

Amarjeet Saini Zee Entertainment

M: OK, fine. Thank you. Cool. Alright. So, we're doing this through Brandscapes and Prachi is working full time with them. I'm just helping them on this project, so I believe you have some context of what the conversation is going to be. Right. Yeah. But so not wasting too much time with this directly. Dive into it just for the record, if you could just share your introduction, what do you do? What's your Role at Zee?

AMARJEET SAINI: So I am as per the definition of Zee I am chief channel officer in Zee for Bhojpuri cluster, so under me is a Bhojpuri movie channel. There used to be a Bhojpuri GC channel as well, but as of now it has moved under Hindi movies. So there is a Bhojpuri movie channel called Zee by scope, which is managed under my leadership and there is a team of about 11 odd people and the channel essentially shows Bhojpuri movies, Bhojpuri events, Bhojpuri music and also some non-fiction shows.

M: Right.

AMARJEET SAINI: That's essentially, I am with Zee since 2017, about 5-6 years and prior to that I was with the reliance broadcast over there also I was in the TV and radio business.

M: Right, right. OK. So, a very typical HR question, but how do you see your future either in this organization or somewhere else, like professionally, if I had to ask you, You know, how does the picture of success look for you for your future like you are at a certain place now, but yaha se kaha?

AMARJEET SAINI: Obviously, Yaha se to OTT because that is the next destination where you know the world is moving towards and even I would want to. I have now done TV for almost 8 years and has now I'm pretty good at, you know, doing TV shows. Have launched 3 Brands 3 channels till now. So I've got a very, very rich TV. Experience OTT is the new frontier, so that is where I would want to move to, but I guess maybe in a span of next one or 2 years and that's what the goal is immediate future because there is this merger right now you would have heard about GN Sony merger happening, so currently it's the wait and watch as to how the scenario will unfold and post that hopefully and preferably within this organization itself moving into the digital entertainment space, but that too entertainment as in show based entertainment, not the Facebooks and the instas of the world, not the not the social media part of entertainment, but the show based entertainment.

M: Would you want your profile to be similar? Are you seeing yourself in a much more leadership kind of a role or do you still see yourself more in the content space like what is on your mind?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah. So what's on my mind is basically a larger portfolio because now with experience, I have the bandwidth to, you know, handle more than one channel, 2-3 channels or maybe an OTT platform with a much wider portfolio of shows events, nonfiction, fiction. So currently My Portfolio is good enough, but now my hunger and my experience is such that I know that I can manage bigger portfolios, maybe 2 or 3 channels under me. If it is TV, just one channel is not good enough because you know, because there is more that I can do and in one channel it's not enough for me to do because the experience is much wider now. So I'm looking for a larger portfolio not really higher designation.

M: Sure. OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: In the sense that maybe like a cluster head but not really a CEO kind of a thing because I think I still need to invest next 5 to 6 years to learn much more about, you know, the

entertainment business for me to be confident to take that role. So a wider portfolio, more variety, more experience is what I'm looking at.

M: OK. And on a personal front like in terms of you know, because if you're looking at handling a bigger portfolio or and you know also wanting to change from TV to OTT. What kind of changes are you looking at? You know, bringing in yourself or also, are you even looking at bringing some changes on a personal level you're in terms of your attitude in terms of your behaviour, people, management skills, whatever, like, you know, not just which is a little more professional thing, but also if you think personally changes that you're looking at bringing in yourself? That it helps you professionally.

AMARJEET SAINI: Yes. So some of the areas which I'm consciously working on and I need to work more on them is one is networking skills like I am, I have come to the entertainment industry, but I my journey is very short. It's just 7 to 8 years and I have not been from entertainment. So very few people know me. And I also know few people I need to reach out to a greater number of people because that's how you're standing becomes like more people know you then. You know, you kind of create and over a period of time you start identifying which are the type of people you want to work with. You know the be it the production houses be it the producers be it the actors, be it the, you know, the management, you know, the people who are in the on the management side. But I feel that my personal reach is very less. I need to network more, socialize more, and be known to more people and know more people. If I need to go deeper into this industry, that is one thing which Uh, you know which definitely I have to work upon at a personal level. The other thing is about, you know, is about PR. The media industry is a lot about I am a kind of a person who does a lot of work but does not talk so much about it, but it is also important to be seen not just to be working. So that is something which again I'm now taken to LinkedIn and now I'm trying to publish the work which I have done because otherwise, despite being talented and being hardworking, you may not, you may be ignored because people are not aware of it, so creating an awareness about your skills and your you know, profile and your honest work that one is doing that is the second thing which I'm working upon, which is my let's say a weak area. It does not come naturally to me. I have to consciously work on that and the 3rd the 3rd aspect that I am that I have to learn at a personal level is managing bigger challenges. I have come to a certain level where you know, shows of a certain budget or of a certain proportion or channel of a certain kind a revenue and a certain kind of a cost center I have handled, but I till the time I sink my teeth into something which is a bigger pie, you know which will be learning again from a scratch because the dynamics are completely different. The stakes are completely different, so to build confidence to handle that is the 3rd thing, which is what I'm looking at when I'm saying that I'm looking for a bigger portfolio to develop confidence, to handle larger responsibilities.

