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67th FOUNDATION DAY & 17th NATIONAL MANAGEMENT DAY

Managing The Unprecedented: Harnessing The Uncertainty

Tuesday, 21 February 2023 : Hotel Le Meridien, New Delhi

Souvenir

ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Management House, 14 Institutional Area
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003. India

Tel. : +91 11 2464 5100 / 4312 8100, Fax : +91 11 2460 8503

Website: www.aima.in

67th FOUNDATION DAY & 17th NATIONAL MANAGEMENT DAY

Managing The Unprecedented: Harnessing The Uncertainty

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear AIMA Members

Congratulations on the 67th Foundation Day of All India Management Association (AIMA), which is also the National Management Day, and many thanks for your sustained commitment to the organisation and the cause of building management capability in the nation.

The past year has been one of recovery and change for AIMA, as the Covid pandemic finally retired and the economy reopened fully. However, there was no time to celebrate, as new economic disruption and distress arrived because of international conflicts, inflation spike, monetary policy reversals around the world, radical technological change and a general anxiety about unforeseeable upheavals.

During the past year, AIMA returned to working from office and it resumed physical activities and revived global engagements. In the past few months, nearly all major AIMA events have been physical, including the National Leadership Conclave, Managing India Awards Night, National Management Convention, Annual Convocation, Global Procurement Summit, the Regional Management Conclave (held in collaboration with participating Local Management Associations), as well as the current 67th Foundation Day and 17th National Management Day. In addition, AIMA's hugely popular management and leadership Retreats were also resumed in Goa.

Even as AIMA has resumed and revived its physical programmes, it has continued to enhance and refine its digital capability. The digital infrastructure and expertise acquired during the pandemic is being used to engage with and serve its stakeholders through multiple channels. The digital initiatives in education, testing, events and the internal processes have been consolidated and AIMA is continuing to extract the benefits and flexibility that online solutions offer.

On the international front as well, several initiatives were revived and resumed in their physical avatars. During the past year, AIMA recommenced its US-India Conference in California and organised a CEOs visit to the Silicon Valley after a long, two year Covid induced interruption. The Global Advanced Management Programme (GAMP) in the US was also revived and attracted good participation. AIMA partnered and participated in the Horasis India Meeting in Vietnam and the St Gallen Symposium in Switzerland. AIMA also took a delegation to Dubai Expo where Indian CEOs could interact with their global peers and local policy makers. Soon after the Foundation Day, there will be a CEO visit to another innovation hub of the world, Israel.

This year also saw the completion of AIMA's 3-year presidency of the Asian Association of Management Organisation (AAMO). Unfortunately, due to the travel restrictions in place at the time, all AAMO initiatives

and meetings during AIMA's tenure had to be held online. As the outgoing Secretariat, AIMA also organised the 21st AAMO Triennial Conference online, in which AAMO leaders from India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Macau, Pakistan and Nepal participated.

During the year, AIMA undertook several new initiatives to enlarge its activity portfolio and expand its scope. One of the key new initiatives during the year was the launch of a new Women's Council- AIMA Aspire - with the premise of Strengthening Leadership amongst Women. AIMA has formed a core committee of eminent women leaders from different domains to guide the Women's Council. Dr Preetha Reddy, Past President, AIMA and Executive Vice Chairperson of Apollo Hospitals Enterprise, is Chairing the council and Ms Vinita Bajoria, Chairperson, Nicco Cables, is the Co-Chair. The council recently started its WomenSpeak series - online sessions with exemplary women leaders which have so far been addressed by renowned banker and philanthropy investor, Ms Naina Lal Kidwai; IBM's global leader, Ms Vanitha Narayanan; Delhi Police's Special Commissioner, Ms Sundari Nanda; and India's water warrior bureaucrat, Ms Debashree Mukherjee.

On the learning and education front, over the past year, AIMA has made its education offerings more contemporary and industry centric. A slew of short learning programmes have been introduced to prepare students and executives for the critical new areas of management, such as digital innovation and enterprise transformation, design thinking, sustainability management, cyber security and data privacy. AIMA is now exploring further collaborations with renowned universities for offering contemporary management programmes and also to offer more choices of universities to the management PhD scholars. With an aim to provide more interactive and engaging learning opportunities, AIMA also diversified its Business Simulation offerings with the introduction of online gamification workshops to help management executives hone their learning agility, critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration.

Strengthening its portfolio, AIMA's unique Young Leaders Council (YLC) further consolidated its training efforts through new international linkages. Its recent collaboration with Stanford Seed Spark has enabled several young Indian entrepreneurs to take the online global learning programme for early-stage entrepreneurs. The YLC has also reached out to Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conference, Canada for a 2-week learning programme for its members.

It has been an exciting and rewarding journey so far, only made possible by the unstinting support of the AIMA Council, its members and the Secretariat. As we celebrate AIMA's 67th Foundation Day, it is a time to acknowledge the outstanding guidance and contribution of the organisation's leaders, both present and past. I thank the Past Presidents and the members of AIMA Council for their precious counsel and support in helping AIMA achieve its mandate.

I appreciate that you are a part of the Foundation Day celebration and I look forward to your continued association with AIMA.

Best wishes



Shrinivas V Dempo

President, AIMA

and Chairman, Dempo Group of Companies

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The All India Management Association (AIMA) is the national apex body of the management profession in India. AIMA is a not for profit, non-lobbying organisation, working closely with Industry, Government, Academia and students to further the cause of the management profession in India.

AIMA has a membership base of over 38000 members and close to 6000 corporate /institutional members, through 67 Local Management Associations affiliated to AIMA; and is represented on a number of policy making bodies of the Government of India and national associations.

Established in 1957, AIMA has contributed immensely to the enhancement of management capability in the country over the years. AIMA offers various services in the areas of testing, distance education, skill development & training, research, publications, executive education and management development programmes.

Over the past six decades, AIMA has evolved as times have changed and catered to the growing needs of today's management community. Apart from its flagship Post Graduate Diploma in management, AIMA offers topical and industry-oriented programmes and initiatives to help management professionals and students keep in step with times; while offering state of the art business solutions for organisations and institutions.

As the pioneer of Distance Education, AIMA has always been an early starter, even in the digital space. AIMA was amongst the first mover organisations to offer Internet Based Remote Proctored Tests on a national level; and among the first to shift its service offerings online. AIMA quickly built digital expertise and now has the capability to offer its management programmes and business solutions in the physical, virtual and hybrid mode; as per industry requirements.

AIMA also brings to the Indian managers, the best management practices and techniques through numerous foreign collaborations with professional bodies and institutions. AIMA is an important and long-time member of the Asian Association of Management Organisations (AAMO), which promotes professional management in the Asia Pacific region. In addition, AIMA has developed close associations with several leading international Universities and Institutions including University of Berkeley - California, UC Santa Cruz – California, St Gallen Symposium, Horasis, The World Bank to name a few.

Follow AIMA on:



FOUNDATION DAY THEME

MANAGING THE UNPRECEDENTED HARNESSING THE UNCERTAINTY

The recent spate of crises and changes has challenged and upset many of the conventional management dogmas and practices. The disconcerting experience of covid pandemic, global lockdowns, and geopolitical eruptions has forced management leaders to factor in the unprecedented, the unpredictable, even the unthinkable. The persistent and shape-shifting uncertainty is now a part of the routine and business strategies and methods must make room for radical adjustments. However, playing defence can be a losing strategy in this environment and organisations may be better off attacking the situation with agility and innovation. Management leaders need to figure out how to harness the uncertainty to achieve the organisation's objectives and build new competitive advantages.



AWARDEES



ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Confers

"Life Time Achievement Award for Management"

2022

on

N R Narayana Murthy

A pioneer of India's global IT services and the founder of Infosys, he has been the benchmark for entrepreneurship and business governance in India for four decades. Under his leadership, Infosys grew exponentially for many consecutive years, both in revenues and in global presence, and he conceptualized, articulated and implemented the global delivery model, which became the standard for the entire Indian technology services industry.

An innovative and committed capacity builder, he created an outstanding physical and technological infrastructure to make Infosys an efficient, resilient and reliable partner for its global customers. Always an investor in talent and innovation, he established a strong learning culture at Infosys and turned it into a leading centre of technical, management, leadership and innovation training. He is a trustee of the Infosys Science Foundation, which promotes research and innovation in science and technology in India through the annual Infosys Prize. He is also involved in the governance of leading educational institutions in India, America, Japan, France, Spain, Brazil, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines.

A business leader with Indian characteristics, he has believed, preached and practiced compassionate capitalism. He has set high standards for corporate investment in employees, community and country and he has attained the status of a statesman. He was the Chairman of Public Health Foundation of India and he is on the board of the UN Foundation. He always makes time to speak to young leaders and entrepreneurs and supports transformative startups. He is a recipient of the Padma Vibhushan and he has been honoured with awards the world over for his contribution to the technology industry, business leadership, international relations, and humanitarian initiatives.

All India Management Association is privileged to present the AIMA Life Time Achievement Award for Management to Mr N R Narayana Murthy, Founder, Infosys.

21 February, 2023, New Delhi



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"AIMA Public Service Excellence Award"

2022

on

Dilip Asbe

An outstanding technology innovator and administrator, he has transformed money and finance in India. He has played a central role in creating multiple digital public good platforms that have made handling and transferring of money easier and cheaper for the regulator and the government, the business and ordinary people of India.

He is the first employee of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and has gone on from being Chief Technology Officer to leading the organization's strategy and business expansion. His formidable drive and achievements are highly valued by the regulator and the government, which has re-appointed him as the CEO of NPCI, and he has made NPCI central to the RBI and government's campaign to make money easily transferable, transparent and traceable.

An inveterate innovator, he has led the designing, building, and operating of several banking and financial services initiatives. He has played a pivotal role in the creation of money transfer and payment platforms such as the Immediate Payment Service or IMPS, Aadhar-enabled Payment System, Aadhaar Payments Bridge (or Direct Benefit transfer platform), India's own card payment network RuPay, Electronic Toll Collection (NETC/FastTag) and the game changing Unified Payments Interface or UPI. Now, he is taking the UPI and RuPay global by exporting its knowhow and connecting India's Payment system with leading countries for payments and remittances to make India self-reliant even on cross-border. Prior to joining the NPCI, he had set up the technology infrastructure for Euronet Worldwide for the Asia Pacific region.

A man on a mission to bridge the digital divide and democratise the financial services, he has worked creating one of the best public good infrastructure in the world to get nearly all Indians to use digital storage and transfer of money. Thanks to his unrelenting efforts, billions of financial transactions are processed digitally every month.

All India Management Association is pleased to present the AIMA Public Service Excellence Award for 2022 to Mr Dilip Asbe, Managing Director and CEO, National Payments Corporation of India.

21 February, 2023, New Delhi



ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Confers

“AIMA Public Service Excellence Award”

2022

on

Sanjit Bunker Roy

A man on a mission to help rural communities to become self-reliant, he has transformed millions of lives. He brought water, light, education, livelihood, healthcare empowerment and technology to the poorest last-mile population by devising simple rural solutions.

Coming from a privileged background, he learned about rural struggles and potential while deepening wells as an unskilled labourer in the desert of Rajasthan. He learnt the significance of traditional knowledge, practical skills and village wisdom while developing poor rural communities, which was the foundation of the Barefoot College in Tilonia. Over a period of 50 years, he has established that villagers can be self-sufficient and live with self-respect and dignity.

He founded the Social Work and Research Centre, better known as the Barefoot College, in 1972 to provide drinking and irrigation water in a few villages. Today the barefoot model has reached 96 countries around the globe south of the equator and become a global brand. The Barefoot College has received tremendous support from the Ministry of External Affairs under the India Technical Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. He also trained illiterate rural women to be solar engineers in 6 months whom the Prime Minister called Solar Mamas.

His work has been globally acknowledged with several national and international awards conferred for his efforts and innovations.

An astute rural economy strategist, he draws on rural resources and wisdom to develop sustainable solutions to local problems. He has taught villagers to be self-reliant instead of waiting for external aid. He also drives village transformation through women and was instrumental in achieving pay parity for women workers in Rajasthan government's welfare projects.

All India Management Association is pleased to present the AIMA Public Service Excellence Award on Mr Sanjit Bunker Roy, Founder Barefoot College.

21 February, 2023, New Delhi



ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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"AIMA-Dr J S Juneja award for Creativity and Innovation for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises"

2022

on

Automeck Private Limited

"Shree Sahajanands Automeck Private Limited" is a well-known brand with a successful track record in engineering and design systems. Automeck, based in Jamshedpur, was founded in 2013 and has established itself as a leader in cutting-edge technology in environment-friendly and energy-efficient products with quality perfection, and safe operations. The AUTOMECK brand is rapidly becoming the most trusted engineering brand in India and around the world.

"Fully Automatic Hydraulic Driven Mist Cannon Trucks," "Water Distribution Arrangement for Vehicles," and "Hydraulic Mist Cannon Purpose - Dust Suppression" are among Automeck's registered patents.

It was one of the first companies in India to deploy fully robotic firefighting units. This product is intended to provide immediate fire suppression in extremely crowded areas.

Forbes India named Automeck one of the top 28 businesses representing the "Future of the Indian Economy" in 2021.

Automeck is scaling new heights as a result of a winning combination of technical and business acumen. It has made significant contributions not only to domestic needs, but also for import substitution towards Atmanirbhar Bharat and reaching developed markets such as the United States and Europe.

The All India Management Association is pleased to present the AIMA-Dr J S Juneja award for Creativity and Innovation for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises 2022 to Shree Sahajanands Automeck Private Limited, through its Founder & Managing Director, Mr. Rajesh Suryakant Chawda and Mr. Kishan Sonthalia, Joint Managing Director.

21 February, 2023, New Delhi



ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Confers

"Dr Ram Tarneja Award for Best Article in Indian Management"

2022

on

Sanjeev Baitmangalkar

A seasoned lean transformation expert, he is the founder of Stratmann Consulting. He has helped many Indian and foreign companies with their transition to lean manufacturing and contributed to improvements in their performance and value delivery.

He has held leadership positions at several companies, including Roots Multiclean, Texmaco Perkasa, and Mysore Kirloskar.

A keen writer, he has put together case studies that are used as reference material by academia and industry. His article published in Indian Management journal of AIMA made a case for eliminating waste, solving problems and making improvements through developing competence and influencing behaviour.

All India Management Association is pleased to present the AIMA-Dr Ram Tarneja Award for Best Article in Indian Management 2022 to Mr Sanjeev Baitmangalkar, Founder, Stratmann Consulting.

