

The banner features the 'play to potential' logo on the left. To its right are contact details: a WhatsApp icon with the number '+91 85914 52129*', a Twitter icon with the handle '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with the website 'playtopotential.com'. Further right, under the heading 'Also available on:', are icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the right side of the banner is a portrait of the host, Deepak Jayaraman, with the text 'Podcast Host' and his name 'Deepak Jayaraman' in a red box below it. At the bottom left of the banner, a small note reads: '*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

Context to the nugget

Andrew speaks about how we need to seek diverse inputs while going about a decision and not just look for people that reaffirm our view. He refers to Abraham Lincoln who had the reputation of assembling people around him that gave him a contra-view.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And moving to the second one Andrew, trust, there you say you talk about seeking diversity and not validation and I was... when I read the HBR article, I found you referring to Abraham Lincoln as an individual who proactively sought diverse perspectives when he made decisions. Could you talk a little bit about what we can learn from the way he went about soliciting diverse views in making good decisions?

Andrew Likierman (AL): Well, what he did was that... and this is set up very, you know, very interestingly in a biography which I read, he brought together people who he felt did represent a different set of views and one therefore where discussion and conflict could give rise to a better choice at the end. Now most people wouldn't necessarily choose this route and I know myself from having run more than one organization or one part of an organization that often one likes to have people around one who frankly agree with one and you know it's a much more comforting business to have people who chime in to what one says and agree and so on. But actually then one doesn't often get the kind of challenge that a point of view needs before it can be passed through and go to an informed choice and there's the famous case of Alfred P. Sloan at General Motors when people agreed to an item on the agenda around the board table ask people to go away and think about it and then come back to the next meeting so that somebody could present an alternative so that they could at least discuss it. Now, I am not suggesting that's a very good use of everybody's time but it just let me give you an example of something that I have done here which is... and that happens particularly if people are somehow afraid to speak up, they say I liked somebody, I would love to name somebody, you know, just to put the alternative view so that we have heard it. Now, that might give somebody courage as it were to put forward a view that they have without feeling that they are causing a problem in terms of their own position in disagreeing with the majority of people in the room.

DJ: Interesting, it's like giving them a license to disagree.

AL: Exactly, exactly and that's important particularly in cultures where disagreement particularly with hierarchies is not encouraged.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It might be a good opportunity for me to share something that I learn from Arun Maira (AM) (a senior business leader and a former member of the Planning Commission), who was on the podcast a few moons back. He has written a book – Listening for Wellbeing – conversations with people not like us. He speaks about not just focusing on the what of the message but trying to get a handle on why somebody thinks it is important.

AM: *“There is this what and how and the why, different ladders that people describe and the three Why’s in terms of enquiry and I say, OK we look at data and so there is a lot of questions about data, where is the data? How does the data add up? So you go down that path about the data and trying to see reality through, re-organizing and adding or subtracting in the data itself and you can go down to the path also into the logic behind in the data itself. So this way it could lead to that so it comes to next level on that which is not just addition or subtractions but you go to more calculus maths and so there’s a more ways to thinking about how to make sense of the data and I say fine now the data is being interpreted by a mind, the data is also collected by the people who felt that, that was good data to get so that was mind who chose which data to select, what data to select so there are minds here so there’s a reasoning about mind. Why this is important data? So I learn to switch myself off the deductive track pretty quickly and to ask why do you think one should be looking at this data. And then I would notice quite often that why the person thinks this data is important is... the reason to probably ask the question I think is what the point of this data is? I don’t think this data is important but this person is presenting all this stuff, why do you think it’s important? So I am learning about another person’s way of thinking and what another person gives value to? Which apparently is not what I give value to my way of thinking?”*

DJ: I guess, this has become all the more important in the world we live in where it is very easy for each one of us to operate in our echo chambers and live in a bubble.

If this topic is of interest, you might like the playlist on Listening. You can find this at playtopotential.com/tags/listening

Thank you for reading. If this topic is of interest, you might like the playlist Judgment where we have insights from leaders across domains speak about their take on this topic. This ranges across Zia Mody who speaks about judgment in a legal context, Amit Chandra who speaks about on judgment in investing, Vinay Sitapati who speaks about Narasimha Rao’s sense of judgment, and Dr Ramachandra Guha who speaks about Gandhiji’ sense of judgment when he took big calls and so on. To access this, please go to playtopotential.com/tags/judgment (/t a g s /judgment)

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Arun Maira that is referenced: [Art of asking good questions](#).

RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

Listening: When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new”. This is a quote by Dalai Lama. Several leaders talk about their experiences

with listening and how they have grown with it. More specifically, leaders also reflect on the criticality of listening when transitioning into a new context. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Judgment: Judgment is a key trait that differentiates the great leaders from the average ones. How do you make decisions and exercise choices in a world full of options and grey areas with multiple stakeholders around you. In addition, the playlist has nuggets that discuss how one creates a climate for the people around you to exercise good judgment. You can access the playlist [here](#).

SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

Podcast Newsletter: Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

Nuggets on Whatsapp: We also have a [Podcast Whatsapp distribution group \(+91 85914 52129\)](#) where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating "INTERESTED". Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

Sir Andrew Likierman - Nuggets

- 60.00 Sir Andrew Likierman - The Full Conversation
- 60.01 Sir Andrew Likierman - Defining and measuring Judgment
- 60.02 Sir Andrew Likierman - Listen attentively; learn critically
- 60.03 Sir Andrew Likierman - Seek diversity, not validation
- 60.04 Sir Andrew Likierman - Keeping track of judgment run-rate
- 60.05 Sir Andrew Likierman - Identify, then challenge, biases
- 60.06 Sir Andrew Likierman - Question the solution set offered
- 60.07 Sir Andrew Likierman - Judgment during COVID times

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](#).

Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in itself, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.