M: Yeah, OK. And any specific skill sets you think you need to invest in, you know? Anything that's going to help you also.

AMARJEET SAINI: 2 Though I already said networking skills and PR skills is something which I need to work upon.

M: Which is again very, very personal, but skill sets, you know which can be provided to you by like a 3rd party. You know someone else will help you build those skill sets and you either you go through some training or some kind of coaching, whatever like you know, which would probably help you.

AMARJEET SAINI: A technical or personal?

M: Yeah, technical technical.

AMARJEET SAINI: Technical skills. So technical skills. I'll tell you because I recently also did a course from ISB, so there are certain aspects which I am looking to learn like one is negotiation skills because where I am heading towards more and more it will be coming into usage. The other is obviously the digital arena, which is AI and associated applications. So, understanding that entire world. I recently did one course on digital analytic. From ISB because I needed to understand that entire, you know, how does the digital matrix works? What are the parameters which get employed? It was more from the marketing point of view, but the same principles apply to content side as well. Then the other technical skills that I need to do is basically I want to do a filmmaking course because one of the areas where I want to develop is the understanding of the production and post production technical aspects more from the point of view at this stage not so much from the point of view of making content but because I deal with makers of content, if I do not know the technical aspects of it, then I can be taken for a ride. I'll have a better control over managing that project if I myself am aware what goes into it and what are the you know, because like let's say producer comes that for making this kind of a show so and so budget is required. Now for me to evaluate that this is the right budget quoted. If I do not have the technical know how I would not be able to assess it correctly. I do have experience informally having worked for 7-8 years, but I think that is not sufficient. I need to know more, so these are the technical areas that I am focusing on right now.

M: OK. Alright, so coming back to this coaching program, the executive coaching program, what's your general perception of this, like what do you feel these kind of courses or programs really do for people who are especially at your level, you know, I mean, not just the experience that you have with media, but you know you you've also had a past research experience from what I know and you spent so many years in the industry and you're in a very senior position now and obviously you're looking at achieving greater things in future, where do you think this executive coaching programs really fit into the scheme of, you know, you're planning, what do you feel about that?

AMARJEET SAINI: Honestly what I think is that it's a must have, but it is generally done as a lip service or generally done as a Gyan service, so I look forward to executive coaching programs because as you keep scaling up you know the ladder you keep encountering newer set of dynamics, right. And you do need grooming to deal with those newer dynamics, right? Like from college when you join a job, it's a new dynamic. What was working for you in the college does not work when you join at an executive at a junior executive level. And you need to that time if there is a program which at least sensitizes you and gives you a feeler as to these skills would be required, It helps you cope with it and deal with it in a much better fashion. Similarly, as you keep climbing your, you know, ladder of success in whichever area you so they so currently. And also given that currently things are much more dynamic than they used to be 10 years back, all the more reason that one needs to keep equipping, equipping themselves with new set of skills, new knowledge, new understanding, and new perspective. So, it is a must. But what happens typically is that, it either it is not there or if it is there it is not in a very practical fashion. It is more in a very textbookish fashion, which honestly does not help that much. So that's what I feel.

M: OK, so all these, you know, future requirements that you've spoken of, you think are executive coaching program will help you achieve this?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yes, yes, I had when I Alifya contacted me, I had told her that I have participated in I think almost 5 to 6 coaching programs till now. There is one happening on 20th of December I am participating in that as well. So at Zee now for last. Almost 2 years, there is an entire department HR has started this department called Zeecadmy, which is which is basically about creating all kind of programs for all kind of levels. So for in the in the in the Zee corporate infrastructure, I'm at a mid-upper Senior level. So for them they have all this while the mid and mid below level programs were

happening. So the calendar for our level has come just now in December. So I've enrolled in one of the program though there were 3 which I wanted to enroll in. But because of my travelling schedule and other work schedule, I could only pick one.

M:OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: But now these are happening?

M: What kind of a program is this?

AMARJEET SAINI: This is change agents. That's the name of the change agents, yeah.

M: Change agents OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: Change agents, yeah.

M: Any idea? What would it be about?

