

Focus on the Journey, Not the Destination

SELECTING THE FINAL LIST The high profile 10-member jury looked for diverse attributes including ambition, grit and humility in the candidates



SANJIV PURI
MANAGING DIRECTOR, ITC

CEO Take

According to Puri, all the candidates demonstrated good leadership qualities. They were energetic and committed. "They were all winners in their own right. It was selecting the best from the best," he said.

Clarity, Passion and Energy to Execute

How He Picked Them

"I was looking for a person with deep clarity of value proposition, a strategic mindset, abundant passion, boundless energy to execute and continuously learn from their experiences," said Puri. "They should be able to derive unique insights from their experiences, be self-starters and should be able to mobilise and energise their stakeholders." Puri's questions also explored how aware the individual was of herself and the world around her.

Candidate Take

"The interview was really intense but made me introspect. He expects you to know the gaps in the business you're in and not leave it to a subject matter expert."

GUNJOT SINGH, GENERAL MANAGER, SUGAR AND SPICES, METRO CASH & CARRY INDIA

"One big takeaway for me was when, in the end, I asked him what he was still chasing. He said the journey never stops, and that you need to keep bringing value to yourself and the people around you and not just be a designation."

NEERAJ MEHLA, ASSISTANT MANAGER, DELOITTE



KALPANA MORPARIA
CEO, JP MORGAN, SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

CEO Take

Morparia felt that the quality of candidates was very good. She liked the passion they exhibited and the benefits they outlined in terms of what they got out of the ETVL exercise. "Everyone had their unique pluses and some challenges but learnt something out of it," she said.

Fun Moment

When Morparia asked one candidate whether he was married, he said he wasn't. "That's one regret I have about B-school-25 couples got engaged or married, and I didn't manage to achieve anything on that front," he said.

Identifying with Company Purpose; Career Evolution

How She Picked Them

"I was primarily looking at their evolution so far, how they see their contribution to society at large, how they identify with the purpose of the companies they are currently working for," said Morparia. These are future leaders who can have a very significant impact on the country, she felt. "I was looking at their dreams and aspirations and their record so far in terms of how they are looking at a larger purpose of being in a commercial enterprise," she said.

Candidate Take

"The interview went very smoothly. One tends to be a bit nervous when talking to a top CEO, but with her, it felt more like a conversation than an interview. Not only is she a very patient listener but it felt like she was trying to know me as a person and understand my journey and why I had taken the decisions I had."

NEHA DHANUKA, SHOPPER MARKETING MANAGER, MARICO



VINEET NAYAR
FOUNDER-CHAIRMAN, SAMPARK FOUNDATION

CEO Take

Nayar was highly impressed with the selection of candidates this year. He felt that the quality had risen 10-fold from last year. In his opinion, all the candidates were superb. "It is difficult to leave out any from the shortlist of candidates. All deserve to be selected for the next round," he said.

Ability to Handle Stress; Think on Their Feet

How He Picked Them

Nayar tested all the candidates using the pressure or stress interview tactic. He jumped swiftly from one topic to another. This was done to make the candidates think on their feet. At the same time, he was considerate enough to give them another chance after a few minutes. Almost all the candidates got a second chance. It was in phase two of the interview that each of the candidates emerged stronger. "I wanted to see whether any of them would give in to the pressure but all took it well," he said.

Candidate Take

"It was a very different experience from the interviews I have had so far. It was a stress test and he jumped topics very quickly. He answered my questions about leadership, and asked me what my long-term goals were. One of the major takeaways for me was to pick my battles. I will lose 90% of them, but I need to be careful and choose the 10% I want to win."

NEHA JAIN, ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT, CORPORATE BANKING, AXIS BANK

Fun Moment

When a candidate said that she was here for the experience of meeting Nayar, he quipped, "So should I give you advice or take the interview for the next 15 minutes?" The candidate was quick to come back with: "Please take the interview for ten minutes and give me advice for the next five minutes."

