

The Growth Prescription, a podcast for healthcare sales professionals
Episode 11: A leadership journey from promise to purpose

Masami Cookson: Welcome to Fearless Thinkers, the BTS podcast. My name is Masami Cookson, and our host is Rick Cheatham, head of marketing at BTS.

On today's show, Rick sits down with Ravi Bhusate. Ravi is a partner and Global Head of Purposeful Leadership at BTS. He brings 30 years of experience designing and delivering leadership solutions for companies across industries ranging from technology to financial services, mining and pharmaceuticals. Ravi advocates for an approach to leadership development comprised of three building blocks: strengths, values, and life experiences.

Hey Rick, how are you doing today?

Rick Cheatham: I am doing really, really well. I am ready for the transition into fall. Summer's great, but getting back into a little bit more routine and a little less chaos is also a fun, fun moment, at least for me.

Masami: Absolutely. My, uh, my favorite season is fall and I can't wait for sweaters and hot apple cider and pumpkin flavored everything.

Rick: Pumpkin flavored, everything is, is somewhat terrifying to me. But that's okay.

Well hey, today we've got Ravi, who is just such a kind person that... You almost feel it the second he starts talking. There's a reason why he is focused on leading with purpose. It's a really, really nice conversation today. That was for me personally inspiring.

Masami: I'm excited to hear more of what you guys talked about. Let's do it.

Hey, Ravi, welcome to the show. I'm curious, what's been going on in your world?

Ravi Bhusate: Oh, quite a lot. So, my oldest daughter got married last October, and I was actually Steve Martin, father of the bride, at the wedding. And today they announced that they've had their visa granted, and

so they'll be moving to Virginia and USA in September with their jobs.

Second big thing that's happened is I turned 60 in March of this year. And to mark this moment, I established a new role centered around my passion around purposeful leadership.

And the reason behind that was really 'cause of the demand for purposeful leadership because it's rising with the next generation of leaders who are really purposeful in what they do. And also employees are now starting to question the type of organizations they wanna be associated with and not associated with.

Rick:

First of all, my friend, congratulations for what must be some very good living on your part because you've got seven years on me and look much younger than I. First and foremost, congratulations there.

Big changes in the family are always exciting, but I also am excited to hear more in our audience. I'm sure we'll be very interested in where your focus is today.

I want to know more about what you mean by purposeful leadership. But before we do that, I know that you had quite a journey in getting here in the first place, so I think it might be good for our audience to hear a little bit about your background or your story before we start getting into the meat of the conversation.

Ravi:

Let me take you back to my childhood. The first seven years of my life were wonderful, part of a warm, loving family. Shortly after my eighth birthday, my mother was taken ill to hospital and I couldn't bear to be separated from her, so I visited her every weekend to keep her company holding her hands. I remember a few months in I visited her and she was different.

She was silent, stared at me and smiled like mothers do, and then what seemed like an eternity. She said, I want you to make me a promise when you grow up. Promise me you'll always be like this. I was totally confused. What was she asking? So I pretended to understand. Nodded, smiled, squeezed her hand tightly.

Shortly before my next birthday, my mother passed away and it was as if a dark cloud came over me. I really struggled, especially at school. I was the child, Rick, that you'll probably remember the loner. No friends. My teachers were really concerned about me. I wasn't developing. So to compensate, they held me back a year thinking that would help.

Instead, it had the opposite effect. I was now in the same year as my younger sister. I felt so embarrassed and ashamed. I withdrew even further. I left school with no qualifications, no job, really low self-esteem. I think I hit rock bottom, but the one thing that kept me going. Was the promise I made to my mother.

I wasn't going to break that promise, and that promise proved to be my guiding light. It propelled me forward. I succeeded in getting a PhD in chemistry from Imperial College. I pursued a career in consulting to make a big impact in this world. However, I struggled to find a genuine consulting firm. I navigated 17 years in the wilderness.

Transitioning through nine consulting firms, changing jobs frequently just to survive. I took a significant step towards fulfilling my promise when I joined BTS on Monday, 11th January, 2010. It's etched in my mind. In BTS I found a sense of belonging, acceptance, and appreciation. For my authentic self, and that's how I ended up here.

Rick:

If you wouldn't mind going a little bit deeper into what is purposeful leadership even mean to you?

Ravi:

In joining BTS, I recognized I had a really strong connection between BTS's purpose and my own, which is around empowering others on their path to leadership, as my leadership purpose aligned with the organization's purpose, this created an energy and enthusiasm within me. It was like a surge fueling, a desire to produce something significant.

