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Context to the nugget

Rama talks about how she ended up joining Market Research by accident after joining the Advertising world. She talks about the notion of "sliding doors" where small events along the way can have a significant impact on the overall trajectory and outcomes.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Did you start with the career in Market research? Or did that happen a few years later?

Rama Bijapurkar (RB): No, I was the generation where everybody came and said women need not apply and that year the banks didn't come I remember the guys in the class saying, what are you women going to do? Citi bank is not coming how you ever going to get influent, but the advertisement agencies came so I actually joined an ad agency called Lintas and I spent a year, I was assign to the plum account called Hindustan Lever, we were the first generation of MBAs they ever took, so that was the long haul, the studio would tell you that how do you, if you don't know what the bromide is what is the point of a fancy education, even the studio guys in those days, put your art works together, this is predigital I am talking 1978 and so on, so after a year I remember going to my boss and saying that my job description and job description is a cross between a peon and an errands boy and I don't want to do it and he said but you have the lever account, and all the golden, I mean Harish Pumwani was the management trainee at the same time as me so all the golden grade guys later on were all sort of part of the system and I did love the lever system as systems go but it was just such a waste of time for advertising so then he said that they were setting up the research business for path finders and would I like to go there? So there were two of us who had between us one year of experience, and we had a boss who coming from Australia, who we gamed most of the time and we actually went off and did market research when the industry was nascent. And that was my entering to market research.

DJ: With the wisdom of the path you have been on for somebody who's at that cusp thinking about a career in market research, any words of wisdom around what sort of temperaments in people succeed in that environment, what questions should a student ask himself or herself to see if that path makes sense for him or her?

RB: I am not the great believer in this examiner path before you would go down in it personally, at a very broad level for example whether you want to be a CEO league or rather down the CEO path or whether you want to be down the service business consulting thinking, investment banking kind of path, I think those are the big choices, but I have also lived long enough and seen enough people to know that a lot of it is like that movie sliding doors, if you enter and the door shut, you will not go

home and see your boyfriend cheating on you and you will continue to live your humdrum life and if you actually got through those doors in 30 seconds and you found that the reality and then she quits, she goes to school, gets herself a better job and changes her life, so I think there are just so many sliding doors, I would have been an academic's wife my husband have a PhD and I would have been in academics why at IIMA except that and it would have been a completely different world and maybe I would have done my own FBM and been an academic, but that year IIMA said we don't want in breathing, so we don't want to hire you here so please get out and go and make the living somewhere else and comeback and it's so happened that his thesis guides happened to be one of the grand role men of advertising, so there was Labdi Bhandari, there was Dr. Mote and there was Shubratosen Gupta and Shubrato said that if they don't want to hire you come and work for me in advertising, no one in anybody's families had ever seen advertising and what's a PhD in a public distribution system doing an advertising but it changed my life completely.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It is interesting to see her talk about Goddess Sarasvati and Lakshmi as metaphors for what your driving force is. Is it wealth creation or is it building knowlegde? Those are just two options but while the specifics might be hard to nail down, it is worth reflecting on the broad theme on whether you want to be a leader of people in an organization or you want to pursue advisory. It might be hard to get a sense of that while at campus but clearly when 15-20 years elapse, it is much easier to get a sense of where you get your energy. Reflecting on your energy drivers and taking such directional calls as you go through your journey can get you closer and closer to operating at the intersection of work and play!

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End of nugget transcription

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Rama Bijapurkar - Nuggets

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- 18.03 Rama Bijapurkar - Career in Market Research
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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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