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## Context to the nugget

Mr OP Bhatt talks about how the leadership context in a Board is very different from that of a Chief Executive. He talks about the hierarchy in an organization with KPIs, Metrics and other variables that give the CEO control over outcomes. He contrasts that to the context in the Board where individuals have to be nudged and cajoled to carry on tasks that might be critical for the Board.

## Transcription

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**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ):** In what ways is leading a group of board members as a chairman different from leading a group of CXO'S. As a CEO of the company?

OP Bhatt (OP.B): So it is something that I have said earlier as a chairman who is leading the executives they are supposed to deliver, they are supposed to perform. They are sort of quote unquote in your line of hierarchy, decision making line so the entire psychology is completely different. To board member is a board member you can't even ask to do anything and if you him then he may. What are you going to ask a board member to do actually there is no task that you can ask him to do you can ask for information, you can ask for wisdom, you can ask for discussion, you can ask for if you got some issues in that department. I think some ethical issues or some risk not is manageable and you may want the board member because of who he is and where he come from to visit that department or to have a conversation with the senior group around that or whatever it is. It may be done in a meeting, it can do on dinner, it can do formally something like that he will ask there is no task that he can that he can ask the board members. It is always about building bridges, it is always about sharing information, and it is always about making things easier because of relationship, connections, and networks. There is no such task as such where as to his own executive he can ask for anything that his role require. I mean there is a set of KPIs, score card and all kind of things on the performance matrix. So the relationships are quite different.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: When it comes to leading people leading people through influence is often a very different muscle from leading people through control which leaders are often equipped with. And several people struggle to make that transition when they don't have direct power over others.

The other point to mention is often that Executives that become Board Members by default have their loyalties to the management and that might be misplaced. One of my earlier guests Rama Bijapurkar (RB) spoke about this in our podcast conversation.

RB: *“So board role is nose in and fingers out and executive role is fingers in and nose in and everything in and that’s why I think consultants make the transition more easily because they are quite happy to have a fingers out of things so that’s the one thing I think executives, so you have to really understand that this is jury duty more than actually being the protagonists that’s hard but the other thing is also that I noticed that the executive leaders who transition to non-executive. So when you are going to NED board position we find that there is a lot of sympathy for the executive management so we usually find that the board divides up when there are issues and the executives guys who have been executives have that old empathy and sympathy and so they think their job is to sort of make up for the fact that they won’t protected in their tenure and to be the protector and that what, our job is not to disappoint the management here, what is I am saying, if you want an acquisition desperately I still don’t have to give it to you and if you are going to get demoralized, I mean grew up let’s talk about why this is important? But my loyalty is somewhere else it is not to you I am not here to be cheer leader, nurse, maid, nanny, coach. I think that’s the stuff that executive managers tend to get into and then therefore you are the coach and you are the this person and so on as compared to saying that all of us in boards are call to make judgement calls so whatever is your background, you are doing your background to make the judgement call and that’s all you should do. And you just make judgment calls for everything that put in front of you and these are since of commissions, since of omissions, Plans whatever it is that’s what you have to do”*

DJ: I guess this is a bit like Method Acting. As a Board Member, one needs to have the right mindset so that you don’t bring your past biases into play unconsciously.

## End of nugget transcription

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Nugget from Rama Bijapurkar that is referenced: [Transitioning from Executive to NED](#).

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### **OP Bhatt - Nuggets**

- 36.00 OP Bhatt - The Full Conversation
- 36.01 OP Bhatt - Transitioning to becoming a Board Member
- 36.02 OP Bhatt - Being an effective Chairperson
- 36.03 OP Bhatt - Making good Board decisions
- 36.04 OP Bhatt - Chairperson versus CEO - Leadership nuances
- 36.05 OP Bhatt - Ensuring Board members add value
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- 36.07 OP Bhatt - Attitudes that have driven career
- 36.08 OP Bhatt - 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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