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## Context to the nugget

Alan speaks about some of the things that Bill Campbell did to earn the trust of the leaders he worked with. This is all the more incredible as he worked simultaneously with leaders who were involved in an intense competition in the market-place. He also speaks about the fact that Bill had made his money and did this as a service. He alludes to Bill's radical candour which is encapsulated in the phrase "I don't take cash, I don't take stock and I don't take s\*\*t".

## Transcription

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**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ):** Lot of these organisations compete intensively in the world of business. How did Bill go about managing these Chinese walls of confidentiality?

Alan Eagle (AE): First and foremost competition between Apple and Google which led to several law-suits so I think things were pretty tense there for a while and Bill was as I mentioned very close to Steve Jobs and of course worked closely with people who are at Google so how did he manage that and I think you know the answer is trust. He first and foremost with anybody that he worked with he established you know a really strong we call it an envelope of trust and I think that's critical for any coaching relationship you know people knew that when they were talking to Bill that he had integrity, he would keep things in confidence and he truly had the best wishes the best interest of the person he was coaching in mind at all times. People knew that Bill had their back, Bill wanted what was best for them that was his only agenda and so was because of that trust that he could continue to work with competitors like Apple and Google even through the tensions of types because everybody knows that they could truly trust him. I would think that most coaches don't work in such tense environment in such competitive environments you know working with two competitors like that but still this element of really building really strong trust with someone is a critical first step toward building a good coaching relationship.

**DJ:** And based on the interviews you did, you mentioned you have spoken to 80 plus people while writing this book are there anecdotes or things that come up that he did to build that trust are there stories that jump out at you when you think about how he built trust?

AE: We have a few principles in the book about this I should note that Bill passed away in April of 2016 and the idea for this book really came up during the memorial service Eric Schmidt was there and he was talking with Philipp Schindler who runs a business operation at Google and you know they were talking about how Bill had some important principles and there are so much that people could learn from him and we needed to do something to make sure that these principles were not lost and so I had worked with Eric and Jonathan on the previous book called How Google works and after the memorial service we three of us got together and said what can we do to both honourable

and also... principles and that's what we came up with the idea for this book and we did interview over 80 people that all of the names that I just gave and really we this book is not a biography of Bill it's really to try to dive into what was his approach to coaching? What made him so unique? So the answer to your question about building trust you know these things are simple, simple things to do and yet sometimes they are hard to do you know for example just to listen entirely you know for example right now as you and I are talking I have got my phone up here on the desk next to me and its face up and you know if someone would have text me or send me a chat or snap chat or something I had probably distracted from in that I glance over there. So you know with Bill he put the phone away as I am doing know as you can see that I am putting the phone away and we just be there you know the term being present is sort of a common phrase these days in California but you know Bill really what was doing that well before that was a common phrase he was just really truly listen and then he would answer with full candour you know calling above hours. Tim Scott recently wrote a book Radical candour and I think those sort of practice that this idea that you know he would really tell you honestly what he felt and what he thought was the right thing you know and I hold back and he can do that because you know that he was coming from a position of really caring about your best interest and you are finally don't show up we talk to so many people who when they are going through a tough situation Bill was there and not just with an email not you know sometimes physically show up like come over to their house and talk to them and just be there and that sort of things is how you build trust with people you know when someone shows up.

**DJ: And what was inspiring to read Alan was I understand that he did this all free of cost, right? He had made the money he wanted and at some point he said I wanted to give back and this was his way of giving back to the society. So that was truly inspiring to read that.**

AE: Yeah, you know, not everyone can afford to do that. Bill had been very successful in his business career, didn't feel like he needed to make any more money. One of the people we interviewed was Dan Rosensweig who is the CEO at a company called Chegg here in Silicon Valley and Dan really credits Bill for saving Chegg and really helping turn that company around and he said when Bill showed up, he said I don't take cash, I don't take stock and I don't take shit, I hope I can say that on your podcast and so yeah he didn't take payment. He just wasn't interested in that. He was doing this because he felt that he could help, that he was good at coaching and good at helping teams come together and he believed in these companies, he believed in what Google was doing, he believed in what Apple was doing, he believed in what Intuit was doing, he believed in what Chegg was doing, all these companies he felt they really had a valuable vision and a valuable mission and he wanted to help. So, you know again this is not something that everyone can afford to do but it's what Bill did. This was kind of his retirement hobby although he worked awfully hard at it.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The one thing that struck me in what Alan says is the point he makes about Bill showing up not just through an email but really coming over and spending time physically when some-one was going through a tough situation. Reflecting on what Alan says in the context of my journey, I would say that when I was a Search Consultant at EgonZehnder, I formed some of my deepest relationships when I engaged with individuals when they were going through a tough patch as individuals. I noticed that when I spent time with them when they were in transition, the gratitude they had was of a different order when compared to adding value to them when they were doing well. In a way, that was the genesis for me to focus on transitions as a theme of curiosity and value add as I felt that is when individuals are lonely, problems are complex and stakes are high.

The other element that really struck me in this nugget was about knowing when you have enough money and doing stuff that you are passionate about. Alan says that Bill had made enough money as a business leader and did the coaching work pro-bono. It is a great example of a leader having clarity around what mattered to him/knowing how much enough is / reflecting on the past experiences and finding a canvas where he could make a profound influence to some of the most influential leaders who shape the world we live in. We hear people talk about Passion, Skill-set and opportunity while talking about the sweet spot of where one could operate. If you include Purpose as well, then people show up in a very different way and make such a big difference to the world around them. As in the case of Bill Campbell. While the work he was doing impacted Trillions of Dollars, he didn't take a penny for the work he did as a coach. It is hard not to observe the irony here!

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## End of nugget transcription

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### Alan Eagle - Nuggets

- 50.00 Alan Eagle - The Full Conversation
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- 50.02 Alan Eagle - Building trust as a Coach
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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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