

PANEL 1: IGNITING THE DORMANT POTENTIAL OF MIGRANTS

Malika Singh Kanwar

If everyone's seated and ready to go, I would like to commence with our first panel this morning which is focusing on igniting the dormant economic potential of our migrants. This segment is going to focus specifically on migrant experiences in Australia and how some of our panelists have explored through the social and economic challenges they've either faced themselves or through the communities that they've been involved in by other migrants, to become a successful Indian Australian. Our facilitator today Jaibeer Singh is a young migrant himself and as a YSPN team member he is certainly a success story in his own right and he is going to be moderating this panel with his own stories as well as the panels. So, I'd like to welcome Jaibeer to commence this panel and welcome our panelists for today.

Jaibeer Singh

Thank you so much, Malika for the welcome, and I'm happy to be here, honored to be here and welcome all of you to the event. Before we start, I would certainly like to draw your attention to two kinds of elements in this phrase 'Igniting the dormant economic potential of migrants'. The two phrases I want you to want to draw your attention to is the dormant economic potential and Migrants.

Why dormant economic potential? As from our previous keynote speeches we have found out 92 percent of the Indian population is self-employed and yet the economic potential of our community in Australia is dormant. It means it needs the igniting of that potential that's what we're going to do here today. The second element of migrants now, why is this important segment for YSPN, for the community and the conference today, mainly because of three reasons, number one: efforts that we put in this section or this demographic could reap multiple and immense benefits for the community at large and specifically for the beneficiary community that we are thinking of, migrants. number two: the desire to succeed exists, the desire to be someone, the desire to succeed is immense in this demographic segment and number three: we can provide the head start to those people who need the most and we can save their months and years to figure out is it MyKi or is it Opal card, is it com bank is it nab, they don't need to waste times on these. They might have someone who just tells them, hey here's your cheat sheet go and do your thing and start working or start living your dreams, the dreams that you saw in India; you certainly didn't see the dreams of where do I get my groceries from or where do I, how do I reach a certain place. The dreams that you saw of doing, being your best self, we can do that ladies and gentlemen.

With that we would like to commence our panel today, allow me to introduce the first speaker of the panel; our first speaker panel is a corporate leader and experience led and building businesses herself and for fortune 500 companies before moving to Melbourne she founded and served as a CEO of Blink Asia and independent media and content firm, she has a history of educating people strongly for equality and diversity and inclusion for women across all generations. She found a purpose for this in her with a profit for purpose venture empowering women entrepreneurs and senior executives across all globe,

recognized as an influential thought leader. She has been awarded one of Asia's 50 women leaders appointed to the board of Asia's content marketing association a non-executive board member to brilliant women global and a feature international speaker, ladies, and gentlemen please put your hands together for mighty inspiring Shamila. Our next speaker for the panel is a founder and former CEO of HashChing an online marketplace of home loans in Australia his entrepreneurial experience has earned him a spot on top 100 coolest people of 2016 in Australian tech by business insider, that is cool. In 2017 he was awarded a young business leader by Ibaka and nominated as a finalist for 2017 young business leader of the year award by Optus for his contributions to Australia's successful migrant his name was added to the 79th bronze panel of the welcome wall at the Australian national maritime museum in 2018. In his spare time, he mentors budding entrepreneurs at Sydney business school and the founder institute. Please allow me to call upon stage Mandeep Sodhi.

Our third and final speaker of the panel is a Melbourne based senior advisor for Alpha Beta a strategy and economic advisory firm before this he was head of global policy at Uber leading on economics marketplaces and future off work. He also has experience serving as a senior economic advisor to two Australian prime ministers and as deputy chief of staff and director of policy and leader of the opposition. He attended many leading think tanks and conferences delivering papers and presentations on technology and new economy around the world. Notable events include the OECD conference, Concordia, Canada 2020, and new democrat's coalition but something tells me that YSPN in Elevate 2020 is going to be on top of that list if I'm not wrong. Early in his career he also worked as capital market solicitor and advisor for corporate mergers and acquisitions, he is also the director for Chifley Research Centre for Civil Rights and Social Action, ladies and gentlemen please put your hands together for a loud round of applause for Amit Singh.

