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Context to the nugget

Indranil talks about what it takes to build the habit of story-telling within an organization. He underscores the futility of one-off programmes that leave you with a high but don't really move the needle when people come back to the rough and tumble of their daily life. He re-emphasizes the criticality of some sort of a deliberate practice programme for people to bake in the habit.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What's your advice for companies to bring a culture of storytelling into their organization?

Indranil Chakraborty (IC): To start with there has to be someone and ideally someone reasonably senior who starts with the belief that stories work. And then the first thing I tell people who come and tell me I believe stories work but how do I explain that to my boss? Go back to Mahatma Gandhi which said be the change you want everyone else to be, start telling stories. When you are going to demonstrate how by telling stories you are making a difference in your communication people will start learning now that obviously can't translate to the wider audience, so you do need to get a structured training program who ever does it. The once think that I would like people look at where they are trying to choose how and who do they train with is first is get people from business to teach your business story telling because storytelling is a little alien to most people or at least there are these labels of stories are for entertainment, stories are for children when you get a non-business person coming in my brain is already saying it doesn't work in business, its further enforced, that guy is from theatre and when they bring in things like voice modulation it makes me more uncomfortable but if you get a business person coming and telling you, someone who is been in senior position has been in board meeting like you have been in important presentations saying you can use it brings source credibility. Second, don't look for one off training programs I mean not just for storytelling, I don't think one hour training works any which way, the number of trainings that I have been sent to where at the end of the day I was very convinced this is fantastic and then I came back and did exactly same what I was doing earlier so make sure that there is a deliberate practice program that you set up now whether that is set up with the person that you trained or through your internal sort of processes, whichever but make sure that there is practice program that is put and that is calendared and not left to other people whether they want to do it or not third when you are evaluating people who are going to come and deliver training on story telling evaluate whether they tell stories, I mean I had an interesting conversation just the other day with a head of HR who said you know I get it the work you do I get it but you know you are very expensive, we have a few other people who come and pitched, I said you know you have got to go with who you want to go. Just curious these other guys who pitched how many stories did they tell you during their pitch? He thought for a while and said none. And I said that's a bit counterintuitive, someone's come to sort of

sell you storytelling and hasn't told you single story so these are some of the things I would like people to think of make sure that the person who is coming in is not just someone who has got a theory about story telling but is able to tell stories and practice, set in a process and this is not really I might be talking about storytelling because that's one of the things I do but it could be any-thing, design thinking just the two day design thinking course run by Ideo is not going to make your people design thinkers there would be five per cent who are self-starters who will sort of do their own experiments, you need to put a deliberate practice program into process.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I couldn't underscore the point more about calendaring in some sort of a deliberate planning programme and not leave it to the vagaries of whether people want to do it or not. I have realized that most people lead a reasonably busy life and are flooded with enough urgent things that the critical things take a back foot. Even in the Coaching work I do, I realize that the ones that work out well are where we get into a cadence of catch up and that keeps the topics front and centre of the leader in question.

A relevant book in this context is 'Stick with it' by Sean Young. He talks about the science of lasting behaviour. He discusses various strategies in the book but the one he suggests for baking in common habits whether it is exercise or waking up early or writing 1000 words first thing in the morning, is the notion of Step-ladders. He talks about the dopamine rush that we get when we have a small win and how that can nudge us to do more of this and how it can slowly snowball into an ingrained habit.

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End of nugget transcription

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Indranil Chakraborty - Nuggets

- 37.00 Indranil Chakraborty - The Full Conversation
- 37.01 Indranil Chakraborty - Transitioning to solo-preneurship
- 37.02 Indranil Chakraborty - Business storytelling Vs Storytelling
- 37.03 Indranil Chakraborty - Contextual applications
- 37.04 Indranil Chakraborty - Curse of Knowledge
- 37.05 Indranil Chakraborty - Story listening
- 37.06 Indranil Chakraborty - Building deeper relationships
- 37.07 Indranil Chakraborty - Deliberate practice
- 37.08 Indranil Chakraborty - Building a culture of storytelling
- 37.09 Indranil Chakraborty - Story tellers that stand out

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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Podcast Transcript [37.08 Indranil Chakraborty - Building a storytelling culture](#)

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