

# TRANSCRIPT OF PODCAST

## WORK WITH PURPOSE SPECIAL EDITION

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Commissioner  
Australian Public Service Commission

### **Clare Walsh (Speaker)**

Deputy Secretary Business Enabling Services  
Department of Finance

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DAVID PEMBROKE: Hello everyone and welcome to Work with Purpose, a podcast about the Australian Public Service. My name's David Pembroke, thanks for joining me. I begin today's podcast by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the lands on which we meet today, the Ngunnawal people, and pay my respects to their elders past, present, and emerging. And acknowledge the ongoing contribution they make to the life of our city and this region.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Today our topic is the APS Academy, a new public sector institution dedicated to helping public servants be better at their jobs. Back in July, 2020, the APS Commissioner, Peter Woolcott, initiated an independent review of the APSC's Centre For Leadership and Learning. The review recommended that in order to keep pace and transform the learning and development practice of the APS, the service should adopt a national network model in partnership with all APS agencies that connected with the existing APS centres of excellence, as well as extending its networks with the Australian and New Zealand School of Government, or ANZSOG, as everyone knows it as, academic institutions, and other specialist providers.

DAVID PEMBROKE: The focus of the Academy as I mentioned before, is unashamedly on developing capabilities unique to the work of the public service. Joining me in Studio 19 today, to discuss the APS Academy, is Peter Woolcott, the Australian Public Service Commissioner, who is well known to many of you. As Commissioner, Peter Woolcott is responsible for preparing the organisational capabilities of the APS to meet its current and future needs. He was also I might add, along with the recently appointed Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, Katherine Jones, a guest on the very first Work with Purpose episode that went to air in April of last year. Peter, welcome back to Work with Purpose.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Thank you, David. Nice to be back.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Joining Peter is also another returning guest, Clare Walsh, who was on the program a few weeks ago with Mary Wiley-Smith, discussing the new APS learning and development strategy. Clare is currently serving as the Deputy Secretary of Business Enabling Services at the Department of Finance, but Clare is also importantly the Chair of the APS' Chief Operating Officer Committee, and is a faculty member of the APS Academy. She is passionate about lifting the capability of people working across the service, and ensuring that they keep pace with both the current and future demands for our ever changing world. Clare, welcome back.

CLARE WALSH: Thank you. It's good to be back. Thanks for having me.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Our third and final guest is the man behind the review that recommended the establishment of the APS Academy, Dr Subho Banerjee. Subho is currently serving as the Deputy CEO Research and Advisory at ANZSOG, and is a visiting fellow at the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. But he's also one of those fortunate people who's enjoyed one of those typically eclectic and challenging APS careers where he has served in many roles, including at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and also in the education portfolio. Subho, thanks for coming along today.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Thanks very much, David.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Look, before we get into the discussion about the APS Academy, Peter Woolcott, I have to ask how are things with you? On the very first Work with Purpose program, you told a wonderful story of having to drive to Sydney to rescue your dad from lockdown in Potts Point and along with a parent returning home, you had children and their partners coming back. There were cats and there were dogs, and chickens I think moving back into the Woolcott household. Have things returned to normal?

PETER WOOLCOTT: Not quite, thanks David. And we seem to be back in a moment of focus on COVID again at the moment, with what's happening in Sydney and also Melbourne. No, my father's back in Sydney, he went back. He'd had enough. He likes Sydney and he's now locked down there. I've still got family and there's been a few dramas. One of the guinea pigs died and those sorts of things which happened, but no, life is still a bit different.

DAVID PEMBROKE: How are you feeling about the COVID thing again? As the head of the service. Because we almost felt like we were emerging but certainly it's gripped us back again.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Yeah, look, it's still very much a focus for our workforce. I mean, I think the public service has really stood up during the COVID crisis and just goes to show you've got to keep focused on this. I mean, it's just going to be critically important that everyone gets vaccinated and we get this rolled out as quickly as we can. But no, COVID is still a very high focus of ours, in terms of making sure that the workforce is mobile, agile, and responding to the governments' needs, and also the citizens' needs.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Okay. Listen, today's about the APS Academy, and Subho we might start with you. Although the Academy does have a physical home in the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, it's not your traditional bricks and mortar institution. Why did you recommend this network model?