AMARJEET SAINI: They haven't given a descriptor, but from the title I think that it will be about that how you can be an agent of change within the. Or towards any particular goal that you're doing. So I have enrolled in it because I just filled the form feedback form for it because one of the challenge that I face is that to change the mindset of the team that I'm working with, I'll just give you a very quick example that like I said zee by scope is a movie channel, so usually about 2 years back the category used to be male and youngsters dominate and my team constitutes of all male working personnel. But in last 2 years the category has changed. It's more female-skewed now. The challenge is that they continue to do what they used to do. I need to now consistently shift their minds and then now you're creating content for the female in the household. She has a different way of consuming different taste for content. You can't make the promos the same way. You can't buy movies the titles which you used to earlier. So to prove it to them by data by taking them to the market, making them talk to the women of the household, it's a huge task because the mindset does not change. Mindset is stuck with what used to happen before, so that's one big challenge that I face in my working. So that's why I've enrolled in this, dropping some practical tools will be available in this, which I would. Be able to employ.

AMARJEET SAINI: Your image is frozen.

M: OK. And would you also remember the other courses that were there in the list? Yeah, I just got a call now. So maybe it got disconnect.

M: Do you remember the other courses that was there in that list of?

AMARJEET SAINI: Other courses which there was one other courses. I can read them. Out right now. Let me.

M: You tell us later also. That's fine. We'll come to the courses that you have already done. You've already been through some 5 courses.

AMARJEET SAINI: There was one on emotional intelligence. How to employ emotional intelligence network. There was one that i had to attend but i could not do. OK, sorry. You were saying something and I just remembered this.

M: No, that's OK. No, I wanted to ask you about the courses that you have already been through. So were these all through Zee?

AMARJEET SAINI: OK. Your voice crack? Maybe it's a problem at my end. I could only hear it till you said that the word it all Zee and then.

M: Able to hear me now.

AMARJEET SAINI: Better, better.

M: Is this OK now?

AMARJEET SAINI: You want to know about the courses which I have. Done so far.

M: Yeah, yeah. Just constantly getting calls. Uh, sorry.

AMARJEET SAINI: No issues, no issues.

M: Yeah, I want to know the course that you have already been through.

AMARJEET SAINI: So the ones which I remember is I did one course on, there was coaching the coach. That's one program which I have done. Then there was one called how to develop strategic thing. Then I have done one on time management. These 3 are remember and there was one more. This lady had come from one organization, but.

M: Coaching the coach, time management and sorry missed the 3rd one/

AMARJEET SAINI: How to develop strategic thinking?

M: How to develop? OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: There was, I think it was found.

M: And all these 3 were through Zee.

AMARJEET SAINI: No. So like coaching the coach, they had a tie-up with one organization. I'm forgetting their name. But those people I think are into this executive coaching program, only that one lady had come. So they had like they were.

M: This is not the train-the-trainer program. This is a different program, coaching the coach.

AMARJEET SAINI: This is a different. Yeah, this. Is a different program.

M: OK, you have also been through the train, the. Trainer program, yeah.

AMARJEET SAINI: Yes, yes. So they so it was an external organization. Zee was the facilitator, but they ran this program and even in the how to develop strategic thinking there was a speaker who had come from outside and he took that course, and time management also this it was this one lady who had come from some other organizations. So Zee facilitates it. So I think that tie up with these people, but none of these are from the employees of zee

M: Got it. Right. OK. And was this voluntarily done by you or is it like this was a mandatory thing like that you had to attend these sessions?

AMARJEET SAINI: Voluntarily. In fact the 3 of the session i was the only one who was from the mid upper senior level, all participants were and, but I was interested so I participated but.

M: OK, OK. So it's it's very interesting, Amar, like you mentioned these courses and you also said that you were the only one who was attending these from that level, right? So what was your purpose of attending these like I I think if you could just quickly tell me for each of these time management

coaching the courses like for each of them like with what mindset did you go for it like and? How did you think that these courses are going to? Help me you. Know at some point achieve the more senior position that you know you're aiming for in the future, so just help me understand that like for each of them.

AMARJEET SAINI: OK, so firstly I didn't go with the mindset that they these things will help me for the next level that. I'm aiming for.

