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Context to the nugget

Rajat speaks about how he grew as a leader through his tenure in the firm. He speaks about the combination of mentorship, apprenticeship and entrepreneurial space where there is a vacuum that one has to rise upto as a recipe for developing leaders effectively and speaks about how that played out in Scandinavia for him.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How have you thought about your development as a leader; what's been your approach to scaling up your muscle as a leader?

Rajat Gupta (RG): It was perhaps mostly by necessity and perhaps different needs and different times of my career and so on. As you would expect, I mean I graduated in IIT and then went to HBS and then what I discovered in my early days that my particular skill and I developed it well was that I was a good problem solver and you know that's the fundamental foundation block for being a consultant, so I invested a lot in becoming a better and better problem solver, I was reasonably good, I dealt with people well so reasonably good project manager when that was but I was not particularly good at client relations or client development and its of course a some-what a learnt skill that actually learn through mentorship of others and they teach you how to do it and so on and you observe from they doing it and you learn from it. And that I had some good teachers in the New York office where I was growing up but still I was not anywhere as good as, it was clearly evident when I went to Scandinavia, I observed two of my partners there who were amongst the three partners that remained after this head of the office had to leave who was the very good client developer and initially I worked with him and learnt a lot two out of the other three including me that were then leading the office were extraordinarily good client developers and introducers and I learnt a lot from them, observing them how they used to do it and because there was nobody else, in New York there were so many senior directors who negotiated with the clients etc. and you executed the assignment but in Scandinavia there was nobody like that, so you had by necessary to go and develop clients and I always say "I feel there is a combination the best development model is actually a combination of mentorship, apprenticeship and entrepreneurial space where you have a vacuum that you that you have to rise up to and with the safety net, if you start failing somebody is there to... and Scandinavia was that, there was a vacuum, there were three young partners and we had to keep many people busy and grow the office and all that stuff and I learnt entrepreneurial skills in Scandinavia I would say I was not a very good entrepreneur nor a very good client introducer or developer before Scandinavia and after those four or five years in Scandinavia and even this is immodest to say but I was one of the best client developers after that because, I had good problem solving skills to begin with so I combined that with...

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

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End of nugget transcription

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Rajat Gupta- Nuggets

- 43.00 Rajat Gupta - The Full Conversation
- 43.01 Rajat Gupta - Taking stock of the journey ahead
- 43.02 Rajat Gupta - Provoking reflection through osmosis
- 43.03 Rajat Gupta - Vivekananda versus Napoleon
- 43.04 Rajat Gupta - Leadership at McKinsey across 3 terms
- 43.05 Rajat Gupta - Settling into Scandinavia

- 43.06 Rajat Gupta - Transitioning across cultures
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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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