



Dona Sarkar

AUTHOR

Director of Technology for Microsoft Accessibility, Author, Bipoc Woman in Tech Leader



About:

- **Gender:** Female
- **Nationality:** United States
- **Languages:** English
- **Travels from:** United States

Engagement Types:

- Moderating and Emcee
- Panel Participation
- Speaking
- Training and Workshops

Biography Highlights

- Dona Sarkar is the Chief Troublemaker of Microsoft's AI Extensibility Program, a BIPOC woman in tech leader, Multi-published author, and Owner of the ethical luxury fashion brand Prima Dona Studios. She was recently named one of Fast Company's 100 Most Productive People and Cosmopolitan magazine's Businessperson of the Year.

Biography

Meet Dona Sarkar

Dona believes that you are one experiment away from being your most powerful self at work. And yes, in life!

Currently at her day job, she's running 100 experiments as the Chief Troublemaker of the Microsoft AI and Copilot Extensibility Program. Her goal is that people all over the world can use Microsoft's AI and Copilot programs to reason over their OWN data and truly make AI useful for their business.

Previously, Dona led the Accessibility tech program at Microsoft, implementing Generative AI in her products in an inclusive way. She also led the #WindowsInsiders program (20 million people globally) and worked on advocacy for the Metaverse via HoloLens and low-code development

Topics:

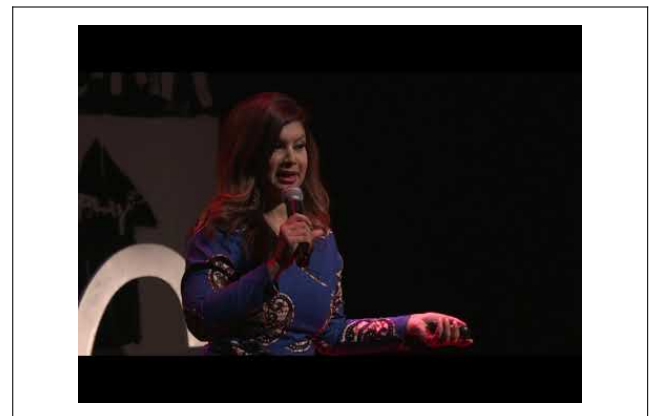
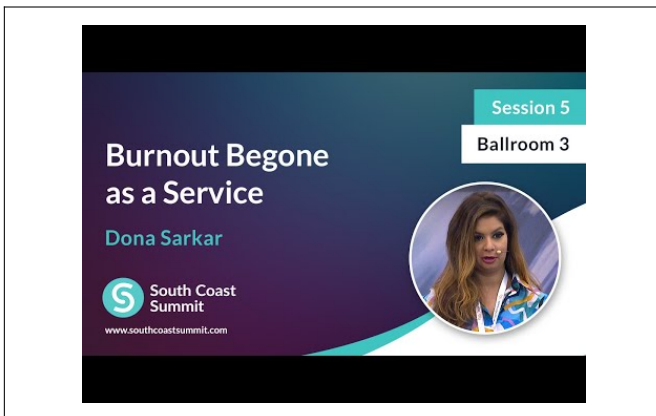
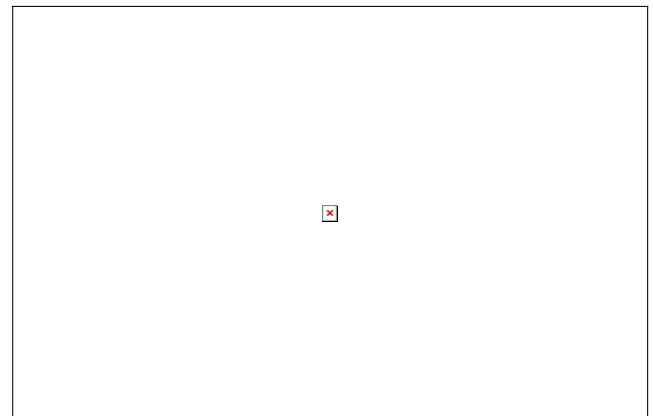
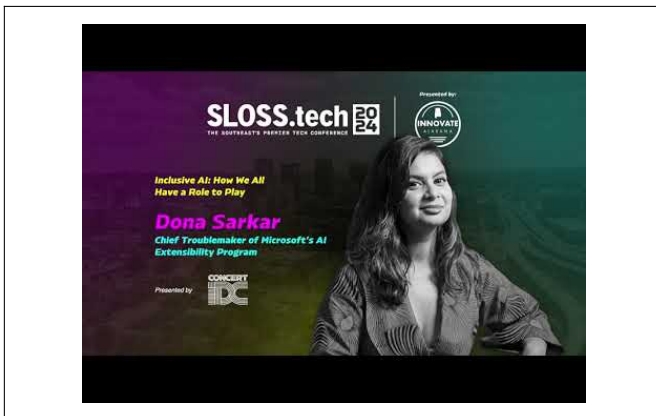
- Customer Experience & Marketing
- DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
- Future of Work
- Innovation & Digital Transformation
- Leadership & Management
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Technology & AI
- Work-Life Integration

