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Context to the nugget

Meher shares her perspectives on what it would take to have more women leaders at the top. She starts with the challenges in basic education and sanitation and how that severely restricts the number of women who start a corporate journey. She goes on to talk about what organizations and women can do to ensure that we have more women at the top.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What's your view on the key points of leakage (Leaky pipeline of women leaders) where one could look at and how we could think about it, I guess the question is are there two or three things where there isn't as much commentary as there should be for us to have more women leaders at the top?

Meher Pudumjee (MP): First of all feel that if you were to really look at our education system, look at Pune itself there are 230 municipal's schools in Pune municipal limit's which go up to the 7th standard and there are 52 go up to the 10th, I am talking about municipal so automatically a child's education stops in the 7th standard unless the parent value education and want to put a child through a private school and pay for it not that a private school necessarily better or anything like that but there is an economic hurdle if you have an economic hurdle many times they would put a boy through, tell the girl it's ok you can do something else after all you are just going to get married so I think it starts with the education system and I am not talking about private schools, I am only talking about municipal but I tell you the kind of potential that we have in our system with the poor in terms of tremendous thinking ability, vision, wanting to do things is huge if only we can give them the opportunity so I think a lot of it lyse in our education itself and other things even in terms of toilets, if you don't have toilets when a girl reaches adolescence, how do you expect her to go to school? So I think some of these things and this is now pan India I am talking, it has to really thought through for us to see more and more women because unless the supply increases you will have less and less at the top then of course you come in to industry and go through different phases in their life, so initially they are all Gung-ho coming to work then of course they need to take a break as a maternity, when they get or have their children how open is the organization to helping a women, cope with that phase, how open is the organization in terms of giving flexi time to the women after she has the child and as a child is growing up and I think flexi time and all this are not to be given just to women that also I believe, I believe if an organization does it should be absolutely to both there is no difference and I think a dad plays as important the role in bringing up the children as the mother does so especially in todays, in this new age so I feel that an organization very often should have a responsibility to help these various phases to be seen through and I don't think we do enough of it I also feel that having role models, very often at the top in the organization of women can help being a mentor to women down the line so that they can see, ok if I can do this I can get up to there

as well, if she can why can't I? so I think the few things that organizations really need to do, and it's not easy but I would love to see it happening more and more, starting with our own company where the percentages are very low and then of course we have always told that it's an engineering company, we don't have women coming through the pipeline but there are others who have done it so I think you only have to look at some other role models or bench mark to see, how can we improve?

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It was interesting to hear Meher talk about how some of the other elements need to come into play for us to solve the question around women leadership. Something even as basic as sanitation can make a huge difference. One of my earlier guests –Vedika Bhandarkar who is the MD of Water.Org spoke about it in detail when we spoke. If that's of interest, do look up Nugget 15.01. The point Meher talks about is how women and organizations handle the maternity transition. That's the point where there is a lot of leakage. This came up in my chat with Zia Mody and Anu Madgavkar. If this is of interest, do look up Nugget 20.03 where Anu talks about the notion of a Segment of 1 while navigating this transition. Thank you for listening. For more please visit Playtopotential.com

End of nugget transcription

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Meher Pudumjee - Nuggets

- 22.00 Meher Pudumjee - The Full Conversation
- 22.01 Meher Pudumjee - Early formative years
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- 22.05 Meher Pudumjee - Perspectives on Philanthropy
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- 22.08 Meher Pudumjee - 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](#).

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