Now before we kick off the panel, I want to share that I am a mere facilitator of the conversation. I am just asking questions on behalf of the people who are present in the room, this by no means that I will only be the person asking questions so I want to give a heads up to whoever is listening if you resonate with something make a note of that if you do not resonate with something, more importantly, make a note of that too, and feel free to challenge this panelist when we have a Q&A section. Sorry about that, I didn't mention that we challenge you, but here we are now without further ado let's put our hands together one more time to kick off the panel. What is the welcoming audience, isn't it right? So, let's start now, everyone especially every migrant has of a story when they came to Australia and especially coming from our parents that I used to travel miles to go to schools and swam the rivers so I am sure migrants, especially you have come in recent years have their stories of initial struggles, let's start with Mandeep. Could you just share the story of when did you come here, what led you to come to Australia in your initial and updates?

Mandeep Sodhi

Sure, I came to Australia in 2000, August 2000 when the Olympics were going on and so my anything in my life today has been circumstantial it's not my choice and so I arrived when I was 17 and my dad wanted me to go to IOD or Delhi college of engineering, every parent wants that and I disappointed him, so eventually I went to the Delhi college of engineering

exam and my dad said to look after the exam I'll pick you up and why don't you wait for me at the Hotel Taj, so he gave me 50 rupees, you know my dad thought it was a good amount of money to buy me a lot of food there but apparently at the hotel, you couldn't even get a tea for less than 110 rupees, so I was really hungry and after the exam, I went to Hotel Taj and there was the University of Hong Kong doing their show and they were offering free food, so even two months before arriving in Australia I didn't know I was going to Australia.

I had an elder brother, I'll keep it short, so my elder brother he was going through his engineering college he was in year four, last year but he used to come home like half of the head shaved off like mustache gone there's like all ragging that was going on back in those days now gone abolish, I'm hoping but that used to scare the shit out of me so that's why I thought okay well firstly I could see a lot of beaches and the brochures it's glossy and I've got to offer letters straight away from the University Abuloma saying look you've got great results and we would like you to come to Abuloma and the rest was a history of course. I forged my dad's signature to get the fire shirt.

Jaibeer Singh

Could I request you to briefly touch on if there's any top one challenge or top two challenges that you're gonna face in your initial days?

Mandeep Sodhi

I think so, I come from, although I'm Sikh, so I was born and raised in Haryana and you can spot Haryanvi anyway like even if you go to Delhi people will tell you are you from Haryana, they'll ask you like well how did you figure that out you know because of the way we behave. So, it was hard for me and I never came out, I never visited any state. We were always in Haryana, Mexico I went to Rajasthan when I was five years old so I couldn't remember that, and suddenly coming to Sydney with all the beaches around and there's a culture shock as well but I was 17-year-old. There's a lot of challenges I faced; I wouldn't say the language but understanding the culture it took us a while but I think I came at a really good age where I could adapt myself very quickly and there were little challenges, I wouldn't even care about it but yeah it was challenging a journey.

Jaibeer Singh

And on that front Shamila as I understand you've lived and worked across three different countries for a major part of your life US, Singapore, and Australia. Do you resonate with some of these challenges, and if yes what did you do in those times of adversity?

Shamila Gopalan

Well I had a set of very different challenges because I moved here approximately about two years two months ago, so I haven't been here for very long and before that, I lived in Singapore, I lived in the U.S., I lived in Hong Kong so I lived in multiple places. So, adapting to a specific culture or a country I've always had that in me since I was young because I moved to the U.S. when I was 16 and between Asia and the states and you know traveled around the world and did all of that, but I think what was really quite different with my experience moving in to Australia was that I had done it at a much older part of my life when you've actually kind of established habits and social circles and professional circles

so I think my challenge coming here was starting that again from ground zero, I am 44 so I'm not shy to tell my age I think as a woman who's older and being successful I'm quite happy telling you how old I am, but I think that was the biggest start over again and having to find that community that would support you throughout you know that initial phase and throughout your life settling into a brand-new culture, even having lived in many different places you never get used to a different culture and I think you do have to learn you know, how people operate, how people think how you know, between Melbourne and Sydney and Queensland the differences then, understanding that especially I think as an entrepreneur.

