



SoundBites Podcast Transcript

Episode: Jessica Perez

Dave Fabry: Welcome to Starkey Sound Bites. I'm your host, Dave Fabry. Starkey's Chief Innovation Officer. Our guest today is Jessica Perez, Starkey's new Chief People Officer and Executive Vice President of Culture. That's a long title.

Jessica Perez: It is. And it's so fun.

Dave Fabry: And you've earned it.

Jessica Perez: And I refuse to cut it down.

Dave Fabry: No, you shouldn't. And not even abbreviate. I mean, I think you could come up with- [crosstalk].

Jessica Perez: No, it is everything.

Dave Fabry: ... a cool acronym for it, but I think it's better if you just draw it out.

Jessica Perez: You know, I did like the Madam Vice President for a while though.

Dave Fabry: Say that again?

Jessica Perez: Madam Vice President.

Dave Fabry: Madam Vice President.

Jessica Perez: Yes, Madam Vice President.

Dave Fabry: Oh, that's pretty good too.

Jessica Perez: That was fun but the- [crosstalk]

Dave Fabry: MVP. MVP is good.

Dave Fabry: Well, beyond your title, we're going to have you talk a little bit today about really navigating these uncharted waters. I mean, really what we've been going through. It feels like just a continuation of 2020 into 2021 into 2022.

Jessica Perez: I love that you just said that because when the New Year came around, 2021, I was like, "Okay," and then I went, "Nope. Nope. There is no 2021. There is no 2022. I'm sticking with 2020 until this is done and then we'll continue on.



Dave Fabry: Yeah. Just feels like one long blur-

Jessica Perez: It does.

Dave Fabry: And I'm waiting for New Year's Eve and whenever that's going to be. It feels like we're getting closer to it now, but it still is ongoing. And so we really are looking forward to talking about a few of those topics today, how you've been helping Starkey navigate these waters as an organization. Maybe talk a little bit about some of your crystal ball, if you will, for what you see for the future. But, to that end, let's just kick it off. But first I think, talk a little bit about your Starkey story.

Jessica Perez: My Starkey story. Gosh. So my Starkey story is that I spent really the first 10 years of my career doing retained executive search, which is like head hunting, within pharmaceutical biotech, med device. Fascinated by science, wasn't smart enough to be a doctor. So it was the way that I could kind of play with it and kind of went through that age 30 transition, if you're familiar with that at all.

Dave Fabry: It was a long time ago, but yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I remember it vaguely.

Jessica Perez: Yeah. It's one of those things where there was just something that suddenly catapulted me into realizing I just need to be my authentic self.

Dave Fabry: What was that?

Jessica Perez: Well, a divorce will do that for you. Getting laid off will do that for you, so on the-

Dave Fabry: You had the experience of 30 both being laid off and got divorced.

Jessica Perez: Yes. Yes.

Dave Fabry: Wow. Double whammy.

Jessica Perez: So interestingly enough, I decided I'm not going to go back to the retained world cause it didn't feel good, didn't like the job, don't know why I did it for as long as I did. And Starkey just happened to come across and candidly, I didn't know anything about hearing aids, wasn't familiar with Starkey, even though I lived here and it was like, "Oh, hearing aids." Which was beautiful because when I came for the interview process, I was just me. Hire me, don't hire me. It's all about networking, meeting people. And it was interesting because the first interview that I had, he kind of did the little sit back and looked at me and "Why would we hire you?" "Well, you don't have to." It was just a very honest kind of thing. And I figured that interview went terribly, not going to get... but at least I did it and I walked through the door and I met people.



So color me, surprised when then I get called back and interestingly enough, the second round of interviews, that same person that was doing this, was now doing this. Engaging, fun, authentic. And then I met with a handful of other people in the HR world, the same thing and I went, "There's something so interesting about these people."

