it's commonly called diversity, which can mean many things. Uh, Naz I have had the absolute pleasure, and I'm not sucking up, I've had the absolute pleasure of working with you and your team, which is easily the most diverse culture I've ever seen. And it's so harmonious. So when you read about and hear about, "Hey, we've got to move to more diverse cultures," you must raise one eyebrow. Because I guess you've always had that.

Naz Vahid ([18:34](#)):

You know, it's interesting, and it has happened a little bit naturally. Because we always talk about how we have to mirror our clients. And our clients are trying to become more diverse the same way we are. We are realizing it's not just saying it, that we are more successful, we are more profitable if we have a diverse environment. But to make it happen you have to be intentional about the way you hire. You have to be intentional about the way you train. Let's be very honest. If you come from a underrepresented group, whether it's from economic point of view or a culture that necessarily did not have very formal dinners and lunches with clients, you have to teach people certain things. And if you do it in the route of, "I want you to be successful," not that you have it wrong, it's really important.

Naz Vahid ([19:24](#)):

I will also tell you, you know, there was an example of, somebody just interviewed for a job with us on Zoom. So they were from an African country and they had worn a very colorful outfit. The person who later was talking to me said to me, "She was really smart, but she was dressed like a rainbow almost." And I said to myself, "Well, that's because when you want to make a strong comment, you actually in African culture dress in red and pink." And so she was trying to show her confidence. And the person just took, sat back and said, "Oh, I didn't think about it like that." And all of a sudden you're changing the way you looked at an interview. Who cares what she was wearing? Who was she and did I like what she said?

Naz Vahid ([20:09](#)):

So that is how intentional you need to be sometimes about it, and make sure that your biases do not get in the way of helping them, and when people come in you've got to guide them a little bit to make sure that they fit in. Not that they have to change themselves, but they understand the structure of the business they're coming into. I hope that makes sense.

Jorian Murray ([20:30](#)):

Oh, it makes absolute sense, and talking of, uh, diversity in terms of apparel, we have Scott in his splendid bow tie today, which, uh, always makes me smile. Scott, you once said to me that the war for talent has been talked about for years but is really on now. And diversity is very much at the heart of this. Now, I don't just mean, it's, it's diversity of where you get people from. Talk to us about that.

Scott Stimpfel ([20:54](#)):

We, we've talked about the war for talent for many years, but it's at our doorstep now. We, we feel it as leaders and as managers as we're looking to bring in talent into the organization. We have to look and engage in communities and in universities and institutions and places where we may not have traditionally engaged before. And this is because there's so much great talent out there, and it's incumbent upon us, as Naz mentioned, to have a diverse workplace, because it's going to result in a better company at the end of the day, a company that can provide better solutions to its clients. And so we must, as an organization, engage with and engage in areas that we haven't engaged traditionally before. And we have analytical tools now, technology to be able to do so. And we are now increasing the, if you want to call it a pipeline, of areas where talent can come from. And I think this is gonna continue to change over the years as we look to bring in talent from, you know, we're a global company, from all areas.

Scott Stimpfel ([22:04](#)):

And I think we're gonna continue to be able to do this given the technology enhancements that we have, given the data enhancements that we have, that we're able to open opportunities to others. And I would just highlight what Naz mentioned about being able to bring people into the organization, and it's a responsibility to h- give and en- empower people with that professional capital and the social capital to be successful in the organization. If we all come from different places, we're not all gonna have the same information. So it's incumbent upon all of us to have the responsibility to share the professional capital and social capital and knowledge that we have with those coming into the organization to make sure that they're successful.

Jorian Murray ([22:45](#)):

I'd love to open this up. I came from the world of advertising in the UK, and you know, when we did our graduate recruitment, the same agencies were chasing the same people from Oxford University or Cambridge University, and it almost became a competition to get the best people who were like cookie-cutter. But I know, Scott, that you feel very strongly about this. So you know, banking had a similar kind of pipeline. But you're looking to really open that pipeline, aren't you? And how do you do that? What are the challenges? Is it presenting a bank to different sorts of people, or is it getting your organization to understand that talent can appear in many forms and come from many different sources?

Scott Stimpfel ([23:23](#)):

I think it's both. You know, I, I came from community college, I went to Pasadena City College and transferred to the University of Southern California. And when I was in community college, I had never heard of an investment bank. I didn't know what it was. I didn't know there were careers possible in an investment bank. And so I think as we reach out to communities and as we reach out to universities where we haven't typically had a pipeline from talent, we're gonna have to educate about what those opportunities are within the organization. And I think if we do so, people are gonna find out that, "Wow, this is a great place to work. There's really talented people. They do really interesting work. It's global."