Jaibeer Singh

And as I have Amit you had different experiences from because of the age that you came to this country and all of those my question for you is around the kind of role models that you had when you were growing up specifically in the mid after teens or early 20 years like from your 16 to 24 years of age who were people or even presence or lack of role models who are people you. looking up to and how's that experience

Amit Singh

So, I'll kind of, sort of an essential answer to the last question and this one as well I think I moved to Australia when I was 15, I moved actually on my 15th birthday so my experiences of moving early to Australia were seen through the outside parents and it was not a positive experience frequently and I think this is underestimated in the entire conversation about migrants and the impact that it has, but the impact it has on the kids is pretty significant. I used to find my dad finding it very difficult to find work at the right level for him, not because he didn't have experience from his qualifications, but not from an Australian university. He went to Cambridge and has a Ph.D., so that was the extent of it and I think and the impact I think it has on your parents are pretty significant and we shouldn't underestimate how it impacts on the kids and their perceptions or their sort of understanding of the opportunities that they might have.

There's a huge amount of evidence that shows that people's success or people's attachment to the labor market is a very direct proportion of their parent's attachments to the labor market so we should underestimate that. I also came at a time where Australia, like it's kind of funny when you know like, we can call them elephant-like Australia racism has its life cycles and like different groups of people are like the target of like Australian racism as it goes on.

So in the 80s it was Vietnamese, it was the kind of yellow peril you mean like in the early 90s it was the Chinese and like you know towards the late 90s all the people from Hong Kong and it was the yellow peril plus then you sort of had like 2001 and it was like you know oh my god it's all the south Asians and what are they going to do and it was like you know so when you're growing up in the middle of that cycle of racism and then today you know you've got the cycle of racism while profuse it's like it's all of the African migrants and everything that's happening there and now we're back to the yellow peril right so it's like it's almost like you have this kind of cyclical nature like one group is being picked on and when you moved to Australia it was a particularly bad time to be. It was a particularly

bad time to come from a south Asian background right and so I think that you know those things kind of put together with sort of challenging things.

On your question, one thing that's really interesting for me is the kind of role that networks play and what I mean by networks I mean like that in a small end kind of version even though you know we're obviously looking for a vegan one and I think what was really interesting for that was someone gave me this advice actually a few years later but I've kind of used it throughout my career where they basically said just spend your whole life building a tree, and so every conversation that you have with someone try and get two more conversations out of that with two different people and then try and get two more from those two people and then just do that basically for the whole of your life right a and use that in your career and use that in your personal relationship but use that in the way in which you think about your attachment to the world so specifically your career, the thing getting paid for the things that you're interested in as well can help and as you do that, you'll find that different parts of your tree connect with other parts of your tree so then you'll be in a conversation and you'll be talking to someone saying branch five of your tree but you've actually what you're relating to is something else that's quite a very different part of that tree and so what's been interesting for me is being able to find people to sort of build that tree at the time, and so, that I think was the answer to your question is like there wasn't one specific but it was probably if you want to give credit on it that one specific person that told me about build one and everyone's kind of doing it anyway but if you just think about it intentionally it's actually really interesting.

Jaibeer Singh

All right say but to myself, get two conversations with each of you next one, but could I take a little deeper into that kind of last week where you mentioned that with a tree, and try to get a conversation or try to reach out to those people. I would specifically understand as I've heard that the first big break in Australia seems like a difficult one and that's like a common motion shape by everyone. What was your, you know first big break or first break when you thought that things are going to be easier for you for now, and did you use your tree or did you use your network to get there?

Amit Singh

So, I think it's a really good question about what was your first big break, I think just to take Deep's point like someone did research and people's success in life and worked out that the biggest defining factor of success in life was luck and so you know, so what was the big break, and the big break could have possibly been the fact that Australia won the 1998 world cup. I don't know if it would be breakfast but the interesting part of, I think career-wise I think would be great was actually the person that suggested to me to do the treaty and so he then suggested that I don't speak to a few people and I did not want to be a lawyer when I finished university I was adamant that I wasn't going to be a lawyer and he said that was fine I'll just send you to people that, we used to be lawyers but are no longer lawyers and they'll give you advice on what else you could do a little bit more but it turned out that he sent me to the same group of people whom all told me to go be a lawyer.

So, I was just kind of grateful for that but the interesting part about this goes back to why the tree is useful is that because all of them told me to be a lawyer actually what it helped

with when to ask someone to give me a job as a lawyer I could say actually, all these people who used to be lawyers told me to be a lawyer and then and that was a big validating point so again I guess that's probably the big break is just having the patience to go through that process and having the fortune to meet someone that and like I'll tell you where the tree story is kind of interesting I'm trying to make it a bigger thing than it is, but it's really interesting but like literally somebody sat next to me out of dinner I used to, he sat next to me at dinner for like some social event. I didn't know the guy he was kind of bored of the conversation that was on his other side and like the person sitting next to me so we just started talking and then he asked me what I was studying, he asked me what I was interested in, he said the thing that you should do is, you should do this I'll introduce you to two people but it's your job, it's on you to find the next two you should keep going, so again like you know that's luck right but it's then taking advantage of that.

