



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, it lists 'Also available on:' with icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the far right, a portrait of the host, Deepak Jayaraman, is shown with the text 'Podcast Host Deepak Jayaraman' below it. A small disclaimer at the bottom left 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 conversation

Harish speaks about how the Tata Group tries and uses Storytelling as a mechanism to reinforce the culture. He speaks about the need for discipline in collecting and telling stories. He also speaks about creating opportunities for the Tata Group members to listen to the stories of some of the legends that lived these values.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And just changing track a little bit before coming back to your book, Harish, clearly, there is a role of stories in the way consumers think about a brand, stories also help in building culture in a company and in driving a certain set of values, what have you learnt about the internal application of stories if you will, what are the three-four things companies need to bear in mind to get that right?

Harish Bhat (HB): What do you mean by the internal application of stories?

DJ: In essence, within the Tata Group, you know, I realize there is a certain discipline in the way stories are shared in different forums, the way the stories are, you know, what are the topics around which you share stories, there is an opportunity to be deliberate about how we use stories as a vehicle for transmitting values, transmitting culture from what I see, so I was wondering if that is a piece that I was talking about.

HB: You can take #TataStories and this book. The stories fall into three categories. There are stories of pioneers who have broken new ground, entered new industries, gone through tribulations of entering new industries and eventually made successes of them, so there are stories of pioneering. There are stories of excellence. If you look at JRD Tata and his complete focus on excellence or Nani Palkhivala, those are stories of excellence. There are stories of pioneering, our stories of Jamsetji Tata and his quest for an integrated steel plant in India or stories of Ratan Tata and his quest for India's first indigenous car or stories of JRD Tata and his quest for India's first commercial airline. So there are stories of pioneering, there are stories of excellence and there are stories of giving back to the community in this book. If you look at #TataStories, there are stories about the fight against cancer, there are stories of the establishment of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research or the Indian Institute of Science or NCPA. So most of the stories within the Tata Group, which are consumed either externally or internally, are around these three very powerful pillars. They are around pioneering, around excellence and around community because authentically, these are the three pillars, which have stood the Tata brand aloft. So I would say one important lesson for me is different brands may have different pillars and different brands may have different ideals holding them up. But it is very very important for a brand to be authentic to what it stands about and have a

discipline of narrating those stories, which are authentic to the idea of the brand and which are true to the idea of the brand. So that is one discipline that the Tata Group always bears in mind. The second thing that we bear in mind is that the legends of the Tata Group, such as Jamsetji Tata, our Founder, such as JRD Tata who was our Chairman for 50 years, a lot of our principles are derived from them. So, to be true to that, what we do is on the 3rd of March, we celebrate Founder's Day, which was Jamsetji Tata's birthday, on the 29th of July, we celebrate JRD Tata's birthday, and we use those days also to reflect on the stories of these giants on whose shoulders we stand today. So that is also a discipline that the group pursues every single year. Both 3rd March and 29th July are secret dates on our calendar where stories of these legends are celebrated and we pay tribute to them once again.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Another institution that does a great job of Storytelling is the Armed Forces. Here is Captain Raghu Raman (RR) speaking about the power of Stories in building culture in a unit.

RR: I think, how the forces do it is by storytelling, by creating a narrative of that organization which is so strong and so powerful, that any time a person puts on that uniform and he has got the shoulder badge and whatever it may be, Jat Regiment, Rajput, Bihar, Rashtriya Rifle, 22 Mech and the moment you adopt that, you sort of put on that clothing on yourself and you become part of that unit, you also are immersed into the legends of that unit. So, for example, one of the rituals that happen in a battalion is as soon as new soldiers are commissioned in and they may come in a batch of 15 to 20 or 30 or whatever they are actually taken around the officers' mess and the quarter guard and they are shown all the trophies. Every narrative is 'To retrieve this flag, we lost 30 people in that battle; to recover the dead body of one of our comrades, we launched seven attacks and we lost several more in the process, but we did not leave the body of one of our soldiers behind'. By the time you listen to the third or the fourth or the fifth story, your hair is standing on end, and you realize that you are in a temple, you are in the presence of your ancestors who have left this legacy behind, and that's the expectation from you.

DJ: If you liked this topic, you might want to look up playtopotential.com and look for the Playlists on Culture and Storytelling.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Captain Raghu Raman that is referenced: [Building Culture a lesson from the Army.](#)

RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

Culture: Culture eats Strategy for breakfast but how does one build it. Leaders across domains (Academics, Armed Forces, Silicon Valley, Bollywood, Venture Investing) talk about the notion of culture and how they go about building it in their organizations. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Storytelling: Perspectives from practitioners and thought leaders on how we could use the power of stories at the work place in order to build a stronger culture. 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.

Harish Bhat - Nuggets

- 80.01 Harish Bhat - Key choices along the way
- 80.02 Harish Bhat - Perspectives on Navigating Career
- 80.03 Harish Bhat - Taking a pause
- 80.04 Harish Bhat - Art of storytelling
- 80.05 Harish Bhat - Profits with purpose
- 80.06 Harish Bhat - Identification with Labour AND Capital
- 80.07 Harish Bhat - Shaping culture through stories
- 80.08 Harish Bhat - Competing with a collaborative spirit
- 80.09 Harish Bhat - In Summary - Playing to Potential

About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock the 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.

Podcast Transcript [80.07 Harish Bhat - Shaping culture through stories](#)

Also available on Apple Podcasts | Google Podcasts | Spotify

www.playtopotential.com

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.