Scott Stimpfel ([24:05](#)):

And so as you think about, you know, our organization and thinking about the opportunities that we have to offer, it's really about educating people about what those opportunities are and then also educating internally our leaders and talent and, and opening eyes, right, and minds around where talent can come from. 'Cause to your point, we don't need to always go to the same places for talent.



Jorian Murray ([24:35](#)):

Uh, Naz, I can see you nodding furiously again. Tell us your thoughts on this.

Naz Vahid ([24:35](#)):

I just could not agree more. You know, if I look at my workforce, some of my best, best bankers and best individuals have come in from, uh, probably what we would have not considered the school of choice, but they are the top of that other school that they came from. They work really hard because they take the opportunity as a gift. And they're willing to learn. Just their attitude is completely different. And I love that, I love taking that type of individual who's willing to learn, who is excited about the opportunity of joining, not taking for granted that I was just gonna be given this opportunity.

Naz Vahid ([25:22](#)):

So I feel that if we go in and are thoughtful about who we bring in, not just what schools we're bringing in, it's wonderful. I also always say you bring a smart individual to the office, ask them if they know other people. Don't worry what school they come from. Ask them if they know other people. They tend to participate in activities with people like themselves. And I find that as a great way to recruit in the new environment as well.

Jorian Murray ([25:50](#)):

I'd like also to talk about the attitude to when people wish to leave an organization. I'm pretty sure we, we've all worked in organizations where someone resigns and, you know, they get frozen out or you just can't bear them leaving. In a world where people are far more mobile, is this something that we need to embrace more? Scott?

Scott Stimpfel ([26:09](#)):

I think it is. And I think there are two ways to embrace it. One is to encourage mobility internally within an organization if possible. I think a lot of times people may feel that they have to leave the organization to find another opportunity. And organizations like Citi have really started to focus on mobility internally and what that looks like to make sure that we are actively and proactively reaching out to our talent and showing our talent opportunities internally. So they're not looking for an external recruiter to bring them outside of the organization. We are proactively reaching out to them and showing them the great opportunities.

Scott Stimpfel ([27:03](#)):

And to the extent if someone does choose an external opportunity, uh, we continue and help that person as they exit the firm and just ensuring that they had a wonderful experience because the odds are they're gonna either come back or they're gonna work for a client at some point in time. And, you know, although we, we live in a big world, it is a small world too, and we wanna continue to have people be advocates of the firm, even when they leave, because they've had such a great experience.

Naz Vahid ([27:22](#)):

Can I add to that, Jorian?



Jorian Murray ([27:24](#)):

Please do.

Naz Vahid ([27:25](#)):

I've been with Citi about 35 years. I've had nine different jobs at Citi. So by standards, I might look like, oh wow, she's been in the same company for a long time, but nine different jobs. So when you divide that, it's very average of when people stay in different jobs and move on to something else. I have to say, I've been lucky that there have been managers that have looked out for me. So when I was looking to move, as Scott said, or was bored with a job, they created opportunities for me.

Naz Vahid ([27:55](#)):

And that has all happened for me in this one company, not different ones. But I also wanna go back and say that when people resign, a lot of times it's because they're not getting fulfilled or they're looking for something that they don't see in our company. The interesting thing is I have an individual that left, went to another bank, said to me, it's not the same job. I just wanna be more entrepreneurial, and all of that, went. And I remember I talked to him and I said, when you wanna come back, if you wanna come back, door is always open and keep in touch. And we kept in touch on LinkedIn and all of that. Two years later, sure enough, he said, I miss the culture that we had, uh, with you all in Citi. I wanna give it another try. He's in, he's just getting promoted to another job. I just feel that it is really important not to get upset about somebody leaving, not to take it personal, but think it as growth, it's one way to grow the business.

Jorian Murray ([28:54](#)):

Okay. You're now allowed, Scott, a commercial break. What is it about Citi's culture that, you know, if there's any young talent listening, thinking about why they might wanna join Citi, what is it about your culture that makes people want to come back?

Scott Stimpfel ([29:08](#)):

I wish there was a profound answer to this questions. As professionals, there's certain needs that we all have in the workplace. And in my experience, Citi's culture provides an environment that meets these needs. It's a culture where people are treated with respect. They are encouraged to bring their authentic selves to work. They're able to work with really smart people from around the world to solve complex problems and they're given the opportunities to develop professionally. At the end of the day, it's actually quite simple. It's about working with good people to enable growth and economic progress.

Jorian Murray ([29:49](#)):

At the top of this conversation, I talked about extraordinary changes for all of us in the last couple of years, and it's only gonna accelerate. Are you both excited by these changes? I mean, it's, it's tiring. Let's be honest. Sometimes it's tiring, isn't it? You gotta learn a new technology and what plug goes into where or what have you. But broadly Scott, are you, are you excited about the, the challenges that, that face you in terms of building culture and building teams and recruiting talent?

