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## Context to the nugget

Kartik speaks about how we should think about using algorithms for decision making versus decisions support. He urges to think about machines as augmenting and not substituting human capability. He speaks about how we should consider the extent of consequences and social implications to think about how we leverage the power of the machines.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): I am curious about line between decision support versus decision making how should leaders think about leveraging the power of algorithms and where should they take it and run with it versus use their judgment on top of what the algorithms tell them?

Kartik Hosanagar (KH): I think we are finding in many settings that algorithms can make as good and sometimes better decisions than humans and so there's a temptation to make them autonomous, so to not use them decision support but essentially make them decision making entities, meaning – why bother having a human figure out who to invite for interviews to have the system figure it out and maybe humans interview the applicants or something like that and certainly you could ask in the medical setting as well, in fact one of the god-fathers of modern ML his name is Geoff Hinton he in fact got the Turing prize this year which is the top prize in computer science, sort of the Nobel prize in computer science, he once made the statement that we can as well stop training radiologists because there is no point even having radiologist try to interpret x-rays and MRIs when machines can beat them easily. And so it's kind of arguing for not decision support but decision making through algorithms, I think we need to be a little bit careful about that, I think AI has a lot to contribute when we are augmenting humans when we are allowing humans to process more data than human brains can process and machines become a way to augment human limitations and augment the human brain and there are many settings where we want to actually replace humans with algorithms as well completely and that's also fair but I think when we get into socially consequential decisions, when we get into safety critical decisions we need to be a bit careful and make sure there's human in the loop. So, I don't believe for example that even if a system is diagnosing better than doctors, that you replace them, what you do is you use that to complement the doctor to allow the doctor to be able to see more patients, to allow the doctor to be more faster with the patients, to allow the doctor to say that I will focus spend more time on the more complicated cases and the simple cases whereas just a fever, a viral cause and you don't have to do much beyond just give a pain killer let the algorithm do some of that or maybe use the algorithm to help a nurse do some of that and things like that, so I think the goal shouldn't be lets replace humans, the goal should be to figure out what are the things that are easy and when things go wrong? The consequences isn't high and therefore we completely automate that, what are the things that we automate for the human to free up their time to do the more creative things to do

the more complex cases and then what are the things where we augment and guide the human and we kind of say tell the doctor we think it's the diagnosis is this and here's why and then the doctor make the call or we could say, you know this things are probabilistic, we could say 40% chance we think it's this, 30% we think it's that, 10% chance we think it's this and here is why and provide the explanations and the doctors make the decisions, so the goal I think should be in figuring out how we augment and not just replace.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: If I bring this back to the nature of the work I do, I find that there are several psychometric tools that are available in the context of assessing a leader. When I see people around me using just the psychometric as the sole data point in assessing a leader, I start getting concerned. Let me give an example here. I was talking to a CEO and a CHRO of a rapidly growing tech company on how they think about leadership transitions. When I asked them about how they had done transitions before, they said that they would have an incoming leader take a psychometric, have a coach provide feedback to the leader on the psychometric for what he or she would have to do differently in the new role and that was it.

Couple of points here right:

- I find just working with the psychometric as a characterization of the individual as a gross over-simplification and borderline insulting to the leader in question
- So much of the transition is contextual and a function of the people in the new organization, the culture, business situation and so on

I guess a similar logic applies when leaders are thinking about career paths. So much of the choice is contextual. What does your spouse want? What are you solving for? What gives you energy and so on and so forth? At best, some of these diagnostics can give you hypotheses to work with.

The reason I mention it is that with machines getting good at probabilistic predictions, it is very easy to get into a mode of false confidence that we have the answer. Like Kartik says, I would like to believe that there is an opportunity for humans to layer empathy and understanding of the nuanced context on top of to be of value on top of what the algorithms churn.

## End of nugget transcription

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### **Kartik Hosanagar - Nuggets**

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- 44.08 Kartik Hosanagar - Jobs at risk and new avenues
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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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Podcast Transcript [44.07 Kartik Hosanagar - Machines - Decision Makers or Enablers?](#)

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