

An Answer to the Labor Shortage: Second Chance Hiring with Jeff Korzenik | 075

Welcome to Lean Leadership for Ops Managers, the podcast for leaders in Ops Management who want to spark improvement, foster engagement, and boost problem solving - AND still get their day job done. Here's your host, Leadership Trainer, Lean Enthusiast, and Spy Thriller Junkie, Jamie V. Parker.

Heads up, this is a must listen to episode, and I actually want to ask you to do a couple of things. First, I want you to listen with an open mind. And second, really try to pay attention to what our guest says. Like, there's just so much value here.

The explanation of what's happening, why it's happening, what it means for us and why we should consider a different approach to hiring reality is if you zone out on this one, you're probably going to miss some good stuff because there is no fluff. It is just straight value, the whole conversation.

Our guest today is Jeff Krzanich, who's Chief Investment Strategist for one of the nation's largest banks, where he is responsible for the investment strategy in the allocation of over \$40 billion in assets and for more than 30 years, Jeff has been known in the investment management industry for the clarity and the originality he brings to complex challenges.

He's a regular guest on CNBC, Fox Business News, and Bloomberg TV, and his insights into the economy, markets, manufacturing, and the workforce are frequently cited in the financial and business press. Now, Jeff is also the author of Untapped Talent, a book on the business case and Best Practices for hiring people with criminal records. And that's exactly what we're going to talk about today.

Jamie: [00:01:48] Jeff, welcome to the show today.

Jeff: [00:01:51] Thanks so much. Great to be here.

Jamie: [00:01:53] Well, I am glad to dig into this topic, but you know, I just want to start with the problem first because I'm out talking with operations executives, manufacturing executives, and other than supply chain issues, which I hear a lot about. Besides that, the most prevalent challenge that I am hearing about that people are talking about is staffing.

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And you know, of course, we talk about, you know, maybe some baby boomers are deciding to exit the workforce sooner. I know my mom was one of them. She retired a few years earlier. She was when she was originally planning. And I know that some folks are wanting to work from home and wanting to flexibility flexibility. But I know that, you know, there's there's more to do this challenge, right? It's not just those things.

And you know, you have this background in economics, banking, finance in that space. So tell us a little bit about this problem as you see it when it comes to economic and business growth and how that relates to our employment market.

Jeff: [00:02:46] Sure. I think the most important takeaway for your listeners is that this labor shortage really isn't going away. This is baked in stone. It was baked in stone 20 or 30 years ago when we stopped having enough kids to replace our population. And this is a real challenge post-pandemic.

The labor shortage that I and others saw coming gradually came all of a sudden because of the pandemic. And to your reference point, we were expecting prior to the pandemic, 10,000 baby boomers a day were going to retire out of the workforce. The pandemic pulled millions of those retirements forward. Plus, you have other issues.

Millennials, you always would expect some parents to drop out of the labor force as they start to raise and raise children. That's that's traditional. Perhaps less fewer do that today than than would have done it 20 or 30 years ago, but that still happens. That was also pulled forward by the pandemic. And then you have this final big dislocation in the labor force, which has caused people to be unemployed for long periods of time, which tends to cause dropouts from the labor force.

And then finally, you have what economists call reallocation friction. The way the patterns of consumers today have changed so quickly, the labor force couldn't adjust fast enough. So people who were laid off find they can't go back to their old job and no longer exists. The industries have shrunk, and they now have to find new pathways to employment, which also slows labor force growth and causes some people to drop out.

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So this labor shortage is not going away. When you run out of labor, you run out of room to grow in your economy and businesses are feeling this pain today. They can't service their existing customers. They certainly can't grow their business. And I think nagging at the back of their minds is also this fear that maybe their competitors will figure this out and they will be crushed by any competitor that figures out how to do this or solve this problem.

Jamie: [00:04:50] Yeah. And I think too, you know, when I when I hear you talking about this, so we've had this kind of thing that was happening anyways. Now it just escalated in both in the pace and probably in the scope a little bit as well. So all of this kind of coming down together at once.