Jaibeer Singh

I certainly agree with that, but I would also yes and to that, being present in those situations, being present with luck is present was the kind of opportunity that you grabbed. My next kind of understanding from you which is related to this is the presence of role models or the presence of people around you what are your observations on again the presence of or the lack of role models around you in the community and specifically for you the lack or the presence of female role models for people in the community.

Shamila Gopalan

That's a great question because it's exactly what I do today I am very passionate about empowering women and the reason for that is, I won't get into my whole life story because we'll be here like forever, but you know when I was growing up so I'm of Indian descent. My parents were from, all my grandparents were from Kerala so we grew up in the migrant region to Malaysia, so I grew up in Malaysia now and I grew up in a really small town near Penang, if you guys are familiar with Malaysia it's up north, and you know we were multicultural and all of that.

However, my family set up was quite distraught because I had a single mother pretty much and an absent father and growing up in a small community in a small town you were not exposed to a lot of things and I'm talking late 70s early 80s right, so there was no internet, there are no social media, there's no, it's just you and your community it's like you go to your next-door neighbor to have a conversation. You don't do it on messenger or WhatsApp so the limited amount of exposure we had also you know fueled for the limited amount of role models that you had around, and from that point of time, this is three decades ago. I do not see an emergence of role models especially from our community and specifically for women that have emerged.

We're in 2020 so in two weeks we're going to have international women's day on the 8th of March I wrote an article yesterday, which is why this question is so on point, at this point I sat down and I thought about who are the top 10 south Indian role models from a female descent that I can think about and it was a struggle. I was like oh who and a lot of them were celebrities right so you think about a female role model you're going to think to get picked up from pony or you know Priyanka Chopra and I called up some of my friends in the community and said not just in Australia but in Singapore and the U.S. I say, could you

give me top three you know names of female role models and it was the same thing. So, I think what we need and the lack of that would have had impacted my life personally and I'm sure it has impacted other young girls and other women out there within our community.

If we had more female role models who looked like us had our story you know had the challenges and had shown the success of how to overcome those, it would have given a lot of hope to me personally and to my mom because my mother was very successful. She was highly educated; she was one of the few women during that time who got her master's degree, but because of the situation, she felt that that was her limit she was limited in that situation because she didn't see anybody else who had the same struggles that could get out of it.

So, at 42 she was depressed and she passed away and she was 42 years old, and at that point, I decided this has to change so I think you know having those women in your life whether they're in your community or whether they're even outside that by having heard their stories it inspires and motivates and lifts people, so today my whole role is about doing that, is about working with women so that they can tell their story and tell it in a very authentic voice you know because I've come from a background of media and entertainment so I've worked with celebrities and I know what fake is and what is right so whatever we see on tv or magazines is not real it's like it's all made up.

So, I believe that is crucial it's not just important I think it's crucial and it would have made a huge impact in my life I mean some of the decisions I have made in my life would have been different if I had someone whom I could look up to and go look I don't think that's the right thing to do, I think I should do this and it also gives women and people generally a lot of you know self-hope and self-love and you need that to come up and build yourself because you know like we've all been talking I mean we've heard the opening speech and you know Dhruv talked about his journey and the struggles that he had gone through so you know if he had told his story to all of you, it's inspired all of you today as well and you want to go he's done it I can do it so that's really, I think it's crucial. Sorry if maybe that's I was passionate about that.

Jaibeer Singh

That is interesting and relates to exactly what the community is being taught from the ages which mean and resonates to equal opportunities for women across everything there is no doubt about it now shifting to that I want to use the opportunity being in presence of 100 people from the community going from problem faces solution phase. Mandeep, what do you think your initial thoughts are on how we as a community could do to kind of support the incoming migrants and who are coming to Australia? What do you think your Asian thoughts is that we could do as a community?