21 February, 2023, New Delhi



ARTICLES

IN FOR LEAN

Building a lean culture is about developing competence and behaviour in people to see waste, solve problems, and make improvements.

Winner of this year's 'AIMA-Dr Ram Tarneja Award for Best Article in Indian Management 2022'

Sanjeev Baitmangalkar, Stratmann Consulting

Sustainability. Corporate responsibility. Business purpose. Social responsibility. Call it what you like; competent boards can no longer afford to put ESG—environment, social, and corporate governance—issues on the back burner.

Not long ago, these subjects—ranging from freak weather events to demands for a higher minimum wage and the diversity of board members—were widely considered to have no place on a board agenda. Now, however, directors ignore them at their peril.

I have often been asked, “How did you build the lean culture?” Simply said, culture is ‘how we do what we do’ or ‘the way things are done in an organisation’. Some also define company culture as a shared set of goals, values, attitudes, and practices that characterise an organisation.

A successful company culture is one that can be accepted easily or embraced by the newest member to the MD or CEO. In this article, I will share with you some important things that helped me build a lean culture in my organisation.

Over time, every company develops some sort of culture that may include strategy, goals, etc. But it is really about attitudes and practices that can answer the question, “What does it feel like to work in a particular company?” When people ask me, “How did you change traditional culture to lean?” it indicates their intent to change or transform from a traditional production company to a just-in-time (JIT) manufacturer or service provider. This transformation is not casual, as a lean company thinks in a manner that is exactly the opposite of a traditionally managed one, when it comes to operational approaches, underlying attitudes, and practices. Traditional companies are structured into departments that make them produce in batches, while lean companies are structured in value streams that enable flow of value to



customer on demand.

Two traditionally managed companies might not have the same culture. Yet because of their approach to marketing, production, and functional structure (batch production structure) they may share many similarities. The list of thinking or process examples could be endless, and underscore the point that to become lean the traditional organisation has to change. The challenge is enormous and to build a lean culture, you must first build a lean company.

This massive change is not an overnight job. Building lean culture is not a fly by night operation, it is not about fixing broken down processes or doing some kind of rejig. It is not something that can be subcontracted to middle managers or below. It has to be led by the CEO or business owner from the front. Transforming to become lean is not a mechanistic thing; it is

more about people, and hence, it is more of a social transformation. It is about developing competence and behaviour

in people to see waste, solve problems, and make improvements. This is a new way of conduct and has to be taught by demonstration till it takes root. So, the question is how to do it and where should one begin?

Lead Lean From The Top

My tryst with lean started when I was reassigned from business development to head of operations, at a time when (we) knew nothing about lean (we called it JIT) back then. I learnt by practising on the Gemba for most part of two shifts every day. Understanding what does not work, failing sometimes, always teaching workmen and staff, leading the kaizens, improvising, focusing heavily on the process and never on the monthly results, learning when to use which tool or technique etc. Demonstrating by example, this not only helped me develop the next level of leaders, but leading by example helped change everybody's behaviour and attitude towards work. Our new work-related mantra, behaviour, and description itself of the job had quietly changed to:

When any abnormality was observed, it had to be corrected and restored back to standards. We discarded accepting with deviations. Drawing was the master and compliance to it alone was mandatory.

We solved problems every day (kaizen). Solving problem to us meant preventing reoccurrence. We would exchange with each other every day, the number of problems identified and how many were solved. Seeing me leading the kaizen effort, the workmen and staff dived deep into it. That is how high motivation levels were. Once a problem had been solved, we set new, higher standards and went after achieving them, aligned to overall company goals.

In short everybody's daily work was: strictly complying to standards, bring abnormalities back to standards, eradicate reasons that caused problems at their grass root level, setting higher standards and get to achieving them...and we were in a hurry!

Work starts with the leader who does not have to be an expert, but needs to commit to getting good at it and improve continually. It is necessary for him to know the principles, philosophy, tools and techniques of lean, and to be able to make conversations on the subject. Success or failure will depend on the leader's involvement. Period. The transformation or change cannot be managed or delegated. The leader needs to be hands-on and lead the change. It is not a talk and instruct thing. Even if people follow the top down orders, it will not change the culture, for instructions may be followed but attitudes and behaviour will not change if there is no ownership. There is an old, Indian Vedic proverb that says ...

यथा भूमस्ति तथा तोयं, यथा बीजं तथाऽङ्कुरः ।

यथा देशस्तथा भाषा, यथा राजा तथा प्रजा ॥

It means, as the land so the water; as the seed, so the sprout.

As the region, so the language; as the king, so the people.

So, if you want to build a lean culture, the leader needs to think, speak, act, and behave in compliance with lean necessities. Only then will people choose to follow the leader's behaviour, take ownership, and change their attitude that will help build the new culture.

Communicate and the 'how to'

It is necessary to tell every member about why you intend to become lean and how you intend to proceed on this journey. The goal of lean is not to reduce head count, so it is important to alleviate any fears of retrenchments. When we decided to implement the Just-in-Time system three decades ago, we had a reason why we wanted to become lean. There must be a reason why any company wants to become lean. Explain these reasons to the people, let them know why you are asking for a change. Tell them the broad strategy of how you intend to implement it, when will you start, what can they expect, and what is expected from them. The language must all be 'let us do this' and not 'you do it'. This communication must come from the leader to the workmen and staff, and must not

be informed via a circular or by delegating the job down the line.

There is a subtle difference between showing and telling. Lean is different in values compared to traditional management. The new or different value systems need to be imbibed and exhibited in behavioural attitudes, it is not a speak thing. Leading is by example. In the twelve to fourteen hours I spent on the Gemba every day, I was teaching them to respect the customer by demonstrating the respect necessary to be given to every subsequent process within the product manufacturing processes. By learning to respect the internal customer they began delivering better value. When they saw me believing in their ability to solve problems, and challenging them to do more, they cultivated the kaizen habit and began to do more. They had understood the importance of customer, kaizen, and respect for people. The old blame game had vanished and given way to collaborative and cooperative work. The workmen felt they were a responsible part of the change. Trust had come into existence and teamwork was built. There was nothing to fear, so the lies disappeared, they were not afraid to experiment with new ideas. Truth, honesty, effort, and earnest work and was encouraged and celebrated by all.

Dream, vision, and goals

A dream--a far sighted vision--is necessary to fuel your Lean journey. The adage 'you will believe it when you see it,' here means you need to see the possibilities or the picture in your mind first, then you can achieve it. You will realise the results when you believe in your vision and input necessary work to get there. Then translate this broad picture of possibilities as the goals of the company. Break it down into smaller steps for teams to work on them. The CEO must set these aspirational goals for himself and the company, stretched goals will be good. Focus on the process and not the results. Remember good process will always get you good results. Result is the consequence of what you do and how, so, focus on changing your processes and the results will follow. It is important that the CEO himself speaks to the workmen and staff setting the goals and leading them in Kaizens showing the way. This is necessary for duplication (monkey see, monkey do).

When my lean journey started, we faced many problems. One of them was that there were no orders despite having very good products. This led to a temporary closure, necessitating a turnaround strategy to avoid longer or permanent closure. I started by setting myself some goals, such as becoming the number one player in the market; reduction of costs by 50 per cent; empowering workmen to be responsible for and in charge of production without intervention of management; inculcate lean or JIT behaviour in all; give new products protection for eight to 10 years; make competition redundant; develop new markets; become India's first true lean organisation, etc. I had a time line in mind, but we were basically in a hurry to outperform ourselves. With these guiding lights, I broke them down to daily kaizen activities on the Gemba in every area from marketing to product development to execution to supply chain, with all this work being done seamlessly and concurrently across all stages of the value stream. I had given my team five 'Zero' goals even if they were inordinate—zero delay in deliveries, zero waste (defect included), zero lead time, zero inventory, and zero accidents. These five good zeros facilitated all goals.

Lean department or not?

My focus was on developing every person into a leader (however unreasonable or overambitious that might sound), which meant everyone had to learn and master all aspects of lean by imbibing and adapting to lean behaviour. So, I did not think it was necessary to set up a special lean department and put them in charge of the education and transformation. I made it everybody's responsibility in his area of work, taught by me initially and later by my value stream managers. To us this job was to be done every day on the Gemba and not in some remote location. We felt happy with every achievement, and yet, were never satisfied as it taught us that more was possible.

In hindsight we were lucky not to have had people telling us a variety of what to do things. We followed JIT leads from Dr. Schonberger's book *World Class Manufacturing*, which, incidentally, is still a good book today. Seeing me walk the talk built trust. My team saw me in action addressing concerns on all fronts—

be it marketing, product, or process design, supplier development, problem-solving, people development, creating a happy trustworthy environment, etc., always talking to them of the next goal and its benefits. My experience is testimony that one can transform without a special department or group being setup for the purpose. The fact is you cannot manage the shift to lean or delegate it, the leader needs to be hands-on in this job.

Social and passion versus mechanistic and intellect

Building a lean culture is not something for which you can randomly cherry pick some tools and make it happen. It is more of a social process; one that is of people development and transformation, that teaches involvement, ownership, and responsible behaviour. Passion

and not intellect is the driver for success here. The set of emotions that come with passion are very different from that with intellect. Intellect here is useful in kaizen and standardization but success will come out of passion. Passion motivates involvement, intellect encourages delegation, and delegation in the beginning is ruinous for success.

About The Author



Sanjeev Baitmangalkar
is founder and Principal
Consultant, Stratmann
Consulting

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The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 2 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

A MATTER OF EMPATHY

Challenging as it may be, human resources management is an interesting job, provided one does it with passion and patience.

J Devaprakash, Tarapur Atomic Power Station

Twenty-first century is witnessing the age of robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). With an exploding growth in the digital field, computers have begun to influence human life deeply, replacing them in numerous industries. Robotic surgeries have become common in the healthcare sector. Robots and AI are ruling our homes too—from the vacuum cleaner to mood based lighting system, mankind's dependency on machines is surging largely. What's more, robots that can mimic many human activities, have already been put into service. Still, human brain is the best in the world. With about 100 million neurons—the information messengers—the mind of a human is superior to a computer in many aspects. It has the ability to think and has senses like logical reasoning, judgment, and creativity. Besides, emotions make humans a breed apart. So, handling of humans, particularly in organisations, is no simple task. When handling a machine or a computer that does not think, the human

operator remains authoritative, but when handling a human who has cognitive abilities identical to any other human, the manager or the handler goes diffident.

According to whatishumanresource.com, there are five 'M's—management, money, machines, materials, and methods—in an organisation. Human resource management (HRM) is all about first M, the men. From recruitment to retirement, HRM is involved in every facet of the workforce, but this is not an easy task. Every individual is unique, and has with the ability to manipulate the other four 'M's, which makes HRM a crucial aspect of any organisation. Smooth handling of HRM also streamlines other aspects such as production, sales, marketing, purchase, etc.

Over a century, HRM has been studied in depth and practitioners of human resources have developed numerous strategies to effectively deal with workforce which is the foremost asset of a company. Here are some of the ways HR managers can rely upon for fruitful human resource management:

- **Listening is caring**

We have two ears and one mouth. If these are used in 'this same proportion', particularly by HR managers, it will lead to genial employee relations. Listening is the key to problem solving. Even if a manager is in a helpless state, if he just listens to the employee, the situation he could turn the situation from hostile to placid. Showing interest in understanding the issue will give the employee a feeling of repose.

- **Make them feel comfortable**

Often, employees visit HR department when they believe that some injustice has taken place—toward themselves or towards other employees. During such truculent times, the HR manager must remain calm and attempt to make pacify the complainant first—get them seated, offer something to drink or eat, etc. Once peace



prevails, the HR officer can crack a conversation in a calm tone. Respect is always a two way street; being an employee manager, you make the start. And you will see the flow of respect from the other side as well. This may guide to a good-tempered conversation. If their issue is genuine, it can be taken up to the management. Else, things can be put in the right perspective.

- **Align decisions with values**

At times, people blow up trivial things—particularly a new decision of the management—into a big controversy. HR managers have to make the employees understand how important that decision to the organisation and its growth is. They can also try to connect the decision with the organisation's values and the longterm benefits of that decision. Besides, HR managers can elucidate how important the employees' role is in executing the decision.

- **General to specific**

HR analysts believe that not understanding or half understanding of HR functions by others is one of the major reasons why HR is always blamed. Because of this, an employee may beat around the bush. But, the employee may wait to catch some point from the discussion. During such circumstances, the HR manager may try to avoid general discussion and insist on to be specific. This will help avert unnecessary confusions.

- **Keep your personal emotions aside**

Remember, as HR manager, you are dealing with human beings, who too have emotions. If your personal emotions crop up, it may lead to

embarrassment. The anger or displeasure of an employee is not on you, but on the system or on policy or on something else. You may be right, but exhibiting your emotional outburst will only worsen things rather than dousing the fire.

- **The art of saying no**

As a human resource manager, one cannot say yes to everyone every time. Owing to lack of clear policy or inadmissibility, the HR person may sometimes be coerced to say no to the employee. Hearing "no", especially when said bluntly or authoritatively, can cause dejection or even unrest among employees. But, if the rejection is announced sympathetically, in a non-imperious manner, respecting the feelings of employees, it is quite possible to placate them, or even make them agree with you.

These are some of the best means for effective human capital management. However, some or all of these will not work in case an employee is a pessimistic moaner (who complains about everything every time) or a stubborn non-listener. Though challenging, the handling of human assets is an interesting job, provided if one does it with passion and patience.

About The Author



J Devaprakash is Deputy General Manager (HR), Tarapur Atomic Power Station.

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 11 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

HARNESS THE POWER OF DIFFERENCES

Generational diversity should be viewed as an opportunity to leverage the experience of seniors and the energy of the youth in the workforce.

Dr Debashish Sengupta, Author, *The Life of Z*



Currently there are four generations at work—baby boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1979), Generation Y or millennials (1980-1999), and Generation Z (2000- 2020). Let us look at how these generations are in terms of their numerical presence and how the workforce composition is likely to be in the near future. By 2028, most of the boomers might retire; however, some will still continue to work for another six to seven years. During the same time, Generation X will outnumber boomers and will be holding most of the senior leadership and senior management positions. By 2025, millennials will make close to 75% per cent of the world's working population, making them the largest percentage of the global workforce. The oldest of the Generation Z members have started to trickle into the workforce and will continue to do so at an increasing rate in the coming years, making them a close second in terms of workforce numbers in the coming decade. In summary, in the next five years, the global workforce will have few boomers, a good number of Generation X in senior

positions, mostly millennials in key positions driving organisations, and a sizeable number of Generation Z members in entry and mid-level positions. Generation diversity is here to stay, a global reality and something that organisations can leverage on to improve their performance and sustainability.

