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## Context to the nugget conversation

Stephen speaks about five underlying beliefs that are at the heart of a Trust and Inspire approach. 1) People have greatness inside of them 2) People are whole in body, heart, mind and spirit 3) There is enough for everyone (abundance) 4) Leadership is about responsibility, not rights (stewardship) 5) My job as a leader is to go first

## Transcription

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**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ):** In terms of how to make this shift Stephen, let us talk about that. Clearly, the need for trust and inspire is sort of glaring, it is hard to not understand that it is a need of the times. Having built a muscle memory in a certain way, what is your advice for leaders to start moving the paradigm from command and control or enlightened command and control to trust and inspire, what are some of the baby steps they can take to move in that direction?

**Stephen M. R. Covey (SC):** I think the first step we can take is to really become self-aware of our fundamental beliefs, of our paradigm. And it is hard to, because almost by definition, the paradigm is in the lens through which you view the world. So even becoming aware that we all wear lens, we are looking through a lens, we are looking through a paradigm and to maybe challenge it, to maybe question the assumptions that we are based upon that how we view people, how we view leadership. And so, that is where I try to map out these five fundamental beliefs of a trust and inspire leader because I believe that those beliefs are more accurate, more complete, more relevant paradigm of leadership in the people. And so, challenging yourself on those and asking some questions. And so, here is a way of doing it. So, the very first fundamental belief, this is how you view people, is this that I believe that people have greatness inside of them. So, if I buy that belief, my job as a leader is to unleash their potential, not control them. Now you might suddenly hear that and say, okay, yeah, I believe that. So here is a way of maybe really challenging ourselves and how deeply we believe it is to ask this question, okay, I believe that people have greatness inside of them, ask this, how would those who I lead and serve describe me in terms of seeing and unleashing their greatness and it was just not me saying, I believe people have greatness, it is how would those I lead describe me in terms of seeing and unleashing their potential, seeing and unleashing their talent. And you have to be really self-reflective because what they say the same thing that you might think which is I see the greatness, too often, we have more of a limited paradigm versus an expansive paradigm on this and we might say, well, the high potentials have greatness inside of them. Even our systems and structures are all designed with a scarcity, command and control mindset. High potentials have greatness, so you have got to develop them but everyone else, you have got to make sure you contain them, control them and people have greatness, I did not say some people, I said people have greatness inside of them.

DJ: And you spoke about five believes, this is one of them. Could you quickly throw the light on some of the others?

SC: I will quickly state them because the reason this is important is that these beliefs collectively, when you put all five together, they comprise a more accurate paradigm, a better map of people in a leadership than a command-and-control paradigm, you know, fundamental beliefs that a command-and-control person would have. So here is, yeah, I will go fast. First, I believe people have greatness inside of them. So, my job as a leader is to unleash their potential, not control them. Second, I believe that people are whole people, meaning body, heart, mind, spirit, they are whole person. So, my job as a leader is to inspire, not merely motivate. Now if people were just economic beings, motivation would be sufficient. If all they were is a body, then motivation would be enough, just pay them. But they also have a heart, they want to care and belong, they have a mind, they want to develop and grow, you talk about growth and play to potential, they want to grow, develop and contribute and they have a spirit, they want to matter, make a difference, have impact, so inspiring taps into a better way of moving them than just motivating. So that was commentary around the belief. I am sorry, I will try to stay with just the beliefs, not the commentary.

DJ: No problem. This is helpful.

SC: Yeah, so I will just repeat that second one, I believe that people are whole people, so my job as a leader is to inspire, not really motivate. Now I shift from people to leadership. Third, I believe that there is enough for everyone as an abundance mentality. So, my job as a leader is to put caring above competing. Fourth, I believe that leadership is stewardship. It is about responsibility, not rights. So, my job as a leader is to put service above self-interest. Finally, fifth, I believe that enduring influence is created from the inside out. So, my job as a leader is to go first, someone needs to go first, leaders go first. If you take those five fundamental beliefs collectively, it is a more accurate, more complete, more relevant paradigm of people and of leadership. And I can go through a command and control of paradigm of people and leadership and it will be, high potentials have greatness inside of them but not everyone and people are really just economic beings, you just pay them well, so you motivate, not inspire. And there is scarcity, not abundance. And, you know, hey I am the leader, I am the boss, so it is rights, not responsibilities. And we have got to work on systems and structures to make the change, not I go first and look in the mirror, I go first. So, it is just a more expansive, more accurate paradigm of people and leadership. And the reason it is important Deepak is until the paradigm shifts, we really would not follow with the behaviors and it will just be an enlightened command and control, a better version. Here is a way of thinking about it, authoritarian command and control operates on the premise of fear, that is what I can do to you as the old model, most of them have moved away from that. Enlightened command and control operate on the premise of fairness and transactional exchange, much better, what I can do for you. Trust and inspire operates in the premise of inspiration and partnership, it is what I can do with you. So authoritarian and enlightened command and control is still motivation, trust and inspire is inspiration, what I can do with you and partnering, different in kind.

DJ: And in the book, I loved one of the phrases you use, I think you say this in the context of stewardship, you say that you rent your title but you own your character. I love the pithiness of that phrase. Can you expand on that for us?

SC: Yes, I heard it from Thasunda Brown Duckett. When she became the CEO of TIAA, big financial services organization and she became the CEO and new title, new role and that is kind of position right, title, I got this new title, I am the CEO, and her old thing is, no, titles come and go, I rent my title that will change but I own my character, this is who I am. And the whole idea is that it is not just enough to have formal authority, we want to have moral authority of who we are. Yeah, position

matters but what really matters is influence. And if you have to rely upon your position, upon your title, not upon your character and your credibility and your influence, then again, you are in a command-and-control model, not a trust and inspire model, you are using your position to get things done. And so, you are talking about rights, not responsibilities. I believe that leadership demands stewardship, its responsibilities that we have as a leader and I, in Trust & Inspire, talk about, there is three of them, three key stewardship we have to model, to trust, to inspire, we have leaders for those that we lead, those that we serve, these are responsibilities, not rights. And we do it through influence, not through position. I could come back to Satya Nadella, beautiful modeling. He modeled, he trusted, he inspired and unleashed the potential of Microsoft by first unleashing the potential of his people.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I want to share my experience in the context of some work I have been doing with an organization called Antarang Foundation. Antarang Foundation works with young adults in low-income communities and helps unlock their potential by giving them aspiration, teaching them life skills and by providing clarity to them on the path that would make most sense for them. However, when I look at the world of opportunity and the manner in which the potential employers look at these young adults, it is often in the frame of “Enlightened Command and Control” – What can I extract from this person at this rate? However, I truly truly believe that while the world of opportunity might be skewed and there are haves and have nots, the world of potential is uniformly distributed. There is no reason to believe that a bright kid in the slums of Dharavi is not as capable as somebody going to a posh school in the city. While, I may not have an answer on how to do it at scale, I must say that empirically speaking, the two people who edit this podcast, Akash Deore and Arman Bansod are both alumni at Antarang Foundation. One of them was a ticket seller at a Metro Station in Mumbai, the other was a Barista at Starbucks. Today they handle the Social Media Marketing and Audio Editing respectively. I learn so much each day working with them.

Back to what Stephen says, I my limited point here is that very often, when it comes to our children, we are willing to think like a gardener but when it comes to others around us, whether it is the helpers that come to us, the staff in the communities we live in or others, we very quickly move to the mindset of a machinist. Worth reflecting on whether we can bring a gardening mindset to some of those conversations too. Not easy, but we are trying somewhere.

## End of nugget transcription

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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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