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Context to the nugget

Vedika talks about the transition from being an effective executive to being an NED. She talks about the significant shift required in style for people to flourish in each of these environments.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): The other transition I wanted to talk about is executive to NED transition. Now, I think you sit on 6 boards? In your experience, where do people struggle in making that transition? What does it take to transition well from being a successful executive to being an effective board member? Where do you think sometimes people who have been successful as an executive struggle to be as effective as a board member?

Vedika Bhandarkar (VB): I think, the biggest difference is when you are an executive, you have responsibility and authority. And if it's a P&L, you own the P&L. So, you can make most of the differences. When you are a board member, an independent board member as I am, you certainly don't have that authority. So, to stay away from that micromanagement, I think, it's the hardest thing. Very often, actually, I think, the boards struggle with it. So, many boards sort of forget that their role is not to run the company on a day-to-day basis and then, they start doing what the CEO is doing or start micromanaging the CEO, which I think is hard. So, that is hard when you move from executive to non-exec positions.

The second is on similar themes: how do you get people to accept or to listen to what you're suggesting when you are not really their direct boss? So, how do you get yourself heard? I mean, it's not a direction you give. How do you influence without having the authority? I think, that's the second one.

And the third one is, every board has its own dynamic between the board and if you are the latest member on to the board, there are already groups within boards or some typical characteristics of boards. How do you figure that out? And in several of the boards, I was the first woman on the board. So, that brings its own dynamic, but I found it fascinating. I tell my husband that this is like the OB classes in IIM, and it's just fascinating to me.

DJ: It's like the 12 angry men and a woman.

VB: Absolutely!

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: From a leadership capability building perspective, Influencing capability is something that really starts mattering when you move from a CXO to a CEO. Till then you are often in your function, domain of comfort and you can somehow get away with a command and control. But when you move to a role where functions where you have no clue start reporting into you, it becomes a challenge. The CEO to Board role transition is even more interesting because you need to influence now without any formal authority. And that is a transition that can be challenging to a lot of people. Just being aware of these structural shifts required in how you need to behave can be a good start. And getting somebody (internal or external) to observe you and give you constructive feedback can go a long way into you settling into a role.

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End of nugget transcription

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Vedika Bhandarkar - Nuggets

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- 15.02 Vedika Bhandarkar - Early childhood wiring

- 15.03 Vedika Bhandarkar - Investment Banking as a career and key transitions
- 15.04 Vedika Bhandarkar - Women and careers
- 15.05 Vedika Bhandarkar - Effective Leadership transitions across companies
- 15.06 Vedika Bhandarkar - Executive to NED transition
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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](#).

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