So anyways, obviously joined, supporting the R&D side and that's when I learned I got really into the technology, because in my mind it was for older people and they're kind of clunky, didn't know... And then meeting with the engineers, especially recruiting for them and understanding the signal processing that goes into it, and oh my gosh, one day these are going to be wireless, one day. And then it goes to the iPhone and now you've got sensors and all those and I was like... It was just fascinating what we could do. And then as far as the engineering side, the computational power and what it takes to fit all these different pieces into this little thing and then have it powered. So I was fascinated by the technology. Very, very smart people. And I was super interested in the culture.

So anyways, that's what started me on my journey of really being engaged and looking at our culture.

This part was just an R&D and we went through changes and we realized, "Gosh, we're promoting managers that are very technical, but they don't really desire to lead people. They don't really want to be managing people. They still want to be down here." And the reason that they're wanting to be promoted to managers is because they perceive that they're going to get special communication or they're going to be in the know of what the secrets are. So once we realized that it was like, "Oh gosh, let's really look at both the professional as well as the leadership kind of track," if you will, and if it really is about communication, then at a certain level in the organization, whether you're leading people or not, you're going to be in the communication stream. And if you want to do technical stuff, that's fine, but you do it as an individual contributor and then you get leaders. So we go through all these pieces and then I'm asked after doing all that fun stuff to then pop over to the international world.

Dave Fabry:

Yeah. Because I was going to say that you've had the opportunity that a lot of people within Starkey haven't had and that's to see a really broad array of our global business and business partners and I think... And talk a little bit about that because it's really, I think, foreign literally for many of us to really see all of the impact that Starkey's making around the world.

Jessica Perez:

Yeah. Oh, it is fascinating. So I would say two parts. I have been fortunate enough to work with leaders that see me, get me and they're like, "Just let her go." Cause I'm a little bit stubborn, I like to dig in. And so other than I think my first promotion into managing the recruiting function, none of the other



promotions ever existed. The titles didn't exist, the positions didn't exist and that's the beauty of Starkey is that when you see an opportunity, then you dive in and you try to help the business, even if it's not in your job description. And that was just my case is that eventually as time went on and other people or other departments started to see it, they were like, "Hey, what is she doing? And maybe we need to call that something."

So when I went over to the international side, we had never had support for international and it was literally day one of like, "Jess, I want a headcount report," and you would laugh at this, but there was no headcount report, there was no system and it was like, "Well, I know that we've got about 3000 employees located outside of the United States, that just happen to sprinkle across 29 different countries, what they do, how they do it, who they..." We had no idea. And that was done by design at that time when we started building all these different facilities is because we wanted them to be standalone businesses and not get bogged down by the US or corporate or those things. But of course, as we've continued to grow and then with everything that's been going on around the world, there was a realization that if we really want to have an impact that impact right now, we focus so much on the US, that impact is going to be outside of the US.

Dave Fabry: For sure.

Jessica Perez: Yeah. And so as we start doing that, then we realize, okay, in Europe we've got maybe nine facilities, each facility has a managing director, they have sales people, maybe they have HR finance people, but none of them are connected with the other countries within the region.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. And that was going to be my point is that you talk about having and seeing all of these independent entities that are all part of the greater whole, then as our EVP of culture, how do you tie that into our global culture?

Jessica Perez: Yeah. Yeah. So that was, I think, the most rewarding part of this role in working with them is they didn't know what HR was and they were used to HR being kind of the 1980s policeman, policewoman, contracts.

Dave Fabry: The windows are open in the parking lot and it's raining.

Jessica Perez: Exactly. Yeah. And so it was really just starting to integrate and get to know the leaders. And when you start to get to know the leaders, you start asking questions about the business and it naturally always lends itself, when you're talking about results, back to the talent or back to the people and then you start to talk about "Hey, have you ever thought about maybe tweaking an incentive plan to drive the behavior that you want," or, "Hey, have you ever thought about setting goals or how do you hold people accountable? How do you know that your employees are engaged? How are you getting the best of them?" And



because they're seeing it drive business results, they glom on immediately and I've lost count of the number of times that I've met with people and I still don't understand how you're HR, because you seem like you're more of a business consultant, but that's what we want to be. We are here to enable performance, both for the leaders as well as the employees and act as that bridge and conduit to say, 'How do we get the best out of both?'