SUBHO BANERJEE: Thanks, David. I think one of the things that really struck us during the review was how large the APS is, how varied its tasks are, and what that range of responsibilities are across the whole of service. Peter's role as commissioner with a responsibility for capability improvement across the whole of the service, that role needs to be discharged in a way that is flexible enough to get across that full span. And so as soon as you start thinking about it in that way, you can't really think about it as a central node that's just going to try and do everything. You need to connect, you need to connect firstly across the service.

SUBHO BANERJEE: There are amazing, fantastic initiatives already underway in terms of capability development in different parts of the service. You want to build on that, you want to partner all the way across the service with agencies, and you want to look outwards. You want to look to other experts, you want to connect with entities like ANZSOG, other specialist institutions, universities. You want to make sure that you are taking a really expansive, up and out approach to the whole thing.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And Clare, designing the institution, the APS Academy to meet that particular need, what have been some of the challenges in putting it all together?

CLARE WALSH: Subho came to see me quite early on actually, when he was starting to do some thinking around this. I know it wasn't just me, you were consulting quite widely. And I think the thing that struck me in those initial discussions was really one, the individual agency investment in learning and development, which is very strong. But the fact that it was actually quite siloed, and while there was a lot of effort across the service particularly through the APSC, to connect some of that learning particularly if you think about it at levels, so SES1, SES2 type training, there was still I think a mindset that you did learning and development within the agency in which you operated.

CLARE WALSH: And that isn't surprising I guess, in many ways. But as we think about the other things we've been saying about the needs in the public service to be more mobile, to be more agile, for our workforce to have had opportunity to work in different parts of the public service or doing different things, whether it's policy, or it's regulation, or it's service delivery. Then you're not thinking about it as a connected across departments was working against this other priority we'd set for ourselves, in thinking about how our workforce needed to be now to respond to the government's requirements and citizens' requirements.

CLARE WALSH: But even just forecasting that that was only going to continue to be a priority and the way we need to operate into the future. So therefore our learning and development, the way that we think about training our staff, and they think about their careers has to match that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Silos, Peter, always a challenge in big organisations, diverse organisations like the APS. What are some of the measures that you're going to take to try to break those down, to build a ... Because the culture's got to come with the aspiration, surely.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Look, David, we were very influenced by the Thodey review on this, when we looked at the public sector and the need for reform, we focused very heavily on capability and the need to make sure the public service was going to be fit for the future and have the capabilities to deliver into the future. He commented on the fragmented nature and Clare and Subho talked about this, of the way we did learning and development across the public service. He also commented on the lack of guidance about what were the essential things that made a good public servant.

PETER WOOLCOTT: And that's been very much at the background of a lot of the work we've been doing with Clare and Subho and right across the public service in terms of the people we've been talking to. That's why the Academy is focused ... It's rare I get as someone who looks after people in governance, to talk about something which is actually really bold and exciting, and this is actually bold and exciting. And it's about working in partnership across the system in terms of delivering public sector Craft.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Tax or finance will focus on the training that they need to do for their specific people, in terms of understanding the tax acts, or the PGPA Act, but what we are going to be trying to deliver, in partnership with other senior practitioners is public sector Craft, and that is what makes a better public servant, what makes you better at your job. And really we've learned that a bit, I suspect from other people in the workplace. That is a legitimate way you do learn things. But we're going to try and bottle it, we're going to try and teach it, we're going to get really experienced practitioners, talk about how you do implementation services, how you do leadership and management better, how you actually manage minister's offices. It's all going to be, as I say, about Craft, about how we do our job better.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So Subho, this was a part of your review very much, this notion, and as I said in the introduction, unashamedly this is about public servants being able to do their jobs better. What are those components? Peter alluded to some of them there, but what are these unique characteristics and elements that people have got to be good at, to be effective public servants?

SUBHO BANERJEE: Well, one of the things we were thinking about, David, was really what is the role exactly in being a public servant? What is special about being a public servant? And I mean special in a couple of different ways there. One is what are the particular characteristics? What distinguishes it from other professional jobs or other things that you might do? What is the thing that you need to do particularly because you're a public servant? But also one of the things that came through very strongly in the consultations was special in another sense, there is a sense of vocation. There is a sense of service.