The outcome was to create a multimillion-dollar global leadership practice. My passion for purposeful leadership fueled me even further to create something meaningful. And that's where I created Leadership Signature, a powerful approach to

uncover and align individual's purpose with the organization's purpose.

Rick:

If I'm understanding you correctly, it really comes down to how do my values and my purpose even align with the organization's purpose and. How when those things are aligned, I could do exponentially more correct spot on the quest to engage and align employees with the overarching purpose.

Ravi:

Many organizations often turn to conventional approaches. However, purposeful leadership happens through self-discovery, not through teaching models or lectures.

What sets leadership signature apart is its simplicity. It's rooted in the principles of discovery based learning. This methodology revolves around three interconnected building blocks: your own personal strengths, your own personal values, and your the life experiences that you've had anchored by the business purpose and strategy.

Rick:

Could you maybe give us an example of what that looks like in action?

Ravi:

My leadership signature is true friend catalyst for polishing pearls to shine. When I recognized that this was my leadership signature, one of the first things I started to do was, how can I aim this within the organization? And that's often what leaders do in discovering their true purpose for leadership, and it's around where do they want to aim that gift to create the biggest impact.

Rick:

It sounds to me, obviously a uniquely personal experience, but we all know that organizations are systems of individuals. I understand what my unique leadership signature is, how does that play with other leaders and potentially in the way that I interact with my team... Once you've discovered your leadership purpose, you also discover your peer's leadership signature.

Ravi:

It's often done with a small, close-knit team that help you really hone in and sharpen what is your leadership signature. It is so unique to you. It has to be built from your strengths, your values, your

life, and as they hear stories. About your personal strengths, your values, where they align, where they don't align with the organization, the life experiences that you share, they're able to pinpoint.

Exactly which strengths and which values were present during those pivotal moments that shaped you as a leader. Often you find a bridge from where you are as a leader to connect to parts of the organizational strategy, vision, and purpose that you feel that you can accelerate.

Rick:

We saw organizations through the pandemic really begin to focus on the wellbeing of their people. Probably more than we ever have before, given the macroeconomic conditions. A lot of organizations are bouncing back in the other direction.

When I think about leadership signature and how organizations are constantly evolving – how does that play out potentially as the organization's culture or priorities shift with the current environment?

Ravi:

If you think about effective leadership, it, it extends beyond just financial success or just doing a job for, or the monthly paycheck. And that's the realization that most leaders don't have, is that they actually have the resources within them. To shape their future. Often, leaders get stuck in a vacuum and they see all the changes that are happening around them, and they feel isolated around doing anything about it.

Rick:

Gosh, Ravi, that feels like such a tremendous gift to give to someone early in their career, because I know so many leaders that get closer to the stage of life that we're in, frankly, and they look around and say, "What am I leaving behind? What is my legacy?" That's where the demand is coming from. From the next generation of leaders, they have a cause. However, the majority unfortunately have been led or are being led by old-fashioned leaders who are stuck in their way and determined to deliver just financial outcomes.

Both of us being part of a consulting firm, we tend to have many new junior consultants coming through, and we see so many people minimizing those values in

those younger and career folks and not realizing that it is not only a missed opportunity and maintaining talent, but also in building a sustainably growing business.

Ravi:

In response to that, Rick, purposeful leadership isn't something nice to have. It should be part of how a business runs itself. If you think about the next generation, they're not gonna stick around for too long if they start to see that decisions are being made that are purely financially driven. And it's not having a positive impact on society and the world at large.

Think about, "What is my purpose as a leader, and the difference that I want to make within this business, but also outside of this business?" The power of going through this process... It's not just something that I do with clients, it's something I've done within BTS. And there're many colleagues in BTSs who have been through this process, and many of them are from our Strategic Alignment/Business Acumen part of the business. And having gone through this process, it helps them to understand their leadership footprint and the difference that they want to make in this world.

Rick:

I actually get the concept of the power of doing this within my organization and with the cohort. I think there's enormous amounts of brain science out there that says people don't necessarily shift their core beliefs unless they're able to have conversation about it.

That said, there's probably [much] opportunity for individuals to begin this journey, potentially even on their own. What would you want to leave our listeners with? What's the key takeaway for them today?

Ravi:

I think that they are three key takeaways. The first one I would say is: **imagine a world of authentic, inspired leaders**, with unwavering purpose driving business and societal outcomes. This is possible for everyone to take their leadership to a legendary height; to leave a lasting legacy. I would say **embrace your leadership signature**. It's unique to

you. It is your gift to the world to make a difference. **Don't wait. Start now.**

Rick:

That is an awesome call to action, my friend. It is always such a pleasure getting to spend time with you, so thank you.

Ravi:

Thank you, Rick. Bless you.

Masami:

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