

Associate Director — Technical Support

Presentation Talking Points

Madhi Indran | Razorpay Case Study | 2026

SLIDE 1 — OPENING

“Saurabh, thank you for the time today. Before I dive in, I want to say this — I’ve spent the last week living inside this case, and the more I studied it, the more I recognised it. Not because it’s generic, but because scaling a high-trust operational team through a growth inflection point is something I’ve done. The details are different. The leadership challenge is the same.

What I’ll share today isn’t a theoretical framework. It’s how I would actually run this — the sequencing, the trade-offs, the things I’d do on Day 1 versus Day 90, and the things I’d deliberately not do yet. Thirty minutes isn’t long, so I’ll be direct. Let’s get into it.”

SLIDE 2 — ASSUMPTIONS

“I want to start with assumptions because this is where most plans fail — not in execution, but in the gap between what was assumed and what was true.

I’ve listed eighteen assumptions. Let me call out the three that are load-bearing for this entire plan.

First, budget for 8 to 10 in-house hires. I want to be clear — this isn’t headcount expansion. The vendor is currently costing us quality, repeat contacts, and CSAT. In-sourcing is a reallocation, not an addition. The business case closes itself.

Second, engineering partnership on diagnostic tool access. If agents can’t see traces, webhooks, and logs — they will keep escalating. Not because they lack skill, but because they lack visibility. Closing that gap is the single highest-leverage action I can take to bring escalations from 30% to 12%. That conversation happens in my first week.

Third, leadership support for structural change. Moving from flat to tiered isn’t a support team decision — it’s a company decision. I need HR and leadership as co-designers, not just

approvers. If that alignment isn't there, the tier model fails before it starts.

These aren't excuses built in advance. They're the conversations I'll walk into on Day 1 with full ownership."

SLIDE 3 — CONTEXT

"Let me frame the situation quickly, because I want to spend most of our time on solutions.

You have a 65-person team that grew from 25 people in 18 months. That's 2.6x growth in under two years. The team has held together — that speaks to the quality of the people and the leadership that built it. But fast growth without structural investment always creates the same pattern: institutional knowledge concentrated in a few people, processes that worked at 25 that are buckling at 65, and metrics that look acceptable on average but mask dangerous variance underneath.

88% SLA sounds reasonable until you realise it's 94% during business hours and 72% on evenings and weekends. Merchants don't experience your average — they experience the moment they submit their ticket. If that's a Saturday night and a payment is failing, 72% is the number that matters.

The good news: the foundations are real. Strong payments knowledge, senior agents who are genuinely trusted by merchants, a team that has scaled without breaking. My job isn't to rebuild — it's to architect the next phase. Structure for scale. Governance for predictability. And a team that can absorb 2x merchant growth without 2x the chaos."

SLIDE 4 — PHILOSOPHY

"Before I get into execution, I want to share the four principles that will govern every decision I make in this role — because strategy without philosophy is just a list of actions.

First, operational rigor. Predictability is not a target — it's the operating rhythm. When governance is working, SLA consistency stops being something you chase and becomes something you maintain.

Second, proactive operations. During a payment degradation event, merchants should hear from us before they flood us with tickets. The 300-ticket surge described in the case — that's not a volume problem, that's a communication problem. Trust is built at the highest-leverage moment, which is when things go wrong.

Third, scalable structure. A flat team works beautifully at 15 people. At 65, heading to 130,

flat structures create bottlenecks, burnout, and invisible single points of failure. Structure isn't bureaucracy — it's the architecture that makes scale possible.

Fourth, merchant-centricity. An enterprise merchant processing crores of transactions daily and a startup that went live last week have fundamentally different support needs. One queue serves neither of them well.

These aren't support-specific principles. This is how I think about building any operational function at scale."

SLIDE 5 — LEADERSHIP

"At this level, my leverage is not in doing — it's in enabling others to do. I want to be direct about how I lead, because it shapes everything about how this transformation will actually happen.

At PayPal, I inherited a team where most decisions escalated to me. Within six months I had pushed decision rights down to my leads, reduced my own involvement in day-to-day operations by more than half, and the team's output and satisfaction both improved. That's not a coincidence — that's what happens when people are given real authority, not just responsibility.

In this role: my Sr Manager owns the operation. Shift accountability, vendor oversight, capacity planning — that's theirs to run. My leads own escalation review, knowledge curation, and coaching. I set direction, remove blockers, and verify outcomes — not methods.

