



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 right side of the banner is a portrait of a man in a suit and glasses, identified as 'Podcast Host Deepak Jayaraman'. At the bottom left of the banner, there is a small note: '\*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

## Context to the nugget

Suresh talks about the journey of rebuilding trust using the example of what happened with Maggi in India. He provides an insight into what it takes to rebuild trust by talking about the various elements that go into it – not compromising on the pillars on which trust is built and navigating the path with dignity, respect and transparency (something recently demonstrated by Dara Khosrowshahi – CEO of Uber – in the context of the litigation with Waymo).

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And the related point Suresh in a lot of ways the journey of Maggi also has been a story of rebuilding trust with the consumers, so what have you learnt about building trust in the context of your journey over all but more in the context of Maggi in a more pronounced way, how do you sort of break it down? Building trust which is probably the case in this.

Suresh Narayanan (SN): Look I think firstly trust is all about ensuring that whatever you are building the trust on is rock solid at all points in time the reason why Maggi was able to come back to its primacy and come back strongly on trust was because at no stage was food quality and safety ever compromised in this company the strength of my backbone Deepak depended on the ethic of this company if that was not the case if I had actually been part of an organization where these things were kind of OK a few batches here and there its fine the reaction on trust would have been very different. So walking the talk and talking the walk as far as the core trust aspect is concerned is inviolable for the company so that was number one. Number two is navigating the path, with dignity, respect and transparency and not trying to show that the other guy is wrong. In my case if the regulator felt that I had erred, it would have been absolutely foolish of me to go and try and poke the government of India in I, who am I? I am one corporate player amongst thousands of corporate players in this country. The government of India and the bureaucracy is really in times because of me, so that foolishness and that arrogance sometimes because of ego can also lead to a down fall but if you do it with dignity and the respect and you repeat the same message again and again. And number three is if you keep your doors open in terms of people that you need to talk to over a period of time, trust gets built back, but it all starts with the inviolability of whatever is predicating the trust if that is fine I think you can come back, if that is verbally Deepak, there would have been no chance because I would have to at some stage hum and haw, I know Deepak but kind of it could have happened. I had so many samples of mine analysed, not a single sample failed, if one sample had failed Deepak, we would not have given your child Maggi, you would have said why should I give, why one has failed? May be that happens to be the one next time, that my son or daughter eats. So I think that is the whole principle, and you have to ensure, I think in building the trust that these principles are disseminated to the lowest level in the organization and that is the beauty of the Nestle culture that's going to nothing do with me. The beauty of the Nestle culture is

that the guy in the factory will be as conscious of this if not more than what I am? And they will not do anything that is going to play with this. We have had I remember when the whole Maggi saga was kind of going on, there was a former sales officer of the company who met me and he said sir during the Tsunami we were to supply every day dairy whitener to the government of Andaman's for the Tsunami relief and they had ordered for some lot and it was lying in the Chennai distribution centre and some last minute test done on that before dispatching it and one parameter in 30 parameters was off by very small degree, the company made a fresh lot and sent it to the Andaman's and destroyed what was in the warehouse, sir that is out Nestle and he had left Nestle by then and he said sir that is our Nestle, so that gives me that confidence and you might say and somebody might say yaa but you know. Isn't that very foolish? Sorry the company's belief is every consumer irrespective of where he is in the world, deserves to get the safest product that I can give.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Couple of things struck me here. First is the point about being black and white about the pillars on which the Trust is built. If that is flaky, then no amount of PR or Marketing will salvage a brand with shaky foundations. The example he gives around the Everyday Dairy Whitener is a classic case in point. I guess that also means being black and white about these matters with everybody down the chain. How leaders take calls during moments like these gives the employees a sense of what matters and what is sacrosanct in the company.

The other thing that struck me was the point Suresh made about navigating the path with dignity, respect and transparency. It's quite timely as I read about Uber's new CEO – Dara Khosrowshahi's statement in the context of the lawsuit with Waymo the self-driving business spun out of Google. Uber recently reached a settlement. I loved Dara's quote in this context where he says, Quote "My job as Uber's C.E.O. is to set the course for the future of the company: innovating and growing responsibly, as well as acknowledging and correcting mistakes of the past," Unquote. As Suresh says, navigating the path with dignity, respect and transparency is paramount when one deals with such situations where one needs to rebuild the trust with the consumers.

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## End of nugget transcription

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## Suresh Narayanan - 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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