As a young lawyer and expert in human resources issues, Rajiv Kohli found himself wanting to be challenged by something less reliant on precedents and more on innovation. A conversation with a mentor about Management Information Systems (MIS) planted an idea for a dynamic new career; a Ph.D. in information systems sealed the deal.

“I’ve never regretted my decision for a moment,” Kohli says. “With information technology changing so quickly over the last couple of decades, there’s no time for monotony.”

An associate professor of management information systems at the Mason School, Kohli delves deeply into researching the business value of information technology, healthcare information systems, and managing innovation with information technologies. A traditional barrier between academia and business has often been a catalyst for his work.

“For many years, the academy and the business world remained wary of each other,” he says. “But now that wall has come down and each side realizes the other’s value.”

Among the many companies he has worked for or consulted with are IBM Global Services, SAS Corporation, United Parcel Service, and a number of healthcare organizations. He seeks to provide businesses with flexibility, innovation, and the ability to make better decisions. The corporate world in turn provides him with a wealth of material and case studies for research and his teaching at the Mason School.

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Kohli is current editing a special issue of MIS Quarterly on “Co-creating IT Value,” and a special issue of Information Systems Research will cover “Information Systems in Healthcare Organizations.” He is also published widely in such journals as Management Science, MIS Quarterly, Information Systems Research, Journal of Management Information Systems, and others. He is also coauthor of The IT Payoff: Measuring Business Value of Information Technology Investment (2002).

After nearly two decades working with MIS, Kohli remains energized by the incredible amount of change in technology and information gathering that allows everyone to voice an opinion and contribute to the overall knowledge base of society. The result is not only better processes and accuracy, but smarter people who literally have information in the palm of their hands.

“If the next ten years are as different as the last ten, I can’t imagine what’s on the horizon,” Kohli says as he prepares to review another submission to MIS Quarterly. “And that’s very exciting.”

More information on Kohli’s research interests and publications is available at http://masonweb.wm.edu/rajiv.kohli/.

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