via Microsoft's Power Platform.

Dona is also a keynote speaker (fave audience is corporate leaders like YOU), a multi-published author (it turns out fiction writing is useful in software!), the owner of the ethical luxury fashion brand called Prima Dona Studios, and she has recently become a wine bar co-owner and is studying to be a sommelier.

A few years ago, she was named one of Fast Company's 100 Most Productive People and Cosmopolitan magazine's Businessperson of the Year for her multi-faceted (aka weird) life. And yes, she is always ready to get on a plane and come see YOU.

Videos





Dona's Topics

I Got 99 Problems but AI Ain't One

How many of you have heard that AI is here to take your job? Yeah, exactly. Us too. Apparently, AI is here to take ALL the jobs.

Yet, here we are, employed and busier than EVER. Did you know that every large tech company has announced AI products this year with the promise to transform your business?

In this talk, you'll learn:

- What in this latest AI craze is hype and what is real?
- What are successful companies actually doing with AI these days?
- What are 3 things that you ABSOLUTELY should be doing in the next 6 months to get your business ready to implement AI in a secure and responsible way?

Available: In person, Virtually

The Future of Work is... Shenanigans

"Yay. A Consultant." - no one ever

Every company, especially when the economy takes a downturn immediately decides to hire a consultant to solve their latest business problem. Here is the real truth: the best ideas for your organization are already in your organization, hidden deep inside the brains of your quietest members. Your goal is to get these ideas out of brains and onto paper so that they can become experiments and then wins and then tangible business results.

Using my proven 5 Step SHENANIGANS framework, we will identify your most urgent business problems and solve them in an innovative and FUN way using your most valuable assets, your teams. This will not only save you million of dollars, but will also raise employee engagement and retention like you've never seen. Let's go!

Available: In person, Virtually

Inclusive AI: How We all Have A Role To Play

Who's heard of ChatGPT and DallE?

- These exist to be your copilot
- They start stuff for you
- They finish stuff for you
- They're here to make your life easier, NOT harder.

BUT they can very easily not represent what you believe and value. How can organizations and individuals make the best use of this amazing new technology when they're NOT AI experts and don't have the time or resources to become one?

Learn 5 techniques that your company can be doing today to maximize the usability and usefulness of Generative AI and the 3 different roles everyone in your company can and should play a part in the AI revolution.

Available: In person, Virtually

Total Immersion - Tales From A Decade Working On The Metaverse

How many of you have heard of web 3.0? How about the Metaverse?

So...all of you. But what does it mean? And more importantly, what does it mean for YOUR business?

In this session, you'll learn what exactly the metaverse is, how it can boost your business and most importantly, how you can start your journey to the Metaverse today. Dona has worked in the Augmented/Virtual Reality/Metaverse space for almost a decade and will give you a behind the scenes look at companies like Volvo, Lowe's, Ford, NASA and others who are using this technology to thrive—and how you can do it too.

Available: In person, Virtually

NON-PROMOTE-ABLE WORK: 10 Ways to STOP doing it and START being more Powerful in the Workplace

No one ever got promoted for organizing a "women's mentoring ring".

Harsh. But true.

Every senior woman knows this. So why don't we coach and advise the next generation to stop doing this work unless it's part of your job?

Around 2012, I stopped doing ALL non-promote-able work and instead started doing 10 *very specific experiments* at my job.

Lo and behold, my career *absolutely transformed* over the next 2 years. The opportunities started to show up and have not stopped to this day. I talked to a few of my other senior women friends and we agreed-these techniques WORK. In this 45 minute keynote, I will walk you through the 10 experiments I have done to become more powerful in the workplace and how you can do it too!

Available: In person, Virtually

Mind Your Business: How to Talk About Mental Health At Work

"Managers should be keeping their team's mental health in mind."