M: OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: My mindset was more that whatever I'm doing currently, also, I generally feel that it's always good to, you know, you sometimes you get very good tips perspectives or tools. So I also keep reading articles. I also keep reading a lot of books because you know any session, any interaction sometimes, like for example this time management over there she gave this, I've forgotten the name of this thing. So they organized tasks into 4 quadrants XY axis This is like. High importance. Maximum time, high importance, low time, low importance, high time low importance, low time and time taken to complete the task. Now if you have like number of things and if you first classify them in those boxes then you know that what is high importance going to take high time should be your priority number one. Because, you know, it is high importance, it's going to take high time. But typically what happens is people either what instinctively, what we do is that you choose something. Which is high importance and low time, but of a male base you would not even realize so. Now, just when she shared that, that in itself was a new thing and I used it for quite some time, then after that I forgot about it. Now that we are talking about it, it again came to my mind. Once you get whatever you're doing, also you get good tips. So I attend all these sessions also because. Just the strategic thinking was a waste of time I went, I thought that in strategic thinking some new some new approach that person will tell but it was more about his quoting from all the strategic books, Blue Ocean strategy and Art of war, those kind of things and giving standard things about you should plan etc. But sometimes you get good new tips. So that was my motive to go for this. Coaching the coach was different. In coaching the coach there was a program called Arise which was there is an external organization. Like I said that they initially started with the lower level and mid-level, so the rise was the first leg had happened for people who have become people manager for the first time. So earlier you were individual contributor and then you became a people manager, so you're going to manage people for the first time so people. So it was for them, but their reporting manager also was supposed to participate in it to help them become, to give them those skills of becoming people manager. While in during that course while I was those the tasks and everything were given to my reportee. But there was one session where this lady was it was more about telling the Reporting manager what should be my approach with this person in terms of coaching? So I thought coaching will be basically giving Gyan but coaching is a completely different skill altogether. Then when she took me through it and when we actually first she displayed how she coaching is basically making the other person realize what is their problem and where they are going wrong by not telling them, but by questioning them in a skillful manner that they realize it's not you telling them it's not like it's very easy from my experience to tell my reportee to do this and not this. But that is a imparted knowledge that is not a self-acquired knowledge, so it's another skill to make him realize that what you are doing is that correct? And then he thinks on it and then it has no, this is wrong. This is how it should be now that growth is a much better growth. So i attended that session and I got fascinated by this skill of coaching. So then when coaching the coach program happened. So I enrolled for it because I wanted to learn more and thank God I did. I started using that with all my reportees because I got so fascinated by that approach. But in coaching the coach, that Lady again, there was 4 Quadrant, i took a picture of it in my mobile because it was an online program, So they

showed that there are 4 types of managing coaching is one and in what case is coaching to be used? It should not be used as a blanket tool forever

M: OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: Agar koi Naya Naya joinee aaya hai toh you can't coach him/her because for coaching there is some degree of knowledge or experience for that person to self-analyse. But I would want to do more on this coaching technique. It's an amazing technique.

M: OK. And what about with the Train the trainer?

AMARJEET SAINI: Train the Trainer, i don't really remember honestly.

M: So all of these were you said train the trainer was over 2 days coaching the coach was online and time management and the other one that you mentioned developed strategic thinking.

AMARJEET SAINI: Time management for office, that lady came, and she got props also to conduct exercises in office.

M: How to develop the strategic thinking?

AMARJEET SAINI: That happened online. I would not even call it a workshop. It was more like a session which this guy did, OK.

M: So these I get. These were basically facilitated by your organization, and you did this on like on your own. Yeah. Do you remember coming across any other executive coaching programs that you would have probably seen maybe on LinkedIn or you know if you know your peers have taken something, has anything else interested you have you come across any other programs?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yes i saw on LinkedIn Because it's like once you Scroll down below notifications, there is a section where they also keep highlighting program. There were 2-3 interesting program one was about negotiating skill program Well, I didn't enroll for it at that point of time because I was bit caught up. So negotiation skills. There is another. New age leadership was there

M: What's your expectation from New Age leadership kind of the program What would you expect? What would your expectations be from a new age leadership, kind of a program? That's what they've titled it.

AMARJEET SAINI: I would expect, like there is a difference in today's leadership and earlier leadership, so I would expect they will highlight some facets of leadership which may not be new for me, but may give a better understanding of those faces. Like for example Buka environment environment, all these terms that have come right now because at the end of the day, all of this is basically saying that today's world is far more dynamic than it is. Now, if it is very very dynamic, then as a leader also you what kind of personality character you develop has to be somewhat different from what it was at the time of your dad. Mostly like they will say empathy on emotional intelligence, on proactive listening on should be listening these are standard. But when defining proactiveness it has a new understanding to it. The skill may not be new, but your understanding of that skill may have a better perspective or a deeper perspective by the way, that person explains it or give these examples. The New Age leadership leadership, maybe they will also have to be like this, but with a pinch of salt as it is contextual also.

M: So if I had to ask you to, you know, design or if you have, you know, certain parameters in your mind which would help create an ideal coaching program that you think would probably work best for you, your requirements, you know, basis everything that you've spoken, you know, until now in

terms of. How do you look at your future changes that you want to bring into yourself? So all of that, if you had to help us design or describe an ideal program, what would you?

AMARJEET SAINI: First and foremost the feedback which I have been giving in the organization itself, which is difficult because Aisa Hen he reality may, but the program should be custom made for media sector. The programmes offered are generic program which are taken from corporate sector. Media world is very different unlike in MBA. There should be one branch for media management as it is a very different world all together. Lot of principles and fundamentals of your general product companies or brand companies do not apply here because the nature of product is very, very different, right. And the dynamics are very, very different. So one of the shortcomings.