Mandeep Sodhi

Sure, I think YSPN is a good start, it has evolved a lot since I first met current you know really proud of the crowd here many initial days we were a small group but you know it's I'm really excited and the whole theme has changed as well and what I want to focus on is the Sewa part so you know in of all the success I had a lot of challenges as well a lot of doubts as well I'm not going to share all of that but the reason why I'm here today is

because I brought that Sewa mentality outside Gurdwara, as well our community, as well to my professional life, as well so I think a lot of what that means is that when you go out and network with people you got to have that same mentality and like how can I help this person you know I teach a lot of migrants about don't go out there and say look here's my resume and help me out it's more about how can I help you and that's how I got my first job as well again you know I was going through the 2000 the Dot com bust at that point there was no one that was getting a job people who were I.T. professionals were getting into taxis and there I was looking for job and the reason I scored a job is because I went to this telco company I met the manager and I said I just want to buy you coffee and understand your challenges and it was the first time he said look there's a job applicant who's saying what are your challenges and you know that changed my thinking so since then I've been doing that, when I started my startup we raised 5.1 million to fund our company and it was called.

Support came from the local and offshore investors but I've always got there thinking that I need to help you so then I can get some help back. So, I think overall just keep that; you know why has been going and all the networking events but we need to create that safe environment as well where people can share their challenges. I sometimes come across people who are going through tough times, they have families to support and you know depression is becoming a big thing as well so I tell them to talk to others you know and please be open to talking to people don't cut them off listening to them, people are going through some difficult times and I've gone through difficult times that people have hurt me and they've helped me out so I want to pass it on so I think just keep that open mindset, please.

Jaibeer Singh

Understand and, on that front, if I could kind of ask you to build on that and kind of have an idea of how do you think YSPN 2025 looks like. What is the future state of such and coming such a community such an organization looks like what are few things that YSPN is doing in 2025 which is kind of helping discourse or helping migrants in general?

Amit Singh

Can I just put like a thousand times things of what I need to say I think someone once said to me that it's much easier to shift your bucket to where it rains, rather than to make it rain. This meant that the best thing you could do is listen and ask someone about what's worrying them and how you can solve their problem. It's not I think one of the hardest things to do is basically to go and try and sell yourself right. So, you should never do it you should in a sense try and find out how you can fit in with someone else's things and work out the right way in which that works so I think that that's right. I think in terms of the future state so I want to sort of touch on what I said at the start about professional networks. How professional networks matter and this is a little bit abstract so just forgive me for about a minute right, so, the abstract thing is this right, there's not as in as a sort of economic policy person there's no real easy way to get growth in any kind of major advanced economy at the moment but it hasn't been for the last 10 years and everyone that's told you that is lying right.

The main way in which the economic growth has happened has fundamentally been by migration right and particularly by skilled migration and places that have succeeded from that right. So, if you look at the [30:17 inaudible] it's much easier to look at in the context of America right, if you look at America almost all of the economic growth in America over the last 10 years has been has come out of California right, almost all of the new invested capital right has been in California right I think if you look like basically VC funding effectively you know you get a small pocket in New York a small pup in the Boston area and everything else in California right and the reason why, there's a lot of articles you could probably buy like a room full of books about what's the reason for the California miracle, is it for 38 research universities, is it the fact that food is awkward, is it whether it's good weather's not good is it the fact the beaches are good the beaches are not good it's actually the fact that they like but essentially California's population is the most diverse population the whole country and in particular the growth areas of California is because it is because of that and so one thing that is really interesting is like places that are better at being able to accept and integrate migrants and in particular integrated migrants across the entire spectrum are economies that are going to be successful.

The proof point for this is Donald Trump got you to know, it's kind of amazing for something but the proof point for this is this because basically when Trump got elected there was this huge kind of thing and this is why I started the American example right because when Trump gets elected there's this huge thing about whether migrant visas are going to be full store so the geniuses in Canada go and decide to effectively build, basically build facilities designed specifically to take h-1b visas which are still loan cases and put them in Canada. I worked for a company that spent 20 million dollars building a facility as part of a 200-million-dollar complex in Toronto specifically for the reason that we wouldn't get enough visas to run to do the kind of technology and product work and engineering work, so all of the self-driving programs are run out of Toronto, not in parts in Pittsburgh and San Francisco but it's made facilities in Toronto right and so the proof point is you look at the blip in like American economic growth and the blue happens when Trump gets elected. Now over time as all things with Trump, nobody knows what happens but the point was at the point which Trump got elected American economic growth suffered for a brief period, and the reason it suffered it; some people say is because there was this uncertainty about migration.