Who hold the onus of managing generational diversity then? Is it the more mature generation i.e., boomers and Generation X or the relatively younger generations millennials and Generation Z? Undoubtedly, this onus lies with every generation. Empathy is never a one-way street. However, owing to the positional and situational superiority of the mature generations, the onus of initiating and managing generational diversity lies more with boomers and Generation X leaders. Diversity and inclusivity are cultural aspects, and are always driven from the top. Without the intent and commitment of the top brass, these initiatives remain a mere lip service and nothing more than that.

Signs of growing discontent among younger generation

As the Covid-19 waves started receding, another undesirable wave started to engulf the world—the great resignation wave. What started in the US, has spread rapidly across other countries like France, Germany, Singapore, United Kingdom, and even India. To provide a rough estimate, in 2021 alone, 47.8 million workers quit their jobs voluntarily in the US. According to the Willis Towers Watson's 2022 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey, 44 per cent of the employees are job seekers. A recent report from Michael Page—a professional recruitment services firm—states that nearly 86 per cent of India's professionals will seek new jobs in the next six months as the Great Resignation in India will intensify in 2022.

Worrisome statistics, no doubt. But wait! Can this great resignation be attributed to poor management of generational diversity? A closer look at these figures reveals one more fact—millennials and Generation Z workers are at the forefront of this great resignation. More than half who have quit belong to these two generational cohorts. This is where it raises suspicion that poor management of generational diversity might be one of the reasons behind the great resignation. Obviously, when people quit, some reasons are attributed to those decisions like dissatisfaction with pay, poor manager, work environment, etc. But what remains mostly muted is that those who quit voluntarily could not find a voice or a medium to communicate what was bothering them about their company. Therefore, when we find that most of those who quit recently belong to the younger generational cohorts, it more or less confirms that communication and comfort between them and the more mature generations continues to be a point of concern. A classic Harvard study had revealed that people do not stay because they are happy, but because they are not unhappy enough to quit or not hungry enough to leave. Therefore, what must worry companies more is those who might have not yet left, but could gather enough momentum to overcome the inertia of staying put. Just to put it in context, the engagement of millennials and Generation Z workers in the workplace continue to be low as per most global engagement reports.

Leveraging generational diversity My decade-long research on generations, especially on millennials and Generation Z, work with the industry regarding generational diversity management, and engagement of millennials at workplace, has led me to the conclusion that unfortunately very few companies really worry about managing generational diversity. Most either ignore it, thinking generational talk is just a fad or think that the supply-side of the human resources is too skewed in their favour for them to worry about managing generational diversity. Both these beliefs are not only incorrect, but they are also fraught with risks that might threaten the sustenance of the company in the long run.

During my research on millennials and Generation Z, I had an opportunity to not only interact with countless millennials from around the world, but also find opportunity to work with companies in Dubai, UK, the US, and India helping them manage generational diversity and improve engagement of millennial and Generation Z workers. Based on empirical evidence and experience that I have gathered from the field, I propose a five-pronged strategy to manage generational diversity-

- **Foster understanding**

Millennials and Generation Z, have, in particular, lived a transformed time that has resulted in a significant shift in their life realities, mindsets, and attitudes. Both millennials and generation Z live a paradoxical life, with the barter not working in their favour—losing more than what they have gained compared to the previous generations. Millennials, for instance, have probably more choices when it comes to career-options, greater autonomy, bigger and more global network, and more lifestyle choices. However, they also have to deal with greater job instability, low, or at times, non-existent social support systems; they are the first generation to earn less than their parents (adjusted to purchasing power parity and inflation), the volatile environmental stress and modern life pace impacting their physical and mental health and growing loneliness among these generational cohorts making their life realities different and complex. Empathy is the first step towards managing generational diversity.

Organisations must take active steps to ensure that their leaders and managers learn the art of empathy when it comes to younger generational cohorts. This requires both training and awareness. The Deloitte Global 2022 Gen Z and Millennial survey reveals that cost of living expenses is the biggest worry of these two generational cohorts and most of them are living pay check to pay check. Majority of them do not believe that they will be able to retire comfortably and also feel that the gap between the rich and the poor is widening in their respective countries. Most of them actually have taken-up a second part-time job, besides their full-time employment. Other concerns include political instability and disturbances caused by wars and conflicts. Their priority in job includes good worklife balance, opportunities for learning and development, flexible work arrangements that helps them work remotely so that they can save on expenses, and free time to pursue their passion and spend more time with their families. Both these generations look for values alignment when taking-up an employment and two out of five have rejected job offers from companies who have no commitment to issues like diversity and inclusion, sustainability, etc.

Empathy goes a long way in creating a better understanding between mature and younger generations and thereby the ability to understand each other standpoints.

• **Train managers and leaders**

When we talk of developing empathy, how does that really occur? How fair will it be to point fingers at managers and leaders, blaming them for lack of empathy and poor understanding of the younger generations. And then, is empathy just expected from mature generations and not from the younger generations? What will we do about the millennial managers? Do they need to learn empathy for understanding their own generation reportees or Generation Z workers?

Empathy needs to be learnt and comes through structured learning programs for managers of all generations on issues related to generational diversity. In the year 2017, when a prominent bank, headquartered in Dubai, was at the cusp

of launching a millennial version of their bank, they encountered survey findings about their own managers doing not too well when it came to engaging millennial team members, leaving them baffled. My subsequent engagement with them and the series of structured training workshops that I conducted for the CXO-level leaders as well for their senior business managers was a mutually rewarding experience. They went on to successfully launch the millennial version of their business and have continued to retain their market leadership position. Recently, I was invited by iPlace USA, a prominent global recruitment firm to discuss about generational diversity and millennial engagement. The fact that this event was attended by their CEO himself, showed their commitment to generational diversity.

Mentoring by senior leaders is a great way to enable younger generations to develop empathy and improve generational diversity. Such engagements improve understanding between generations and create a more inclusive environment.

• **Culture of openness and inclusivity**

A very interesting study was done recently by resume.io, wherein they analysed LinkedIn median tenure of employees and identified top 20 companies where employees have stayed the longest, averaging between eight and ten years, and another list of 20 companies where employees have lasted less than two years. The study revealed that companies where employees stayed longer were the ones who offered them greater freedom to use their initiative and craft their own roles, flexible work from home options among others.

“In our organisation, generational gap is bridged in a variety of ways. We celebrate Bahrain Sports Day forming teams with a varied spectrum of age. Teams working on any project is always a mix of young and old. Further, factory acceptance test visits also always constitutes of old and young professionals.” - Saikat Sarkar, Chief (Engineering Design, Planning & Studies), Electricity & Water Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain.

“In our company, we have done away with any form of hierarchy. The respect is for your

role and the work that you do, regardless of whether you are an office assistant or the CEO of the firm. We encourage empathy, remove communication barriers, and have built a culture of respect for each other, with which I strongly believe everything will fall in place. Internal innovations and collaborations are encouraged, and we believe that generational diversity is our strength to make the world a better place.” – Jyoshna Reddy Bodedhula, co-founder & Head of Operations, Careerpedia and Inkprog Technologies Pvt Ltd, India.

A great way to leverage generational diversity is to understand the varying needs of different generational cohorts. Building an open culture and empowering the younger generations by providing them greater flexibility goes a step further towards ensuring generational inclusivity.

- **Build and display trust**

Research has revealed that both millennials and Generation Z like early leadership opportunities in their career. The sense of ownership and organisational citizenship behaviour grows when they are entrusted with leadership roles early in their career.

“Organisations have moved beyond orthodox methods of experience barriers for specific roles. The priority is now on competency/skills over years of experience. This opens up opportunities for young minds to take up leadership roles. It also opens up window for continuous learning and cross functional movements regardless of one’s background. Various MNCs are now encouraging work-integrated learning programs that groom early talent for taking up roles at the level of experienced professionals. The reason we see young leaders taking up CXO roles is proof of increasing generational diversity.” – Benjin Samuel, Senior HR Professional, India.

Most companies still do not have a digital-first mindset. Pandemic period has been a huge testimony to the power of digital and how companies can leverage the same to grow exponentially as well as become more resilient to future challenges and crises. Younger generational members are undoubtedly more versed and proficient in such technologies.

Creating reverse mentoring opportunities where a millennial or Generation Z member has an opportunity to reverse mentor a senior on digital and other modern technologies could be a great way to display trust on their capabilities and respect generational diversity in letter and spirit.

Expert teachers must meet at least once or twice a week for at the ‘discussion table’, wherein full teaching strategies are taught to the newly hired teachers during their first semester at the school. Experience is certainly more important to be a good academic/teacher, as teaching skills is a compounded skill, but that does not mean the new teachers are less valued. In fact, they gave great ideas, and they are handling e-learning faster compared to the older generation. Both parties learn from each other, and I feel such culture must be there in all the organisations regardless of their industry.” – Fatema Mahmood Ghareeb, Business and Commercial studies Teacher, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain.

When the organisation shows trust in the diversity of thoughts, ideas, and capabilities of different generational members and leverages them in a way that creates complimentary competencies across the board, it truly harnesses the power of generational diversity.

- **Revamping internal communications**

A great way to leverage generational diversity is to create an open culture and engage different generations through a meaningful dialogue by strengthening the internal communications strategy. Some companies have revolutionized their internal communications by integrating social media like Bunzl, Cisco, Grant Thornton, Pfizer, Shopify, to name a few. Smart companies are employing such capabilities to encourage informal sharing among all employees of different generational cohorts. Social media tools such as Smarp, Bitrix24, Slack, GagglesAMP, Paper.li are some such tools that have helped companies integrate social media in their internal content sharing.

“The CEO of my current organisation—also my reporting manager—is younger to me. I see that the culture of the organisation is flat,

and this enables a free flow of communications across all levels of management, and employees are encouraged to speak freely. I also personally experience that ideas from the team members are encouraged without generation or gender discrimination and small successes are celebrated and appreciated which are a great morale boost for team members to create positive working relationships.” - Neelima Somashekar, GM Communications, Subramaniam Academy of Performing Arts (SaPa), India

Meaningful engagement starts with powerful internal communications strategy, one that recognises contemporary social media tools keeping in mind the preference of the younger generations. Open, multi-way communications is the only way to ensure that different generations of workers understand each other better, recognise and respect each other, and address to the needs and priorities of each other.

“There are multiple ways in which generational differences are bridged. At a previous organisation we attempted reverse mentoring for senior leadership by younger generation. In another firm, we included them in a brand task force that came up with creative ideas and plans to improve recall and awareness. In yet another firm, we created solutions where all generations contributed solutions to existing company

issues like attrition and brand engagement. And in one firm, we invited them to be citizen journalists inside the firm.” - Anisus K Verghese, Ph.D. Global Internal Communications Expert, Poland.

Conclusion

Generational diversity is a double-edged sword and cuts both ways, depending on how it is being managed. It can help organisations to leverage on experience as well as exuberance, wisdom as well as radical ideas, established factors of competitive advantage as well as new-age technological hues. On the other hand, if not managed properly, it can result in disharmony, misunderstandings, and conflict between generational members, resulting in disengagement, loss of voluntary efforts and organisational citizenship behaviour and undesirable turnover.

About The Author



Dr Debashish Sengupta is a professor at Royal University for Women, Bahrain. He is a master trainer and certified from Harvard University in Higher Education Teaching. He is author, *The Life of Y* and *The Life of Z*.

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The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 7 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

LEADERSHIP 101

In his monthly column, Cyrus MR Gonda explains what exactly is leadership...
and just why this vital and much needed resource is in such short supply

Cyrus MR Gonda



Leadership is like gravity. You know it is there, you know it exists, but how do you define it? - Jamie Williams The resource most in short supply of, in the corporate world (and indeed, in the world, at large, as well), today, is a steady supply of strong leaders and sound leadership.

‘Leadership’ is a critical term which needs to be clearly understood so that organisations of the future are able to withstand the extremely volatile, competitive, and uncertain business space. As global markets tend to be cyclic in nature, the organisation which the leader heads should be capable of withstanding all market conditions and the organisation should also be perceived in the wide spectrum of its customer

base as vibrant and sensitive to evolving and ever-changing needs, at the same time, keeping the flames of the founder’s philosophy alive at all times.

Have a close look at the two pictures below.



Now answer, which of these two pictures do you think depicts the image of a glorious leader? Did you select the silhouette image of the dashing man waving a sharp sword, sitting astride his horse? That man is an actor playing the role of a knight from a bygone era in a fictional film. That same man has also played the role of a murderer and a thief in other films.

He is an illusion. But unfortunately, a popular illusion, as far as the subject of leadership is concerned.

The image on the right is that of a truly successful corporate leader and a business hero. This simple, but smart, cultured, decent man with the clean-shaven look, sporting scholarly spectacles, and with well-combed hair; the one who looks like everyone's idea of a favourite, kindly uncle, is Lee Iacocca, ranked among the best American CEOs of all time. Through the force and power of his mercurial and inspiring leadership, Iacocca almost single-handedly brought about the turnaround of a dying, gigantic brand called Chrysler. (He is also the author of a brilliant book titled 'Where Have All The Leaders Gone?')

What exactly is it that Iacocca did to establish his reputation as one of the best corporate leaders ever? He conceptualised, drove, and cemented a series of apparently small changes and tweaks in the organisational setting and environment, both through personal example as well as by initiating a culture of robust brand leadership through inculcating the right vision and values, demonstrating courage and valour, ultimately paving the path to Chrysler's victory in a highly competitive marketplace. Unfortunately, the typical picture of a heroic leader which we carry in our mind would be that of a dashing warrior brandishing a sword and seated atop a charging horse. Or possibly, for the more contemporary-minded, the picture of leadership would be one of a man in a mask and a cape, swinging from skyscraper to skyscraper as he effortlessly wraps up entire gangs of evil-doers.

And it is this distorted picture that has done a lot of damage to the discipline of corporate

leadership. In some primal, prehistoric part of our brain, this is still the image we carry of what we expect a leader to be like; an Emperor Ashoka, or Alexander the Great, or Napoleon Bonaparte, or King Arthur; or Superman, or Batman, or perhaps, even Spiderman.