Scott Stimpfel ([30:16](#)):

We've talked about some of the great opportunities in front of us but I'm more excited about the opportunities that we have 10 years out when we think about undergraduates now driving change. But, I think the change in 10 years is going to be phenomenal when the true digital natives, the Gen Alphas enter the work place. Gen Alphas have been raised with technology in a way that can't be matched by any other generation and the implications in the work place are profound. I'll share one more story about my son who is a Gen Alpha that illustrates this point. His first word was mama. I was set on his second word being dada and bought the Jimmy Fallon book and read it to him every night. But his second word was Goo for Google. And I had no idea where he had learned this word from and it had occurred to me that I had asked Google so often about sports scores and the weather that he had picked up on that.

And so fast forward five years later, my son, who is now six, goes directly to our Google Nest hub and asks for sports scores. The other day he asked for a hockey score and then he said thank you. And Google responded "Just doing my job". I looked at my wife in astonishment. When I was his age, I had to get sports scores from my father. The point however, is not that I've been displaced by Google assistant but that he fully trusts the information that he receives. So, Gen Alpha kids across the world are having these conversations daily and it won't be long until this generation is actually in the work place and it's exciting to see. And think about how their comfort with technology will shape human relationships, trust and communication across our organizations.

Jorian Murray ([31:35](#)):

And I'd just like to touch on a changing characteristic. I hear a lot of talks and I read a lot of stuff about out for the future, people probably need to be armed more with EQ than IQ in the way that we were maybe taught at school. Is this something you would agree with? Is this something that you are conscious of when you are interviewing people, their ability to deal with other people rather than necessarily what it is they know? Which brings me neatly on to a kind of a, a closing question I like to ask in these podcasts.

Jorian Murray ([32:02](#)):

Our next, uh, subject, we're gonna be discussing innovation. So by way of trailer for that, but also I'd like your first thoughts on innovation. It's a word that gets so overused in my opinion. But what does innovation mean to you? I'll start with you, Naz. What do you think innovation means?

Naz Vahid ([32:19](#)):

Innovation means doing things differently than we've done it before, to me, it's not just about technology, it's just about a different way of thinking. And I think innovation can happen at any time in any company at any business. You know, the business that I used to run is 50 years old. And if we don't innovate ourselves all the time, we're never gonna be at the top of our game. So I don't believe that innovation belongs to a certain group or a certain generation. I think it's continuous and owned by all of us in the business.

Jorian Murray ([32:53](#)):

Scott.

Scott Stimpfel ([32:54](#)):

I would agree with everything that Naz said and that it's a mindset. You have to have a, a mindset that is open to innovation, that is open to new ideas and that the first response isn't no, but let me think about that or yes, let's, let's figure out a way to do it. And so, you know, having an open mindset is innovation in my perspective.

Jorian Murray ([33:20](#)):

And would you say that Citi's culture encourages that or embraces that?

Scott Stimpfel ([33:25](#)):

I believe so. It challenges us to have an innovative mindset, to challenge each other to be open to new ideas, to be open to new perspectives. And I think the more, going back Naz's point, the broader community and family and diversity that we have within our Citi community, innovation is always going to be something at the forefront, 'cause we're gonna have to continue to challenge each other with new ideas and new ways to solve problems and to create opportunities for our clients.

Jorian Murray ([33:53](#)):

So summing up this whole world of work, is there anything that we've not discussed when you were preparing your thoughts coming on today, anything to do with the changing world of work that you would like to add?

Naz Vahid ([34:06](#)):

I think we discussed a lot. I do feel that it's not even finished in the way we are gonna learn. I do believe that as we return to work, things are still gonna continue to change because we're gonna realize how can we do it differently, better. I am exploring job sharing in context of my business, that's something we've never thought about. But if there are jobs that are gonna be remote, why couldn't we do job shares and do it longer and during the day in front of our clients?

Naz Vahid ([34:33](#)):

So let's come back and innovate and be open. One thing I wanna say is Zoom, uh, actually made it easier for people sometimes to tell me what I can do better, people who are more junior than me. And I feel that without it, we're never gonna be the best that we can possibly be. I really appreciate the fact that somehow it made it easier to just say what wasn't working. So I hope that continues as the new environment settles in as well.

Jorian Murray ([35:01](#)):

What a great way to finish. I've so enjoyed this conversation. Thank you so much for being our guests and good things really do happen when you get bright minds together. Thank you.

Naz Vahid ([35:10](#)):

Thank you.

Scott Stimpfel ([35:12](#)):

Thank you.



Legal Read ([35:14](#)):

The views expressed herein, are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of Citi Global Marketing or its affiliates. All opinions are subject to change without notice. Neither the information provided nor any opinion expressed constitutes the solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security. The expressions of opinion are not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results.