SUBHO BANERJEE: And I think that is really a privilege in being a public servant, and that came through again and again at different levels in the interviews with previous commissioners, the current commissioner, secretaries past and present, and graduates and people all the way through the service doing very different types of things. That kind of unifying theme of what is special to be a public servant I think is really important and so the Academy provides an opportunity to really package that up and say, "We're now going to concentrate on what is special about being a public servant and then what excellence means in being a public servant."

SUBHO BANERJEE: I think when you start thinking about it in that way, then it immediately gets you to the sorts of things that Peter was talking about, that a lot of that has practical wisdom to it. How do you work through the things that you need to do, to be a public servant? That's a combination of things that you can get from codified knowledge as they say, but a lot of it is also tacit knowledge. There's stuff that you get through working, through apprenticeship, through learning from senior mentors and coaches in different ways.

SUBHO BANERJEE: And so when we through the review were starting to think about, "Well, what's core to that? How can we describe that?" We described it in terms of six different domains. Now, there are different ways to cut it, but the six that we came up with there and that have been pursued through the Academy are making sure that there is a central focus on integrity and connection to the values, the APS values. Of course, that is core and that is part of the privilege of being a public servant.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Then thinking about working with government. What does it mean to really think about the particulars of working in a contemporary Australian Westminster system? What does it mean to work for the government of the day? What does it mean to have stewardship responsibilities? How do you unpack those issues? That's a really interesting set of issues. Then strategic policy, what's the direction? What's the objective? Where are we going? How do we evaluate? How do we see what's working? Delivery and service orientation, how do we actually get things done? How do we make sure that things work on the ground for citizens?

SUBHO BANERJEE: Engagement and partnership, we have to work with people and we need to think about how we do that most effectively. Not just broadly state it, but actually make sure that public servants are equipped to be able to do that. And then as you think about all of that in terms of the service, you need to think about leadership and management. How's the place going to be run? We split it into six in that way. The Academy materials are talking about how you can think about capability development in each of those six domains, but critically as Peter was saying, it's a combination of formal instruction. Whether that's online or face-to-face, and a range of other learning approaches that are in the workplace, so that you can embed what you're actually learning about through what you're actually doing.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Whether that's placement, whether that's coaching, whether that's immersion, whether that's case studies, a range of really interesting and different ways of reflecting on practice, which I'd actually say is consistent, David, with this podcast as well. Reflecting on practice is a really important part of what IPAA's been able to do through this podcast I think. And this is another form of really trying to get into what does the Craft mean? And what does it mean to pursue excellence?

PETER WOOLCOTT: I might jump in here and just say we've actually established a faculty now. It's not a conventional faculty, but Clare is part of that faculty. We've actually assigned two senior practitioners, some are retired, some are not. Clare's obviously not.

CLARE WALSH: Not yet.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Long runway yet. Long runway yet. To basically work with the teams in terms of setting up, establishing, and providing advice on what a particular Craft might look like. In fact, there's the first faculty meeting is taking place this evening, and Clare is involved in the working with government aspect of that. That is one part of the governance framework, and looking to use practitioners to work with L&D specialists in delivering this sort of education.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So Clare, as a faculty member, what are you hoping to bring to that particular role?

CLARE WALSH: Well, one of the things that I think is exciting about this opportunity of the Academy, it's not just the central nature of it. But there's this having the faculty heads, the leads if you like, putting their collective heads together and thinking about that six, the suite of six if you like, and making sure they're connected and sensible, I think's really exciting. The thing that I'll be looking for as well is not that it makes sense to just agency heads or the senior executive, but actually if you come in as a graduate, or you're really early on in your career, or you're mid-career, that you see the opportunity, you see that this is actually connecting to where you are now and where you're hoping to go in your career, but also that it opens your eyes a bit.

CLARE WALSH: You say, "Actually, I've been thinking about my career in this way, and by the work that the Academy is doing, and providing I can actually see the potential of my job now, or my career path being different, broader, more engaging." And also not just about necessarily in the APS. I think that's something that we need to think about as we think about the Craft of a good public servant. It doesn't mean that you spend your career in the public service, honing it in the public service. The thing that strikes me about the sorts of things that Subho just said, you ask the question what's different or unique about being in the public service, one obviously is the accountability to the elected government of the day, is quite different to most other workplaces.

