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Context to the nugget

Zia talks about what it takes to be a successful lawyer. She also teases out the difference between traits that are good hygiene in any profession and what is specific to law. She also talks about how optionality's have changed over time for people with a law background.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What's your take on how should people at the cusp of making a choice think about law as a direction given the journey you've had and journeys of other people you have seen, what are the two three questions people should ask themselves for them to say that might be a career worth pursuing?

Zia Mody (ZM): I think law has become so much more attractive now in the last 10 to 15 years for a couple of reasons one is the starting compensation, which is always a worry for any youngsters who has taken loans how has taken money from their parents, its pretty good. So earlier when you were start with the petals, now you would start with the very decent base salary so to the attraction to law as a good financial start to a good career exist, now that's the money part. The real plus in choosing to do law, if you are so minded is that there is no down side, in the sense that couple of things you can study law and you can go on to study something else. You can practice law but you can go on to be something else, you have to practice law but you have so many now choices in which to be a lawyer, so earlier the choices really were, did you go to court or did you become a solicitor, and do table work, now you can be an in-house council, you can be a lawyer to private equity and if you look at the stats there are some pretty interesting stats where a lot of global seniors were former lawyers. So the switch from being a lawyer, with all the traditional stereo type lines that you would like to give it the flexibility of what you can do once you become a lawyer has I think today increased manipulate.

DJ: But from a personality trade perspective are there one or two trades that stand out?

ZM: The stereo type trades stand out but not all lawyers have them and that does not mean that those who don't have them are not successful, so I would say, obviously the trades that standout are, logic so everybody assumes everybody's intelligence, there's no point saying a lawyer has to be intelligent. Logic stands out and a huge amount of attention to detail so I am assuming that everybody has the hard work quota, everybody has the passion quota but the attention to detail is I think much more regress a requirement in a lawyer, simply because what is the Successful lawyer at the end of the day, He is the one that has the ability to marshal every fact in the matter and to bring out an argument that wears the success factor best in his favour that is not possible unless you know

every single fact, that is not possible unless you paid the attention to these facts, so that is why a successful lawyer according to me is one that knows more of the fact pattern than his opponent.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Every career path as a characteristic trait that is unique and specific to that particular path. Things like hard work, commitment to excellence are reasonably career agnostic and don't help people pick a direction. Zia talks about attention to detail as an absolute must have for a person that is looking at a career in law. A few weeks back, I was talking to Kartik Hosanagar (KH), an award winning professor at Wharton. I asked him what questions people should ask themselves to see if academics makes sense. Here is a short clip from that chat.

KH: "you have to be a self-starter because there is no one breathing down your neck, so I think, at the end of the year as an academic there is an assessment done that determines things like promotions, and tenure at the end of six years but really you don't want to have a boss, so you have to be a self-starter"

DJ: He talks about the point about whether you are a self-starter. The key insight there was that while the Indian system rewards disciplined people who follow the rules and the system, the PhD is a very different environment where there are no often no system driven requirements. Are you are self-starter in that environment? That is a very different frame and it is worth reflecting on that before you take the plunge. On a similar note, figuring out what is that unique trait that is unique to that profession is often helpful to ensure you aren't surprised when you walk the path. The only way to do that is to talk to people on that journey, their highs and lows, and map it back to your energy drivers and what you enjoy doing. Thank you for listening. For more please visit playtopotential.com or subscribe the podcast on iTunes, Stitcher or one of the other Podcast apps.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Kartik Hosanagar that is referenced: [Highs and Lows in Academics](#).

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Zia Mody - Nuggets

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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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Podcast Transcript [17.02 Zia Mody - Law as a career choice](#)

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