

## Rakesh Ramana – The place to be yourself

**Rakesh Ramana, Senior Relationship Director**, doesn't just talk the talk, he walks the walk when it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

As co-chair of the REACH network and part of the Corporate & Commercial Banking (CCB) DEI team, he goes above and beyond to make Santander a more diverse and inclusive place to work. Even more than that, he inspires other people to do the same and his dedication meant he took home the D&I CEO Award.

"The category really spoke to me, and I had to nominate Rakesh," says **Cathy Roberts, People Development, CCB**. "He's an ambassador for diversity and the voice of reason we go to in CCB when we need advice."

Rakesh said: "I'm really excited and humbled by the whole experience, and it's great to be recognised on behalf of everyone who's also putting in work in the network."

### How Rakesh got his big win >>>

Rakesh managed the change from 'Ethnicity @ work' network to the 'REACH' network, to be more inclusive of everyone. He also suggested changes to the way we run our assessment centres, to make them more inclusive.

Cathy explained:

*"Rakesh is never afraid to Speak Up, looks at the hard truths and hold a mirror up to people. He throws himself into everything – like race equality week or conversations with senior leaders – and just wants to make things better for the next generation."*

*"Rakesh made the point that young people from some ethnic backgrounds speak when spoken to and won't interrupt or disagree, so they were scoring lower in interview assessments. From him raising this concern, we've made changes to the assessment centres and now everyone gets a chance to speak. He encourages people to tell their stories, bringing their whole selves to work. For example, his 16-year-old son did work experience and held a webinar about his experiences."*

*"I was absolutely thrilled that he won – both for himself and his network. They do such fantastic work."*