M: Give an example of this because like while I understand because I have worked in that sector but just for the record, if you can just you know support this with an example that you know how you think media world is actually different and why those corporate generic programs may not work for the media houses.

AMARJEET SAINI: Right. Because Indian media sector is an amalgamation of organized and unorganized and the unorganized part is much bigger than the organized part. Organized part is like a very smaller chunk, but this smaller chunk deals with larger chunk which is heavily unorganized, heavily unprofessional, and heavily how do you put it fluid, yeah. Like for example any other category could be product category, white goods category, you see industrial goods category because they have been existing for so many years there, larger chunk of them is very structured and organized, there are parts which are unorganized but the size of unorganized is lesser and the size of organized is very lesser. Media is a creative field and before making a show or before casting no one can confirm if the audience will like it. Let's say you come up with a soap that lathers well and has some fragrance, there is still some degree of objectivity, which you can bring to the table, but here the larger part of it is very subject, very subject, right. So because of these 2 aspects, when you take a management principle and you try to exercise it. The problem that happens is that most of these management principles have evolved from arenas which were highly objective, where the dealing party and the task that is being dealt is more objective in nature and not subjective in nature and hence they eliminate the subjectivity of it and they try to give a very objective approach towards any path of skill development that you had. That becomes difficult here what usually happens is that the coaches come are from abroad companies which are quite developed and logical and India is different country where the 'Fundas' are different. Here, don't give me examples. It's important to Indianise. Give me examples of Vodafone and all. Also how will this be applicable in an Indian environment? Because I'm going to operate in an Indian environment. Are there success stories within Indian environment, you know all those things and to customized it for media and all the examples which come because in all these management and leadership skills if you see example are from formal sector, very less are from media industry, right? These coaches dosent know our environment so when they are coaching us i might as well have to tell them them these are the challenges i might face in my work environment. Hence the coaching professiona; should be someone who has some Media line experience or coaches who have coached media people. And most importantly there should be practicle tools and not general gyaan. Give your own examples and where these tools where implemented. Stories of its success and faliure. Give them tools and give them with a fair honesty. Don't give them as brahmasrta. Give it with the sense of key in certain circumstances this you can apply However, in other circumstances this will not work. So, it is more practical, it is more usable. Or lastly, interactive coaching sessions should be there because when i attended some of them they were one way. It should be involving. This happened in the time management session, after that session we all felt we all gave very positive feedback to HR that this



is this keeps you alert away refreshes you within the coaching session, takes you back into theory. So yeah these should be the things for somebody to learn.

M: OK. OK. OK. Interesting. So. You know, amidst all these 4 programs that you mentioned or maybe 3 actually I will not count train the trainer because. I don't know if you remember bits of it, but you know to take you to the CXO level or, you know, take you to the next designation per say, right? Like I get it that even in OTT you said maybe a larger portfolio If I can handle that, but similar work but larger portfolio. But which of these things do? You feel would actually take you to the next level or is going to help you to take you to the next level? Like next?

AMARJEET SAINI: Which of these 3 programs?

M: Yeah, like any part of it. Also, you know, it could be any learning or anything that you felt was you know maybe a highlight for you. You have spoken a lot about different things and what these programs were all about, but anything typically if you remember you know like 2-3 points which are like a total highlight for you that you truly feel which will take you to. The next level.

AMARJEET SAINI: All these work more about changing my way of operating where I am, but none of this imparted me with any knowledge or skill that will grow me for the next level both.

M: OK. Sure. OK. Right. So would you want to take up a course like that? So if keeping that in mind, if you have a few more thoughts in terms of ideal program developed which will help you go to the next level, do you have some? Thoughts on that?

AMARJEET SAINI: Like what kind of program it should be?

M: Yeah, like what should this program comprise of?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yes, it should bring out clearly the difference in skill set knowledge area require between where I am currently and where I should be currently market for example, if somebody a CXO has done a journey of running 20 business units, right so the skill required is, you know, understanding which one to prioritize, not to prioritize. So it should clearly differentiate the 2 levels to explain the difference in the skills to know which area to focus. Secondly it should outline what are the musts and what are the pitfalls of being at that level? So example people who have been very successful CXOs what are the good practices they have done and people who have failed as a CXOs or CEO or CFO or whatever what are the pitfalls, where they failed and because of which you know the journey could not be. So one is where to focus on. You know where to focus upon where not to focus upon, and there should be definitely should be a dialoging with the, CEO 's and CFO 's whichever level I want to go because nothing is more live and practical than actually, you know, one is it's almost like you go for Barry John classes and he will tell you about acting and he himself has not acted in a single movie. So while you're here and he has created great actors, but it's another thing that if in his session, let's say one of his students like Manoj Bajpayee or Shahrukh Khan also comes in, then it just it just adds that's the more real experience where Sharukh will talk about after Barry John, what of Barry, John help and what in Barry, John, he did not learn which he learned when he started his own journey because not everything you can learn in coaching class. It comes from person's experience.