Dave Fabry: Yeah. I've heard, it said a lot of times that people think of HR as a cost center, an organizational development is really an organization within the organization to help bring and populate that culture and that vision and the why for the organization, which is so vital to Starkey's mission and vision.

Jessica Perez: Absolutely. And that's the point of when you talk about how do we get that culture and really create that one global organization. It's our purpose. It's our mission.

Dave Fabry: And it's great because we're not doing things... we're doing things that help humanity.

Jessica Perez: Exactly.

Dave Fabry: We're making products that then are fitted by professionals on end users to make a difference in their life and enable them to communicate with other people.

Jessica Perez: Exactly. And it's like, "What better gift than that?" And when you have people that work for an organization with such a strong mission, there are so many more commonalities than there are differences. And so that's what we built on is our customer service orientation, serving our customers better than anybody else, but then in addition to that, we started doing road trips. Going to these different facilities because then I needed to build trust with the employees because they had their perception of what HR is, which is again, the scary one that we're not going to talk to. And then little by little, really understanding what is it about Starkey and what do we expect out of our leaders as far as how they show up and how they behave.

Dave Fabry: Exactly.

Jessica Perez: And so for some areas there was... somebody would show up looking great, they know how to manage up very, very well, they know how to present their budget, but then behind the scenes you find out, they're sitting in the back office all day, not interacting with employees-

Dave Fabry: Nope. Not engaged with their employees at all.

Jessica Perez: Nope, not at all.



Dave Fabry: Well, and I want to talk a little bit about that. You've already mentioned just since we started, you talked about authenticity, you talk about vulnerability, you talked about going through this period of turning 30 where you sort of needed to come to grips with your authentic self. I think that one area that I find particularly refreshing about what you've brought to the table is, we've lived in a world in many cases where it's like fake it till you make it. I don't mean at Starkey, I just mean in general. Leadership is often seen-

Jessica Perez: Yeah, absolutely. That's what you're told to do.

Dave Fabry: ... lead from the front and fake it till you make it. And don't let them see you sweat. And you're bringing a sense of authenticity and vulnerability. I'm a huge fan of Brené Brown.

Jessica Perez: Yes.

Dave Fabry: And so in her book, the latest book, Atlas of the Heart, she talks about -- I've spent my whole life trying to think about how many countries I can visit, how many places I can go -- And really what she's taught me in that latest book is to try getting in touch with, and being vulnerable with those people who have earned the ability for you to see and be authentic with them is important. And I think you really have brought a flavor of that to the organization in your leadership style.

Jessica Perez: Thank you. Thank you.

Dave Fabry: And I think that's really important moving forward-

Jessica Perez: I do too.

Dave Fabry: ... because the last few years we've all had to deal with real life in ways that in many cases we haven't before. And I do want to pivot a little bit into that in talking a little bit, we've been at the helm now during COVID and talk a little bit about the way and some of the challenges that you've had within Starkey in dealing with the COVID pandemic.

Jessica Perez: Yeah. I think that what COVID has done for us, positive, negative, however you want to look at it, is that people don't seem to have the ability when they come into the workplace to leave the personal life behind. And for so long, we were taught business is business and you don't bring personal stuff into the business, but with COVID, and whether that is simply because people were isolated and realizing what was important or maybe it was the whole discussion about returning back to work and daycare and so now you're talking more about your kids or those things.



Dave Fabry: Have you seen the show, I don't remember which network it's on, called Severance where it's like people's work life-

Jessica Perez: I have not yet.

Dave Fabry: ... from their home life is completely separate and like you said, during COVID, we've had to get used to imperfection on Teams calls or Zoom calls, there's a cat climbing around in the background, our kids coming in asking for something.

Jessica Perez: Yes.

Dave Fabry: And we all just got used to it. In the old days, we would've been mortified, and now we've-

Jessica Perez: Yeah. Yeah. And I love that.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. And now we've seen that authenticity come through and you learn a little bit more in ways that previously we didn't know about each other as colleagues.