So, the reason why I kind of raised that is actually I think it's sort of putting these things into a larger context than just the community, even though that is incredibly important it is incredibly important to build a network for the purpose of supporting people through a community and again to take and it was much more open than I think but like the challenges of sort of mental health that work across generations that work within people have been able to speak to people that you most commonly identify from which is a human trait anyway it is really important so the community part is important but I think there's also a much more urgent need to sort of think about it in terms of its actual like tangible benefit for enterprises or societies or economies of thinking about ways in which to do what ways in which you should build that, so if you talk to me about what does a future state look like, a future state looks like this, it looks like you're having this meeting in a much bigger room but it also looks like a way in which people intimately understand the kind of need and value that this has in terms of building up the networks that are

required to fuel their particular enterprises. So that's why I think like professional networks. Every educator in the world will tell you every smart educator will tell you the things that matter most for the future of education is learning creative skills not technical skills, you know technical skills are important but also learning creative skills but also just as important as being able to form and build a professional network to support you through that career.

Jaibeer Singh

Sorry thank you, thank you so much for that.

Shamila Gopalan

I a thousand percent agree with Amit because I wanted to say this because as an older migrant having moved here and having to start from ground zero. The number one thing that supported me in terms of being able to launch a venture six months ago was my professional network, I mean it is extremely important to build that network and you know that that tree analogy is on point and Mandeep saying save up because there are two things that people, anyone I mean it doesn't matter how rich, how poor, how famous you are. Two things that any human being wants is to be seen and to be heard, these are two key things if you can give that to someone else that appreciation that comes back will help you build a life anywhere and take you whether you're trying to get in your building, your career or build a business I mean whatever it is because that is what this is about, this is about you guys call it, some good which is the community and everybody needs that every single person.

Jaibeer Singh

Thank you so much for adding your thoughts on that and all of us personally can appreciate the presence or the use the leverage that network again can do I do want to take this opportunity to ask in the audience if you have questions that you agree with or you think you have quantitative, feel free to ask those questions. Can I? I guess my questions for Mandeep, around the entrepreneurial community I work in that space too and I see a complete lack of just south Asian people in that space in Australia, what do you think it is and I guess that would be nice but Shamila talk too this is a new person here, in this space as well what are some cultural.

Mandeep Sodhi

Things that you think have led us not to be as progressed as the US. I think the things are changing now we're seeing a lot of I mean it's still low compared to the U.S I mean we're seeing a lot of southeast Asian migrants now starting their startups here raising capital but still early days and I remember I did more than 100 pitches and had like 98 rejections I still got that spreadsheet it was like really bad and you know one-time I was told you know there was a random meeting that was set up and the person thought it would be a local Australian would be coming bitching and this is very, it was a shocking story so the guy was not interested at all and two minutes within the pitch he said look, whatever you're gonna pitch I'm just not interested because I don't invest in people like you that was the turning moment for me like I walked out shocked, then I decided I'm not gonna give up so

I kept pitching and finally raise a lot of capital and I always go back to that person and keep the name like you should change your mind now.

We need to keep doing it but don't take it personally focus on your strengths and start thinking you're a global citizen, stop telling your mind that you're an Indian background, you and anyone can see that right from your face, so I mean having that self-confidence and looking at the problem that you're solving people now understand. So, I'm doing my next venture and we raised capital with no issues at all but now people understand, now they're saying well you've done your first one we want to back you and we got oversubscribe this time, but this is what I want to change and I've been reaching out. A lot of you know southeast Asian or specifically Indian entrepreneurs that have been helping and saying look I can introduce you to investors but I'm trying to create that brand out there that you know our community brand saying we can do better and we are much better, there is all there are the great examples I'm trying to bring that to Australia and that's why we share our stories a lot you know sometimes it comes across that we are self-promoting ourselves but it's not that I'm trying to get the community brand up here as well I think we need to do that but don't lose hope just stay resilient you know I had a lot of bad stories I would share but just not for today yeah.

Shamila Gopalan

I think from my perspective one thing pretty much touched on a few key points I think one is education. I've in my previous business I mean it wasn't in Australia but it was in southeast Asia you know I had similar but different problems raising capital as well but I think what I've noticed in Australia is being a female and two being a multicultural female you do come up against challenges that probably other segments or you know like men might not come up against right and I think the key thing that I did was I did build my brand I think it's really important for everyone to start doing that and start thinking about it not as a narcissistic point of view, but as a view of educating people about your capabilities and your skills and what is what is it that you are offering in order for them to invest whether time money resources anything like that with you because once people understand what your capabilities are they will know it kind of triggers right it's going to actually contribute to me as a person as well as the community and whatever that I'm involved in that's number two number two is persistence you know like Mandeep said don't take it personally you know I think everybody's fighting their own battles and going through their own situations and they're trying to manage that with what you are so if someone says no it doesn't mean it's a no to you personally they might have circumstances that's going on in real life so in their situations that is making them say that or acting a certain way so don't lose hope because this is my third venture and it never gets easy right I mean any entrepreneur, your entrepreneur be able to tell you that you just have to keep persisting.