M: Right, right. So these courses since you you know self-nominated for them, these were free, they were paid or is it just because it was done through the I get it, but it was free, all of them were free, free. OK. Have you ever taken up any course where you have to pay for it?

AMARJEET SAINI: I have done one ISV course where I have paid and I am there was another course which had come. I'm forgetting its name so that I was value to that was also paid, but that had not come from within the organization that I think on LinkedIn or something have come again because of time I couldn't do it, but I'm planning to do a couple of more courses, courses and whatever you call them executive. But yeah, where but not within the organization.

M: But would you call them executive coaching programs or they are more just learning a certain skill set and technical skills? Is this that kind of?

AMARJEET SAINI: There were more courses, they were not executive coaching programs.

M: Right. OK, OK. Go ahead. OK. And but would you by any chance know how much they would have paid for these courses that you have taken? Any idea?

AMARJEET SAINI: The company?

M: No idea, OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: I thought they would be doing it at a.

M: And how much did you pay for that ISB course that you mentioned?

AMARJEET SAINI: I paid one 1,40,000

M: That was a more technical thing.

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

M: OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: And they give certification also know which helps ISB certificate also.

M: Helps how as in?

AMARJEET SAINI: So like if I'm putting it in my CV then.

M: It's a big deal, OK?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah, yeah. Because ISV is like the topmost institute. So if I have done from that.

M: But anyone can take this course? Or did you have to be eligible to take this course was like eligibility criteria or? And even Phase 140 and is able to do this course.

R; Yes, yes, yes.

M: OK, OK. You think it was worth it? I'm only asking about this one because everything else was free for you. So this amount that you paid for the ISB codes? This was for data analytics, right?

AMARJEET SAINI: No, for digital analytics.

M: OK, got it. Uh, OK. So was this worth it? Did you feel it? Was worth it?

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah, yeah, yeah, totally. And they are superb. Very rarely I've come across and as in an organization which is so professional, so organized, so clear in everything and amazing at service the way they organized everything the way they coordinate each session flexibility built in and then there is an exam. Then you have to pass that exam and you know for certification you need to have that many grace marks, otherwise you don't get the certificate and I had also wanted to mention my grades because I got very good grades in that. So, the way they accommodated that

request. So superbly professional. So I'm planning to do one more course from ISB because and my friend has done 5 courses from there by now so.

M: OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah, yeah, yeah they are. They are there.

M: This was also recommended by your friend. Did you get to know about this? Your friend.

AMARJEET SAINI: No, no, no, no. Uh, this how did I come to know about this ISB? I knew I was planning to. I was looking for a course for something to that enhances my digital knowledge because I'm planning to go into OTT. So I was looking at an international institution to do because that certification that Brand matters. So I was looking at this Kellogg's and Harvard and but they were very expensive then ISB, at least compared to them, is more affordable. But it has the same reputation in Indian market it has it's like the number one institute. So then I chose.

M: OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: Because online is because it was affordable.

M: Ohh correct right. So you think it was worth it, right? OK. Alright, so you know, amongst all the courses that you've done, so you were able. To put these two use right, all the learnings that you had from the ISB course. Also when other 4 courses also that you've taken within the organization. You're able to put it to use like on a regular basis.

AMARJEET SAINI: It it has now I use it selectively, but I do that many a times because it's a very nice probing technique to make people realize where the problem is. Time management i did it for some time then i could not do it.

M: Oh ok

AMARJEET SAINI: I know the terms and I know how the parameters or the analytics works. So we have a social media platform and so I have a marketing person. So now what happens is for a long time, they kept on telling me you can't access the success of this post and all that stuff, but after having done that course, I know that you can. So then I started asking them give me this analysis. Give me that analysis so. I had been able to then prove it to them. OK, this kind of approach has worked. This has not worked, so that was more for. Me just than a key. But I should be knowing he what goes into it. It helped me that way greatly.

M: Got it, got it. OK. And you mentioned this was an online course, So what was the duration of this course, the one you took from ISB?

AMARJEET SAINI: This was the this was 6 weeks, 6 weeks a course with an extension of 4 weeks in case you're not able to complete it for 6 within 6 weeks and her class is open to the 12 session.

M: So you were OK with the design of the course, the curriculum that was covered, the time, duration and everything that you know, like overall the setup of this was OK with you.