- How many of you have heard this?
- How many of you have absolutely NO IDEA what this means or even how to do this?
- How do you make sure you're not crossing the line into trying to be someone's therapist?

Fear not, I have a simple 5 step strategy that will work for your organization.

In this session, we will cover:

- WHY is it important for leaders like YOU to talk about mental health
- WHAT you should be talking about and what you should not be talking about
- Talking to your team about them creating their own Mental Health plans
- Creating a team Mental Health plan
- Understand what resources are at your disposal

Available: In person, Virtually

Burnout Begone as a Service

Are you weirdly irritable with your colleagues?

♀ Is the thought of checking your calendar just way too overwhelming?

Are you feeling like you're not actually having *real* impact in your work but rather just doing "activity"?

You, my friend, might be facing Job Burnout. The World Health Organization has defined this to be a real "occupational phenomenon" that's impacting millions & billions of us. So...what are you going to do about it?

Come here to learn a process to figure out if you're burned out...AND a formula for how to debug, root-cause and most importantly, banish it.

Available: In person, Virtually

How To Delight 8 Billion Humans

"You need to find product-market fit!" "Like, now!"

How many of you are so frustrated with hearing this? What if you could guarantee that the product or service you're toiling away at will be AMAZINGLY received...not just by your target audience...but by surprising other audiences as well?

In this session you'll learn about the 6 categories of audiences we think about and a 3 step SIMPLE and inclusive process to reach and delight them at any phase of your business.

Available: In person, Virtually

Dona's Programmes & Workshops

We Understood The Assignment: How to Leverage AI in your Enterprise

Yes, yes we know...there has been WAY TOO MUCH TALK about AI in the past 18 months. But guess what? People who work in enterprises are actually using these things to do their actual jobs AND finding value in real business results.

In this workshop, you'll get hands on and learn:

1. What exactly is AI, what is Generative AI and how does it actually work?
2. How companies are defining scenarios for AI and what are the most common scenarios across industries?
3. How companies are skilling up their workforces for the AI era
4. How companies are creating Adoption programs for AI in their business
5. Assistants and Agents oh my! What's coming up next in the AI-verse and how will it affect you?

Available: In person, Virtually

Testimonials

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If you're looking for a speaker who's 100% authentic, not afraid to engage in uncomfortable but highly necessary #RealTalk to get your audience thinking, Dona Sarkar is your answer. A powerhouse of a speaker, Dona always comes prepared with fresh ideas and actionable plans (read: homework!) to continue investing in themselves long after the event is over. Get ready to be volunTOLD, get out of your comfort zone, and discover how you can become a better human.

Shona Bang

Global Head

Microsoft's Human of IT Program

“

When Dona Sarkar speaks, something exceptional happens. She is a passionate presenter and changemaker who is making a remarkable impression globally. Single-handed, Dona is lifting up Everyone in the room and instilling in them the belief that they can and will do more. Her brave, no-

nonsense approach is infectious and making a world of difference.

Tracy O'Connell

Director
European Sharepoint Conference ESPC

“

As an Olympic athlete, I've listened to many motivational speakers. It's sometimes hard to find talks that really hit home specifically to me. Dona's presence in person and on stage grabbed me immediately. I knew she was someone I wanted to emulate and was further inspired after hearing her TEDxtalk about the Imposter Syndrome. She was engaging, relaxed and so genuine. Anyone who has taken a risk in life towards success can relate to her message of feeling like you don't belong or are not worthy. She uses her own successful career and personal experiences to illustrate how to combat these feelings and find power on the other side of it.

Every employee, college student, entrepreneur and athlete will be faced with Imposter Syndrome at some point in their lives, Dona Sarkar's message will prepare, normalize and inspire to conquer these feelings and teach them how to OWN their success!

Katie Hoff

3x Olympic Medalist & American Record Holder

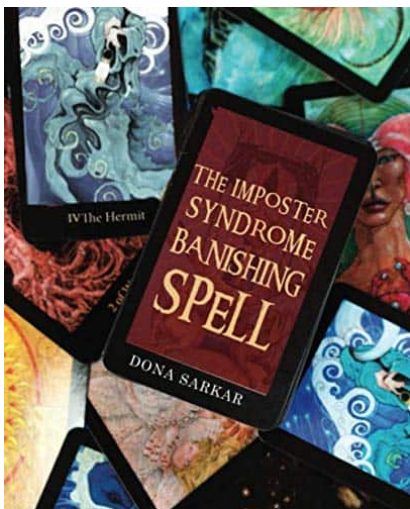
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Dona Sarkar is one of our favorite speakers! She is a dynamic and engaging speaker who captivates audiences with her sharp wit, intelligence, and insightful perspectives. Her keynotes and fireside conversations are both humorous and thought-provoking, making complex ideas accessible and inspiring actionable change