Speaker 1

Hi guys I'm just going to stand up because I can't see Shamila firstly great answer so far, I'd like to put up a different perspective and get your views and probably everyone in the room's views as well I think you touched on it and it is a very important perspective to

kind of look at we're looking at migrants from very top level very highly educated very smart migrants that come to this country a lot of migrants that do come that can have an economic impact actually the potential that we're missing out on is educated but they're not so much your entrepreneurs or your engineers or your I.T. consultants can come in and get a job based on the fact that they're from IIT or have great skills in a particular or a particular skill set you could say my point, my perspective I guess is around education and I think the changing view around education in Australia in particular growing up I'd say and especially when my parents moved in I think a lot of the people who moved here education was the way we got jobs, you came in and you had on your resume and that was your proving point but I think in today's society education gets you through the door for an interview but I think where migrants are actually having difficulty is the fact that the communication skills the ability to actually sell yourself in an interview and actually show your worth is where they're actually missing out on that job opportunity and I think that's where as a group I would love to get your input I guess your opinion sorry but how can we actually help these migrants these people that come and actually start driving Uber and driving taxis they don't have the best English skills they try they can speak English India is the best country to speak English I agree but not all of them have the ability to sell themselves in an interview and I think that's where I think we're lacking or missing out on their economic impact and how can we kind of bring that forward.

Amit Singh

There's I think your question has like three great questions within it so one is: How do you basically improve you know how do you basically support people to get the soft skills to get the first start, I get the first time the second interesting question I think in that is what is the kind of core thing that we need to all learn that basically gives us the kind of ability to kind of succeed

going forward I think the third thing is where basically like we're the jobs, I mean like in a sense where the jobs for the vast majority of people that there's we've talked a lot about the kind of the sort of the very skilled very kind of like very sought-after parts of the kind of cloud market but what about the total labor market and so I think that's kind of really interesting because I think the growth I'll deal with a third one first because it's easiest to learn the growth parts of the Australian economy are actually where the jobs in the Australian economy are going to be created I'm not going to be at that kind of at the sort of top end of the economy I love when people frequently sit around and talk about the kind of great story of technology and you know I'm one of those people right, that like you know Australia will create about 120,000 AI related jobs over the next 10 years. Australia will at the same time create about you know 1.1 million jobs in the care sector.

We have, we are undergoing the biggest investments in disability care, in aged care, in early childhood education, those are places in which they are literally screaming for jobs and so thinking about the kind of opportunities and those jobs are jobs for which you know qualifications that migrants hold can be valuable so I think we just sort of having a much more textured story about where the opportunities and think about the sectors of the economy beyond basically part of the set beyond the professional services.

There's a whole range of a much broader story about that and having a more diverse picture of that is a helpful thing. The second thing and the second piece is this, just think

about what are the types of things we need to learn. The firm that I worked at, basically to study to work out whatever if you look, so what we did was we did this kind of analysis of every job ad that's existed over the last 20 years and looked at the evolution of job ads and like the skills that were required and looked at it across like 500 occupations effectively. What we concluded was that in essence 20 of the tasks in the job are basically disappearing every decade, and also the number of times you change jobs is usually changing, jobs between two you know between two and two and a half times in a decade like the average person. So, the point about it was that basically, you'll have to do about 8,000 hours more of learning right from the point at which you enter the workforce and to give you a sense of that, that's three hours a week more.

Three hours a week more is about four shows and Netflix like there's no way to watch four shows on Netflix consistently every week. It's hard, so finding space to learn the new skills is going to be a challenging thing for all of us but getting good at that and being able to do that efficiently is going to be important, that's the second question the first question is the question around how do you help people with the connections to work and I think that thing is a really interesting and difficult problem because a lot of the skills acquisition that we do, a lot of the things when we go to University, school whether it's in Australia India or wherever people come from. They all frequently have an emphasis on technical skills but they don't have an emphasis on the other types of things and those other types of things can be taught, that's true but they're actually learned through experience right and so that's why again like a kind of network like this is helpful because sitting down with someone and talking to them and this kind back to what was said about sitting down with someone just to talk to them almost as like a trial into your right or sitting down and talking to people just so that they can get more familiar and comfortable being able to sell themselves.