And most of my clients, most of the folks that I'm talking with as well are seeing business demand, right this growth in their demand. So not only are they saying, Hey, I can't even fill these positions, but I'm supposed to do more and I can't even fill this position, right?

Jeff: [00:05:19] So some of that will pass, like some of the stresses on the supply chain, are driven by a surge of demand and to the degree that's pent up demand from when the economy was locked down or additional demand because of one time stimulus related payments that will ease off. But the labor shortage and the pain of that simply won't go away.

Jamie: [00:05:40] Ok, so we can't ride it out.

Jeff: [00:05:42] Right? Yeah, exactly right. You know, I think it's going to get better over the next six months. We're already starting to see people face up to the fact that their old jobs are no longer there. What do I have to do? I have to move to a job of lower pay, adjust lifestyle.

Those things are starting to happen. We see that in the labor numbers. That's why some of the payroll growth data of the last month or so has been better than expected. And we're seeing that, particularly in states that dropped the augmented unemployment benefits early.

So all those things suggest to me that the worst is over, but that doesn't mean it'll it'll ever be good again in terms of what American businesses got used to and in labor availability, it's just not going to be there.

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Jamie: [00:06:27] Ok, well, let's talk about how we close this gap then, because it's not going away. And you know, everyone's out there trying to figure out, how do we close the gap? So what do you think some of the answer is?

Jeff: [00:06:37] You know, you can talk about things like automation, and that's part of the answer. But the reality is if you replace certain jobs with automation. Now you create a demand for highly skilled jobs to manage the automation process and equipment, and those are often even harder to find, so automation is part of the solution.

You can talk about immigration, but the decline in birth rates, the decline in fertility, the number of children that a woman is expected to have over a lifetime is somewhat of a global phenomenon, particularly in the developed countries where, you know, highly skilled immigrants tend to come from more developed countries. Of all the developed economies in the world, only one has a fertility rate above replacement rate. And you know, that's Israel, which is a very small population country. So that's not going to solve that. Immigration can help, but won't really solve it.

So the answer has to lie, at least in part in digging deeper into our population and making sure we no longer overlook any potential talent resource. And for me, when I look across, why are people sidelined? Who can we bring in? And then more even more importantly, where do we have a track record of success by businesses that have done this right?

I look to the population that has been marginalized from the labor force because they have a criminal record. And there are, fortunately, businesses that have taken this on for decade plus and figured out how to do this in a way that is not, you know, not it may be a social good, but is ultimately profitable for the business. That's a good business practice. And when you see the magnitude of the problem of people underemployed because of a criminal record, you can flip that and say, Wow, this is a great resource.

19 million Americans have a felony conviction. That's an unbelievably high number and that's a huge barrier or has historically been a huge barrier to participation in the economy. And it doesn't have to be.

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Jamie: [00:08:43] Mm hmm. Yeah, I was I was going to ask you, like, how big is this population? And 19 million? That's a lot of people.

Jeff: [00:08:50] Well, nineteen million with felonies and then we don't have good numbers on any of this. And you know, that was a that's kind of a ten year old number. So maybe it's closer to 20 million today and then likely tens of millions who have misdemeanor convictions, but not felony convictions. You know, people quote all sorts of numbers. Those are the ones I'm, you know, good with 19 million felony millions, possibly tens of millions with misdemeanors. And either way, you slice it, that's an unbelievably high number of people who face barriers to employment. Yeah.

Jamie: [00:09:23] Ok, well, let's talk about how this works. Well, so. So give us an example of what this looks like when it's working well.

Jeff: [00:09:32] So I'm actually I'm going to flip that a little bit if I may and talk about what doesn't work, right? I'm going to say companies today have become much more open to this kind of hiring. But they have to go about it the right way.

And if they go about it and I've seen some of this lately, we're out of labor. I guess I have to lower my standards and I have to go scrape the bottom of the barrel and I'll go, you know, let some people in with criminal records. That's not the right way. If you don't go looking for talent, you certainly won't find talent.