Erin Tselenchuk

President & Co-Founder
Risequity

Books

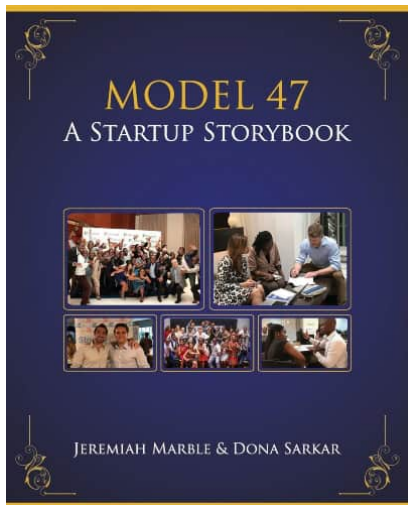


The Imposter Syndrome Banishing Spell

Do any of these statements resonate with you?○ I'm not as good as the people around me○ Oh that good thing that happened? It was dumb luck. I was in the right place at the right time○ There was a mistake in the process and I slipped in under the radar○ Who am I to write that screenplay/give that talk/volunteer for that thing?○ Any minute now, someone is going to point at me and say YOU ARE SO NOT QUALIFIED TO DO THISYou're not alone! According to research, about 70% of the people around you get this sense of being a fraud, this Imposter Syndrome at some point or another...including Sheryl Sandberg, Howard Schultz and Neil Armstrong (yes, first person on the moon, Neil Armstrong). I used to feel this way all the time--until one day, I got sick and tired of feeling like a fraud and decided to DO something about it. I've spent the last decade running a series of experiments to banish Imposter Syndrome for myself and the people in my life. Let me walk you through a 10 step banishing spell that has worked for me and for hundreds of others who have confessed their impostering to me. By the end of the 10 steps, you'll not only have banished your imposter syndrome, but you'll have the tools to

keep banishing it shall it ever dare to return. I've spend the past 17 years fooling EVERYONE across my four industries of tech, fashion, writing and speaking and I'm more than happy to help you do the same. You got this!

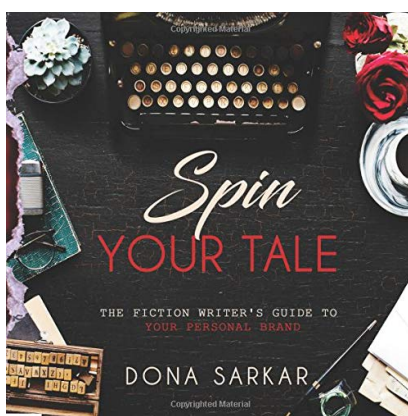
[BUY THE BOOK](#)



Model 47: A Startup Storybook

How long are you going to procrastinate starting that business? You've been thinking about it for years. Have you scrawled that idea down on a napkin somewhere? Congratulations friend, you've already finished the first step of Model 47! A few years ago, the two of us embarked on the greatest journey of our lives, to understand how the modern entrepreneur uses technology--anywhere in the world, not just in Silicon Valley. We started in Lagos, Nigeria, working with 25 entrepreneurs building life-changing businesses. To our surprise, their biggest obstacle wasn't the tech! Rather it was how to truly to understand their customer's problem. How to solve that problem at a price customers would pay. How to spin the tale of their success. Working with these founders, we created and taught 30 business lessons to help turn their initial ideas into profitable businesses. After six months of teaching and learning, we extended our program to another set of entrepreneurs in East Africa, to understand a different market. On our first flight from Lagos to Nairobi, we began writing down the stories of those entrepreneurs, what had worked for them and what had not. In the days and months that followed, we refined that first outline 46 times--once for every business we have worked with. You're looking at the 47th iteration of the framework: Model 47. Whether you live in London or Liberia, San Francisco or Sao Paulo, Portland or Port Harcourt, if you want a no nonsense step-by-step guide to success, this book is for you. This is the year you can make your dream into a life-changing reality. Let's do this!