Jessica Perez: Oh. A hundred percent. And I remember there were so many arguments about, "You have to be in the workplace to build your culture and how do you do it without being face to face." And I literally went through building out this global HR team while we were going through COVID. So not only the space, the physical space, countries apart, but then also the fact that we weren't able to really communicate live. So it was kind of like the double whammy, but the beauty of it is when you are talking with your boss or talking with your team and one of your kids, this literally happens, slides down the banister and the whole team says, "Hey, Cody, be careful," it brings this familiarity there. It makes it trusting and it makes it a much safer space. And so for me, I got to know my team on a much deeper level than I otherwise would have.

Dave Fabry: That's true. However, now I'll be devil's advocate and say one of the challenges for me personally during the time when we were all remote is that we lose that element of when we would come into a meeting, into a conference room, good old fashioned conference room where we're all together and we have 10 minutes beforehand or after, and we just kind of engage in that informal conversation. Now, with Teams meetings lined up end to end all day, it's very difficult to have that casual informal conversation.

What are you doing as our Chief People Officer and thinking about the culture of the benefit of that informal, unprepared, unplanned conversation. You have the informality of Cody sliding down the banister, but how do you replicate that for other sorts of nuances and benefits to the workplace?

Jessica Perez: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, it's so interesting that you bring that up because I'm struggling with that right now. So having been remote for so long and having the schedule,



not having all the interruptions that you would typically have being back in the workplace, constant interruptions, and if you haven't been planning your day for interruptions. So that's kind of like another shift that we-

Dave Fabry: Recalibration.

Jessica Perez: Exactly, that we all have to make. But I think the other side to it is, and we experience this, we had a customer event in Las Vegas about a month ago, there is something so magical that happens when people come together and when you've got the good positive energy and you haven't been out of the house for so long. And so I think part of what we are orienting ourselves to is how do we make Starkey a place that people want to come to? So that it's not just work, it's also that social interaction. And you hear this all the time. It's the people of Starkey. It's the way that we care about each other. It's our customers, it's the closeness that we have with everybody. So how do we start to create that community feel?

And it's changed up the way that we look at things, whether it is building outside and having picnic tables or areas where people can sit in the grass and be close to nature or maybe there's going to be communal areas where... I remember years ago during breaks, there would be a handful of engineers that would actually play and have their little banjo, and you remember this, and these kinds of things. That's the environment that we need. That's the environment that people want because people want to have fun again. There is so much just heaviness everywhere right now, that to come to a place where you can be your authentic self, let down your guard, you're with colleagues that have got your back, you trust them, they trust you. And that ties in, of course, to our values and making sure that we're hiring people that actually exude and believe in those values. Because otherwise it's just... it's never going to work if you don't hire the right people for your culture.

Dave Fabry: And so to that end then, do you believe that it's more important to hire for culture or for the aptitude for a given job description?

Jessica Perez: Culture.

Dave Fabry: Yeah.

Jessica Perez: A hundred percent.

Dave Fabry: It seems as though you can train on the other elements and obviously in some of the highly technical fields, I mean, they need to have the cache, they need to have the credentials in order to do the job. You can't train somebody up into some of those higher level positions.



Jessica Perez: Well, and interestingly enough, I'll give a shout out to one of our engineers, Pete, because that was, if I go back to the R&D recruiting days, one of the first roles. So we were hiring a group internally, it was going to be a confidential search. We needed to have a director, senior director. I can't remember what it was. And we had two candidates. One was Pete. One was another gentleman. And the gentleman had 150% of the technical requirements. He could do it in his sleep. It was not going to be a problem. But the management side, people leadership, side was like, "Not so much." Wasn't really the orientation. And then we had Pete who had probably 80% of the technical, what we were looking for, but the people leadership and the desire and the motivation was through the roof.

And that was the first big culture shift that we made was hiring a people leader first and then the technical side comes secondary, especially if they're working with a team. And I have lost count of the number of people that I have worked with over all the years that functionally were geniuses and there is so much to learn from them, but my goodness, you put them in front of anybody and they're just not very nice. They shut down ideas, they shut down the brainstorming, they shut down the creativity. It's all about them and their brilliance. And that will never work. It works in some cultures, some organizations not ours.