So the model that works is treat this like any other talent pool in, you know, conceptually, that means you need to find the people who are a good fit and then you give them the tools to thrive. And that would work with any talent pool, you know, go to Harvard Business School, apply that model.

It'll work, though. I will tell you those graduates are very much picked over. This population of 19 million is not picked over, so you can really get a very good return on your on your investment of time and resources. In practice, that means that you need to find a essentially a referral source of pipeline who can tell you who's ready and who's a good fit.

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Jeff: [00:10:50] And it's very hard for companies and HR and talent acquisition professionals to figure that out in the course of an application and interview process. It works much better, just as a college would go and say, recruited at a technical school and create a pipeline and work with the school to determine, you know, there's, you know, here's what we're looking for and send those kind of students our way.

You can do that with nonprofits and government agencies that are very involved in this population. So non nonprofits that are involved in reentry, the process of people living really in prison, workforce development, nonprofits, even departments of corrections, the prison authorities in every state or local parole and probation officers.

All of these are potential referral sources who can assess the readiness of these candidates and the fit for the jobs you need and you really need that filter from the outside. It's very hard for an employer. There are hybrid models at work temp staffing, you know, temp to temp to hire often doesn't work because in traditional labor pools, the best workers are already picked over with permanent hires. Again, this group is different. They're overlooked, so temp to hire programs work very well.

Jeff: [00:12:05] There's no specialized staffing agencies. There's the giant staffing agency Kelly Services Kelly for listeners of a certain age will remember the old Kelly girl was one of the the first entree opportunities for women in the workforce and in office jobs. So they've had a long history of trying to create more inclusive labor force. Kelly has a program that they're they're kicking off in this as well.

So there's so you need that talent pipeline that you have to develop. And then you also need a support model and companies are used to this, you know, training modules for software or mentoring programs. The difference here is this group comes with gaps that are very real and might not be the gaps that you have come to associate with your with your labor force.

So that means you have to make sure that they have access to transportation. How is it? They may have had very little experience with mentoring in their life. They may have never been thanked for anything in their life. And so it requires an employer who understands that these are gaps and that employees who come from these backgrounds and it's usually not really a matter of a criminal record, but it's usually backgrounds of broken families and deep poverty.

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Jeff: [00:13:26] If you can address those gaps, these these are the tools that this group needs to thrive. It sounds like a lot, but employers do this all the time. I always cite the example of McDonald's Corporation, which moved their headquarters from a suburb of Chicago into the city of Chicago to a neighborhood known for young professionals and young professionals who like food and good restaurants and things like that.

They spend over \$200 million on that new building that was a part of their talent acquisition strategy. So here you do have to make an investment as well. But unlike McDonald's, which had to bear the entire expense on its own here, you might have government and nonprofits that will work with you and helps support that and what you get in return for that investment.

And this has been shown time and time again is employees who are highly engaged and more loyal than a traditional workforce. And that combination of engagement and loyalty is a recipe for productivity, which in turn is a recipe for profitability like any other. You know, not everyone is going to work out. Some will be better than others. But that is the the average experience of those who do this right is that you get a great employee.

Jamie: [00:14:45] And so. So there's a lot to unpack there, right, and there's so definitely, maybe not like try. Don't don't DIY it and try and figure it out. You find the go to go to the organizations, go to those government agencies and nonprofits that can help particularly build that pipeline and help you identify because if you try and DIY it, it might not be as successful.

Jeff: [00:15:05] That's correct and realize that this is going to require some work. I mean, you know, as every business person can tell you, nothing comes easy in business. You're in a competitive environment and you have to make you have to work on these, these kind of investments.

But the point is that there's a good tradeoff and you have partners who could do it. And like any other venture, there are going to be mistakes. Some partners are good partners, some are not. And it does require, you know, there's no sugarcoating this. This is a viable talent acquisition model. But you have to work at it.