AMARJEET SAINI: Pehle teen do classes k bad my attendence dropped as they were giving general gyaan. So they realize that I'm not attending classes for 2 weeks. So then they called me up their program coordinator that we are not seeing in the classes. So I told them, I said. I think I've wasted my money because you people are just giving general marketing gyaan and I have come here for digital analytics. So then he explained me, he said that first 3 weeks we do that because not everybody who joins his forces at your level. There are a lot of people who are at a junior level at a

mid-level for them. Yeah, we need to set up a foundation first and once the foundation has happened then we get into it. So he said. Trust me, from 4th week onwards we get into hard core digital analytics only and not general marketing. Here, so he said just do the 4th week and then you let me know. And so then I went back and I. Then I did because they have these classes, they get recorded and they're available on their portal as a recording, so you can always catch up on the classes. And he was correct from 4th week actually hard core session started from there it was I was on a breakneck speed and I completed it within time, but the starting 3 weeks was boring. But then I understood his reasoning because they're accommodating a larger bunch of people.

M: Do you know what the others attending the session with you like it was? A group thing.

AMARJEET SAINI: It used to show in the online profile

M: But no, you wouldn't have any personal interaction with the group that was attending it. Was just one on one thing that.

AMARJEET SAINI: No, I was not. Mostly I used to attend sessions after they were done, so I would only see there when they are asking questions.

M: Recorded thing that you were listening to, it is that.

AMARJEET SAINI: The best part was that it was live, but then if you're not able to attend the session, the live recording is available for you to catch up on. And they had a best part was that they had a simulator so last 2 sessions were simulation of digital campaigning, so whereby you know they so there is a AI based software they have where you actually go and you actually plan a campaign. They give you a company and it's all target market and everything. And then there's a task and you have to actually create a campaign and poll it on Facebook, on Twitter, on Insta. You actually have to go into the in the in the simulator you have to go into the Google as to how you bid for the you know, for the for the ad rate, how you how many spots will you put in afternoon, what is the peak time, which audience? So you actually roll it and then that simulator gives the result he how successful your campaign was in basis your success is where you will get marks. That was amazing. I got a real experience of rolling a digital campaign.

M: OK, OK, this may sound a little repetitive, but you know lot of this thing that you have spoken about so far because you know also your peers, you mentioned that you know maybe someone who's just recently become a manager also has attended the same course as you who has been at a certain designation for so many years. So it's not like, are you even looking for courses to be done which you know would take you to the next level, you know, because I'm sure this digital marketing course also that you took up, I'm sure you know people who are maybe much younger to you at a certain position. Also would have done the same course. I know this was a little new. You know new arena for you and that's why you took up this course because you wanted to, you know, gather that gyaan for yourself. Right. So yeah, I I want to truly understand that. You know, what's your POA for reaching the next level? Like, what's what's on your mind for that?

AMARJEET SAINI: I have more and now I'm laughing is more a more I'm getting a feeling. I think the after having this conversation I'm realizing I think you realized it much earlier, but whatever I've done is possibly not even executive coach program. And maybe I think your interview purpose also possibly I have failed.

M: No, no, you know I. Mean those ones that you've done through Z. Sort of more or less do fall in that category, but it's just these kind of courses could be done, you know, at any level like and the kind of things also that you spoke about. Now whether those learnings, they are applicable to me

also you also and of course to a person who is much more senior to both of us as well. I get that. But you know more in terms of maybe succession planning or, you know those kind of things, if you know, are, are they on your mind? Like, do you wanna take up courses like that or have you already done something like that? So I want to understand from that point of view.

AMARJEET SAINI: I definitely have not done that, as is evident and I think then maybe my understanding, but I have not come across such courses. The one which you are talking about, you know grooming for the next level I have I haven't come across and if there will be then I will. It will open up my mind then. I will be interested in that. But I haven't seen courses which are about.

M: And how if? If there are courses like that to be design. Again, you know like. For a course like that, how much you think would be a good fee to be charged for that and you know, would it be like, do you think it should be like a hourly thing designed you think it should be maybe a day like, you know, throughout the day you have a plan for the entire day kind of a thing or it should be spread across like a couple of weeks. Like what's on your mind and you know how how do you envisage this to be?