SCROLL OF HONOUR ET YOUNG LEADERS

Aanchal Pundeer Paytm	Marshal Sonavane Arvind Ltd	Shreya Modi Idea Cellular
Abhinav Narula MakeMyTrip	Molshree Shrivastava Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas	Shruti Prakash Cloudfair
Abhishek Mishra ClearTax	Monica Jaiswal BPCL	Shubhang Agrawal Aon Hewitt
Akhil Dave Cipla	Murtuza Kothari McKinsey & Co	Siddharth Jain ICICI Bank
Amit Singh Standard Chartered Bank	Naveen Murali Asian Paints	Sidharth Srinivasan Tata UniStore
Ankita Agarwal Nestle India	Neha Dhanuka Marico	Sirsanath Banerjee Tata Cleantech Capital
Anvesha Poswalia Asian Paints	Neha Jain Axis Bank	Sourja Chattopadhyay Dr Reddy's Laboratories
Badal Choudhary Marico	Nikita Barmecha Airtel	Steffina Lincy Reliance Industries
Conni Shaah Bajaj Finance Ltd	Pratyush Raj Castrol India	Swetha Jayshankar Citibank
Darshit Jaju Aditya Birla Group	Rasika Makdey Nestle India	Tanu Sood Goodera
Devesh Jerath Nestle India	Rohit Matta Dabur	Tanvi Swami Kellogg India
Dheeraj Arora Nestle India	Sayan Das Aditya Birla Group	Tarun Chadha Citibank
Dhruv Kumar Myra	Seetha Rajagopalan Eaton	Ujwal Kalra Boston Consulting Group
Jagriti Bhadra Carlsberg	Shankar Ananth McKinsey & Co	Vibhu Goenka EXL Analytics
Keshav Jain Barclays	Shelly Mehan Vodafone India	Vichitra Kumar Mahindra & Mahindra
	Shikha Gupta ICICI Bank	

METHODOLOGY

How the Process Unfolded

Corporate executives aged 26-32 were eligible for participation in the ET Young Leaders programme. The sixth edition of the programme saw nearly 23,000 working professionals competing for a spot in the coveted ranking of India's future leaders. This included significant corporate participation with 241 companies nominating more than 2,800 candidates. The four-part assessment was conducted in partnership with SHL, global leader in talent innovation. Candidates were evaluated by a panel of 10 CEOs. Phase one consisted of an online personality-based evaluation of the candidates. In phase two, shortlisted candidates were put through a series of tests: an analytical test, a verbal ability test and a personality assessment. The online assessment was followed by an on-ground assessment, for which candidates were evaluated on group tasks, role plays and the like. Participants who qualified proceeded to the final stage of the programme. Only 95 men and women – the best of the best – made it to phase four where each was interviewed by one among ET's panel of 10 top CEOs. The final Young Leaders list of 46 was picked by this CEO panel.



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REPORTING BY: Anjali Venugopalan, Prachi Verma Dadhwal, Rica Bhattacharyya and Sreeradha D Basu



HARSH MARIWALA
CHAIRMAN, MARICO

Wholesome Personality; Self-awareness

How He Picked Them
He looked for candidates with a wholesome personality, who not only had an in-depth understanding of their domain but were also clued into the overall macro economy, business environment and political developments. "I was looking for a mix of overall personality, communication skills, determination and ambition."

CEO Take
Mariwala was impressed by their conscious knowledge about themselves and insights they had gathered from their experiences. He was impressed by their potential for leadership and the clarity some of them displayed at a rather early stage in their career.

Fun Moment

One of the candidates who was from an FMCG company carried some of her company's products which she placed in front of Mariwala on his table to explain to him the kind of innovation she had introduced in her company.

Candidate Take

"I was amazed at his humility and his genuine love for coaching. He gave me some solid career advice on what things to consider while growing in a role. It felt less like an interview, and more like a conversation with a coach. At the end of our conversation, he very graciously gifted me a management book for my reading list."