Somehow most of us tend to associate leadership only with dashing action, not with contemplative thought and sound decisionmaking.

The visions of leadership with which we are furnished and fed with today are exaggerated, historical, and Hollywood and Bollywood inspired versions of heroes. And it is these visions with which we are fed so often, and which we have digested so readily, which have distorted our picture of reality.

For the world in which we live and work, the less glamorous and dashing (yet far more effective and productive) leader, the one who converts scarce resources into innovative products and services of high quality, satisfying and hopefully even delighting customers, generating reasonable, and more importantly, sustainable profits, creating meaningful jobs and careers, earning the admiration and loyalty of all stakeholders, and achieving all of this ethically without attempting to 'bend the system' is the leader towards which most of us should aspire becoming in our corporate careers.

And no better example of this brand of leader than J.R.D. can be found as an inspiration to us all.

We are today attuned through a barrage of media coverage to view the cult of 'celebrity CEO' as being larger-than-life; meant to subdue and overawe, rather than to motivate and inspire.

But such need not be the case. In fact, the most sustainable and rock-solid organisations are the ones which are led by leaders who are humble, who have a large heart and a razor-sharp mind to match it, and who view themselves not as celebrities to be glorified and idolised, but as men with an important job to do and who focus on that job and do it well.

he most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born—that there is a genetic factor to leadership. That is nonsense; in fact the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born. - Warren Bennis (leadership guru)
So wake up. You, too, can be a leader. Develop your leadership skills and take up a leadership position. The world needs you.

About The Author



Cyrus MR Gonda is a thought leader, best-selling author, and a leading trainer in the areas of customer experience, communication, leadership, and selling skills.

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 3 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

NEW FRONTIERS, NEWER OPPORTUNITIES

The evolution of, and some crystal ball-gazing, into customer experience management.

Saumabha Barua, TCS



Customer services is the cornerstone of building a successful brand and perhaps the most important differentiator for products and services that are increasingly becoming commoditised. From walk-ins and call-centers to deflection to digital and increasing shift to non-voice contact centers and now the paradigm shift that is expected with the maturing of the metaverse and its various manifestations, this paper briefly traces the journey of customer services and the various channels that exist and how they have evolved over the last few decades. All in the quest of providing that exemplar service that will sway and delight your customer to ensure they become your true brand ambassadors.

Customer experience management through an

effective and efficient sale and support services constitute one of the most important functions of any industry, especially for the ones which require a direct continuous connect for the products or services that are being sold, often with relationships spanning multiple years. Examples of such industries include banking, insurance, telecom, utility, etc. These industries need to employ a large workforce of customer service agents to ensure that the customers are serviced properly not just to continue the existing relationship but to additionally grow the relationship through upselling and cross-selling of other relevant services/products whenever

Ancient History (>25 years back)	Walk-Ins	Post	Voice call
Nature of Channel	Synchronous	Asynchronous	Synchronous
Delivery Location	Inhouse	Inhouse	Inhouse
Service Cost of channel	\$\$\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
Volume per channel	🕒	🕒	🕒
Customer Effort Score	🛒	🛒	🛒
Customer Experience Impact	😊	😞	😊
Work Aid Tools & Technologies (Indicative, not exhaustive)	NA	NA	* Basic IVR

such opportunities present themselves. Over the years the nature of the delivery of these services has changed dramatically. We will attempt to present how this industry has shaped up in the last several decades as well as try to analyse some of the future trends that are emerging. Customer services, initially, was a completely voice-based in-house function as it was thought that only the employees of an organisation can best support its customers. However, this meant that organisations needed to carry a large workforce of people on their payrolls which over the years seemed to have an impact on their profitability. Organisations tried to reduce costs by way of outsourcing some routine non-core customer voice

The Middle Ages (20 years back)	Walk-Ins	Post	Voice Call	email
Nature of Channel	Synchronous	Asynchronous	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Delivery Location	Inhouse	Onshore/Offshore	Onshore	Onshore/Offshore
Service Cost of channel	\$\$\$\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$	\$\$
Volume per channel				
Customer Effort Score				
Customer Experience Impact				
Work Aid Tools & Technologies (Indicative, not exhaustive)	NA	* Automated Mail Room * Dynamic IVR		NA

services activities outside of their organisation. Simultaneously, the outsourced companies also started moving up the value chain and gained expertise in the domains, through which they were able to expand the service lines and take on more complex calls. This outsourcing was restricted to onsite, though, because of issues with diction, accent, culture, security, etc. So, while this strategy helped reduce the costs for the organisations to some extent, the full benefit was not being realised because of the continued high cost of onsite call centers. With the advancement of IT and ITES as well as technologies such as VOIP, this was also addressed gradually through 'near shoring' whereby call centers in nearby countries that had somewhat similar cultures could provide the same quality of service at a much-reduced

cost. With continued cost pressure, there was a need to further optimize the customer service costs. Hence, apart from call centers (which is a completely synchronous channel), non-voice contact channels started getting precedence as an alternate lower-cost alternative. Initially, non-voice was serviced through channels that were completely asynchronous like through posts and emails, but gradually we saw a proliferation of semi-synchronous channels emerging in this space, which included chats, SMS texting, social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc., and more recently Business WhatsApp. Along with this, a very important channel of service was emerging which has now become the mainstay of customer service which is self-service. By exposing many of the processes to end customers that were typically available to agents only for which these customers had to call or mail these contact centers, power to view and in many cases add/modify/delete capability to these databases was placed in the hands of the customers. Of course, proper checks and balances were imposed to maintain the sanctity and security of the data. So, earlier, for a duplicate bill, customers perhaps would have to write or call, today the customer has to just go into his MyAccount portal or mobile app and be able to download the bill in a fraction of a second. To get a refund, a customer would have to call to find out the status; today the entire workflow is made visible to the customer on his My Account page with perhaps, periodic updates on SMS or WhatsApp.

Contemporary Age (Current)	Self Service	Voice call	email
Nature of Channel	Synchronous	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Delivery Location	Agnostic	Onshore/Offshore	Onshore/Offshore
Service Cost of channel	0	\$\$\$	\$\$
Volume per channel			
Customer Effort Score			
Customer Experience Impact			
Work Aid Tools & Technologies (Indicative, not exhaustive)	* Voice Assistant	* Visual/ Voice IVR * Biometric Auth. * Voice Bot * RPA * LCNC	* Automated Mail Room * Mail Bot

A parallel theme that was also playing out was automation in its various manifestations. So while contact centers were moving from normal IVR to dynamic IVR, voice IVR, visual IVR, etc. along with technologies such as biometric voice authentication, the call center agents were being aided with technologies such as RPA which allowed capital-light non-invasive integration of disparate applications which were required to service customers more efficiently. Mash up composite screens to display data from various applications, copying data into various applications automatically instead of individually copy-pasting them, automating repetitive tasks by co-bots while agents attended the next call, suggesting

next-best-action for agents, etc., all helped to improve the productivity of the call centers. While initially these automations were handled by the technology experts, today we see a multitude of Low Code No Code technologies available which allows the agents themselves to create such co-bots to aid them in their work dispensation.

As mentioned previously, a major stumbling block for moving call centers to low-cost countries is the diction, accent, and in the manner-of-speaking a language in a particular region or country. Today along with spelling and grammatical correction we get to see the instantaneous feedback on the tone of our response/message for written communication. This is especially useful for communicating via letters, emails, chats, etc. In the future, realtime voice synthesisation can be a solution where we auto-correct and auto-convert the voice of an agent, or even transliterate, to match the vernacular nuances of a country or region. Google's Project Relate, focused on helping people with atypical speech to be better understood, can be extended to create such a solution. Similarly, UK's Speechmatics claims to have done some stellar work in this area to recognize accented English. Think about, an agent in an outsourced country speaking in English with a particular accent that gets converted into not only a British or US accent but more specifically, into a Scottish or Yorkshire accent, all on the fly!

Into the Future	Self Service	Voice call	Chat	SM/DM	Metaverse
Nature of Channel	Synchronous	Synchronous	Synchronous	Semi-synchronous	Synchronous
Delivery Location	Agnostic	Onshore/Offshore	Onshore/Offshore	Onshore/Offshore	Agnostic
Service Cost of channel	0	\$\$\$	\$	\$\$	\$\$
Volume per channel	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Customer Effort Score	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Customer Experience Impact	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Work Aid Tools & Technologies	**Voice Assistant	**Voice/Voice API + Biometric Auth. + Voice Bot + LDMC	*Chat Bot	*Social Media Bot	*Digital Twin + AR/VR/3D

Customer expectations and preferences are however constantly shifting, which is one of the most difficult challenges in the support

and services industry. From instantaneous redressal of their complaints to one-of-a-kind tariff plans, customers nowadays demand more personalised services with immediate gratification.

While the present state of evolution and journey of contact centers have been outlined above, more exciting vistas are presenting themselves in the form of the metaverse, which perhaps will be able to bring about a completely new paradigm for contact centers. How will the metaverse aid us? In the new world where customers are largely managing their "ownthing" through self-serve. They will come to the contact center only for such activities which are non-routine and for which they have not been able to find the solution to their problem in the FAQs. This then presents the golden moment of truth to provide that differentiated empathetic service that will make them the organisation's voluntary brand ambassadors. We know segmentation of customers is important and that is where the concept of avatars becomes important. We can think of creating personas or avatars of experts for each customer segment and curate the common issues or queries that they face and by leveraging virtual agents we try to provide that level of differentiated service in a 3D immersive way. Say, for example, you need to file an insurance claim for your damaged vehicle. You can use your portable device, which can be as simple as a mobile phone app, to converse with an agent and send the agent a 3D rendition of your damaged vehicle in real-time, discuss the damaged areas, which costs will be reimbursed, and which won't, and get an instantaneous redressal. The options for leveraging the metaverse to provide such differentiated and hyper-personalized customer services are immense.

The metaverse is expected to have a profound impact on customer sales and services just as mobile phones did on the communications industry globally. Companies will perhaps set up virtual contact centers in the metaverse in the future, where customers will be able to connect with agents to take sales and service to the next level.

For contact centers, getting the right resources in a particular location has always been a real challenge. Thanks to digitisation, we have now more choices about how and where to provide the service from across the globe. But this is just the beginning of that journey. Eventually, digital interactions will be able to provide a much richer experience than just talking to some unknown call center agent. Today we can have live transcription which allows us to capture the conversations, search for the relevant topic across all knowledge bases in real-time to be able to respond appropriately to customers, and action items automatically and route them to appropriate teams using desktop-based automation. However, with metaverse, we may be able to do this by moving participants into a 3D space. We may create an avatar of ourselves which will be a digital representation of us, to connect with agents who will also be avatars of specialists in their respective fields, all in a virtual space that mimics the feeling of being together in real life. This feeling is often referred to as “presence,” and organisations are working actively in this space to create a digital world that both replicates and augments our physical reality. The term was coined in 1992 by Neal Stephenson, an American writer known for his works of speculative fiction.) Research and development in computer vision, display technology, audio, and sensors to capture facial expressions, eye movement, body language, touch and feel, are being experimented with. A key feature in the metaverse is the use of spatial audio, which makes speech sound like it’s coming from the direction of the person talking. All these will work together to bring to life the experience of “true presence”, so critical of customer experience management. This presence can provide a surrealistic experience that no voice call or even a video call can match: Picture a virtual setting where your car is being serviced in a garage and you can observe the work from your home while experts of the car company, who perhaps live in different locations, are brought in to a visualize a 3D model of the vehicle’s engine to understand why it’s making an abnormal noise. Or imagine you are entering a service center of yore trying to talk to a service engineer to explain your issue with your router

or mobile phone. In the virtual space, you’ll be able to interact and discuss the issue, perhaps use haptic devices to repair it also. (Like we have Alexa today in every home, maybe we will have robotic arms in every home of the future to do these kinds of work!) Similarly, for a utility company, it can be a meter reading which you are disputing on a bill versus what is displayed in the meter or for discussing the cost of a new connection where you need to estimate the line charges from the nearest pole, and you literally walk the talk and the estimate is done, instantaneously.

While many of these can be accomplished by our ever-evolving phones and tablets, the more advanced use cases will require either augmented reality (where a digital layer is superimposed on top of our physical environment) or virtual reality (which is a completely immersive experience). The hardware for these kinds of captures is in the works. We may have some virtual reality glasses and headsets and haptic devices to control our avatar, but more refined and less conspicuous tools will be required to create this kind of magical customer experience. For example, today there is hardware available that enables users to create high-fidelity virtual objects using their cameras to take photos from their standard-issue phones in a matter of minutes. These objects can then be transplanted into other virtual environments or overlaid into real environments for say, checking how a particular piece of furniture will look in your living room before you go and buy it online. Similarly, newer mobile phones now track 30,000 points on our faces via infrared sensors. While this is most commonly used for Face ID, it can now be connected to create (and stream) a real-time, high-fidelity avatar of a contact center agent who can virtually assist multiple customers at the same time, like we do chat services today. Long term, the goal is a light and comfortable device that you can wear at ease, switching between AR and VR whilst enabling natural interactions between yourself and other metaverse users. Developments in this space are happening at a rapid pace and AR headsets are beginning to look more and more like normal glasses. The much sleeker,

lighter, and more capable, Microsoft HoloLens 2 (as compared to the previous version) can help connect in real-time and work together on a holographic canvas overlayed in your physical environment to quickly resolve issues on the spot. While pricing is prohibitive at this time, it's a matter of time and scale, before it becomes affordable.

The culmination of this is for the virtual world and the real world to co-exist, with immersive interactions between the two providing that superlative customer experience. Along with the software, the hardware, networking, interoperability standards, security, and privacy concerns are hurdles to overcome.

We're nearing a threshold at which the technology is beginning to truly transform customer experience management. The

metaverse may feel like an empyrean world as of now, just as IoT was two decades back or the internet a quarter of a century ago, but as technology continues its precipitous journey, it will evolve into what feels more like an extension of our physical world. Customer sales and support services and customer experience management will never be the same again

About The Author



Saumabha Barua is General Manager at Tata Consultancy Services and currently leads the Intelligent Process Automation and Consulting & Transformation Practice for Utilities, Energy & Resources, and Manufacturing verticals.

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 9 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

OH! THOSE LALA COMPANIES

A generic name for family-run businesses in India, 'lala companies' have unique attributes—great rewards...and greater punishment, if the lala stops liking your face! Having worked for such a company, for 33 out of his total 48 years as a professional, Krishan Kalra, Trustee, Climate Project Foundation India, recounts some interesting memories.

