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## Context to the nugget

Amit talks about how he thought about pursuing an MBA in the US. He also goes on to talk about the considerations he had when he decided to come back to India immediately after his MBA. He also talks about how he thought about Banking as a career option picked Investment Banking as a career path (as against Trading despite his strengths in quant related topics)

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Going back to your career in choices you went to Boston College for your masters and then did you get into the Banking just after that? So just talk to us about how do you think about that fork in the road and how did you pick banking? And more importantly given your journey with the wisdom of hindsight what's your take on the questions people should ask themselves before they pursue a career in banking?

Amit Chandra (AC): My choice for banking was driven by was actually relatively simple I had already moved from the engineering to pursue my MBA, I actually loved my engineering at that time and I went on to do my MBA mainly because I felt that I was deeply ambitious and I wanted a more accelerated path and I think in the late 80s, early 90s to have a more accelerated career growth you really needed to be an MBA, India was just about opening up liberalization had happened and if you were quantitatively oriented banking seemed to be a great option I also was very clear that I wanted to come back to India, it was an unusual choice to make at that point of time but I wanted to be back rather than spend the rest of my life in the US pursuing the American dream.

DJ: and what drove that? Desired comeback.

AC: I personally felt somehow intuitively felt that I wanted to be, I would rather be a big fish in a small pond than be small fish in a big pond and I am very social animal I wanted to be closed to my parents and my friends and I think it's a combination of all those factors that chose me to comeback rather than kind of just hang around in the US on graduation so I decided to comeback to India I actually felt that the opportunities here would be far more exciting given everything that was happening in the India and so I decide to comeback and I think which was probably the right thing to do.

DJ: I was curious, you mentioned quantitatively oriented I was wondering there's quant element of the Banking and there's sort of the investment baking did you think about that? Was that at consideration?

AC: Yes, I personally felt that I am also very relationship oriented, so there's always the opportunity to be like a trader, I personally felt that would be much better as a person who would be more on the investment banking side than someone on the trading side so eventually that's how I landed up in investment banking.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The piece that struck me here was the point around self-awareness when it came to a choice between Trading and Investment Banking. Several people often pursue a certain broad career path say Banking but they don't realize that the recipe for success and the DNA that is required to flourish in that climate is often different for each of the branches. People often ask the question – Do I have the skills to succeed in a certain path and stop at that. I feel it is as critical to also ask the question – “Will I find this energizing over the long run.” For instance, like Amit mentions a highly numeric individual who is also quite social and gets his energy from his relationships would find the Trading path frustrating after the initial glamour wears off. No easy answers but the key is knowing who you are, where you get your energy and ensure that your choices are consistent with that right from the get go. Banker, Entrepreneur and Investor Avnish Bajaj reflects on the McKinsey versus Goldman Sachs decision post HBS and had something similar to say. He talks about how when he reflected on what sort of a person he was, he felt Goldman Sachs was a better bet than McKinsey. Visit Nugget 10.01 if this is of interest.

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## End of nugget transcription

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## Amit Chandra - 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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