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Context to the nugget

Arun talks about how values play an important role in how we build a sense of judgment on situations. He specifically presents the opposing perspectives of two views. 1) Utilitarian view 2) Individual rights view. He goes on to talk about the importance of tailoring our approach to the specific context rather than being binary about it.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What have you learnt about the art of judgement which is making good decisions when you got multiple forces pulling in different directions, what have you seen good leaders do? And what have been your experiences in developing the sense of refined judgment, and how do you drive through the implementation?

Arun Miara (AM): This comes under the deep matter of values and this is going on through human history between the utilitarian school and the individual human rights liberty school, the utilitarian school says if an action produces the maximum good for the maximum number of people even if some people are going to lose, it's a good decision, whereas the liberty school the human rights school says "even if one person suffers and may produce benefits for lots of others it is not the right decision" So this is the matter of very deep values, so I am saying here both seem right, I mean to me and you at this day in age the latter view about individual human rights seems as valuable view as would be the utilitarian view. Possibly 100 years ago the individual human rights view wasn't so weighty. I mean it was an individual's aspect as far as Jesus came up or in our Buddha also the suffering the one person but it was the more universal thing was you know good leaders like Chanakya said "you just make sure the whole population must be looked after" that's been a general thing about leaders of large systems just make the whole system work and you have to sacrifice some fellows and fire them from the company for the sake of the continuity of employment of the rest and so be it. So I am saying that something very fundamental here, which can't be reconciled, however I go forth and say that situations are different also, so maybe in some situation and considering the nature of the decision to be taken I could take a utilitarian view. But there are other situations where I cannot and should not take the utilitarian view so what are these matters though and so people will say like the right to education and so long the majority of people are educated if some few are not being well educated, who cares? I mean the average education, the country is fine. Country is going to progress and others would say well no even if a few children are left behind, it's a very bad system and you can't allow this to happen. Now this is a border-line sort of a thing, I reflect on it and I say I do believe that every child must have an equal right to the thing which will give them a chance thereafter in life to stand on their own feet then like every child has a need for an equal education and I don't care if the richer education suffers for the sake of providing an equal education to those

deprived, even though if I multiplied and said, so many rich multiplied by the high quality is so big, so many poor by little less quality overall so I say No it is not a mathematical problem.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I guess the big takeaway for me here is that developing a sense of judgment on a situation is often about one's value systems and less about the mathematics around a situation. Sometimes, the numbers don't present the full story. The key, I guess is to understand the specific context and apply the right lens to exercise meaningful judgment. I guess, from a Leadership hiring perspective, it suggests that skills and competencies sometimes may not present the full picture of an individual. It is critical to get to the bottom of what drives that person, what he or she gives importance to, why he or she did what they did at various points in time and through that discern the underlying values of the person. That might provide us insight around how they would behave when they may have to make a tough decision as a leader.

End of nugget transcription

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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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