Krishan Kalra

Having spent the first five years—after getting my engineering degree from Delhi University—with professional enterprises like the American oil company ESSO Standard and, arguably, India's finest engineering group, L&T, I landed a job with a lala group. At that time, it was a highly ranked entity in terms of turnover and also boasted the celebrated 'senior management trainees (SMTs)' scheme. Their salaries were at par with multinationals like Hindustan Lever, ITC, ICI, Metal Box, etc.

It was a wonderful learning experience, until one found out that every single decision was taken by one person at the top—the Lala ji—without whose signature, not a thing would move in the gargantuan enterprise. Every appointment, increment, perquisite, transfer, and termination had to come with an 'office order' signed by him. Along with the frustration of having virtually no delegation of authority, one also admired enormous hold of the top man who seemed to know every little thing that happened in the group even if it was a couple of thousand miles away from where he was based.

The guy had an amazing 'unit control system' where bright young SMTs worked and churned out for him detailed progress report of each unit—factory or marketing—in real time. He also had an incredible memory and unbelievable capacity to run through every word of voluminous reports. And, of course, eight to 10 people were called home early in the morning to discuss the papers marked to them at night. One of the PAs would sort these out and phone up the poor sods to 'swing by the kothi before heading to their offices'. It is a moot point that the discussion was more of a rebuke for the juvenile report or agenda sent by the guy and was often thrown at his face with orders to redo the same and submit before nightfall.



Today, many of these outfits have changed their ways significantly. With highly-educated scions taking over from the older generation, many of these companies have started inducting professionals in senior positions, giving them a free hand. Many owners are sending their children to renowned universities like Harvard, Stanford, etc., and their interaction with learned faculty and networking with students from advanced countries have changed their thinking and business philosophy. Raising funds from VCs puts additional pressures on them to improve governance. This professionalism has resulted in phenomenal growth of many family-owned businesses. And yet, I believe, most crucial

decisions in such companies are still taken by the top guy. In any case, I am talking about what happened 30 to 40 years ago.

There was great training from Lala ji, who had himself learned the ropes the hard way from his elders. 'There are no short cuts to hard work'; 'Honest practices will never be compromised'; 'You will meet deadlines, no matter what the personal discomfort'; 'You will persevere till the job is accomplished'; etc., was the pep talk given right at the induction stage. Then there was demonstration by personal example. Let me narrate this one particular case which has many lessons.

On one of his frequent visits to our plant, Lala ji asked the GM, at the airport itself, whether the laminations line had resumed operations? Now, this line, a critical part of any electric motor, had stopped working almost 10 days ago. Our own engineers and even the local agent's representatives had tried hard, but failed. We were waiting for an engineer from Japan. When Lala ji was informed about the situation, he decided to drive straight to that particular shop as he wanted to have a look at it. Upon arrival, he took off his jacket and got inside the line, and a couple of managers followed him. Once inside, he asked about every single switch, indicator light, relay, and hundreds of other connectors and attachments and their role in the running of the complex line. He would ask for something to be switched off or on, some screw to be tightened or a small part to be replaced. The heat inside was stifling; everyone was perspiring. First his tie came off, then the sleeves were rolled up, even the shirt was taken off, but Lala ji did not give up. Finally, after some three and a half hours, Lala ji emerged and the line was functioning perfectly. Everyone was sheepish but the great man had a big smile on his face. He said, "I am sure, if you had persisted, the machine would've been running several days ago. After all, you guys have set it right today also, I was only asking questions and boring you."

One of his annoying traits was that Lala ji wanted agendas for all meetings to be done to perfection. Just a spelling error or a skewed

line or some such minor mistake and he would fly with rage and chastise all those who were involved in preparing the same. The meeting will be postponed even if it meant 20 officers flying back to their base and returning after a couple of days with the corrected document. I remember asking him once as to why he wasted so much time and money on these small details? His answer floored me completely, "Do you think I do this for fun? My only reason is that all those involved should have total clarity on the subject." Indeed, when we made a perfect agenda, we had to make sure that we knew all the facts! By no stretch of imagination am I making a case that family-owned companies are not as good as professionally managed ones. If it were so, then the likes of GE, Nokia, Blackberry, Exxon Mobil, and Kodak would still be alive and kicking. In fact, the CEOs of these giants enjoyed absolute power—just as the owners do! These powerful, big guys, lording over monolithic organisations, did not have any promoters to question them. Perhaps power went to their heads and spelt disaster for their companies. Of course, many family-owned companies have also perished, but, perhaps, more of the so called 'professional' ones have met this fate.

Anyway, let me get back to my story. There were frequent rebukes, unpleasant pulling up sessions, even cuss words. There was zero-tolerance for dissent. We would feel miserable and often want to quit. Many did so. But, there were rewards too—again, totally unstructured and whimsical, often illogical and unreasonable, seemingly unfair to other colleagues, and yet, very pleasant ones. Let me tell you about one such case.

Circa 1969 or 70; it was about 7 pm when I finished discussing the papers marked to me. As I was saying good night, the big boss asked if I was planning to attend the wedding of a colleague that evening. "Yes, of course, I am," I told him. "Good, in that case, if you don't mind waiting for a while, we will go together. I want to just show my face at the ghurchari (a custom in Indian weddings wherein the groom sits on a white mare and proceeds to a temple). You can carry on after that." After a while, Lala ji came out and asked me to get into the car with him and

to tell my driver to follow. “I don’t have a driver,” I told him and added that I will follow his car. “No, in that case, I will ride with you and my car will follow,” said the boss.

The function was somewhere close to Minto Bridge. As we were driving through Connaught Place, Lala ji asked me to stop for a while, and suggested we take a stroll. That evening he seemed to be in a particularly good mood.

Going past the famous Empire Store, he suggested we go in for a Coca-Cola and some popcorn. We stood there, by the glass windows, sipping our Cokes, facing outside and watching people go by in the covered corridor of the inner circle. Suddenly, from the corner of his eye, he noticed the owner moving in our direction. “Let’s get out before this guy catches up, otherwise, he won’t let us leave for at least half an hour,” I was told. So the bottles were left on the floor and we made a quick exit.

As soon as we neared the wedding venue, the groom— already on horseback—saw the eagerly awaited big Pontiac, and he wasted no time in telling the ghoriwala (a person who owns and tends to the mare) that he wanted to get down for a minute. Everyone was aghast; he was told that it is an apshakun (bad omen) and once he had mounted ceremoniously, he could only get down at the bride’s place. But our man knew which side his bread was buttered. He dismissed all arguments and was on his feet in a jiffy, rushed to the limousine as Lala ji was stepping out, touched his feet, thanked him for his presence, got the blessings, and went back to his high perch. Meantime, Lala ji congratulated the family, handed over the mandatory shagun (monetary gift), and sought their leave, adding for good measure that, “Kalra will attend the ceremony.” As he was getting into the car, he told me, “Kalra, iski tankhwah wagera dekh lena,

shaadi hui hai to kharcha to barhe ga.” (Look into revising his salary; now that he is married, his expenses will increase).

Next morning, I was at the kothi with an increment slip (I had proposed a 10% special increment) for the lucky guy. When my turn came, I presented the paper, with the amount entered in pencil, for his signatures. One look at it, and he laughed, saying, “Tum kab se ‘bania’ ho gai ho?” Bechara 800 leta hai, 1000 to kar hi do.” (Since when have you become so stingy? The poor chap gets only 800 rupees; make it at least 1000).

As I was driving to my office, I felt very happy for the young accountant and was planning to actually send the good news slip to his house through a peon. As I entered and was heading to my cabin, I noticed all staff members grinning, and one or two even congratulated me. I was quite surprised. How did they know about Gupta’s big increment? I wondered. Perhaps the PA at the kothi had called one of them. But why were they congratulating me? Everything became clear as I entered my room. Right on top of the desk was an ‘office order’ signed obviously by the big boss, which had just one sentence “With immediate effect, Kalra is sanctioned company car and driver.”

About The Author



Krishan Kalra is a past president of AIMA and member, BOG IIMC. He is Trustee, Climate Project Foundation India

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 12 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

PICK YOUR STYLE

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y are good reference points for managements to decide on their style of leadership.

Amit Mishra, Indian School Of Business, Hyderabad



Organisations built to stand the test of times would always embrace adaptability. The changing patterns of industry demand a leadership style that not only helps the organisation grow, but also ensures that the employees feel comfortable and connected ceaselessly. The leadership style thus must be dynamic with changing times. The bone of contention always lies within a perfect idea of leadership, that there must be a single way to the apotheosis, albeit the most debated of the ideas. The reality is, a transformational leadership style imbibes within melanges of effective values that set the base for resilient organisations. The paper is an attempt to explore the ideas of Douglas McGregor on Theory X and

Theory Y and understand its application and how differing management styles have lasting impacts on the employees working in the organisation.

Theory X

Douglas McGregor ideas on Theory X management style emanated from his earlier works on classical management theory. The roots of Theory X lie in the notion that employees are inherently lazy and will dodge their work whenever they find an opportunity. The onus then lies on the reporting managers to keep the employees in momentum, give them direction, continuously motivate them, or penalise them as the situation demands. This theory proposes that employees lack drive and stay in their comfort zones. Therefore, they require a management system in which they are led and controlled by their supervisors, while being subjected to threats and punishments. Theory X also tends to promote authoritarian leadership style within the organisation which creates a lack of trust among the peer group.

Theory Y

Theory Y is defined as an alternate management principle to Theory X, deemed as a more optimistic leadership approach X. It proposes that employees working in the organisation are not lazy and are always looking for opportunities to upskill and rise up in the hierarchy. It is always for the supervisors to provide the employees with ample freedom and opportunities, so that the latter can align themselves to the company's vision and achieve organisational goals cohesively. Contrary to Theory X, Theory Y states that employees dislike lack of freedom and controlled decisionmaking mechanism in the organisation. It also states that employees always look for meaningful work, they look for ways to take responsibility, and if the

management provides them with optimum conditions, they excel at work. Theory Y not only builds trust among the employees but also helps build strong decision-making skills. It advocates the idea that every employee is valuable and has his/her say in the organisation's progress; that every employee has the right to exercise his/her free will and creative independence at work to achieve maximum potential.

Conclusion

Douglas McGregor never expounded upon the two motivational theories with an aim to draw upon a choice between one or another. Both the theories hold their relevance and must be referred to accordingly. No organisation in the world has modelled their management style choosing either Theory X or Theory Y. It is always up to the management to decide how the teams must be led, what actions necessitates success whether being coercive in some situations is the right choice or being compliant is. Differing styles (Theory X or Theory Y) need to be tested and the most effective amongst them must be chosen for efficient management. In any situation, the organisation must not only look for increasing productivity but also ensure that employee well-being is not compromised.

Douglas McGregor never perceived the two theories as canonical laws; he left them open

for improvements and improvisation. In his last days he started to work on another theory which was an improved version of Theory X & Y and combined the ideas from both the theories. He called this motivational theory as Theory Z. It was only after his death that William Ouchi elucidated Theory Z by drawing similarities between American style of leadership and Japanese style of leadership. He proposed that organisations should ground their execution in values which is a blend of American and Japanese style of management.

Theory Z promotes not only constant skill refinement of the employees but also advocates fostering long-lasting relationships between them. Employees will only perform better in environments in which they feel secure and safe. Organisations who trust their workers and give them the space to assert their opinions, create such environments. Whether it's Theory X or Theory Y or Theory Z, management should give a lot of thought before applying any of them, as the outcome will depend not just on the theory, but on its right application.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Amit Mishra is an academic associate, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad

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Disclaimer:

The article was first published in *Indian Management Journal* (Issue 6 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

THE FUTURE OF SKILLS

The future of work will be quite different from today. Hence, the workforce of the future needs to be armed with the right skills

Dr Debashish Sengupta, Royal University For Women, Bahrain



Digital, AI, and automation technologies are transforming the world and the future of work. The Covid-19 pandemic has acted as a vigorous catalyst in this transformation and has tremendously accelerated the whole process. The future of work is likely to be very different from the one that we see now. Take, for example, the education sector, to which I belong. The traditional universities may soon see the end of the road if they do not quickly innovate and leverage modern technologies to make their offerings accessible with no geographical or time barriers. The EdTech companies are growing fast on the horizon and the future in all likelihood belongs to them. In the same way, each sector is transforming and so is changing the skills that will be demanded in the future to

deal with this transformed work and workplace. From network being built across companies, we might have companies being built on the network completely. Some have already begun, and others are fast transitioning into the same. So, what are the skills for the future?

Mapping Skills For The Future

Many organisations have tried to enumerate the skills for the future. Some of the studies have really done a great job in doing the same. While these listings of future skills are good in their own ways, each of these studies has presented a slightly different version of skills for the future. Therefore, it was important to map these various future skills reports and create a comprehensive future skills list that could serve as a benchmark for various academic and corporate development programs as well as a guide for personal professional development.

Methodology

The mapping of the skills for the future was done in two steps- first, mapping across few selected and global future of skill studies, and second, these skills were mapped to different skill categories.

Six top future skills studies were mapped. These include future of skills studies by global bodies, global consultancies, and top recruiter sites World Economic Forum, Forbes, Institute for the Future (ITF), McKinsey & Company, Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW), and Top Resume. The skills were assigned scores (weights) based on where they featured in terms of rank in a particular study. The scores for each skill were then aggregated. Since the maximum score for any skill was assigned as 10, any skill which had an aggregate score of less than 10 was not considered significant enough to be part of the final list. Keeping this criteria, 16 skills made it to the skills for the future category.

Skills	World Economic Forum	Forbes	IFTE	McKinsey & Company	AIDSW (Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week)	Top Resume	Overall Score
Active Learning and Learning Strategies	8	7			7.5	10	35.5
Novel and Adaptive (Adaptability)			8	10	10	4	32
Critical Thinking and analysis (Sense Making) (Smart System)	7	10	10	2	2.5		31.5
Emotional (Social) Intelligence		9	9			6	24
Diversity & Cultural Intell. (Cross Cultural) (Fostering Inclusiveness)		3	7	6	7.5		23.5
Creativity, originality and initiative	6	8			2.5		21.5
Leadership and social influence/People Management	5	1			7.5		16.5
Judgement and Decision Making		6				8	14
Technology Skills (use, control, monitoring) Digital Fluency	4	2			7.5		13.5
Complex Problem Solving	8				5		13
Embracing Change (Coping with uncertainty)		1		9		3	13
Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility	2				10		12
Teamwork, collaboration, social intelligence			4		5	7	12
Transdisciplinarity					7.5		11.5
Analytical Thinking and Innovation	10						10
New Media Literacy			5		5		10

This can be considered by far the most acceptable, relevant, and rigorous skills list as it aggregates the rigour that was applied in completing each of these studies by their principal organizations.