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Jamie: [00:15:38] Sure, sure. And so, so part of that work is in figuring out the pipeline and the partners. And then the other part of the work you're talking about the tools that we need to provide and some of that, how do we help close some of those gaps and provide these tools? How do I learn more about like, you know, so I don't just have to figure it out through trial and error? Or how do I learn more about what I will need to better support these folks if I if I go down this route?

Jeff: [00:16:01] Sure. So often, the nonprofits that can help you with the pipeline are the same nonprofits that can help you with filling the gaps. But it becomes having an informed management team, and one of the ways management teams can inform themselves are doing things like participating in poverty simulations that are out there.

So you know what is like to live on the edge? One of the companies I studied Cascade Engineering about 1600-2000 employees. They put hundreds of workers through their career welfare to careers program, and one of the things they offer their supervisors is a is the ability to participate in a poverty simulation because they found it helps. So you understand if someone doesn't show up for work one day. And many manufacturing or logistics companies have the kind of old-fashioned no-show, no call, no job rule.

Well, you may be talking to a worker who's never really had a job, who doesn't know he's suppose he or she is supposed to call in their car may have broken down with a \$300 repair. Not only do they not have \$300 in the bank, they don't have a credit card or access. So as an employer, you have to reach out a little bit as you get to know employees.

Jeff: [00:17:22] Some companies go so far as to have a social worker on staff or a life coach on staff, and that's part of the process. In my book, I work very closely with a company called GM Packaging in Lebanon, Ohio, and they have coaching documents and an intake form essentially of new employees that ask questions. You know, what are your triggers? Do you have stable housing? What's your transportation and have a coach and who can help solve those problems?

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Again, it sounds like an awful lot of work, but it's really not. It's not really any different than how you try to support talent and you have outside resources you can partner with. You have to build up relationships of trust.

Sometimes that might be helped by if it's a union position, the union might be involved. You could partner with probation and parole officers. It's all about supporting the individual and allowing them to thrive. And if you've done your job right on the intake side, you have the employee who wants to thrive, and it's just a matter of kind of meeting them and figuring out how you work together.

Jamie: [00:18:32] Yeah. Well, and it's almost like some of the work that has been happening through this pandemic is is has almost prepped or organization to be able to do this work, too in the sense that empathy has become something that we have been able to have more of. Recognizing that our team members are taking care of family members, that they've got kids at home, that they're trying to school, that, you know, like just everything was so disrupted that.

I don't know as an organization, as a leadership team, if you how you would have really been able to go through that without developing some of this idea of understanding different people's circumstances, finding out how to be more flexible, how to be meet people where they are. A lot of that work, almost. It's like we're almost been primed to take this next step.

Jeff: [00:19:15] I use that term meeting people where they are all the time, and I think that that is ultimately the lesson employers have to take away from this labor shortage. You have to meet people where they are. And while it's different, it's not necessarily bad because people appreciate that and can become much more engaged than, you know, a rubber stamp. Cookie cutter model of of of employment.

So so these things do really do work. It's outside the box from traditional ways of doing it. There's nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong with that at all, and the types of return on investment from this are actually quite high if you look at the costs that you incur in doing this kind of support. They're really dwarfed by the added profitability of lower turnover costs, higher engagement and higher profitability, higher higher productivity from employees who care about their job and stay in place for one time for a long period of time.

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Jamie: [00:20:15] Mm hmm. Yeah. Ok. So I want to just touch base on maybe some potential objections, so so you've got folks out here who are listening in right now and maybe like, all right, I'm starting to hear some of these, you know, positives or ways of work, but what about right? So let's go to a couple of those. So like, what? What about someone who's out there going, Yeah, but you know, isn't, you know, our people that have felonies, violent or don't individuals with criminal records, aren't they bad decision makers or not reliable? So for somebody thinking that,

Jeff: [00:20:48] You know, societal stigma? Yeah. And and it's important. I never sugarcoat this. I mean, a lot of people who are in prison are there for crimes that we would look at and say, Yeah, they deserve to go to prison. That being said, we should also recognize that over half of all people with felony convictions were convicted of crimes of such minor threat to public safety.