CLARE WALSH: But it is that how do you deliver for citizens? That's what we're here for, at the very end of the day. Politicians are here for that, we're here for that. Do we even know the citizens? When we think about the experts that come in and help train our staff, help develop our staff, who are the experts? Who are the people that we need to engage with? I think it's actually the citizenry in some way. How we think about that through the Academy I think is going to be-

DAVID PEMBROKE: So it's not public servants just talking to public servants?

CLARE WALSH: No, no.

DAVID PEMBROKE: It's ... Yeah, Subho?

SUBHO BANERJEE: Just to continue on from that, David, I think a really exciting part of the Academy concept is also by being more explicit about all of those things, it's actually also a way of equipping people as they come in at different parts of their career as well. It's not just for people that are going to run through from being a graduate all the way to being secretary or a senior person. It's also to actually deliver on this promise of more mobility in and out, by being clearer with people about what's required when they come in.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Because a lot of the things that we've been just talking about, particularly the working for government piece, is very, very difficult to pick up just through instruction. A lot of it really requires much more careful coaching, mentoring, and working through these things in practice, cases, difficult conversations. I think what's really exciting about the Academy is it also delivers on a bit of that promise around mobility that's been around for a long time, about what it means to equip people to succeed when they come in, laterally into the public service.

PETER WOOLCOTT: The other aspect I just want to mention quickly is we've also brought in the heads of profession. The head of digital, head of data, and CTHR, all of whom appeared on your podcast.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yes, indeed.

PETER WOOLCOTT: As well as David Parker, who is the head of the regulatory taskforce in Prime Minister and Cabinet, as part of the faculty, because if they're all going to have a big role in terms of what they deliver in the future, in terms of capability development and how they use the Academy, but they'll also use external partners as well, as will we. Because it's all about being a partnership across the public service, but also with external providers and universities, ANZSOG, and ANU, and any number of other universities.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah. It's been stood up in double quick time, really. Subho, when you handed the report to Peter, not that long ago, to where we are today, what's surprised you? What's encouraged you? Where are the barriers at the moment that you think the Academy needs to be to continue to adapt? Because I think to Clare's point, she's really suggesting that this is really going to be a ... Yes, it's got that six pillars, but it's going to be a rolling, evolving capability deliverer for the public service.

SUBHO BANERJEE: I think the team has done an amazing job on the standup and the implementation, given how short a time period it was, David. I think part of the advantage that they've had is that they were building on strength, that there are some really terrific examples of practice that they've been able to connect with. So, for example, in PM&C, the delivering great policy project is a terrific project, and the Academy's been able to build off the back of that, in terms of the policy offering.

SUBHO BANERJEE: There are amazing things being done in the DFAT Academy, and again, I think there are some very good connections there. The idea was always to build on existing practice, not just to think about new things entirely. There will be some new things, but I think there's also enormous goodwill, David. I'm really struck by how enthusiastic people have been to get involved and to cooperate. There's really a very strong One APS sentiment abroad. I think perhaps partly in reaction to COVID and the APS' action in taking measures to address COVID.

SUBHO BANERJEE: I think that's really led to a degree of enormous goodwill and good faith in trying to get this thing to happen quickly. But I think there's also, and this will be an ongoing implementation effort. It's certainly not a quick sprint. It's a continuation of continuing to work on a very wide range of activities.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Just on that point, the Academy actually opens formally on the 22nd of this month, next week. Although it started its work on the 1st of July.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Indeed.



PETER WOOLCOTT: But the support that Secretaries Board and Phil Gaetjens of PM&C and the other Secretaries have all given to the Academy and the whole concept of this being part of the One APS philosophy has just been huge. In terms of secondments, people, financial assistance, and also Subho's talking about the PM&C work on making good policy. But also other departments such as Department of Industry have also been transferring a lot of their really interesting work about citizen centric, human centred design, and engaging the stakeholders to the Academy, as well. It has been utterly a partnership right across the public service, and that's been hugely important and will be hugely important to its future success.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah. Clare, it's an exciting thought, isn't it? That some experts sitting in a remote part of Western Australia teaching people across Australia, using the technology, but really that lived experience and people being able to access that.