In step two, the top 16 skills were mapped to four skill categories- Cognitive skills, people skills, personal skills, and technological skills.

Cognitive Skills

Skill rank	Skill	Skill category
1	Active Learning and Learning Strategies	Cognitive
2	Novel and Adaptive (Adaptability)	Personal
3	Critical Thinking and analysis (Sense Making) (Smart System)	Cognitive
4	Emotional (Social) Intelligence	People
5	Diversity & Cultural Intell. (Cross Cultural) (Fostering Inclusiveness)	Personal
6	Creativity, originality and initiative	Cognitive
7	Leadership and social influence/People Management	People
8	Judgement and Decision Making	Cognitive
9	Technology skills (use, control, monitoring) Digital Fluency	Technological
10	Complex Problem Solving	Cognitive
11	Embracing Change (Coping with uncertainty)	Personal
12	Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility	Personal
13	Teamwork, collaboration, social intelligence	People
14	Transdisciplinarity	Cognitive
15	Analytical Thinking and Innovation	Cognitive
16	New Media Literacy	Technological

Cognitive skills will be important in the future that help a person to learn, think, retain information, process information enabling a person to understand meanings, contexts, solve problems and make decisions. This is by far the most important category of skills for the future. Out of the 16 skills, six skills, namely, active learning and learning strategies, critical thinking and analysis (sense making) (smart system), creativity, originality and initiative, judgement and decision making, complex problem solving, transdisciplinarity, analytical thinking and innovation fall under this category. Each of these skills can be further articulated in detail.

People Skills

With new work models coming into existence, the future of workforce might be connected over network. It should be less of a surprise if one finds a person of Indian nationality living in Dubai working for a European company. This is only going to intensify in the future. With reduction of face-to-face contacts, people skills like teamwork, collaboration, social intelligence, leadership and social influence/people management and emotional (social) intelligence will needed to manage work and engage people in the future.

Personal Skills

The future of work will also require people to change, adapt, and learn at a rapid pace. The workplace built over the network is likely to be extremely diverse in all possible ways. And, rapid changes, disruptions might also bring with them high levels of stress. Personal skills like resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility, embracing change (coping with uncertainty), diversity, and cultural intelligence (cross cultural) (fostering inclusiveness and novel and adaptive (adaptability) would be in great demand in the future.

Technological Skills

Technology has already pervaded our lives and the future is only going to make this mesh around us denser and stronger. Therefore, technological skills would be in great demand

as well. Everyone will be expected to be not only tech-literate but tech-proficient. Technology skills (use, control, monitoring), digital fluency, and new media literacy will be the most in demand.

Do today's new hires have skills for the future? Having mapped the skills for the future, it was also important to see if the HR managers and business leaders are able to find hires with these skills. Running interviews with HR leaders, entrepreneurs, and business managers I found a general agreement that it was difficult to find new hires with skills for the future.



It is also interesting to note how companies are changing the way they hire. I ran a social media poll to understand how companies are hiring right now and how are they likely to hire in future. The poll that asked the participants to vote if their companies hired more for knowledge than educational degrees, more for skills than experiences, and above all, for the right attitude.

The findings of the survey clearly show that traditional hiring is slowly giving way to a more competency-based hiring where skills will be valued more.

Did millennials learn their top three job skills from the professional schools?

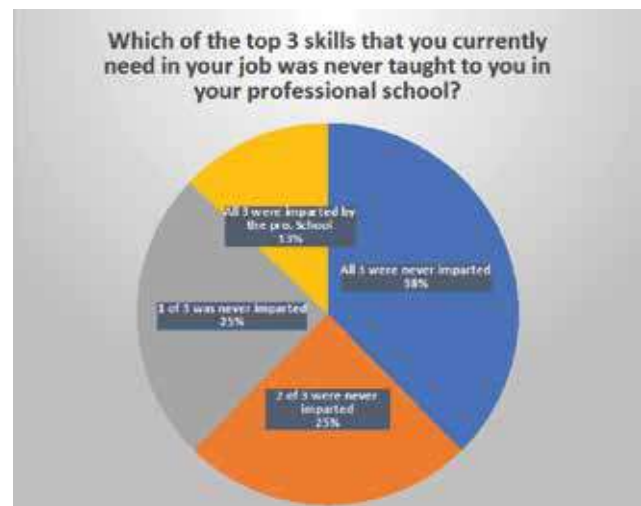
Millennials, today, make up for the majority of the workforce. As traditional hiring is giving way to more competency-based hiring, HR leaders are finding it difficult to find hires who possess skills for the future.

Another study on millennials revealed that majority of them do not think that they acquired the top the skills that they currently used in their jobs from their professional schools. That is indeed a shocking revelation.

By 2025, millennials will make up roughly 75 per cent of the world's workforce. By 2028, the oldest millennial, will still be quite young and will be entering leadership position. If this soon-to-be-the-largest global workforce, feels that their top skills of today did not come from the professional schools, it certainly is indicative of an existing and continuing gap between what is taught in schools and the attributes desired by the industry.

The gap can be qualified at least in two very significant aspects –

1. The education imparted by professional schools is largely not contributing to the skill development of the graduates.
2. Professional schools do not prepare graduates for the skills needed in the future.



This could also be because most of them are yet to take stock of the future of skills and tailor their curriculum design and delivery on those lines. How many professional schools use the graduate attributes to benchmark their program and then use the principle of backward design to build those learning outcomes into those programs and each course offering?

The Way Forward

A philosopher once said- 'Education is the passport to the future'. Education should help one to think critically and build character at the same time. In present times, though, it should also focus on skills. The concept of 'backward design' in curriculum design, delivery, and assessment calls for ascertaining the learning outcomes of a course or a program first before deciding on what to teach, how to teach, what to assess, and how to assess. Most professional school programs are over focused on disseminating information and knowledge, but less focused on skills that would help graduates in their career. Hence, it is important for professional schools

to revamp their curriculum design and delivery and make it focused on developing skills for the future.

About The Author



Debashish Sengupta is an author, millennial expert, and business consultant. He is a Professor with Royal University for Women, Bahrain, and a master trainer certified from Harvard University in Higher Education Teaching

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The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 4 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

THE IDEAL MOTIVATION

Dan Ariely's ground-breaking work can help organisations understand the basic nuances underlying employee motivation.

Amit Mishra, Indian School Of Business, Hyderabad

Why is Dan Ariely important?

Dan Ariely is a professor at Duke University, a trained psychologist, and a behavioural economist who is widely regarded as one of the most important scholars in his area. He is noted for his wide-ranging and incisive research on human behaviour and psychology and has authored three best-selling books—Predictably Irrational, The Honest Truth about Dishonesty, and The Upside of Irrationality. Principal ideas emanating from his research on Behavioural Economics and Psychology are held in high regard in the academic circle.

Dan Ariely shot to notice when he challenged the basic notions of motivation in the organisation through his research. One of his most famous experiments was conducted at a semiconductor factory of Intel in Israel (Research was published in the paper titled—It's (not) all about the Jacks: Testing different types of short-term bonuses in the field, 2014) where employees, at the end of their workday, were given either a bonus of \$30, a pizza voucher, or a text message complimenting their work by the boss. Pizza turned out to be the best motivational reward but eventually as the week passed, Ariely and his team

found that the compliment received from the boss had the best effect on the employees. The study concluded with the notion that employees prefer to be valued and appreciated, and their performance primarily dwelled upon appreciation by the boss over monetary benefits.



Ariely's research on organizational motivation rocked the management diaspora and paved the way for several management theories revolving around the ideas of intrinsic motivation at work. Ariely has argued that monetary benefits do not actually motivate employees in the long run; a sense of purpose, work autonomy, and optimum acknowledgments are the key forerunners for employees' performance. The article put forth his intricate theories in a simple form, and if imbibed well, can help organisations understand the basic nuances underlying employee motivation.

Ariely's genesis of organisational motivation

Dan Ariely's prior inspiration to work in motivational theories dates back to his teenage years when he was horribly injured in an accident, wherein 70 per cent of his body succumbed to third-degree burns. Consequently, the next few years of his life were spent in hospital beds with nurses trying their best to heal his wounds. Miraculously, Ariely survived the ordeal and attributes this period of pain and tribulations as his inspiration for his lifetime work on human behaviour and motivation. Finding meaning in tough times helped him sail through the agonising trauma of the psyche afflicted by the wounds of dismay. He has always emphasized the fact that human motivations are affected by several dynamic variables and one among them is whether we generate a sense of meaning in whatever we do or not. Research conducted by BetterUp labs in 2017 corroborates that employees' motivation at work is directly proportional to them finding their work to be meaningful. (Reference- <https://www.betterup.com/press/workers-value-meaning-at-work-new-research-from-betterup-shows-just-how-much-theyre-willing-to-pay-for-it>)

According to a poll conducted in 2019, involving more than 3,500 workers in the United States and the United Kingdom, meaningful work outranks income, bonuses, and other criteria in career relevance across all age groups. Meaningful work becomes increasingly essential to us as we age, concluded in a poll commissioned by a software company called Workhuman. Those who had a sense of significance and purpose

in their work were four times more likely to enjoy their work and live a productive life. (<https://www.workhuman.com/press-releases/meaningful-compensationemployee/>)

Money is not always the best motivator, since it puts a monetary value on qualities like dedication, zeal, punctuality, politeness, and ambition which are not easily quantifiable. Good incentives, on the other hand, focus on acknowledgment and the development of relationships. People who are rewarded for quantifiable achievements are more likely to search for methods to accomplish the goal from various means which can be unscrupulous and dishonest; this is also one of the reasons that monetary rewards do not add much value to employee motivation after a certain point.

Ariely's Four Laws of Organisational Motivation

Law 1: Meaningful work is the source of employee motivation

A. Generate a sense of meaning. Employees are more motivated when their work has meaning. Simply understanding that there is a sense of purpose in the work they do is enough to enhance employees' productivity. The productivity boost is even greater when people find intrinsic enjoyment in their work, and they will continue to do that work even when monetary rewards have diminished.

B. Motivating an employee is hard, demotivating him/her is easy. People can be forced to do meaningless work or can have their existing work become meaningless when they are asked to dismantle it. When work is meaningless, the performance of people who enjoy the work is as low as that of people who do not. When projects are abandoned because they are no longer in a company's best interests, its employees can lose motivation if they feel that their work on that project is viewed as meaningless by the management. The research by Ariely revealed that it is easier to destroy meaning for employees than it is to create it.

C. Accountable leaders. Many business leaders

fail to reinforce meaning in order to create motivation. Companies that reinforce employee hierarchies fail to make employees feel unique and valuable. An added investment in meaning generates increased productivity. It is the leader with whom the onus lies to create motivation at the workplace.

Law 2: The desire to create is one of the deepest yearnings of human soul

A. Creativity is next to divinity. People associate value with the things they put effort into even if those things are not particularly unique. The greater the effort, the more value they assign to the results, even if they are of objectively worse quality. Employees feel a greater attachment to products they assembled or chose to design themselves. Thus, creativity at the workplace is an important cornerstone of employee motivation. Workers who are motivated to be creative are often more productive and inventive than those who are not.

Law 3: Non-monetary rewards are the true motivational rewards

A. Personalised rewards. The offer of a reward can be a strong motivator as long as the reward supports the meaning of the work. Leaders must think constantly about the rewards they give to their workers and how they are motivating their teams. It is recommended that rewards should be personalised rather than keeping it the same for every person regardless of interest or suitability. This ensures that employees feel that the leadership recognises them individually, is interested in them specifically, and cares that they feel comfortable and accepted in the workplace. Some rewards are unquantifiable.

Applying monetary value to interpersonal relationships is often upsetting to both parties because it can imply that the entire relationship has been about an exchange of goods rather than about helping one another to achieve a mutual goal. Rewards like attention, recognition, responsibility, credit, equity, fairness, freedom to exercise creative independence, growth opportunities, etc. can never be equated with

money. The human brain deals with money differently than it deals with other objects of value. Even if someone brings a pie worth \$60 to a family dinner, the impact is more rewarding to the relationship than if that person wrote a check for \$60 and gave it to the host.

Law 4: Nothing lasts forever, not even motivation.

A. Beyond ephemera. We all know the eternal truth, that everyone who is born on this planet shall see an end, and that death is a stealth motivator. The reality is that we are perishable, and somebody no sooner can replace us and take our place in the organisation when we have reached fate's end. Being able to work on something meaningful is a very crucial aspect between life and death. Employees may ease emotions of worthlessness in the job by generating purpose for themselves and others. Building meaning can also be connoted to leaving a legacy, it does not necessarily mean doing something great that no one else has done. This could also mean repairing ties with colleagues in the organisation, revisiting the way we approach our work, or establishing a program or foundation that continues to assist others after the originator has passed away. The desire to make a lasting impact shall motivate employees to do meaningful things as employees, in the end, are more scared of a pointless existence than of death.

Epilogue

The crux of Ariely's idea of motivation revolves around 'meaning'. If employees find meaning in their work and are valued for whatever they do, their motivation levels will always be at their peak. The best that any organisation can do is attach meaning to the employee's work as a sense of meaning will win over the impediments that hinder employees' growth in the organisation.

A great psychiatrist and author, Viktor Frankl, has noted how the inherent human yearning for meaning is so strong that people search for their life's purpose even in the direst of

circumstances. As a result, meaningfulness is more important to employees than any other aspect of their job, such as pay and perks, growth opportunities, or working conditions. Work that is meaningful, will always be very motivating, resulting in greater productivity, devotion, and satisfaction. Organisations that instill the notion of meaningfulness in employees will always outlast and triumph over the organisations that don't.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Amit Mishra is an academic associate, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad

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The article was first published in *Indian Management Journal* (Issue 8 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

THE LEADERSHIP SWEET SPOT

In his monthly column, Cyrus MR Gonda explains why, as a leader, your leadership achievements matter more than your personal milestones.

Cyrus MR Gonda

Sustainability. Corporate responsibility. Business purpose. Social responsibility. Call it what you like; competent boards can no longer afford to put ESG—environment, social, and corporate governance—issues on the back burner.

