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## Context to the nugget conversation

Dorie speaks about networking over an infinite time horizon which often means connecting with people that are seemingly in a different orbit but could potentially be relevant in the future. She speaks about leaning into our curiosity in these kinds of situations.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): The other theme that struck me, Dorie, was you talk about different kinds of relationships, how we think about them. You talk about the short term, long term and what you call infinite horizon networking, I think, all of us know short term is not good, very often, we settle into the long term, could you tease out the nuance between long term and infinite horizon the way you see it?

Dorie Clark (DC): Yeah, so the way that I think about networking in this way, long term networking is great, that is what most successful networkers, most successful professionals do and that is building relationships with people, where it is not like you need a particular thing. I mean, as you said, we know that that is kind of sleazy, oh, I wonder if I can get him to talk to me so he can invest or whatever, we do not want that. When you are doing long term networking, it is just, hey, I respect this person, they are in my orbit, I should get to know them, they seem cool, I do not know what they can do for me, they can probably do something for me at some point, I do not know what, I can probably do something for them at some point, let us see, it is a great attitude. But the challenge that I feel like even a lot of really good networkers fall down in is, they often fail to build relationships with people that seem irrelevant to them, for obvious reasons, because they seem irrelevant. But the truth is some of the most transformative relationships that you can have are the ones that are out of left field. They seem completely random because those are the ones that can genuinely expose you to new ideas, to new information, to new opportunities, and actually can really, profoundly at times, change the way you think about things. And that is to me is infinite horizon. And it gets overlooked but it is very powerful.

DJ: And maybe if I could stick with that, Dorie, what is the filter, back to the metaphor of red men or red women and somebody who could be a potentially valuable person, let us say, from an infinite horizon perspective, any markers you look for, for you to say, maybe I should lean into this relationship?

DC: I think the most important one is, are they interesting, are they somebody that you love talking about, you love learning from. There should not necessarily be any kind of direct professional benefit, who knows, who cares, but for me, it is, would they be an interesting dinner guest. If you invited them to a dinner, would you be happy they were there talking to them and would your

guests. There is a guy who is in my recognized expert community, and he is a former FBI hostage negotiator, and I feel like, I would invite him to any dinner party, he is always going to be a winner at a dinner party because people are going to love talking to him and that is something that is cool. Like, I am not sure exactly what that can 'get' you necessarily, maybe something, maybe nothing, who knows, but he is always going to be interesting. And that applies for almost anything even if it is far-reaching. I mean, I would love to talk to whatever a professional polo player, I mean, like random but cool.

DJ: Got it. Leaning into curiosity and sort of, you know, one of the inspirations for my podcast was this book called *A Curious Mind* by Brian Grazer, a Hollywood producer who has made *A Beautiful Mind* and he talks about something similar. He says, 'I used to meet a range of people across disciplines and somehow, the plot involves and I make a movie and something comes out of it,' so point well taken.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This input from Dorie reminds me of an insight from Herminia Ibarra (HI) who speaks about 3 types of networks that all of us need to have – Operational networks, Personal Networks and Strategic Networks.

HI: *"We do passes certain point in our career we do everything through relationship this is how we get things done, that's how we find out what's going on, and that's how we get advice, perspective. And most people who are doing well have very good operational networks just help them get the day to day work done more smoothly maybe you know lets something done faster for them or they will get the information they need sooner but you know it is really kind of what's in the critical path of my routine day to day work that's the operational network. The personal network is the part that is you know the people that you have worked with who become friends and you have stayed in touch with and there is more emotional quality to it or may be some old mentors and there is often common interest there are longer term relations and most of this have those too and then the hard part, the tricky part is strategic network which has to do you know if the operation is about you today the personal often if about your past the strategic is about future and it's about how do you connect the dots between some of your interest and relationships that are may be external to your company, some of the internal relationships, help connect people, help bridge across different areas, help bring new ideas in, help export new ideas. It's really where you are adding unique value in the context of your work but in the most strategic aspects of it*

DJ: *And may be just to bring that aspect t life Herminia because a lot of the one and two almost come by default because they happen more organically has to be deliberate so are there a couple of examples you could share of people who have been thoughtful about cultivating this network given the journey?*

HI: *One example that struck my eye a couple years ago so what that to my mind when Beth Comstock was still at GE as chief marketing officer she felt that she was often times much more connected to the outside world than most people in operational jobs at GE which tended to be more internally focused is though she felt even that wasn't the part of the job description that are part which is you can bring that outside in for those people and the example that I love is she was at a book talk in Silicon valley for the launch of "The Lean Start up" by Eric Ries about fast prototyping which originally had a book for start-up how do you go to skill quickly minimum viable prototype but she just has thought we are taking too long in a product department or turbines are taking too long to develop and I bet we could use some of these ideas in our more classic manufacturing context let*

*me make the connection and she did and a big part of GE aviation then got trained on these methods to kind of make the process agile so that for me is a great example of how you can be strategic you have got access to something others don't is so you see the idea here in the need there and you bring them together."*

DJ: Coming back to what Dorie says, we can't be too deterministic about what the strategic networks would be. The best bet we have is to lean into our curiosity and explore the adjacencies of our field and see where it takes us.

## End of nugget transcription

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Nugget from Herminia Ibarra that is referenced: [Operational, Personal and Strategic networks](#).

## RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

**Curiosity:** "A Curious Mind" by Brian Grazer (Oscar winning Producer of movies like A Beautiful Mind and Apollo 13) was the inspiration behind the Play to Potential Podcast. In this playlist, Leaders reflect about the role of curiosity and how it has helped them in their journeys. As Alvin Toffler says, the Illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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- 85.04 Dorie Clark - Riding an S curve
- 85.05 Dorie Clark - Infinite horizon networking
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### **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](#).

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