The test I use: if I'm unavailable for a week, does the operation run? If the answer is no, I've failed as a leader. My goal is to make myself the least critical person in the room for day-to-day execution — so I can focus on the things only I can do: strategy, stakeholder alignment, and building what comes next.

Micromanagement kills ownership. And ownership is the only thing that scales."

SLIDE 6 — AREA A: EXECUTION EXCELLENCE, SLA GOVERNANCE & QUALITY

"Area A is about one thing: making performance predictable. Not good on average — consistent across every shift, every load condition, every product launch window.

On SLA — the problem isn't speed, it's variance. A 22-point swing between peak hours and

weekends is not an SLA problem, it's a staffing and visibility problem. I'm putting a real-time command centre in place with alerts that fire at 80% threshold — we act before SLA is missed, not after. Shift optimisation moves 6 to 8 agents to evening and weekend coverage based on actual ticket volume data, not historical assumptions. We staff to demand.

On quality — today quality is measured after the fact. I want it to predict CSAT and FCR before they degrade. Mandatory ticket categorisation at creation. A response quality rubric that defines what good looks like — accuracy, empathy, resolution confirmation — not just speed. Five audits per agent per week with bi-weekly calibration sessions so quality feedback is consistent, not ad hoc. Quality is upstream of everything. FCR, CSAT, escalations — they're all downstream of response quality. Invest here and you get compounding returns across every metric.

On FCR — 52% is the bottleneck. The path to 72% is three phases. Months one to three: diagnostic tools deployed, knowledge base at 100% product coverage — it's at 60% today. Months four to six: agents trained on payment traces, webhook logs, API debugging — the same access engineering has. Months seven to twelve: AI-assisted routing and predictive issue detection. Every FCR point reduces repeat contacts, escalations, and engineering load. It's a force multiplier.

On the vendor — this is the tough call, and I've thought about it carefully. A 12-point CSAT gap and double the repeat contacts isn't a vendor performance problem — it's a structural problem. You can't train culture into a third party at this level of criticality. My recommendation is phased in-sourcing. Three months to give them one genuine chance with penalties attached. Months four to six, hire 8 to 10 in-house L1 agents and transition 60% of volume internally. Month six onwards, retain four vendor agents for surge only. This is cost-neutral — repeat contact reduction and improved retention offset the hiring cost. But more importantly, it gives us control over quality, training, and culture. As a Director, vendor decisions are build-versus-buy decisions with long-term consequences. I'm choosing to build."

SLIDE 7 — AREA B: ESCALATION MANAGEMENT, INCIDENT RESPONSE & MERCHANT EXPERIENCE

"Area B is about owning what we can control, communicating before we're asked, and shifting the team's definition of done.

On escalations — 30% going to engineering, but only half truly need it. The other 15% is agents escalating because they can't see what engineering sees, not because they don't know how to debug. The fix is a clear escalation matrix — criteria that are objective, not judgment calls — combined with giving agents the same diagnostic visibility as engineering.

And then tracking escalation reason codes monthly so engineering and support are partners in closing the gaps. Reducing escalations from 30% to 12% frees roughly 150 to 200 hours of engineering capacity per month. That's half an engineer's time back to build product instead of debugging tickets. This is a business impact metric, not just a support metric.

On incident response — the 300-ticket surge before an internal alert reached support tells you everything about the current model. Support is at the end of the information chain when it should be at the beginning. I'm integrating with Success Rate Ops alerts so we know about incidents before merchants do. Auto-created war room within five minutes. Pre-built communication templates ready to customise, not create under pressure. The first message to merchants during an incident is the most important one — it should say we're aware, here's what we know, here's what we're doing, here's when you'll hear from us again. That message builds more trust than a perfect resolution two hours later.

On culture — tickets marked resolved when a response is sent, not when the merchant confirms the issue is fixed. That's a culture problem, not a process problem. Policy won't fix it — coaching, measurement, and recognition will. I'm redesigning the quality rubric to include resolution confirmation as a mandatory field. Automated 48-hour check-ins on complex issues. And I'll personally recognise agents who follow up proactively in team meetings. What gets celebrated gets repeated.

