



Updated Host Introduction (Balanced + Authority-Building)

"Hi everyone! I'm Sudarssan Nilavalagan — I work on the ground floor of AI and DevOps transformation at Wells Fargo, building deployment pipelines that have saved millions and driving innovation that's been recognized globally. My journey spans from predictive models for global banking ops to applied AI research on EV infrastructure in Singapore. Today, I get to step back from the code and dive into conversation with some of the visionaries shaping Wells Fargo's transformation story from the top."



Refined Themes for Fireside Chat (Now tightly coupled with Wells Fargo goals)

1. **Agility at Scale** – overcoming legacy complexity to enable iterative innovation.
 2. **Developer Productivity** – building high-trust, high-output environments.
 3. **Customer-Centric Innovation** – designing what matters, even when it's not the obvious ROI win.
 4. **Risk-Embedded Innovation** – pushing change without compromising compliance.
 5. *(Optional/bonus)* **ESG + Tech** – how tech supports ESG in real execution.
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Deepened, Context-Rich Questions for Each Panelist



Parul Ghosh – Distinguished Engineer

Context: Patented innovator, leading futuristic solutions (cloud, risk systems, dev experience).

Optimized Questions:

- “Parul, your work sits right at the intersection of risk, cloud, and innovation. How do you institutionalize experimentation across engineering teams, particularly when dealing with legacy infrastructure and compliance constraints?”

- “With Wells Fargo focusing on developer experience to drive agility, how do you think engineering culture can directly improve both innovation pace and platform resilience?”
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Abhishek Malhotra – Head of Core Banking and Enterprise Platforms

Context: Responsible for core modernization and engineering culture in foundational systems.

Optimized Questions:

- “Abhishek, modernizing core banking is like rewiring a plane mid-flight. What concrete steps have you taken to enable agility without destabilizing the system?”
 - “When you think about developer productivity in your context, how do you go beyond metrics like velocity or story points? What tells you your engineers are empowered?”
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Santosh Nishani – VP of Technology

Context: Tech team leadership aligned with business value.

Optimized Questions:

- “Santosh, how do you build feedback loops between tech and business so that teams aren't just solving what's urgent — but also what's valuable?”
 - “With digital talent being a global race, what's your approach to keeping your teams motivated, agile, and deeply aligned with business strategy?”
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Shruti Hansoge – Business Risk and Control Analyst

Context: Balancing compliance and agility.

Optimized Questions:

- “Shruti, as digital innovation accelerates, what role do you play in embedding risk thinking into engineering teams without slowing them down?”
 - “Do you see analytics and automation as key enablers in transforming how risk and compliance keep up with engineering velocity?”
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Mitesh Chalana – SVP, Platform Management, Consumer Tech

Context: Platform innovation, velocity vs. stability balance.

Optimized Questions:

- “Mitesh, platform modernization is central to operational agility. How do you handle the tension between change velocity and long-term maintainability?”
 - “What strategies do you use to give your developers a sense of purpose and productivity, especially in large, interdependent platform teams?”
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Shishir Mishra – Lead Software Engineer and Release Lead

Context: Execution gatekeeper, CI/CD, engineering quality.



Optimized Questions:

- “Shishir, you’re the last line before impact. In fast-paced release cycles, how do you maintain trust in every deployment without becoming a bottleneck?”
 - “How do you bring engineering teams into the mindset that product stability is a shared responsibility, not just a release team problem?”
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Connecting Each Question to Strategic Goals

Theme	Strategic Insight from Brief	Your Question Target
Agility	Only 20% of banks operate fully agile	Parul, Abhishek, Santosh
Developer Productivity	Need to move beyond output to enablement	Abhishek, Mitesh
Risk + Innovation	Risk can enable speed if embedded early	Shruti
Core Modernization	Cloud systems + microservices are the future	Abhishek, Mitesh
Customer-Centric Innovation	Even non-profitable features matter if user wants them	Parul, Mitesh
ESG Readiness (Optional)	ESG is weak on execution, needs tech	Shruti (risk) or add a bonus ESG leader

Final Suggestions

-  **Create cue cards** or slide snippets with each person's bio, theme, and one killer quote or stat you can mention naturally.
-  **Use transition questions** like:

“Building on what Abhishek mentioned about platform tension, Mitesh, how do you manage this in your vertical?”

-  Have a couple of data points ready:
 - “47% of banks feel their transformation is too slow...”
 - “Only 20% of banking organizations operate in fully agile models...”