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Context to the nugget conversation

Tarun speaks about how companies that have a self-imposed constraint (focusing on values, lower corruption or something similar) are likely to grow at a slower pace than a company that is focusing on growth in an unrestrained manner.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And moving forward, you also talk in the book about the choice that some of these companies make around the pace of growth. And you say that if you want to grow with a certain sense of culture and values, you can't grow too fast. How do you observe this play out in how organisations deliberately moderate the pace of growth while ensuring that they are building a unit with stable values and...

Tarun Khanna EP2 (TK EP2): You know, I think the simplest way to think of this is that at any moment if you are a reasonably successful enterprise is you are confronted with many more opportunities than you have resources to pursue them. Then the question is what filtering criteria you are using to sort these out. If it's a purely commercial criterion, the chances are you will grow your top line and bottom line fast, but if it's a combination of a commercial criterion and some other let's call it constraint, self-imposed constraint, let's call it values, zero corruption or values or something like that, it's axiomatic almost that you will not grow as fast as somebody who's unconstrained. But another way to say it sometimes business people resist when I say that, they say, no, no, we can grow as fast. But I sometimes say the following way, which they find more palatable, right, which is think of it as a short run investment for longer run growth in some ways. So, you are leaving money on the table to earn the license to exist in the long run. It's no different than an investment in the physical assets and investment in an intangible asset that turns out to pay out handsomely.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I think there two dimensions here to think about. One is Tangible vs Intangible. The other is Flow metrics versus Asset metrics. I guess a lot of us are wired to think of and solve for tangible flow metrics. If we want to play the long game, it makes immense sense to start focusing on the intangible asset metrics as well.

Lynda Gratton (LG) of London Business School speaks about the notion of intangible assets in a personal context that we all could think about especially during mid-life.

LG: *“We talked about three types of intangible assets we talked about Productive assets, Vitality assets and transformation assets and I think really you know in your 40s the productive assets becomes really important because you need to keep on landing you need to keep on building new skills you need to be saying to yourself and to the labour market you know I am still somebody who has gone lot to offer from now until the age of 70s so that’s really crucial but also of course transformational assets and those as we said earlier they are they are transformational assets a lot to do with your networks. So if you are 40 find yourself spending all your time with people just like you then that’s not gone help you to transform so you should be looking around and asking yourself am I spending time with people who different from me in terms of the nationality or their mindset or their age or their gender”*

DJ: The external world may not reward you for this in the short term but as Tarun says, it might help you earn the license to exist and thrive in the long run.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Lynda Gratton that is referenced: [Mid-life: a double whammy](#).

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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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