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## Context to the nugget

Matt mentions that in the “thin air of world-class performers” toughness is not a differentiator and speaks about the importance of training and rejuvenation in creating the recipe for sustained and consistent performance at the very top.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And on the similar theme if you look at the leaders the business leaders that come to Purple Patch and you use the term you know reach your athletic potential and through that discover your leadership potential your human potential if we explore that phase for a minute and you look at the people that train with you what does to about leadership that they don't know already do they pick up when they train with you all these people are immensely successful they have learnt a lot about leadership, about business, about commerce by the time they come to you. But in your experience what's the delta through the experience of discovering that athletic potential that they take back to the business?

Matt Dixon (MD): I think I would... And I very simple word and it's gone sound like cooking show but the recipe and I think what the people are typically less equipped to execute on is drawing all of the component their strength and the weaknesses and creating a sustainable recipe to ultimately create performance and I'll give you an example if we think about a model that we may apply for a world class athlete and you can picture a Venn diagram almost the we understand with the world class athlete that when we get the appropriate endurance training program and it is supported with strength and conditioning a back bone of re positive nutrition habit and enough recovery to enable the positive affect of their training they accelerate every time and for a CEO and executive that model can be can be applied but it's different and so many of the CEO and executives come and may have a tremendous work ethic. But if you remember and this is an example toughness is not a differentiator so I think one in the area that we help them find is how do you find this sustainable performance or a sustainable performance zone in many ways where they get battle ready to adapt and adjust and evolve based on what is coming at them whether it's a massive period of challenge in the work place a lot of travel whatever it might be and I think that intersection as applies for an executive is a heart of it they have a lot of responsibility at the work place and when that is challenging whether there need to be a leader whether I need perspective what they lose sight of quite often is the intersection of the absolute requirement to have two other buckets that ultimately gone help them accelerate and become the best leader the one bucket is what I would called is training and you don't have to be an athlete by the way to embrace training. The only reason I use the word training is exercise this random and nothing in life that you do random is gone give results training is structure of progressive so that's why we use that word but the key components of training to develop resilience in an emotional and a physical sense and then a big bucket of

rejuvenation for then to ultimately be the best leader possible they have to have a set of positive habit's in including sleeping, including habit's around fuelling and nutrition. But also the chance to step away and have something for themselves and many incoming executives fail to value those two components to ultimately enable them to be successful as a CEO and you think about leaving in St Francisco all of these young tech entrepreneurs that still think that a requirement and a path way to success sleeping under the desk at night and coding into 3.00 a clock in the morning. But ultimately, I like but if sleep is not a marker of toughness or success it's a marker of performance stupidity and so I think really helping them time to join the ... And create their recipe is the thing that actually create the catalysts for them to be able to draw on their natural strengths as a leader as a CEO in many ways.

**DJ: Just picking up the one of the phrases that you use it couple of times toughness is not a differentiator say more what's behind this?**

MD: I think it's a mind-set we have this a lot with athletes we have a lot of CEOs I give you two great examples in an athletic sense if we have a young athletes that any quest they want to become world champion they know the journey is going to be very challenging and when they look at the heroes and if they look at the commercials of their heroes it always the Rocky Balboa bursting through you know toughness running in the beach as hard as you can but the biggest weakness the biggest mistake for world class athletes is going too hard on the easy days so always being turned on and so therefore we have to realize that in that very thin air of world class performance everyone is tough and everyone is relatively physically gifted and so those two components are not the things that separate the champions from the ones that also ran. And that's exactly the same for the leading executives where tough everyone to be successful in life from a living position you have to have high work ethic you have to be willing to be to go the extra mile to be tough but that's not the driver to success and certainly that's not the differentiator. The differentiator is actually when I think about toughness I just get a picture of someone sitting in the weeds, getting up in the 3.00 in the morning getting on the train to New York going in treadmill but the great people actually have a real path, very mission focus and have the ability to stop, pause and come up out of the weeds in it's great pursuit of consistency and so it's not the toughness it's not important it's just the toughness is not a separator of the men for the boys.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It's just been a few days since July 14, the day we saw two sporting events go down to the wire within minutes of each other. One of the artists on stage was Roger Federer who is arguably playing some of the best tennis of his life at the cusp of turning 38 while some of the younger players are struggling with injury and related issues. I like what his ex-coach Paul Annacone says.

I quote "We talk a lot about his body (holding up), but I really think that it's his peace of mind, his ability to decompress the pressure and expectations and how he finds ways of his energy not getting drained which makes a difference."

I must admit I am a big fan of Federer as a sportsman but am a bigger fan of how he is aging and making choices, picking which tournaments he plays, when he rests, how much he holidays with his family and so on while staying competitive at the highest levels of the sport.

The other point I would make here is that how well you are rested and rejuvenated has a huge implication on how you show up at work and a lot of leadership is about who you are being in everything you do and not just in checking off some To Do list. In the work I do, I see too many Type

Podcast Transcript [46.05 Matt Dixon - Toughness is not a differentiator](#)

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A people coming at their role with a Rocky Balboa spirit and as Matt says while it has a performance implication over the medium to long term, it also has an implication on how people experience you and the kind of followership you end up building as a result.

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## End of nugget transcription

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### Matt Dixon - Nuggets

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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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