Not long ago, these subjects—ranging from freak weather events to demands for a higher minimum wage and the diversity of board members—were widely considered to have no place on a board agenda. Now, however, directors ignore them at their peril.

All great performers need not be leaders, and all great leaders need not be performers. Of course, it is always good when a leader is also capable of performing well. It adds a lot of value to the team he is leading. But consider a large-sized organisation having around five-thousand employees, or even a thousand employees. How much of a difference can one individual's (the leader's) contribution in terms of individual achievement or performance really make?

Not too much, even if his or her workrelated output is phenomenal.



On the other hand, it is the leadershiprelated achievements—based on leadership qualities, rather than the individual achievements and the personal milestones, that can determine and decide the fortunes of an organisation.

Too many times, the leader of a department or a team or an organisation is incorrectly chosen, based on the individual-level skills and performance that he or she displays. But one needs to remember that selecting a leader to 'lead' others so that these others can offer their best to the team, requires a totally different set of skills as compared to the skills required for individual success.

The reason such poor decisions are taken is that not much thought goes into the selection process as far as choosing an appropriate team-leader is concerned. In most cases, it is assumed that a good performer will, by default, make a good leader—which is an incorrect assumption.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, former Indian cricketer and captain of the Indian national cricket team offers the best of

both the worlds. In Dhoni's case, thankfully, we have a rather rare combination where leadership qualities, as well as the ability to perform well in an individual capacity, are found combined in the same individual.

Dhoni's record leading the team, not only in terms of the championship wins but in the other traits of leadership as well, is phenomenal. In fact, it is purely because of his leadership traits—motivating, supporting, leading from the front, taking responsibility for—that Dhoni has been able to lead his team to victories, consistently.

Of course, the fact that he is also skilled with the bat and behind the wickets, makes him even more desirable in the captain's position. But the thing to keep in mind is that if there is a choice to be made when selecting a leader between two people—one of whom is a great individual performer but not skilled at leadership—and another who is not such a great individual performer but highly skilled at leadership—it is the one with better leadership skills who needs to be selected for the leadership spot.

As commentator Harsha Bhogle rightly points out: "If you're not doing well yourself, you still have to get performance from others. These are two different things."

Mike Brearley is considered to be the finest captain of the English cricket team of all time. He played 39 tests for England in the 1970s and the 1980s, and captained the English side in 31 of them. Out of these 31 tests he captained the side in, he won 18 tests and lost only 4. Of the 19 tests in which he captained England at home, he never lost a single one.

Was he a great bowler?

No; Brearley did not bowl.

Was he the wicket-keeper then?

No; Brearley had the services of one of the greatest wicket-keepers of all time, Alan Knott, when he was captain. So Brearley did not keep (or needed to keep) wickets either.

Then he must have been a great batsman. Wrong

again. Brearley did bat, but he could hardly be called great, or even a good, batsman. In the 66 innings that Brearley batted for England in test-matches, his average was extremely modest: just 22.88. This is an average that even tail-enders have today. He never scored a single test century either. So, if he was such an average performer, why was he occupying a slot in the team in the first place? Because, purely as a captain—a cricketing brain—he was a genius.

It seems amazing that in over 30 testmatches, across many years, he was in the side purely for his captaincy skills alone.

English superstar cricketer Ian Botham, who played many matches under Brearley's brilliant captaincy, said about Brearley: "Without a doubt the best captain I ever played under, a man with a billion-dollar cricketing brain."

Australian record-breaking pace-bowler Rodney Hogg, who played against Brearley's English team, described Brearley as having "A degree in people."

Brearley was truly a master motivator — a leader whom the most talented men would gladly follow.

And it showed in his captaincy record: 31 tests – 4 losses – 17 wins.

Brearley's best-selling book, *The Art of Captaincy*—largely based on his own successful leadership experience—is considered as a classic work; it is a book that needs to be read by every aspiring leader, no matter what field they are in.

An contrasting example to that of Brearley's is Sachin Tendulkar, who, being maybe the best batsman the world has ever seen, himself declined the leadership role after a short stint, as he realised that it was impacting his batting abilities.

But Dhoni took a different approach, where his batting actually flowered and flourished in combination with his leadership role. So, on one hand we have players like Sachin Tendulkar—excellent performers—but not suitable for the

leadership position. On the other hand, we have cricketers like Brearley, who are by no means performers, but are excellent captains and leaders—role-models for the position.

And then, there are cricketers like Dhoni, who are phenomenal performers, as well as outstanding captains and leaders. This is the sweet spot to be at as far as leadership is concerned.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Cyrus MR Gonda is a thought leader, best-selling author, and a leading trainer in the areas of customer experience, communication, leadership, and selling skills.

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 2 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

THOUGHTFUL OPTIMISM

Blind optimism does not help solve real problems; practical thinking during setting attainable goals does.

Amit Mishra, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad



'Be positive', is the most widely used terminology in organisations, hackneyed by the ginger group of personnel who are perpetually besieged with bottom lines, targets, EBITDA, incessant meetings, gross margins, competition, conversion rates, etc. The phrase finds its solace in the mess of convoluted aspirations of every employee who visualises climbing the corporate ladder faster to the celestial city of success and growth but seldom arrives mid-way to find the lurking disappointments in low appraisal ratings or to the chagrin of the boss's reproof. Positivity coaches (a recently conceived neologism for honchos who give pep talks in return for huge sums from the corporate treasury) harp on the magical power of thinking positively for employee growth. Most of them, positivity coaches draw their inspiration from the nuances of positivity made known to the world by Norman Vincent Peale, Martin Seligman, Napoleon Hill, etc.

The Power of Positive Thinking, a book released in 1952 by Peale, is the very first treatise on positivity and visualising positivity in every

ordeal to make life better. Later, the idea of positivity gained traction in the times of Martin Seligman, particularly in the '90s, who amalgamated the notion of positivity and science and deemed it positive psychology. Recently, these ideas formed the foundation for proponents of positive thinking like Anthony Robbins, Ken Blanchard, Wayne Dyer, Rhonda Byrne, etc. Rhonda Byrne took the concepts to an extreme when she wrote the best-selling book The Secret, and asserted that having optimistic thoughts was the secret ingredient that would ensure success in practically any circumstance. It was everything anyone required and thus success would follow ideas of success, and failure would always follow the thoughts of failure.

But does the factor of positive thinking affect employees' efficiency? Do visualizing positive outcomes lead to desired results? Is positive thinking a panacea for all organizational problems or is there any other tested way? Let's find out

Rethinking positive thinking

Unfortunately for the proponents of positivity, most of the research in this area indicates that the effectiveness of positive thinking is substantially exaggerated. Dr Gabrielle Oettingen, Professor of Psychology, University of New York, has conducted in-depth research in this area. He has spent more than 20 years researching this topic and has found that unlike what we think, pleasant imaginations do not always help us accomplish our objectives. Positive thinking really saps our motivation and weakens our determination to complete the necessary activities.

Dr Oettingen critically reexamines positive thinking and provides a more helpful, nuanced view of motivation based on strong empirical data in her concise book, *Rethinking Positive Thinking: Inside the New Science of Motivation*. According to conventional thinking, inspirational dreams should ideally always motivate us to take action.

Dr Oettingen tests this by enlisting a group of undergraduate college students and dividing them into two groups at random. She advised the first group to imagine that the upcoming week will be a knock out: fantastic grades, amazing parties, happy times, etc., and asked them to visualise positive outcomes. Students in the second group were urged to write all of their ideas and daydreams about the upcoming week—both good and terrible ones—calculative neutral visualisations.

Surprisingly, compared to those who were directed to create a neutral dream, the students who were told to think positively felt far less motivated and productive. It turns out that blind optimism does not inspire individuals; rather, as Dr Oettingen demonstrates in a series of analytical studies, it fosters a feeling of ease and complacency. It is as if when we daydream or fantasize about something we want, our minds are duped into thinking we have already accomplished the objective. Studies reveal that simply daydreaming about a desire decreases blood pressure, whereas thinking about the same wish and imagining not receiving it raises

blood pressure, suggesting that there may be a physiological foundation for this impact. Daydreaming could make you feel better, but it saps your energy and makes you less ready to take action. It, also, puts our culture's unwavering belief in the docks that, 'if you can dream it, you can do it'. It appears that the key to accomplishing your objectives is to be aware of both your desires and the actual obstacles that you and the outside world erect in the odyssey to success and happiness.

In another experiment conducted by Dr Oettingen, two groups of obese persons were assigned the task of reducing weight. One group was urged to see themselves as a leaner version of themselves and to think only positive thoughts about losing weight and the other group was asked to visualise practically about the outcome. The findings were startling after a year. The majority of optimistic thinkers dropped the least amount of weight. Why? Again, visualising success might make you feel good and accomplished before you've really achieved it, decreasing the desire to put effort into it. Thus, People fare badly in terms of having real achievement the more enthusiastically they fantasize and daydream about their future success.

Impeding positivity

Researchers forthrightly deny that simply thinking positively does any good and is almost toxic for our personal growth. Dr Susan David is a recognised Harvard Medical School psychologist and one of the top management thinkers. An expert on emotions and the author of the book *Emotional Agility*, she explains what toxic positivity is, how it appears in our culture, and how we as people and leaders may combat it. 'A tyranny of positivity', as Dr Susan calls it, toxic positivity is the refusal to let ourselves or others feel the complete spectrum of emotions, especially the unpleasant ones. When you are an individual, you can appear to be convincing yourself that everything is OK even when it is not. It can appear that you are experiencing an unpleasant emotion, but instead of letting the emotion go, you decide to focus on all the positive aspects of the situation.

We have been led to believe that doing this will make us stronger, but Dr Susan claims that the hypothesis is false and the reverse is true. This is the case because if we do not deal with the unpleasant emotion, it will not go away and the issue will not be resolved.

If we experience tough feelings while interacting with a toxically positive culture, we start to think there is something wrong with ourselves. Toxic positivity sounds like individuals in our life telling us desuetude phrases like “Keep your head up” and “Be optimistic” that do not address the real issues when we are trying to understand our unpleasant emotions. When asked how they got to where they are today, successful individuals or those who have experienced objectively challenging circumstances may respond, “I got here because I embraced optimism and believed in myself,” which does not elucidate the complete picture. The superficiality of the narrative makes everyone believe that embracing optimism shall make them stand out or help them become star performers which does not happen really.

Embracing realism

What is the ideal way then? Thinking positively does not help and people seldom think negatively about any prospect unless they are very sure about the outcome, which is a rarity in itself. Some of the critics of positive thinking urge individuals to stop talking positively and focus only on difficulties or hindrances that lie on the way. But this adjustment is too immoderate. According to studies, this tactic is no more effective than having positive fantasies. The best strategy is the hybrid strategy that blends optimistic thinking with ‘reality’ which

works wonders according to the research. Dr Gabrielle suggests a technique she calls mental contrasting, which entails first imagining the ideal goal and then the difficulties or impractical barriers that stand in the way of that goal. Gabrielle reasoned that seeing the challenges right after the good fantasy would counteract its calming and dissociation effects and motivate individuals to action. Dr Gabrielle conducted a study and asked participants to select a goal for either their personal or professional lives. She divided them into four groups and asked them to rate how feasible they believed their aims were. The first group engaged in mental contrasting, where they first entertained optimistic fantasies before considering the challenges, they might encounter. The second group solely engaged in optimistic fantasies. The third group simply focused on the real obstacles. The fourth group had a reverse contrast where they first thought about the practical hurdles and then they had their optimistic fantasies. Dr Gabrielle has discovered that people with attainable goals, which is group number one felt more energized and motivated to work towards them. The idea is not to disparage positivity. It is very helpful in various potential scenarios, but it has to be balanced with prudence. If employees combine optimism with a clear grasp of the challenges to be overcome and the work to be done in the organisation, then they shall perform better than the rest who engage only in positive visualisation.

Therefore, it appears that today our workforce requires a right union of optimism and realism, and the idea is not old. In the 5th century BC, Lord Buddha endorsed the same idea with a different connotation called ‘Madhyam-Pratipada’ (the middle way). The middle way seems to be the

only working way for our aspiring personnel who seek achievement amidst all the agony. It worked for Lord Buddha a long time back who sought nirvana and there is no reason it will not work for our burgeoning workforce who seek a 'corporate nirvana' of their own.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Amit Mishra is an academic associate, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.

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Disclaimer:

The article was first published in *Indian Management Journal* (Issue 10 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

TURNAROUNDS WITH LEAN MINDSET

Sometimes, even the best laid plans can go awry. But a lean mindset can change it all.

Sanjeev Baitmangalkar, Stratmann Consulting

It was with great expectations Bridgeport USA and Texmaco Indonesia came together and set up a joint venture company (JVC). The project was headed by experts and a multicultural team from six countries. The land, building, machinery, and manpower were installed, the engineers and workmen were trained at the collaborator's factory in USA. But, five years since inception, with plant, machinery, people, and money in place, they had failed to produce even a single machine! Sometimes, even the best laid plans can go awry, as it happened in this case. Here's how a lean mindset changed it all...

The Bridgeport and Texmaco JV was setup to manufacture both conventional and CNC machine tools. In this article I will use the example of Bridgeport's conventional milling machine for simplicity and understanding.

Identifying the central problem

In five years, some castings and components were developed but never converted into a complete machine. Discussions revealed that the business process was not well-defined and conflicting views between marketing and operations had impeded progress. We asked ourselves many questions ranging from strategy, policy, process, people, competence etc., and were in pursuit of a solution.

The main issues The factors we identified as playing a role in the company not being able to produce a single machine in five years were:

- The frequent interruptions and incorrect discrete instructions from the local shareholder family members who played different roles in the group. These instructions often contradicted earlier decisions. It also questioned the authority installed to oversee this project.
- Indonesia was known for textiles and not machine tools. Our Chairman had told me
- that one of his dreams was to make Indonesia known for manufacture of engineering products. To do that we had to establish the manufacturing processes, supply chain, throughput times, lead times, and deal with cash cycles etc., all while contending with detractions from peers and discrete thinkers within the group management.
- Strategy for gaining market entries, breaking barriers, production, supply chain, and developing people were missing. Although the company was supported by technical knowhow from the parent company, a proper buyback arrangement was missing, because of which both sides had lost on potentially leveraging low-cost production opportunities.