Dave Fabry: Sure. And I can tell you that as somebody that works with Pete on a daily basis-

Jessica Perez: Oh, that was my point. Yes.

Dave Fabry: That 80th percentile, if you will, he has filled that gap and then some and-

Jessica Perez: A hundred percent. And he's now a vice president.

Dave Fabry: Exactly. So ta da. Nice job.

Jessica Perez: I know, like feather in my cap gets bigger and bigger and such a fun conversation when he was promoted to that and he loves it cause he loves people. And when you care about your team it's kind of like your kids, when your kids succeed, you feel better than when you succeed. For people that have that natural orientation where it feels so much better when your team succeeds than when you do, you're in the right role.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. No, that's, I mean, I think that when you align something you're passionate about doing with something that you're good at, that's when people say find your passion. That's what it's aligning both of those and putting them together into something that you could do all day long.

Jessica Perez: Yeah. And stop trying to be something that you're not.



Dave Fabry: Yeah. Yeah. For sure.

Jessica Perez: It's okay. And I know for me, I went 10 years on the retained search side, like "Okay, yeah this is fine," but no real growth, again, because I wasn't even authentic. Coming to Starkey and to go from being an individual recruiter in 2010 to 2022 being named the Chief People Officer and Executive VP of Culture, never in my wildest dreams did I ever aspire to be a C anything, never did I even want to be a manager because I didn't think I would be good at it because I didn't... I thought you had to be kind of mean and deep down detail management and then to be in this position only because when you're your authentic self, you're not second guessing what you're saying. You don't have to pause and think-

Dave Fabry: You don't have to remember what you said because you're only limited by your memory, if you were saying-

Jessica Perez: Exactly. Yes. And that's then when, of course it's like a Slingshot, because there's no baggage holding you back.

Dave Fabry: Well, to that end, let's shift a little bit and talk about some of the challenges that you've had in your role. I mean, we've all heard about, ad nauseam, the great resignation, the great reshuffle. And certainly, I mean, you've had to address that in your role in ways that you didn't have to think about before.

Jessica Perez: Absolutely.

Dave Fabry: But what insights did you gain by this great reshuffle, great resignation? One thing I've seen and heard, and you probably have a better handle on... I'm sure you have a better handle on the numbers than I do, but I know that in seeing reports of people who did decide to leave their jobs that they began the pandemic with into another one. I saw something where upwards of 70% had second guessed their decision, that the grass really wasn't greener on the other virtual side of the fence. But to talk a little bit about some of the challenges.

Jessica Perez: I think some of the challenges is that people were being pushed to the extremes, both personally as well as professionally. So on the personal front, we're going through something that we've never gone through. On the professional, front to your point, whether it's turnover or we have to orient ourselves to our patients a little bit differently, it's just high levels of stress. And I think that as we look across, well really all over the world, where people are orienting themselves is they want to work in a place where they feel good about what they do, they feel like they're adding value and they feel like they're able to fulfill their own purpose. It's almost like it's become more than a paycheck and "Hey, if I'm going to spend two thirds or whatever it is of my life working, I want it to mean something."



So in a positive way, this has really helped us at Starkey because of our purpose. People want to do something, especially people that don't know how to make the world a better place right now because it feels so heavy, this one thing and knowing that the work that they do can change somebody's life and is adding goodness and then you start talking through hearing through humanity or now we know with hearing loss ties to dementia, Alzheimer's, depression, all those different components and with the world already being a dark place, knowing that you can have a hand in bringing light to somebody's life and the impact that that has, that's what people are looking for. So we've seen actually many more people that have awareness of Starkey specifically wanting to reach out to us because of the purpose that we have and wanting to be a part of it.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. I think it's been our secret weapon since Bill Austin founded the company.

Jessica Perez: Yeah. Yeah. But I would also say, in contrast to that, because of COVID and nobody having any answers, there were a lot of fingers being pointed at HR. "How long is this going to last? When is this going to end? What do you mean we all have to go and work from home suddenly? And when do we get to come back, and how are we going to come back? And is there any flexibility? Is there like-"

Dave Fabry: Or that it feels like a four letter word, but it's a six letter word, hybrid.