CLARE WALSH: Yeah, that's right. I talked to a colleague the other day who wanted a bit of advice around career, and we talked through the sorts of jobs that he had done, and it struck me and I made this observation to him, he's always worked in roles where the stakeholders, whether that be internal department or external, think like we do. I said, "Actually, what would be useful, if you went and worked and challenged yourself, where people don't think like we do." I was thinking about that more from a cultural diversity or it can be an intellectual framework diversity.

CLARE WALSH: This is some of the things that I think the Academy can help us do and help individuals, but also organisation really push what we think we know. Because actually it makes us better at delivering policy and advice and programs for government decision makers and to the citizens. I think that's really exciting. Now, you don't always have to do that by changing your jobs all the time, right? And doing it through collective learning opportunities, networks, mentors, all those sorts of things. Really diversifying the way we think about learning and development for the individual, because I think certainly my experience coming into the public service a couple of decades ago, it was a very traditional, go off and do a course, learn on the job, not a lot of mentoring. It was very cookie cutter approach, and I think a bit more tailored work and more diversity in offering is going to be great.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So Subho, Clare mentioned before that really the mission and the work of all public servants is to deliver, yes, for the elected government of the day, but ultimately it's for the citizens. What benefit are the citizens going to get out of this improved performing APS? If that is indeed what the Academy is able to deliver.

SUBHO BANERJEE: It's always an important question, David. I think one of the things that we took into the review was the very substantial work that had been done in the big set piece reviews over the last 10 years or so. Going back a little bit over 10 years, Terry Moran, head of the Game Review, in the middle of the McPhee Review that looked particularly at workforce issues, and then the Thodey Review. They came over a span of about 10 years and those three reviews actually had a striking alignment in saying the most fundamental requirement for improving the performance of public service is capability development.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Getting the right people in the right places and then building skills over and over again, is put as the most important way to build the performance of the public service, and that is then the way to deliver better outcomes for citizens. So, the performance of the public service rests so fundamentally on the performance of people and that comes to capability and skills, and over and over again, these very careful pieces of work have told us that what we need to do is be better in this domain, but not just better by somehow just saying it more loudly, or somehow constructing new institutional, like bricks and mortar institutions, but to think in a more flexible, contemporary way about what it means to build people's skills.

SUBHO BANERJEE: I think we have such a reservoir of goodwill amongst public servants to do better at their job, because they are so cognisant of the privilege of making a contribution more broadly, that there is a real hunger to try and build capability. So I think for me that line of the best way to improve the performance of the public service is to improve skills and capabilities, and I think the Academy could make a terrific contribution in doing that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Sure. But Clare, I would imagine a number of public servants listening to this podcast today would be saying, "Yeah, but I am flat stick at the moment. I've got so many things to do." How does the APS Academy fit into the world of the, or the reality of the working life of a public servant? Given that there is reading through ... There's a certain agency that the Academy is asking of public servants. It's not as if we're going to, "Here, spoonfeed you." You've got to take responsibility for your own learning. But at a time where as Peter mentioned before about COVID pressures, time pressures, and other things, how are you going to land this increased capability in that difficult context?

CLARE WALSH: It's a really good question to ask and if I reflect back on my career in the public service, I can't remember a time where I didn't feel really busy. But there is something particular about now. The pace is just in terms of where information's coming from, how you need to digest it, the multiple sources all the time is quite different than what it'd had been 20 years ago. But what does strike me, particularly when I talk to my COO colleagues around the COO Committee table, some of the things that really worry people is how are they going ... It's a really tight labour market out there, right?

CLARE WALSH: And it's very competitive for skills and competence, and capability. And it's getting tighter and tighter. Yes, we feel busier and busier, part of that is because unless we invest in finding that capability, having a market that we can attract from, that we know what our skills are and how we're developing collectively, it's only going to get worse, that sense of overwhelmed workload, right? Actually, unless you can do the two things at once, we're giving ourselves a destiny that's only worse than it is now, if that makes sense. More intimidating.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And just back up-

