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Context to the nugget

Arun talks about how we could potentially move from understanding the data that somebody presents to us to going deeper in our understanding around why that data is important to the other person and how their experiences have led them to value what they value. He suggests that moving from the what to the Why and the How enables us to get to the next level of insight and intimacy with another person, especially if they are unlike us.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): *Trying to understanding the art of asking good questions, in your experience what have you're learnt about framing the question right in eliciting thoughtful responses or navigating a certain discussion in a meaningful way?*

Arun Miara (AM): There is this what and how and the why, different ladders that people describe and the three Why's in terms of enquiry and I say, OK we look at data and so there is a lot of questions about data, where is the data? How does the data add up? So you go down that path about the data and trying to see reality through, re-organizing and adding or subtracting in the data itself and you can go down to the path also into the logic behind in the data itself. So this way it could lead to that so it comes to next level on that which is not just addition or subtractions but you go to more calculus maths and so there's a more ways to thinking about how to make sense of the data and I say fine now the data is being interpreted by a mind, the data is also collected by the people who felt that, that was good data to get so that was mind who chose which data to select, what data to select so there are minds here so there's a reasoning about mind. Why this is important data? So I learn to switch myself off the deductive track pretty quickly and to ask why you think one should be looking at this data. And then I would notice quite often that why the person thinks this data is important is... the reason to probably ask the question I think is what the point of this data is? I don't think this data is important but this person is presenting all this stuff, why do you think it's important? So I am learning about another person's way of thinking and what another person gives value to? Which apparently is not what I give value to, is not my way of thinking so this is how I am 'people not like us' as I say I am listening to someone who's not like me in this situation both of us could be let's say in BCG or in world of business and BCG they are people like us, so we have a way of thinking and things we value and the data that we consider as important which is similar and when you come to people who we consider ill-educated or people who are rabid in their thinking they are not like us but they are human beings and many of them have got PhD if you want to count that as that they have education or they have been through life very successfully in some field but they value different things and they think about the world in a different way, so then I have to ask them about more question about how they came to believe that these things are important, so learning about them, their journey how they developed, their values and their mental frames and so, that's

how then I am learning at even deeper levels but in the formation of my own values I mean how did my values formed.

DJ: It is not just looking at the data but really sort of going two levels down on how they look at the data and why they look at the data.

AM: Yes and what they value?

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This segment really resonated with me. When I am working with a leader in transition who comes to me saying, what I should do next with my life, I realize that it is imperative for me to understand their world the way they see it. How do they prioritize work, family, me-time and community? What does success mean to them? What energizes them and how their journeys have shaped their views on some of these questions? Only then do I feel ready to be of help to them in helping them navigate their ship effectively.

Even if I go back to my days as a Search Consultant at EgonZehnder, while discussing with candidates, I would often get a lot more insight about a person by trying to understand why they did what they did at various points in time rather than just focusing on what their stints have been and what they have accomplished in each of those stints.

Thank you for listening. For more please visit playtopotential.com.

End of nugget transcription

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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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