Jessica Perez: Yes.

Dave Fabry: The people that initially said, "What do you mean I have to work from home?" And now saying, "What do you mean I have to come back into the office?"

Jessica Perez: Exactly. Yes.

Dave Fabry: And obviously there are... and there's been a lot of studies that have looked at the disparity, the economic disparities of people that had to come in to work every day during the pandemic versus those who've been able to work remotely. But now they're still are jobs and roles that we have that require a physical presence to do their work. But then how are we navigating that and advice that you have for other maybe business owners that are listening to this podcast as to how to address hybrid, because it is a big issue and an issue- Is this going to change moving forward or is this a temporary, transitory stage?

Jessica Perez: Yeah. So I would answer it a couple of different ways. So I think that what has come out of this is that there's almost this equilibrium now between the employer and the employee, meaning they're on even playing fields, which I love and I think that's the way that it should be because for every entitled leader that you have of "Oh, they don't know what they're doing," or "I can just replace this person."



Dave Fabry: We have none of these, by the way.

Jessica Perez: We have none of these, but in the big world business owners. And then you've got the entitled employee, "Give me, give me, give me," and you can see how those two, kind of just the perceptions, kind of bonk heads.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. It shouldn't be adversarial, but-

Jessica Perez: It shouldn't be, it should be a partnership and it should be reciprocal meaning the more that you give, the more you're going to get. And that's that partnership that is starting, I believe, starting to be created. But I think part of the difficulty is, like you said, for the individuals that were showing up on campus every day during the pandemic, we recognized that and we rewarded them and acknowledged them and thanked them and we had a lunch that we brought in trucks and bonuses, those kinds of different pieces. But then on the other side, it has required leaders to take a step back because guess what, you're no longer in a position of power. People can work anywhere that they want to and you got to get uncomfortable being comfortable which many leaders say-

Dave Fabry: Get comfortable being uncomfortable.

Jessica Perez: Get comfortable being uncomfortable. Yes.

Dave Fabry: You can be uncomfortable being comfortable too.

Jessica Perez: Yes. Which all of us can say until it's us that has to be uncomfortable.

Dave Fabry: Oh yeah, of course. Yeah. It's always easier when I'm asking you to be uncomfortable.

Jessica Perez: Exactly. And so there was this disparity and there was a bit of round and round, but basically by talking with the employees, understanding where they were establishing that trust, and listen at the end of the day, the work's either getting done or it's not going to get done. We need to build this trust.

Dave Fabry: You know, you raise a good point. I think the trust is fundamental. Both from a manager and from an employee standpoint is that in the old days, I think pre-COVID, people thought, "Well, if someone was working from home, they were goofing off." And now getting to the point that focused on the productivity, the outcome measure rather than the time you're, you're spending in your chair in the office. As long as we can continue to get... because I will say I'm old school, I'm a Boomer. And I enjoy those interactions that occur at the proverbial water cooler or at lunchtime and someone that I didn't plan to meet, or I didn't have a meeting set up with them and then we might engage for 20 minutes or five minutes and it could be meaningful and change my day.



Jessica Perez: So once you realize that piece, and it's not about getting people to do what you want them to do, it's how do you build on let's create a partnership, let's create a win-win that makes sense for the business, but also makes sense for the employee or the leaders or the... So it's really just about those discussions. And I think that now that it's become less of a topic... So we did become flexible and for those areas... It was so interesting because we want to say flexible. Do what makes sense and make sure you're getting your work done and when you need to be on campus, be on campus and when you don't, then you don't. But people wanted more definitive answers than that.

So then we had to say, for example, if we were to throw out a generality, "We would love for you to be here three days a week and then working remotely, whether it's at home or wherever else, two days a week." And then the noise is... it's kind of heavy for a little bit and you know, "Oh gosh, do I always have to be online? Do I not have to?" And then the noise just stops and it becomes normal again and it's just like... It's no longer top of mind. But then what starts happening is as we're having events, or let's say there's group lunches that are getting together, and I know with my team, we get very, very intentional about making sure that we have that time together in certain days where we're all going to come together, well then for those individuals that aren't coming into the office now they've got like, "What did I miss out on? What do you mean you had that fun-

Dave Fabry: FOMO, they have FOMO.