On merchant segmentation — two large managed accounts have flagged support quality during renewal conversations. That's not a support issue, that's a revenue risk. Platinum tier for managed and enterprise: dedicated point of contact, sub-one-hour P0, health score visibility for agents when they open the ticket — they can see immediately that this is a retention-sensitive account. Gold for growth merchants. Standard for self-serve with AI deflection. I'll pilot with the top 50 managed accounts first — especially those two renewal conversations — and validate impact on NPS before full rollout. If we prevent one enterprise churn per quarter, this programme has paid for itself."

SLIDE 8 — AREA C: TEAM STRUCTURE, CAPACITY PLANNING & TALENT MANAGEMENT

"Area C is the one that compounds. Get structure and talent right and everything else becomes easier. Get it wrong and you're rebuilding constantly.

On team structure — today, a password reset query and a complex API integration debugging case compete for the same agent's attention. That's inefficient and demoralising for both the agent and the merchant. L1 handles volume — 30 agents, 70% resolution target, self-service deflection. L2 handles complexity — 25 agents, product specialisation, segment focus. L3 handles the hardest cases and owns knowledge — 10 specialists,

enterprise support, incident management, engineering liaison. Tiering does three things simultaneously: it creates efficiency, it creates career visibility, and it distributes the expertise that's currently concentrated in 4 to 5 people. If one of those senior agents resigns tomorrow, I don't want to feel it. With 10 L3 specialists sharing that knowledge, I won't.

On talent — attrition at 24%, ramp time 3 to 4 months, undefined career paths. These aren't three separate problems — they're one problem. Agents don't see a future here. The fix is a structured 4-week onboarding programme that cuts ramp to 6 to 8 weeks. A career ladder with transparent criteria — not 'when a role opens up' but 'when you hit these milestones.' And the most important retention play: formal mentorship tracks into SRE, Product, and Solutions Engineering. Agents who see a future inside the company — not just in support — are far more committed than those who see a ceiling. I want support to be the most competitive function to join in this company because people know they'll learn faster and have options. That's how you attract ambitious talent and keep them.

On knowledge — the 4 to 5 senior agents holding all complex case knowledge is a Day 1 risk for me. Before I change any process, I'm sitting with each of them, extracting their knowledge into playbooks and KB articles, and beginning rotation programmes. Their expertise needs to become the team's asset, not a personal one. And I'll frame it correctly with them — they become more valuable as coaches and knowledge architects, not less.

On launch readiness — 12 products launched, 4 with structured support readiness. Agents learning about product behaviour from merchant complaints. That stops. T-30 protocol: product spec shared with support 30 days before launch, complexity assessment done. T-15: training delivered, KB articles published. T-7: shadow beta merchants, scenario validation. T-0: war room standby. And this becomes a gate — Product cannot launch without support readiness sign-off. That's a cultural shift from support reacting to launches, to support being a launch partner. I'll position it to the Product team not as a blocker but as protection — poor support at launch damages NPS and merchant trust that takes months to rebuild."

SLIDE 9 — ROADMAP

"The 90-day plan is built on a simple principle: earn credibility before you change anything.

Weeks one to four are entirely about listening and learning. I shadow agents across every shift. I audit 100 tickets personally — not to judge, to understand. I have one-on-ones with every direct report and at least ten agents. I meet Engineering, Product, HR, Success Rate Ops, and the vendor lead. I establish baseline metrics before a single change is made. Because the worst thing a new leader can do is walk in with solutions before they

understand the real problem.

Weeks five to eight: governance goes live. Real-time SLA command centre. Quality audits begin. Escalation matrix published and trained. Pilot the tier model with 20 volunteers. Vendor go or no-go signal based on eight weeks of performance data.

Weeks nine to twelve: pilot and iterate. Merchant segmentation tested with top 50 managed accounts. Onboarding boot camp launched for next hire cohort. Incident response playbook live with the first joint drill with SR Ops.

By Day 90, you should see a measurably different operation — in the numbers, in how the team talks about their work, and in how merchants experience us. The 12-month milestones are progressive: Q1 foundation, Q2 momentum, Q3 scale, Q4 world-class. I'm happy to walk through the quarterly targets in Q&A if useful."

SLIDE 10 — RISKS

"I've stress-tested this plan and I want to be transparent about where it can break.

The highest risk is tier introduction triggering attrition. If agents feel the restructure is being done to them rather than with them, we'll lose the people we most need to keep. Mitigation: HR and compensation are partners before any announcement. Placement criteria are transparent. Every agent has a 90-day review window. Change lands when people feel included in designing it — not when it's presented to them as a decision already made.