AMARJEET SAINI: Ah, definitely not crunched in a day. One of the that I have learned from whatever these workshops have done is that, like I said, that first of all, you know, learning is something which happens by listening and reflecting. And then again some perspective develops. And again listening and then reflecting. So in a day what happens, it just becomes a one way traffic. You just, yeah. Hearing, hearing, hearing, but nothing is actually sinking in, so it should be spread over. Is definitely and in terms of how much I would be willing to pay. So anywhere between a lakh to 2,00,000 is what I would be willing to pay if there is a course which is telling me how to be a CEO, how to be a CXO how to make it to the top level in media sector I would definitely. I haven't come across like that. I would be willing to pay. Because that's an investment I will be doing. Because that is where I want to go. So and if it is, it's also flashing that it in this course like just in the in ISB the the best part was they had professors who take some classes. Then they have the guy who is currently the head of marketing of Amazon. He takes 2 classes, right? And his session was the highest attended session in my this thing because when he talks there is a level of difference between the professor and him because he's practical. He is in the in the marketing arena, digital marketing arena right now, right here. So he's was telling us that what of this knowledge is theoretical and will not be useful in. The day to day working. And what will be this thing, right? They got one who was, who was the CTO of Bajaj Finance or somebody. So they were practical people. They were very hard-hitting people. So if let's say there is an executive coaching program like this that also brings in some people who are at that level or who have done that journey, it is worth it. Saying that much because you get to interact with those people, you get to learn from those people. So I would be very happy to pay a high sum also provided that it is very clearly communicated what it will be imparting me. Yeah, yeah, it is very necessary because more and more the competition is tough. And so if there is something which can equip you, why not? That's an investment I would be willing to.

M: Yeah, sure. I think that's that from my end. Prachi, do you have any questions before we close?

M2: Yes, I just have few questions. So first one is you had mentioned about the Academy. Am I audible? Yeah. Yeah. Yes. So I just wanted to know, how do you come to know about such programs? And does your talent management team get back to you or they do they take your feedback and then they approach you with?

AMARJEET SAINI: No. So there are 2-3 ways. One is that there is a constant communication by HR on the upcoming programs then to a specific level they reach out with a program calendar for that

particular level, right. And then they there is a, there is a software where you are supposed to go and enroll yourself in the program because there are limited.

M2: OK. OK.

AMARJEET SAINI: It's not. Everybody gets it. So you first come first serve basis. And the other thing is that zeecadmy portal itself has pop-ups. So whenever because all of this is tied to this, there is a zeecadmy portal portal where all the courses, workshops, you know, everything is over their books are there. You can read management books over there. All those things. So it that also has pop-ups which are called smart card. So because I visit zeecadmy portal very often so I keep getting smart card that like it. I think the algorithm keeps tracking my area of interest so it keeps sending me smart card saying that this particular course is now available or this particular you know. So and so 's master class is going to happen on so and so day interested to attend please. Click here so. These 3 ways we keep.

M2: My second question is you mentioned about you have you know attended one course at ISB, so that that was educational institute which had such kind of programs. But would you you know go for a program which has you know organized by a specific? Coaching organization, would you opt for or a program from those organizations?

AMARJEET SAINI: Provided I am provided, I'm given confidence of their credential. That's very important because nowadays there are lot of people who offer these you know, these kind of programs in the market and I do keep looking for, you know, attending certain programs, but there were a couple of sessions I went to. There was one in here in Borivali, there is one session happened on. It was on, I think it was a negotiation in something and they so some message came or something, I don't know how I reached out to them so I attended and I paid they charged some 1500 or something. It was so bad, but love, I realized that those organizations are shy. They're just making money. They're just, like, got somebody. And you know this thing. So. And then today it is very difficult to figure out that see because when you're spending about a lakh 2,00,000 for 3,00,000 in a program. It's it's very important to know that 2-3 things one that this.

M2: I think we lost you, Amir.

AMARJEET SAINI: Sorry at what part?

M2: Since beginning only just few. Hello. Yeah. Am I audible?

AMARJEET SAINI: Oh, sorry. I'm so sorry, I'll repeat myself.

M2: Yes, yes. Could you please?

AMARJEET SAINI: I was. Yes, but yeah, there's some connectivity issue I think.

M2: Yeah, we can hear you now.

AMARJEET SAINI: Yeah, you. Can hear me? Yes, yes. So I think that I would be interested, but provided I can verify the credentials of that organization. Because there are a lot of companies which come up with, you know, programs these days and it has become like a business now. And so one does not. You know that if you will go, if you will pay and go for this workshop, they actually become most of the sessions become a networking. Enough. They're not literally sessions. They are like people are just enrolling because they will get to meet some other business-people and they will be able to send their series kind of a thing. I'm not interested in that. I'm honestly interested in a coaching program properly, so it should be able to first. I need credibility of the organization, then

the people who are taking classes or sessions in that, who are they, what have they done? Where have they come from? That needs to be very, very clear and 3rd it needs to have some kind of a branding method. It needs to include like some endorsements. Let's say you know, Sundar Pichai is recommending this executive program. I'm just saying, but somebody in the Indian business sector is saying that I have done this. And you know, this is credible. You should do it. So that gives confidence so that is required.

M2: OK. OK, understood. Thank you. Vishalakshi do you have anything to add on?

M: No, I'm good. Thank you so much and thank you, Amar Have a good day. Bye. Bye Thanks.