

## **Amazing People – Shraddha Chaplot – February 2015 (TRT 5:01)**

My name is Shraddha Chaplot, and I am a greengineer at Cisco.

I've actually been given this amazing opportunity to be in a six-month rotation program in the Services Innovation Excellence Center. Basically, what this team does is enable innovation for our Services organization.

The Cisco University and Innovation Program is about getting Cisco individual contributors who are idea owners and submit ideas in our Smart Zone platform to work with university professors and students on their project.

And what this does is it enables people to be innovators who would necessarily *not* think they'd be able to be innovators because they're provided with resources, funding, and just someone who really believes in their idea.

*Music*

The fact is you can make something as important or as valuable as you want it to be as long as you believe in it, and that's what I do.

I'm an engineering innovator. I'm a process innovator. I'm an innovator of anything that I feel can be changed for the better, that can empower people and enable people, that can help people in their lives, that can solve problems, anything that's small to anything that can change the entire world.

The power to be an innovator comes from the fact that you want to make a change. If you feel strongly about making a difference, you will become an innovator. So just be very passionate about what—I mean whenever people look at me or listen to me or talk to me, they all get the sense of, "Wow, she's really passionate about what she's talking about," and that's something that I hope that they carry on, as well.

Find whatever it is you're passionate about and see what you want to change, see what you want to improve, see what new technology you want to build around it, and go for it.

*Music*

On one of my walls, I had built this huge mind map, and it was about 24 pieces of big pieces of paper, and I had it up for months, and I never drew anything on it or wrote anything on it because I wanted it to be perfect. I wanted that perfect opportunity. And one day I went right to the center, and in red ink I wrote, "Start." And that was something that really resonated with me because unless you start, unless you get something down on paper, unless you get a conversation going, you will never start.

*Music*

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You are definitely going to piss people off when you are taking challenges, when you are making your own opportunities, but that is part of being innovative. You must expect that people are going to get upset. And just remember, the more people that get upset, the better your idea is or the more promising your idea can be.

I always have this phrase that I say... which is, “If you’ve got no haters, you’re not working hard enough.” You want to make sure that you’re causing change, that you’re enabling change because what you’re doing could go and impact somebody else who has been afraid to be innovative.

### *Music*

Innovation is for everyone. There’s no age range. There is no generation. There is no expertise level. There’s just this desire to want to make a difference and to really challenge yourself, and that’s what you need to do.

I actually think that—going through this generational thing, because I’m at the cusp of a millennial, right? I’m 30 years old. I always say that I’m Cisco’s older sister because I was born three months before Cisco, in 1984—but I think it doesn’t matter whether you are of the traditionalist generation, the baby boomer generation, generation X, Y, whatever it is. I think it is the person because I have definitely met people who are in my generation, and if I didn’t know their age, I would think that they had very traditionalist values. I look at people and I’ve worked with people who have been at Cisco for 15 years, who’ve been in the industry for 30 years, and they are just waiting. They’re just waiting to be given the opportunity to be that person they were when they were 25 years old, to be innovative, to be creative.

But what everyone should really see is that we are enabled and empowered to make our own path. We have all the resources that we could possibly need, whether it’s people to learn from, people to meet, whether it’s different business units and products, whether it’s training... And the fact that we’re doing IoE, which just basically encompasses every possible thing you could think of from healthcare to sports to technology, that just means that we’re enabled to do anything that we want to and learn anything that we want to.

### *Music*

Revolution. Before Facebook, I was actually on MySpace, and there was a tagline on there, and my tagline right next to my photo was, “Start a revolution.” And ever since then, actually even before then, I think it’s been within me to start some sort of a revolution.

And you hear all these words that people say all the time, but I think it’s really important here for us at Cisco to start a revolution where we really value people, we value their expertise, we value their ability and potential to learn, and we really value the fact that we can have fun.

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Whatever you think it is, whether it's technically, whether it's process, whether it's in marketing, it's just the people that you meet. There is an opportunity to start a revolution, so I dare you to do it.

I'm Shraddha Chaplot, and I'm a Cisco builder!