Second highest risk: AI and tooling investment gets delayed. My response: the plan doesn't depend on automation to start. Escalation matrix, shift optimisation, ticket hygiene — these are people and process changes that cost almost nothing and deliver immediate impact. Automation accelerates the plan. It doesn't unlock it.

Third: a key-person departure before knowledge is captured. This is a Day 1 priority regardless of everything else. I identify the knowledge holders in week one and begin structured extraction immediately. No single person should be the only source of truth on any product or flow by the end of month two.

Risk management isn't pessimism. It's the discipline that separates leaders who plan from those who react."

SLIDE 11 — CLOSE

"Let me close with this.

The team you have is genuinely good. Strong payments knowledge, merchants who trust your senior agents, and a function that has scaled without breaking. That's not nothing — that's a real foundation.

What's needed now is the architecture for the next phase. Systems that deliver predictability at scale. A structure where knowledge is distributed and careers are visible. A culture where the measure of success is a merchant whose issue is confirmed resolved — not a ticket marked closed.

I've spent ten years at PayPal building and scaling operational teams in payments. I know what a payment failure looks like at 2am from a merchant's perspective. I know what it takes to get engineering and support aligned on escalation criteria. I know how to run a team through a product growth sprint without losing quality or people.

I'm not coming in to fix what's broken. I'm coming in to build what's next.

Three things I commit to: by Day 30, you'll have a baseline and a governance framework. By Day 60, you'll see the metrics moving. By Day 90, you'll have a team that operates differently — and knows why.

That's my case. I'm ready for your questions."

DELIVERY NOTES

- **Print this document** but do not read from it — know it well enough to maintain eye contact with Saurabh for 80% of the presentation
 - **Trust the deck** to carry the detail — your job verbally is to hit the headline of each point, give one piece of evidence, and move
 - **Pause after your close** — let the silence sit for 2 to 3 seconds before inviting questions. It signals confidence
 - **Go slightly off-script** when you feel the energy in the room — react to Saurabh, not just to your notes
 - **Time check:** aim to finish slides in 22 to 25 minutes, leaving natural buffer before Q&A
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ANTICIPATED Q&A — PREPARED ANSWERS

Q: "What's your biggest concern about executing this plan?" *"Honestly — change fatigue. The team has scaled 2.6x in 18 months. They're tired. My biggest risk is introducing*

too much structural change too fast and losing the people I most need to retain. That's why my first 30 days are entirely about listening, not acting. I want the team to feel the change is designed with them, not done to them."

Q: "Two senior agents hand in their notice on Day 1. What do you do?" *"First — have the conversation to understand why. If it's resolvable, I try to resolve it. If it's not, I immediately activate knowledge extraction with whoever remains. I spend a week doing nothing else. Then I start structured shadowing across L2 and L3 agents to identify who has tacit knowledge that hasn't been documented. You can't prevent departures, but you can make the team antifragile to them."*

Q: "Engineering pushes back on giving agents access to traces and logs — security risk. How do you handle it?" *"I frame it as a shared problem, not a support request. I bring data on avoidable escalations — show engineering exactly how many tickets went to them last month that agents could have resolved with read-only diagnostic access. Then I propose a sandboxed solution — agents get read-only log access on a separate environment. I involve their lead in designing the criteria. People support what they help build."*

Q: "Why only 92% SLA in Q1 — that's just 4 points from today. Why so conservative?" *"Because I've seen plans that promise 98% in 90 days and deliver 85%. The governance infrastructure — command centre, shift optimisation, ticket hygiene — takes 4 to 6 weeks to bed in. 92% in Q1 means the systems are live and working. 96% in Q3 means they're mature. 98% in Q4 means they're institutionalised. I'd rather set a credible target and exceed it than overpromise and spend my first year managing expectations downward."*

Q: "You've been at PayPal for 10 years — a large MNC. Why should I believe you can move at startup speed?" *"Fair challenge. PayPal India isn't the same as PayPal US — we operated with startup-level urgency inside a large company. I've run product launches with 2-week runways, managed payment degradation incidents at 2am with incomplete information, and built processes from scratch without a playbook. The difference isn't speed — it's that at a startup, the decisions have no safety net. I'm comfortable with that. And honestly, the governance gaps I've described in this case are exactly the kind of problem I find energising to solve."*

Good luck on Friday, Madhi. Go win the room.