



The banner features the 'play to potential' logo on the left. To its right are contact details: a WhatsApp icon with the number '+91 85914 52129\*', a Twitter icon with the handle '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with the website 'playtopotential.com'. Further right, under the heading 'Also available on:', are icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the far right, a portrait of a man in a suit and glasses is shown, with the text 'Podcast Host' and 'Deepak Jayaraman' below it. A small disclaimer at the bottom left reads: '\*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

## Context to the nugget

Judging potential can be a very tricky thing to do in companies. While outcomes are very visible but markers of potential are often buried deep within and one has to look for them with a keen eye. OGQ's youngest athlete is 8 years old, an indication of how much they are betting on future potential. Viren talks about how they use a combination of metrics and elements of judgment to figure out which athletes to back.

## Transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ):** You alluded to betting on people over a long timeframe. How do you spot potential? How do you look for that spark for you to say I will invest behind this person? How do you really pick them?

**Viren Rasquinha (VR):** So, a combination of factors really. One, is quantitative factors. We have a full-fledged research team that would be researching into quantitative results over the last two to three years of the athlete. So, what are the kinds of results? What age is the athlete? What are the best in the world doing? What were they doing when they were that age? Also, we need to understand what kind of coaching, support, equipment, etcetera, and the athlete had. So, for an archer, if the archer didn't have the right kind of equipment, he or she is not going to get the same kind of results, if they didn't have a proper technical coach supporting him or her, again, it would be difficult to get those results. So, we try to bring together all these factors.

We would also see qualitative factors, the discipline of the player, and the commitment of the player. For me, a very important quality is the hunger and desire to be the best in the world and not just being happy with being national champion or Commonwealth Games champion. We want our athletes to dream and have the desire to be the best in the world. And for that, we need to gauge whether are they are ready to run through a brick wall for you every single day in training.

**DJ:** And you said one of your players is an eight year old, the youngest player. So, how do you smell this in somebody so young?

**VR:** It's hard to pinpoint, because if someone is that young, there's very little research data available to us, because the data points are very little. She's hardly played tournaments. She's not had any international exposure. We are talking about exceptional talent. When Sindhu was 11, she was already beating 15-year-olds. This young kid is eight years old, but she is already beating 11 and 12-year-olds. And you must remember that at a young age, every six months plays a major difference to your progress, especially physically.

DJ: Eight versus 11 is a much bigger deal than 11 versus 14.

VR: Even an eight versus eight-and-a-half-year-old is a big difference. So, you can imagine between an eight and an 11-year-old. So, that's one thing.

Also, I think, to a large extent, you go by gut. I never ignore gut instinct about a player. Actually, science cannot explain that as such, but it's something that you balance out. And I am happy to take risks. It's important. What we say is that it's important to get the talented people under our umbrella and create good habits in them. When I say good habits, I am not talking about ensuring that they don't drink or smoke or things like that, but good habits in terms of training and following the right procedures, right systems. We want to create the right ecosystem which is conducive to excellence and not a system that is conducive to mediocrity and average performances. If we get that ecosystem right, over a period of time, that ecosystem will produce results. So, maybe when Sindhu was a 14-year-old, there were other girls who were better than her, but the system will ensure that the best player in the long run will eventually come up. So, we try to develop systems. We might make mistakes here or there, but in general, if someone is super talented, OGQ wants to be supporting them.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Picking high potentials in an organization, as Viren says is a combination of science and an art where judgment plays a role. The key is to normalize for context and to ensure that you are looking at intrinsic and not just surface level performance.

Thank you for listening. For more, please visit [Audioboom.com](http://Audioboom.com) and look for Play to Potential. Now the podcast is available on iTunes as well if you happen to be an Apple customer.

## End of nugget transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

## RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

**Spotting potential:** As we move towards a world where intrinsic capabilities count for more and more, how we spot diamonds in the rough is a capability that will begin to matter more and more. This is as relevant for hiring as for investing. Leaders across disciplines share their insights on how they look for raw potential that can then be honed. You can access the playlist [here](#).

## SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

**Podcast Newsletter:** Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

**Nuggets on Whatsapp:** We also have a [Podcast Whatsapp distribution group \(+91 85914 52129\)](#) where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of

interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating “INTERESTED”. Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Viren Rasquinha - Nuggets**

- 08.00 Viren Rasquinha - The Full Conversation
- 08.01 Viren Rasquinha - OGQ and how you can contribute
- 08.02 Viren Rasquinha - Committing to sports as a career
- 08.03 Viren Rasquinha - Transitioning from playing to captaining
- 08.04 Viren Rasquinha - Spotting potential
- 08.05 Viren Rasquinha - Playing hockey to MBA at ISB
- 08.06 Viren Rasquinha - Joining OGQ — Role of serendipity
- 08.07 Viren Rasquinha - Building the grit muscle
- 08.08 Viren Rasquinha - Picking a coach — Learning from Mary Kom’s example
- 08.09 Viren Rasquinha - In summary — Playing to potential

### **About Deepak Jayaraman**

Deepak seeks to unlock human potential of senior executive’s / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work [here](#).

### **Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts**

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in itself, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.