TANVI SWAMI, SENIOR MANAGER, MARKETING, KELLOGG INDIA



SANJIV MEHTA
CHAIRMAN, HINDUSTAN UNILEVER

CEO Take

"Some candidates were very self-aware. Some were very good in their area of operation and the role of technology in the world of business," said Mehta. His view of the young leaders was that they were grounded and keen learners. The CEO, who asked them about the Hardik Pandya-KL Rahul controversy, among other questions, wanted to understand their sensitisation about gender.

Ambition Laced with Humility; Awareness beyond Domain

How He Picked Them

"I looked for the purpose of the candidate, the value that they bring and their track record." He looked for the skills and capabilities the candidates possess to demonstrate leadership.

Candidate Take

"Sanjiv Mehta was warm and welcoming but very incisive at the same time. The 30 minutes spent with him were a mixed bag of nervousness, calmness, excitement and raw inspiration. He made it a point to make me comfortable but also coaxed me to ideate beyond the obvious, leaving me with a smile full of confidence at the end."

TARUN CHADHA, VICE-PRESIDENT, CITIBANK

Fun Moment

One of the candidates wanted to get a picture clicked with Mehta so that he could go back and show his friends.



SHYAM SRINIVASAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BANK

CEO Take

"Some of the candidates displayed extraordinary desire to be impactful. Therefore, they are wiring their lives to reach that objective," was Srinivasan's impression about the young leaders. Srinivasan, who questioned the young bunch of men and women on what they learn from more – success or failure – said the ability to sustain the energy has to be at the forefront of their thinking process. He also asked them what the ET Young Leader felicitation would mean to them 10 years down the line.

Fun Moment

A candidate wanted a selfie with Srinivasan and he obliged.

Desire to Impact; Learning from Failure

How He Picked Them

Srinivasan was trying to understand if the candidates demonstrated the deep desire to be impactful, were willing to back their desire and make their aspirations come true.

Candidate Take

"He encouraged me to ask questions and put forth my thoughts, thereby graciously allowing me to lead the conversation. He shared his own experiential learnings and explained his leadership style. He had a very comforting and welcoming demeanour, which enabled me to be both curious and expressive."

SHELLY MEHAN, DIGITAL PRODUCT MANAGER, VODAFONE INDIA

"Mr Srinivasan is a charismatic leader who possesses the unique ability to inspire futuristic views on the bedrock of ground realities. Creative thinking and constant innovation are values that Mr. Srinivasan believes are hallmark of a good leader. He exudes a burst of youthful energy and his witty analogies to cricket are a treat to hear."

SIRSANATH BANERJEE, ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT, TATA CLEANTECH CAPITAL



FALGUNI NAYAR
FOUNDER, NYKAA.COM

CEO Take

"Most have superb clarity about their job and their role. Some have entrepreneurial ambition, while some want to rise within a more structured corporate environment," said the former banker, who was impressed by the coherence and clearness in understanding of the youngsters.

Clarity of Thought; Potential to Excel

How She Picked Them

Nayar was looking for people who are ready to invest in themselves and in their future. "I don't want ultimate ambition from Day One but some ambition and a whole lot of clarity in what one is doing. I wanted to know if in their own field they have the potential to excel and be very good."

Candidate Take

"Falguni's warm conversational style instantly made me feel comfortable. We had an interesting discussion on current industry trends and my future career plans. Her insightful answers to my questions and parting advice of being passionate and committed to whatever we choose to do, will stay with me for life!"

SWETHA JAYSHANKAR, ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT, CITIBANK

Fun Moment

A candidate told Nayar that some of her friends and colleagues in office were really excited when they came to know that she was meeting the Nykaa boss and had told her to get a few product samples and sachets. Nayar actually picked up some product samples kept on display in her corner office and gifted these to the candidate.