



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 '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with '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 Deepak Jayaraman, with the text 'Podcast Host' and 'Deepak Jayaraman' 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

Mouli talks about the context behind writing the book which is a combination of him finding time across multiple flights to Singapore to pen down his thoughts given a Regional role and a desire to take a break and take stock of life. He also discusses how he wanted to contribute to social impact in a way that leverages his skills rather than do on-ground field work where he may not have any distinctive value to add.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Why you chose to write a book?

Chandramouli Venkatesan (CV): The story to the book has been an interesting story in itself, firstly connecting the dots backward bulk of my 25 years has been business and P&L role but there was a three-years period where I did a crossed functional stint as the head of HR at Cadbury in India and all of us as business leaders we have intuitive sense of what makes people succeed? But my three years in HR also helped me to put principles to that intuitive size and I think one of the ways I define the HR job for myself was how do I get people to succeed? It was a very simple phrase, and then around few years after that maybe 13-14 I was in Asia Pacific role and I did the Asia Pacific role out of Mumbai rather than Singapore because of personal considerations so I used to end up in Singapore Airlines four times a month I must have taken 60 flights 80 flights in a period of two years and I mean there is only so many movies that you can see if you flies off and so I decided that I must be productive in the flight and I just started writing answer to the question, what makes people successful? How do you succeed? And maybe over 40-50 flights I felt I had enough material and I said if this sounds interesting let me convert it to a training program and I created a training program called tea off with Mouli, which comes out of my golfing passion but got nothing to do with golf, it's all about success and then I was doing this program for whoever is interested, so I covered about 35-40 sessions as off now about 22 companies and just helping people succeed and as I was doing this program the feedback was overwhelming continuously to say this is life changing, this is helping me you must try and write a book this can't be only, this can't be constraint with your time so it must have an audience beyond your time, so that feedback was continuously there and then the trigger just happened when I decided to take a brief sabbatical between two jobs and I said if I not get it done now I will never get it done so that's the way it went.

DJ: And on that note even the desire to take a sabbatical, I have often seen people tried to back to back their life what was behind the need to take a sabbatical or the desire to take a sabbatical?

CV: I think basically you reach points in your career where you say that you just need to pause a little bit have a think on what motivates you? What drives you? And I think I reached that phase where I

said I need to give myself just a little bit of time with myself without trying to prove something every day.

DJ: How you thought about ROI and how you ended up with book as a means of maximising ROI,

CV: So the context of this was the ROI for social impact, to say each one of us tries to do some kind of social impact bulk of us give money, some of us also give time and I think the question I asked myself was, if I am willing to go beyond money and give some time what's the best ROI to that time? And a lot of us the moment we think social impact, we think how do I go and teach maths to underprivileged children or how do I go and clean up some dirty place or how do I do some volunteering? And all that is valuable but those are not using your skills you are just another person, anybody can do that and you can do that. I think for people like us who have also built skills if we can find a way of having social impact which also leverages our skills then the social impact is going to be multiplied and I think that's the mindset I brought and said my skills is in helping people succeed and that was the best way I can create social impact is to create more successful people in this country as oppose to cleaning up a dirty place and I think that's the approach I took and I took all the mediums available for that, it's a session, it's a show like this it's a book, all mediums available.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

What really struck me here was the notion of finding your own mechanism of driving Social Impact. Several people by default get down to Grass roots social work. Nothing against it but like Mouli says it's worth asking the question – is that the best use of your time and capabilities to drive impact. If I look at how some of the guests in this podcast have spoken about impact, it is along the lines of what Mouli says here. Vinita Bali is making a difference in Nutrition and leveraging her experiences from Britannia. Vedika Bhandarkar is using her understanding of Financial Markets to see how she can solve the Water problem. Nandan Nilekani is leveraging his experiences to solve intractable problems using technology. I guess the key takeaway is for each one of us to find a mechanism that leverages our skills and is energizing for us.

Thank you for listening. If you are new to the podcast and want to get a sense of the nature of content that is covered, you might want to go to YouTube and type "PlaytoPotential Highlights from 2017". I have tried to capture the key takeaways from my various conversations last year with leaders across disciplines. From people such as Zia Mody, Nandan Nilekani, Viswanathan Anand, Vijay Amritraj, Amish Tripathi, Vinita Bali and the like. For more, please visit playtopotential.com where the content is organized by nuggets and they are tagged by themes so that you could get perspectives from multiple individuals on a topic that you care about. If you want to listen offline say during a car ride home or during airplane travel, you could also access the Podcast on iTunes, Stitcher, Saavn and several other podcast apps but that may not give you the flexibility to navigate across speakers by theme. If you find the content purposeful, please go to iTunes, rate the show and share a review. It will help others discover it.

End of nugget transcription

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Chandramouli Venkatesan - Nuggets

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- 28.02 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Turbocharging your growth - TMRR
- 28.03 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Raising the game when it matters
- 28.04 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Playing the 1st half to win in the 2nd half
- 28.05 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Picking mentors thoughtfully
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- 28.07 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Evolving views on the notion of success
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- 28.12 Chandramouli Venkatesan - In summary - Playing to Potential

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](#).

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