- PETER WOOLCOTT: Clare, on that, the private sector do this very well. They really train their people, they work on the capability of their people and it is a real focus of the leadership in the private sector. We've got to be emulating that in the public sector, too. We have to be actually as Clare was saying, developing our own capabilities, and that's got to be a very strong focus, so that becomes part ... Part of your job becomes continuing to learn, continuing to develop, and continuing to grow yourself as a public servant.
- CLARE WALSH: And I think we also need to be getting better and better at foresight, if you like. If I think about the skills that we're all looking for now and that we're all competing with the private sector for, is in digital and data, as an example. So, it's the APS profession that is looking at that, which is fantastic, because it's a complete focus. But there will come a time where that becomes a standard APS requirement, right? It's the standard, it's like good writing, good data analytics. It'll just be a basic entry.
- CLARE WALSH: We're not there yet, nowhere near there, but at what point does the market of supply catch up with our demand? And when do you transition it? This kind of centralised thinking about skills and capability and the APS helps us think through that, as well.
- DAVID PEMBROKE: The COO Committee conversation is that. Peter, you sit at the Secretaries Board conversation. I'd be interested to know when the APS Academy comes up at secretary level, what's the conversation? What's the focus there?
- PETER WOOLCOTT: Yeah. I mean, in fact it came up, it was on the agenda yesterday, at Secretaries Board meeting. Really just as an update. There's a genuine interest in the Academy and they want it to succeed. It's very much part of the One APS philosophy. And in terms of the governance around it, we're setting up and we'll be announcing that next week as well, a learning and development strategy, which is all about continuous learning. And it's very much across APS learning and development strategy, and there'll be a learning board which will also help manage that APS wide approach to learning and development.
- PETER WOOLCOTT: The Academy is only really one part of this ecosystem. It's a very new part of the ecosystem, and a very important part of it. But it's really only one part of it. And so we've set out a workforce strategy, we've set out the professions, we've set out the ... We've set up the Academy now. And as I said, all agencies have their own development and training programs themselves. How we actually bring all this together, and ensure an across APS approach to capability development is very much part of the Secretaries Board's philosophy towards this. And of course the COO Committee is a subcommittee of that, one of their tasks is to help manage this, as well.
- DAVID PEMBROKE: But Subho, from your point of view, when you wrote about this networked model, distributed model, how did you imagine it was going to work? What advice were you prepared to give to the COO Committee and to the Secretaries Board to make it work? What are some of the challenges that the Academy is going to face?

SUBHO BANERJEE: I think one of the most important things we did and we talked to Peter obviously, throughout the process, was the idea of an explicit agreement or compact, if you like, at Secretaries Board level, where the commissioner is part of that conversation, to say, "This is important. This is a priority. And we mean it." One of the ways in which I think Secretaries can really say, "We mean it" is to get down to a focus number of things that everyone in the service can keep in their head as, "These are the priorities." That's why we went to the six domains. These are I think a characteristic set that everyone can look at and it's meaningful to them.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Yes, that's what we need to be good at, and I think Secretaries were very supportive of a more focused core set of, "This is what we need to be good at" and if that is signed off in that sense, those are our priorities, then how are we going to show that we're serious about it? What comes from that? The COO Committee's a really important part of the governance of it. I think the Academy needs to be run in an open governance way, because I think these things will only work if they are genuinely co-designed, if they are meaningful. There are some hard truths here, David, that when L&D is not valued, it's often because it's not sufficient quality, right?

SUBHO BANERJEE: There's a feedback cycle here that when it is seen as a good and useful thing, people make time for it, and then it works. When it's not seen as a good and useful thing, then it withers away and you get into a whole bunch of other problems. There is a big leadership part of this, and if the service is serious about improvement, is serious about excellence and contribution, it needs to be serious about these matters, and that has to come from Secretaries Board and the COO Committee. I think both have absolutely stood up, and so I think then it's a matter of broader dissemination of that message and walking the walk. Actually making the time and resourcing it properly to do it properly. But over and over again the service has heard that that's critical, that we've really got to step up and do that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Clare, looking at this and advice that you perhaps might give to the public servants there to get engaged, what is that advice that you would ask? Or, what would you hope that the public servants may do and may use, or get from the APS Academy?

CLARE WALSH: If you're asking that in terms of an individual APS officer-

DAVID PEMBROKE: Yeah, someone who's listening to it now thinking, "Okay, this APS Academy thing sounds pretty good." What's your expectation of them?

CLARE WALSH: My expectation of them is that they think about their development holistically and it goes to some of the points that Subho has just made. Parts of your development at any point in your career will be within your agency, right? It'll be things that your agency provides and offers, and it will be related to the job that you're doing. But if you're thinking about yourself as part of the APS, as opposed to an APS6 or an EL1 in a particular section of a particular department, I think that's the better way of thinking about your role as an APS officer. And then it allows you to think about your ongoing development in a broader way.