They never even had to serve a prison term. They might have spent a little bit of time in a county jail, often pretrial detainment. They might have paid a fine. Have a probation officer. But the crimes are very minor, and, you know, one of the takeaways I think you talked about the buildup of empathy that that occurred during the pandemic.

I think during the same period, particularly relationship to the George Floyd murder, we learned that something's not quite right with the American justice system, and that's become much greater awareness. And one of the things that is wrong or has been wrong with the criminal justice system is a history of overcharging.

And so, for instance, I know of a young woman in New York City, 19 years old. She was in a nonprofit workforce development program run by a friend of mine, and she was out on a date fine. She got caught with two fake IDs. In the state of New York as a post-9/11 anti-terrorism move, two fake IDs with intent to defraud. You know, like trying to get a drink when you're underage. She was charged with a felony and what has happened in the United States.

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There's a professor at Fordham University Law School, John Fanfares documented this very well. In his work is for decades. We incited prosecutors to advance their careers by overcharging and trying to get felony convictions where they didn't apply.

So you have that, that that aspect of it. So not all crimes that have felony convictions are actually very serious crimes. But many are. And what I would say is that the characteristics, the unifying characteristic, the most common characteristics of who goes into prison with a felony conviction, the first time is a young male. And we know neurologically young male brains develop late. Young men from broken homes and and with neighborhoods that show little opportunity have shown the very little opportunity tend to get involved in bad things and make bad judgment calls.

But to exclude all men who've made bad judgment calls in their youths. And of course, there are females who do this as well. But it is an overwhelmingly male disease, if you will, to exclude them from the labor force, you'd exclude almost the whole labor force because so many people made bad calls early in life.

But we, you know, people like me, we're in environments where a either weren't caught or we had guidance that didn't allow us to get chewed up in the in in the justice system. So all these things give some perspective. At the end of the day, the fears about hiring people with felony records should never be about compromising.

Jeff: [00:24:11] This is not about compromising workplace safety. This is about getting great employees and the employer gets to control who they hire. No one is saying to consider a felon a person with a criminal record with a felony conviction to consider someone for hiring with that background doesn't mean you have to hire them.

You still get you still get the choice. And I think any employer knows that. You can have lots of people who don't have felony convictions, who are terrible employees and who are toxic in the workplace. You can be a jerk without having a criminal record, and you can be a great human being and have a criminal record.

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People age out of crime. So, so the the fears of safety are something that the employer gets to control. By the way, I don't recommend that employers only consider people who have nonviolent convictions of nonviolent crimes. They have to truly look at everyone individually.

Was it a bar fight that got out of hand? Was it someone involved in the drug trade 15 years ago and something got out of hand? You know, these are things you have to provide some perspective on. How old was the person? What were the circumstances? Because you can't equate the crime to the person today, particularly for a long period of time has passed. The other fear is one of quality. You know, there's this assumption and to your point about they have bad judgment.

Jeff: [00:25:40] Again, you know, most young people have bad judgment and you have to look at the at the individual. I think the most interesting objection today is that there's a reputation risk. If I hire people with criminal records and it gets out there, I will lose customers or something will will negative will be perceived about my business. That might have been true 20 years ago or 30 years ago.

But what we see and any number of surveys show this. Consumers today expect the companies with which they do business to be be about more than just the bottom line to shareholders. They want them to add value to society. And employees, particularly millennial and Gen-Z employees have made very clear preferences that they expect their employer to be involved in doing social good.

So I think that if you look at some of the companies that are doing this, I'll give an example. Dave's killer bread is available in many grocery stores around the country. It's a great product. They were long established second chance employer, and they even have been funding a foundation that promotes this across the business community. They do not suffer because they're known as a second chance employer. It's actually a big positive attribute among consumers.

So I think all of the objections are out there have to be addressed in a serious and respectful way. But you still. Come back to the conclusion that this is a viable labor pool. Mm hmm.