Jessica Perez: Exactly. And so once this becomes that environment and not just talking the talk, but walking the walk where people are authentic, are enjoying themselves. Yes, we work really hard, but we really enjoy the people that we are working with, plus we've got the community spaces so it's got kind of that social impact. It's not that like, "We're looking down on you and trying to figure out how long you're working and what you're doing." Once it becomes an environment that people want to come to that's when it all dissipates.

Dave Fabry: So we've talked about a lot of different things in terms of where you've been, where we're going and now I'm going to ask you to put your crystal ball here and what are your predictions for the next five years? I mean, we've seen a lot in the last three. What's the next five going to look like?

Jessica Perez: Yeah. I think we are still going to have a talent on war. I think it is incredibly-

Dave Fabry: A talent on war or war on talent?

Jessica Perez: A war on talent. My Gosh.

Dave Fabry: I love it.



Jessica Perez: A war on talent. How's that. Yeah or a talent on war.

Dave Fabry: Talent on war, either one.

Jessica Perez: I think that people will continue to be mindful of where they spend their time. I think that they will continue to be purposeful in their decisions. I think there's going to be more and more entrepreneurs that are going to be out there that maybe don't want to be under the whole public paradigm and making shareholders happy. But I think that there's also going to be a much stronger commitment and kind of realness for people that to do what you love and love what you do, I don't think that's just going to be a talking thing. I think it's going to be more relatable and even from a leadership perspective, when we talk about authenticity, -and that's where I see a difference- in what I hope the future leaders is that we're more relatable. And when I mess up, and Lord knows I mess up all the time, if you can see yourself in me and see like, "Well, geez, if she can fall down and do that thing and she's doing this, maybe I too can become that thing."

Dave Fabry: Absolutely. And thank you for that. And so we call this Starkey Sound Bites for a reason and so the time just flew by.

Jessica Perez: Yes, it did.

Dave Fabry: And so now I want to transition in the vein of the name of this podcast into a couple questions about sound and your experience.

So, do you have a favorite musical artist and why?

Jessica Perez: I do. I do. So Patsy Cline.

Dave Fabry: Love her.

Jessica Perez: And it takes me back to my childhood, growing up in Northern California. Grandpa was a cowboy, had a bunch of horses and we'd do the rodeos and there's something about anytime I hear it's kind of like that old country, it just brings me back to the sweet childhood memories.

Dave Fabry: The raw and edge to her voice and the complexity of her voice is terrific.

Jessica Perez: And her story.

Dave Fabry: Yeah. And her story.

Jessica Perez: Oh my gosh.



Dave Fabry: One more then. So we talked about sound and you've talked about the need to recharge, be your authentic self. Do you have a favorite quiet place? It could be a place in nature, a place in your home. Can you think about the absence of sound? Although we don't celebrate that often, there is a benefit in industrialized society to finding a quiet place.

Jessica Perez: Yes. I would say anywhere in the woods.

Dave Fabry: Okay.

Jessica Perez: So camping, no technology and just listening to nature. There's something about just... It's almost like it's grounding. Yeah, I would say anywhere in the woods.

Dave Fabry: I think that's a good one.

Jessica Perez: Thank you.

Dave Fabry: Excellent. Well, it has been an absolute pleasure-

Jessica Perez: That was so fun.

Dave Fabry: ... to have today and I really appreciate your talking about a whole host of topics. We kind of went in a non-linear fashion, but I think we covered an awful lot of ground and to our listeners, thank you for listening to this episode of Sound Bites and if you enjoyed this conversation, please rate and review the Sound Bites on your preferred podcast. If you can also hit subscribe so that you're sure not to miss a single episode as soon as they come out. And I thank you again for listening and we look forward to seeing and hearing you again soon.

Jessica Perez: Wonderful. Thank you, Dave.