CLARE WALSH: And at any point in time, you and working obviously with your manager, can determine which of the levers available to you are the ones that you want to pull at the moment. Sometimes it will be very much head down, learning the job you've just been given or whatever it might be, and other times it's actually, "I'm going to spend a lot more time with the offerings of the APS Academy, because that's where I am in my career. That's what's benefiting me and my organisation and the APS as a whole." I just think people having a more thoughtful approach to their development at any point in time would be my advice.

CLARE WALSH: I'm saying that in a sense of do as I say, not as I do. That's not how I approached my career, and if I could go back in time, I would like to think about that layering, that way of thinking about my career.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Perhaps those resources and that focus was not available to you.

CLARE WALSH: Yeah, maybe.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And Peter, just a final question to you. Let's do some time travelling. Five years into the future, what would you hope that this has been able to do? And obviously five years into the future is still going to be very young in the life of the APS Academy, but describe some of the output and some of the behaviour that we're seeing as a result of the impact of the APS Academy.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Yeah. I mean, it's all about uplift of capability. It's about a better public service. I mean, the issues we're dealing with I think are so complex these days. And so interconnected, that you've got to be able to build a cadre of people who can work skilfully together, who understand how to influence and the other point I keep going back to in the public service is we don't dominant policy advice or service delivery to government anymore. We're actually in competition with lobby groups, ministerial offices, private sector, not-for-profits.

PETER WOOLCOTT: And we've got to be able to influence, because we bring that wide perspective to any issue. And we've got to be able to influence government, we've got to be able to influence stakeholders. I hope to see an Academy which is actually buzzing. In five years' time, we're really delving down into the Craft, we continue to build on the momentum I think we have at the moment, and that we have a really high performing public service. Because that's going to be critical to the future security and prosperity of Australia. I mean, the quality of governance just matters fundamentally to a country, and I hope this Academy is going to play an important role in that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Well, congratulations to all three of you for the contribution that you've not only made to this point in time, but what is going to be coming into the future. I believe it's fantastic. I think the model, it's adaptive, it's engaging, it's accessible, and already if people listening would like to visit the APS Academy online, it is already live. [www.apsacademy.gov.au](http://www.apsacademy.gov.au). It is already in these very early stages, a treasure trove of valuable resources and links and insights, and it's only going to grow from here. If you are serious about serving the Australian people and serious about being better at your job, get involved in the APS Academy. Peter Woolcott, Clare Walsh, Subho Banerjee, congratulations again. And thank you for your service.

PETER WOOLCOTT: Thank you, David.

CLARE WALSH: Thank you very much.

SUBHO BANERJEE: Thank you.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Just before we go, the launch date. When does the minister crack the big bottle of champagne on the good ship APS Academy?

PETER WOOLCOTT: 22 July.

DAVID PEMBROKE: 22 July. Okay. Just a reminder again-

PETER WOOLCOTT: I'm not sure it's being broadcasted like by the ABC.

DAVID PEMBROKE: We could perhaps arrange something else. Maybe we do it live on Work with Purpose, but again, just a reminder about that website, because as I say, I've already been there and had a bit of a look around and already in these early stages, the value is dripping out of this website. [www.apsacademy.gov.au](http://www.apsacademy.gov.au). To you, the audience, thanks also for giving us some of your most valuable asset, your time and your attention. We certainly appreciate your support for the program and stay tuned for more innovation and insights heading your way under the banner of Work with Purpose.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Again, my weekly grovel to all of you, if you do see the social media promotion, please a like or a share to push it along through your networks always helps, and a review of the program on your favourite podcast app. That also helps us to be found. Thanks once again to our great partners here at IPAA for their ongoing support and indeed to the Australian Service Public Commission who is a great supporter of Work with Purpose. This started as an idea in April of last year, and I think it's a demonstration of what can happen when you do just try things, like I know the APS Academy is going to do. It started in April of last year, we're now up to episode 44, and thanks to everyone who's been so supportive in making those conversations happen. But anyway, we'll be back at the same time in two weeks for our next program about the Australian Public Service, but for the moment, it's bye for now.

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