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Jamie: [00:27:15] Yeah, I was thinking, as you were saying that, you know, I do think that I would probably look more positively at an organization who was doing second chance hiring and and creating paths for folks.

Jeff: [00:27:27] Yeah. And you don't want to go about it. You know, as an employer, you don't leave with, you know, hey, we're going to go look for people in prison to be your colleagues. You talk about we need to focus on being a more inclusive workplace. And that means hiring people with nontraditional backgrounds and people with nontraditional backgrounds often and have had rocky times in life.

And I think we can all appreciate that people who have fallen down but are of character had picked themselves up can be great colleagues. That's the positioning. And you can say, yeah, and that includes some people who might have had run ins with the law or struggles with addiction or simply the limitations of deep poverty. We're going to look as a as a workplace to find if there aren't talents there that we can include in our community and help help our enterprise thrive. I think that's the positioning for this, for sure.

Jamie: [00:28:21] Ok, so let me ask this then. I know you, of course, published a book on this. And so there's a great place that people can go to start and say, Hey, if you're listening.

Jeff: [00:28:31] So thank you.

Jamie: [00:28:32] If you're listening, you're like, You know, I'm not ready to make a commitment yet, but I want to explore this idea. And then certainly at our show notes, we'll put the links and all of those things go back to follow you and grab that book. Is there any other thing that you would suggest for someone who's who just is ready to explore? Maybe, you know, find out a little more.

Jeff: [00:28:52] I devote a chapter in the book to a concept called Bridging the Box, and people can find out. I wrote a Chicago Tribune column about this some years ago as well. And it's just a reminder you don't have to go all in.

You don't have to start out by being outside the prison gates with job and job applications. You can test the waters. And the starting point, I think, is to recognize that there are incredibly low risk hires. You know,

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if someone has been in the workforce 10 years as a successful employee, what do you care if they have a 20 year old criminal record?

So simply not discarding an application automatically because it has a criminal record and giving it a truly fair look? Is this the best person for the job, no matter what happened long ago is one step employers could take visiting companies that have done this successfully, and part of what I tried to do in the book is profile many of these companies, so people have a sense of it's real, it's viable. And here's what goes on.

Meeting with nonprofit partners exploring who might be able to help you as an employer in this in this enterprise lifting vendor restrictions if many companies this is common in the health care space, there are some hospital systems, health care companies that are tremendous second chance employers. They've given opportunity to hundreds and by now, thousands of of people in need of a second chance who had a criminal record. It has worked. Johns Hopkins Hospital System, one of the most prestigious in the country, has a long track record in this.

Jeff: [00:30:32] Yet there are other hospital systems which won't even let a vendor that's a second chance employer bring a a worker on site who has a criminal record. One CEO that I cited works a lot with with hospital systems, and he was so frustrated he went to one CEO of a hospital system that barred his employees, who had records and said, Who do you think is walking the halls of your hospital every day visiting patients? You have dozens, maybe hundreds of people with felony convictions in your facility every single day.

Here, I vet them, I support them and I stand behind them, and you still won't let me bring them in. So, you know, so we're eliminating vendor restrictions. You know, you don't want someone with a criminal record in your workplace. Fine? Don't bar the company that manages the manages the building or the repairs the electrical or manages the landscaping. Don't bar them from doing this.

And then, you know, the last one I always suggest is consider amnesty. I've heard some just absolutely heartbreaking stories of long term viable and often very good employees who get terminated because a background check comes to light from something that happened 20 or 30 years ago.

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I have a friend who works for a very prestigious company, and he lives in fear every day that his 25 30 year old conviction will come to light. And after decades of being a major significant contributor to this company, he'd be automatically terminated because those are the company. So lift, you know, offer offer amnesty to your employees is another way to test these waters.

Jamie: [00:32:18] Fantastic. Jeff, I appreciate all of that. Just great advice of ways that you can get started or, you know, kind of explore test those waters that you talked about. So just as we wrap up today's conversation, you know, our audience is primarily their operations executives, operations managers.