[BUY THE BOOK](#)



Spin Your Tale: The Fiction Writer's Guide to Your Personal Brand

People are talking about you behind your back. Your friends. Your co-workers. Your management. People you don't even know. They're all doing it. What are they saying? What? You don't know?! Whether you like it or not, your name has a brand attached to it. Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room. Your brand is your professional reputation. It's what you're known for. It's what you're an expert at. It's why people call on you. Here's the kicker though: You can't control your brand. It's what other people think, say, and feel about you. However, you CAN craft and control your story, the thing that leads to your brand. You need to Spin Your Tale. If you don't spell out for people the story you want told about you when you're not around, they will absolutely make it up for you. In your absence. Likely leading to a brand that you may not love. People who spin their tale have made it big in this world. No matter what they do for a living, where they come from, or who they know. All that mattered was how they spun their tale. And today you will join the global community of people who have done exactly this. Welcome to the tribe.

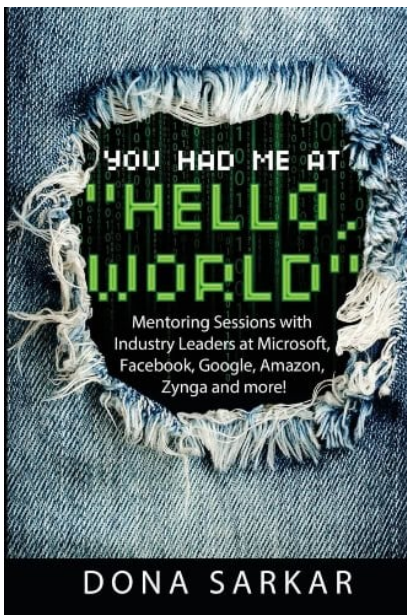
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#DoTheThing: Because comfort zones are boring

Everyone's got that thing. Yes, even you. You know what I'm talking about. Your secret dream or idea. You haven't yet started to make it a reality...but you can't stop thinking about it. Why haven't you started yet? Any of these sound familiar? I don't have time... It's not well thought out... I don't know how to start... I have no one to talk to about it... People will think it's stupid... It's too "big" for me to take on right now... It's too late for me.... Sound like that voice in your head? That voice is a villain. You as the hero of this story are going to defeat that villain. And you're going to do so in a way that's been tested with our #DoTheThing community, people who were exactly in your shoes just a few months ago. In this hands-on workbook, you will lead yourself through a set of exercises inspired by classic fiction writing techniques. By the end of the book, you will have completed a write-in Hero's Journey where you will explore your ordinary world, discover the call of adventure, confront the villain and get out of your comfort zone. You will be left with an invitation to join our online (and sometimes in-person!) #DoTheThing community as well as a clear plan for how you're going to start to make your secret dream happen in the next three months. You've waited long enough. You owe this to yourself. Remember, if magic were going to happen in your comfort zone, it probably would have happened by now. Let's go make that magic happen and #DoTheThing - together.

BUY THE BOOK



You Had Me at Hello World: Mentoring Sessions with Industry Leaders at Microsoft, Facebook, Google, Amazon, Zynga and more!

Would you like the chance to have a mentoring session with a VP, Director or other influential leader from Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Rent The Runway, Zynga, Textio and many others? ? I did! So I scheduled time with these awesome people :) Guess what? They did not tell me to write cleaner code or design more elegant architecture! Instead they shared with me their "career acumen" secrets, things they wished they had learned at school, but instead have had to learn the hard way. In this book, you will hear these leaders' secrets around: - Finding and using your superpowers, the qualities that make you completely unique and memorable - A script for how to negotiate your salary (in a non-aggressive way) and influence your managers and peers from day one - How to do that infamous "networking" thing everyone talks about, especially if you're not a networking event kind of person - How to have professional presence that sets you apart from everyone else - How to hit the ground running in the first 100 days and be the "rockstar" employee everyone talks about and wishes they could hire more of I've had all kinds of adventures during my 10 years of engineering at Microsoft but my absolute favorite thing has been building relationships, speaking to, and mentoring people (both in and out of the tech industry) on how to achieve their career goals while still being themselves. When I interviewed 25 tech leaders for advice on the questions I get over and over, I wanted to share it with more than just my mentees. This book is full of practical, do-today things as well as "scripts" and email templates that we have all actually used. Read the

book and let's talk. I love reaching and meeting new people and you can now consider me "in your network" and I hope I can do the same for you. My best always, Dona

[BUY THE BOOK](#)

Speaker Bureaus And Talent Agencies

Dona Sarkar is available to book via these agencies

✔ Recommended



Speaking Agency



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