What's your story like, what you've done what are you saying not for them saying it to you or you being able to help them and you're feeling obligated to them but just listening can be a really helpful skill, so I think that there's a problem in the way in which like the institutional structures can't support people to learn those kinds of communication skills those things are learned through talking to people and working in the community. When you come you don't have a community being able to provide people that option of having a community and giving them the chance to do that at a kind of low friction way would be an incredibly valuable thing and it's good it's a very good point actually, as much of question.

Jaibeer Singh

Thank you so much for your thoughts on that comment and please discuss with me and I resonate with the things that you've said, unfortunately, I know we have so many questions for the panel but we'll run over time otherwise and then before we wrap up the panel I do have a question for Amit again, it's a very brief question since you've been here almost the longest. If India and Australia play a cricket match, which when jersey are you taking is it blue or is it the gold and blue? If India and Australia are playing against each other I'm going with Australia but I probably watch more Indian cricket games and I watch this because I'm watching India against everyone else.

Shamila Gopalan

Don't kill me but I don't watch cricket, I have zero opinion on that

Mandeep Sodhi

India, even with my Australian colleagues I always tell them and they want some competitive tension as well like it's a good thought and they don't mind, so I always support India.

Jaibeer Singh

That definitely makes three of us sporting India now to wrap up what the key takeaways that I was thinking and resonating with the most was when Shamila mentioned about the role models that she wanted there were I would also add to that if we see that we do not have role models around us we try to be the role models that we could be for the people I'm sure there are people who are trying to reach out to you on linkedin on otherwise professional networks reach out to them and try to be the role model in whatever small capacity that we have second point that I really resonate with Mandeep and it kind of brings back the point which is, do not always try to sell yourself, think of how can I help the other person in solving their problems and that might lead to opportunities, that's really exciting and I mean you might want it or not, but the free analogy is staying with all of us and building that network and thinking it of as a tree get a coffee and get two more coffees with it I really like always be selling and obviously getting coffee so, these are the top three takeaways that I personally have from the conversations and I'm sure when we have our coffee and chai later we'll discuss more, I'm appreciative of the panelists here and with that with huge applause let's conclude.

Malika Singh Kanwar

With that, I'd like to invite Manisha our migration lead to say thank you to our panelists for their time today. Thank you. Thank you again to our panelists and thank you Jaibeer for wonderful facilitation.

We are going to move on to our second panel, I was actually going to share a really interesting story but Gordon's giving me the signal that I need to move on, but I will share this story with you, sorry, you want to hear it, I can tell you it's fine it's fun I was on recently, I'm currently recruiting actually for a few people in my team and I had these amazing applications come through both Indian, but both had the same last name as me, that made me very excited and I looked through their qualifications amazing universities, you know recognizing universities amazing work experience, I work in hotels so they worked in some of the best hotels in Delhi and I looked through their CV and said wow this you know profile is really impressive, let me give this person a call I'm gonna be very honest and I was very scared to tell you guys this today but I think if we're sharing real stories I thought I would tell you when I picked up the phone and I heard this man talks were his answers right yes, did he know what he was talking about, yes, could I understand what he was saying yes, would my boss understand what he was saying no, and being one of the hiring managers it is my responsibility to make sure that I take him to the second stage of the interview and I didn't, and it's really funny, I went home that day and I told my dad, I said dad I think I've done something really wrong you know I think I've let somebody in my own community down and for some weird reason ever since that day I'm so much more mindful to go just because somebody doesn't sound the way I sound

because I've been brought up here it doesn't mean that we don't give them a chance. So, one big takeaway I've learned from that is listening to people give them a chance because you don't know what their life is gonna turn into next and sometimes you are that small little breakthrough moment that they could have, you could be the reason that they could be sitting here tomorrow, so again I just had to do the confession I had to tell you.

With that moving on to our second panel which is one that I'm very excited about today which is Sewa this is something that I'm personally very passionate about and I look forward to hearing our panelists talk about Sewa in a modernized context so again Sewa outside of the Gurdwara outside of what we're probably brought up in, understanding what Sewa is, so with that I'd like to welcome Preety Bains legal officer at the department of child safety youth and women who will introduce our facilitators' panelists today if I could get a round of applause.