They are out there right now, of course, looking to solve some of these challenges and looking for new ways, but say, how do we have this economic growth and how do we how do we find the right ways of closing this employment gap? So just thinking, you know, not even necessarily what steps it take from a second chance hiring standpoint, but even just words of advice or encouragement that you would leave those operations executives and managers with today?

Jeff: [00:32:57] I think it's really important that they get executive sponsorship. So this is something that has to be driven from the top. We have to be very respectful of our colleagues in HR and talent acquisition who are too often put in a no win situation. They make a good hire. Well, that's what you're supposed to do. They make a bad hire. Who did this?

And so you have to give structure to the process that provides them with support and and career protection for doing this kind of exploration. And that is going to be really a critical element to success. And then looking at the process, you know, are you unintentionally discouraging people? Do you have a committee approach which is very common to that individualized review? Someone has a criminal record. Do you have a process that has a built in? No.

Effectively, you know, you call it a fair review, but the answer always seems to be no, you need to work through these things. And executive sponsorship of this concept is one of the most important ways you can move this forward and help your company by accessing this great talent pool.

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Jamie: [00:34:07] Fantastic. Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate the conversation. Like I said, we'll put the links to your website and your book and all of that. And Jeff, thank you for being here today.

Jeff: [00:34:17] Thank you.

Jamie: [00:34:20] So much to unpack, right, so I mean, I'm not going to repeat it all because it would be basically double the time frame, but a couple of key takeaways that I just want to highlight here.

First, let's talk about the employment gap, the labor shortages, the you know, there's a lot of different factors that contribute. And while the pandemic kind of made it bigger and faster, it was actually a problem that's been building for decades. It was there under the surface and it was going to happen anyways. And it's also not going away. So you can't just write it out. You've really got to look at this as a strategic challenge to tackle. So that's number one. Don't try to ride this out. It's not going to just go away. You've got to make sure that you include this in part of your strategic planning.

Now also, there is a stigma that people with criminal records are bad people or dangerous or bad decision makers, or they're either not reliable or that somehow they're just not worthy of employment at our organizations. And we've got to move past this stigma. In fact, I bet that there was someone in your life right now, someone that you respect, someone that you think highly of someone who does great work, who has a criminal record that you don't know about.

Jamie: [00:35:31] Now I also know executives out there who believe in second chances who are open to hiring folks who have maybe past experiences with addiction or who have criminal records, and they're already open to doing this. And they do it on kind of this kind of case by case basis through referrals like someone referred someone and you give that person a second chance.

But what they don't know is they don't know how to do it as a talent strategy. They don't know how to scale it to help close some of this employment gaps. It's just something that we kind of well, we just we give these second chances when it comes up, but we're not seeking it out. We're not going out and having a strategy. We're not going out and partnering with those nonprofits and government agencies who can help us do this better.

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So I love that, you know, just kind of talked through some of that and also that he gave different next steps at the end of our conversation for how you could get started or how you could explore, even if you're not all the way they're committed, right? So I think those were some really impactful things as well. And just in general, I wanted to share that I specifically timed this episode to kick off the New Year because in the new year, we often are in a place where we are more open to change, where we are thinking more about visions and the desires for the future are just front and center, which is kind of in general, a little bit more open to that.

Jamie: [00:36:59] And so I wanted this conversation to happen at a time when we're rethinking what the future looks like, when we're creating new visions, when we're open to our own work and our own change in our own life. And I wanted to bring this conversation to you now.

So here's your next step. I want you to go to our show notes processplusresults.com/podcast. Find this episode. It's episode number seventy five, and then from there, you're going to see links to Jeff's website. His book *Some Other Resources* and articles, and I want you to spend, let's say, at least 20 minutes exploring this topic.

If you want to read the book *Great by the Book* and order it if you maybe just want to stick to podcasts and articles, that works too. But that's the next step that I have for you today is to just take this a little bit further and spend maybe 20 minutes exploring more and learning more about this topic. All right, that's it for today. Until next time.