- Target markets were not identified.
- Core competencies required to build this business were not identified. A good business process, sound philosophy and proper perspective were felt wanting.
- The pricing factor had probably killed the project. There was total disconnection between expectation and reality. For example, the prevailing thought was that the management wanted to sell a milling machine at \$10,000 per piece, while Taiwan sold similar machines for approximately one fourth the price. While Taiwan sold about 36,000 machines a year, Bridgeport's numbers were at best in triple digits annually.
- The casting factor: the group's own foundry was dictating the price, quality, and quantity of casting supplied. The foundry's expectation was a price of \$1.40 per kg of casting, which could otherwise be sourced from Taiwan at that time for thirty to fiftyfive cents per kilogram of casting and in fully finished component condition!
- Since five years were spent without producing a single product, the accuracy and reliability of the equipment, tooling, and capability of the people were not proven and established.
- Lead times for various activities were not determined. Operations were not standardised and throughput times were not known.
- Milling heads were to be procured from the collaborator. The prices of these were not competitive and in fact, were exorbitant, thus making the product unsellable. The brand may have had its name, but customers knew alternate sources for similar machines. The opportunities in machining centers presented more excitement, but the collaborators wanted this to be a subsequent development.
- The strategic intent of the local partner was not clear—it lacked clear philosophy, principles, and value systems to govern this joint venture.

- The plant and equipment supplied by the collaborators were used and rebuilt machines; they were never put to test here and were never beaten for production. The capacity, capability and reliability of this line was not proven and established.

Formulating the strategy

The long-term objective was to develop a supply chain from within Indonesia that would include our group companies. But in the shortterm we had to address market needs—the reputation of being a reliable machine tool manufacturer. Considering the training and development time required within, we needed a strong short to medium-term strategy that could catapult us into the global markets and help understand the customer requirements and establish ourselves as reliable suppliers.

Considerations

Buy gears and castings from in-house group companies. We had to test our ability to produce all components in house. Could we develop them all simultaneously? Were we geared up



for it? The milling head was a critical assembly and had intricate component machining, gear velocities, noise considerations, etc. Among the machinery installed, there was no machine available to finish machine high precision parts. The hardening facility for the spindle was not installed. A group company that had a gear shop could have been asked to supply gears, but they did not have proper equipment to produce gears of quality class IT-5 and 6. So, in our assessment, the factory was not ready to produce the 'milling heads' in-house yet. We had to either source the components or the assembly in the short to medium term.

The group foundry was ready to supply castings. They had received the patterns of parts other than the head from the collaborator and made some sample castings. Quality issues on casting prevailed but, these could be resolved and overcome. The foundry was selling the castings at \$1.40 per kg and wanted to be the final authority on price and salvaging standards! These factors would render us uncompetitive and hence was not acceptable.

The advantage of building the milling head assembly in house was obvious, and we wanted to get to this stage and bring in all that value addition. However, in the beginning our priorities included customers, markets, channel partners, supply chain partners, working capital, etc. Thus, in the beginning, we were not equipped to produce everything in-house. Sourcing from points of cost advantage without sacrificing quality, although costbased strategy would have been the right approach, with the outsourcing thought the differentiation strategy may not hold out. We could source the parts or assemblies from India or Taiwan, but this singular approach would not help develop internal competence.

Concurrent strategy

The critical issue was that even after five years since inception the joint venture had failed to produce machines, bag orders, establish markets, and corner a share in the market place. Everybody was eager to begin production and deliver machines. The concurrent strategy was



to set up two supply chains; one that focused on developing internal competence (long-term), while the other sourced parts from Taiwan until such time we had developed competence to produce parts of the required quality in the required time. This would give us the following advantages and help overcome all the in-between problems:

- We would commence manufacture of all components except 'milling head', and work on the supply chain, procurement cost and quality, manufacturing processes, cycle times, lead times, throughput times, standardise work, develop the ability to solve problems, process documentation etc.
- Initially, we would not be constrained by the results of in-house processes for component manufacture, but could respond to the market demands and fulfill those using outsourced components.
- One of the challenges was building in competencies, lean systems, and processes required. This was our top priority. The outsourcing strategy was to gain time to build in the Jidoka and Kaizen capabilities,

knowledge of JIT tools and techniques, and while doing so not lose the present market, and to begin building a reputation and an image.

- Bring in the CNC machining centers and CNC milling machines. Our intent was not to lose out on present markets while quickly moving on to future ones. We knew that to gain a share of this market we had to compete with the quality low cost manufacturers from other countries; besides Southeast Asian countries are not known to be machine tool producers. To make money in this market one had to produce at low costs and high volumes; however, the sales volumes and contributions could only improve by enriching the product mix. The collaborator had a range of CNC machining centers and CNC milling machines. The bigger opportunities, greater markets, and better contributions lay in these products.

Living the challenge of 'Possibility thinking'

The company had been in existence for five years, incurring expenses without generating any revenue; hence, it was net cash-negative, living on dole outs from the local parent. So, we had to setup a self-sustaining supply chain that would not demand upfront cash. Having done this successfully in my previous lean transformation, the mechanics were known, but there we had worked like a well-oiled human machine in control of time, process, and quality. That level of human capability was yet to be developed here, and we did not have the luxury of time. I put my trust in the people's capability even though unproven yet, and told them we have to work like a machine to get this going. Everyone was excited and ready. Alas there was going to be some action!

We carefully selected supply partners, agreed on lead times, quality, delivery and a thirty-day payment credit. We placed annual orders and indicated initial pickoff quantities that would self-convert into demand rates later. One supplier was nodal to the shipment of everyone's parts. We then picked a shipping company that best maintained schedules. It took seven days

for the ship to dock in Jakarta, two days to receive the container at factory and two days to build the machines. So the machines were ready for delivery in fifteen days from parts' shipment. We shipped the machines, encashed the letters of credit and paid our suppliers on the thirtieth day. And that is how we managed it without having to borrow capital.

Our focus on low lead times and waste prevention brought a huge cost advantage in addition to the negotiated prices. Taiwan was the biggest seller of such machines; the challenge for us was to be more competitive than Taiwan even though we were sourcing from Taiwan. To give you a broad idea, the costs worked thus then: If Taiwan sold a machine at approximately US\$ 2,600 we could not price ourselves over this as it would hinder acquiring market and share. We had to be on par or better to gain entry to various markets. We challenged ourselves to sell at US\$ 2,200 - 2,300 a machine. And the backward working on purchasing costs and lead times both for procurement and building the product began.

We procured complete raw material in fully-machined and ready to assemble condition at US\$ 1,180 per machine set. With internal fixed costs, painting, packing, and warranty at US\$ 350 per set, there was a clear surplus generated of US \$670 (or \$770) per set. This meant that at 100 machines per month we would generate a surplus in excess of US\$ 800,000 (or US\$ 925,000) per year! This was targeting to take a mere three per cent share from Taiwan. There was scope to take more market share and further consolidate revenues with the rest of the Bridgeport product range.

This was fantastic news for any factory that was struggling to produce its first machine for five years. Naturally as inhouse production of components took over, the contribution would only increase. The advantage of this strategy was in being able to start up manufacturing and delivering with short lead times, enabling to establish a network of dealers and build an image.

The victory

From all the alternatives discussed above, the dual strategy action taken by us was perhaps the best. The ownership of the group and the management at first were divided on this issue. However, we went ahead as it was in the best interest of the company and its stake holders. Enacting the dual concurrent strategy, we quickly had the factory buzzing with activity. In about six months we had built processes preventing wastes, established sales channels in many countries, booked orders covered for the next year and a half, and received letters of credits towards payments.

What made this transformation happen? Lean thinking! As long as we were focused, thinking and acting lean, everything else fell into place.

Recognition

I was told that this was considered a prestigious US-Indonesia joint venture project. The previous five years had caused heartaches and

disappointments at the projects' dysfunction. Six months from embarking on the lean turnaround journey, one fine equatorial day, we had an array of VIP guests disembarking from their helicopters that landed on our football fields. Ministers and ambassadors followed the Indonesian President visiting the factory to see this magic that had created the turnaround! I am sure they were as pleased with what they saw as was our Chairman showing it off to them.

About The Author



Sanjeev Baitmangalkar

is founder and Principal Consultant, Stratmann Consulting

Disclaimer:

The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 5 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication



COMPANY PROFILES



The name Dempo is bound - up with Goan history for half a millennium. The Dempos were then renowned for agriculture, trading, imports and underwriting besides social responsibility.

Today, Dempo moves ahead, a confident, caring conglomerate, reaping the practice of business tempered with ethics in each of their existing lines of activity, while staying wedded to their coral values as they ventured into planned lines of industrial activity, new and emerging businesses. The group firmly believes in ethical and transparent Corporate Governance which is critical to the long-term success and ability to create value for the stakeholders.

The group is committed to creating a more sustainable enterprise. Beside business performance, the group also makes a significant investments in community engagements through the implementation of various meaningful philanthropic programmes. Corporate governance and ethical management have always been the guiding principles of carrying out the business at Dempo.



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Serum Institute started to invest at-risk in COVID-19 vaccine production back in March 2020 and Serum Institute colleagues have worked tirelessly ever since to get these life-saving doses to people. It's a huge moment to begin exports again, for us, our partners at COVAX and the low-and middle-income countries we support. The world has largely depended on the low-cost, high-quality pharmaceuticals and vaccines that India has traditionally exported, so we are delighted to support the global vaccination effort once more. Total number of COVISHIELD doses produced now surpasses 1.25bn mark.

Serum Institute of India recognizes its role in ensuring sustainable social, environmental and economic development. The purpose is to ensure not only good health but also provide a mentally stimulating environment that helps the denizens to thrive and achieve their goals. Our CSR initiatives in various fields are a testament to our commitment.



EVENTS CALENDAR

AIMA Events Calendar

Event	Programme Chairman /Director	Venue	Date
Women Leadership Workshop		Online	24 February 2023
12th MSME Convention		Mumbai	24 February 2023
CEOs Delegation	Mr Shrinivas Dempo President, AIMA and Chairman Dempo Group of Companies	Israel	26 February - 04 March 2023
AIMA Aspire Book Launch Session	Ms Aarti Kelshikar Book Author	New Delhi	10 March 2023
PSU Summit	Mr Ranjan Kumar Mohapatra Director HR Indian Oil Corporation Ltd	New Delhi	14 March 2023
Workshop on Sharpening Business Acumen		Online	17-18 March 2023
Pragati	Ms Veena Swarup, Former Director – HR Engineers India Ltd	Online	23-24 March 2023
Session on India's Pathways to Success		Online	03 April 2023
8th National Leadership Conclave	Mr Sanjiv Goenka Chairman RP Sanjiv Goenka Group	New Delhi	11 April 2023

Event	Programme Chairman /Director	Venue	Date
13th Managing India Awards 2023	Mr Sanjiv Goenka Chairman RP Sanjiv Goenka Group	New Delhi	11 April 2023
3rd AIMA - ICRC Case writing competition & conference 2023		Hybrid Mode	13 April 2023
Training programme on GeM 4.0		New Delhi	13 April 2023
Global Advanced Management Programme 2023	Mr Solomon Darwin Executive Director Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation, Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley	USA	25 June 2023



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Protection from birth onwards

A culture of sustainable, customer-centric innovation

What next? How can we make People Flow smarter, smoother, safer and more intuitive? These are the questions we constantly ask ourselves. Here we take a look at some behind the scenes thinking and some fantastic tech-led innovations that KONE is spearheading in the mobility industry

KONE, a leader in elevators and escalators globally and in India, has been spearheading some fantastic tech-led innovations in the mobility industry. KONE has revolutionized the user experience by increasing the attractiveness of elevators and providing digitized solutions to add value to the building.

KONE DX Class elevators are the modern manifesto of advanced digital connectivity. They introduce a whole new realm of possibilities with an elevated user experience, enhanced people flow, delightful designs, future-proof services and just the right ambience.

The automated building operations from the KONE DX Class create an access bridge to KONE's digital solutions, which can further be leveraged with the KONE Partner Ecosystems for efficient management.

Technological innovations have further enabled customers to plug in additional services using the power of open application programming interfaces (APIs). These make integrating devices, apps and services much simpler.

"We, as a company, believe that long-term advantage lies in customer experience and innovation. Together with our customers and partners, not only we innovate and create solutions that users love, but also create an experience that they can't find anywhere else. We will continue to get their feedback and innovate to bring groundbreaking technologies in the industry. Our strategy- Sustainable Success with Customers is focused on increasing the value we create for customers with new intelligent solutions and embedding sustainability even deeper across all our operations."



Amit Gossain,

Managing Director, KONE Elevators India



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Office & Cafeteria Building



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Production Facility



Thus, KONE taps into digitization to offer Infotainment options during elevator rides and enhanced elevator music to develop emotional connections. With its ergonomic designs ranging from nature-inspired walls to futuristic lights to modern heritage designs inspired by classics, KONE elevators give a feeling of connectedness to those who step into the elevator for the first time.

The KONE Digital platform connects elevators to APIs, giving them access to a multitude of solutions and making flow easy and convenient for the user.

Underlying these technologies is the philosophy to adopt sustainable solutions that focus on low energy costs and using materials that use less carbon footprint.

Even well-maintained equipment might fall short of expectations when it ages or is exposed to changing environmental conditions. The performance, safety,

eco-friendliness, and aesthetics of your elevators and escalators shall be enhanced by modernizing them. For example, our flexible KONE Care™ maintenance programme is designed to ensure that our equipment operates safely and reliably while also extending its lifespan.

With our flagship proactive maintenance service - KONE 24/7 Connected Services, we can more accurately anticipate the need for maintenance. Hence, we ensure elevator and people flow experience is safe and seamless. It allows for quick hassle-free repairs, open

communication platforms, which will further lead to a more dependable and safer customer experience with our products.

KONE is a global practitioner and leader in sustainability, and this can be seen in our facilities around the world. It confers a strategic advantage on us and our customers when we consciously build these standards in every step of our working, right from the design stage. Our India factory at Sriperumbudur has been established taking into consideration several eco-friendly parameters in design, construction and operation to create a positive impact, preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life of employees who work at the facility and is sustainable in the future as well. The Indian Green Building Council awarded a Gold Certificate to our world-class factory and a Platinum Certificate to the office building and cafeteria, acknowledging the standards achieved. ■



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The name Dempos is bound-up with Goan history for half a millennium. The Dempos were then renowned for agriculture, trading, imports, and underwriting besides social responsibility.

Today, DEMPO moves ahead, a confident, caring conglomerate, reaping the practice of business tempered with ethics in each of their existing lines of activity, while staying wedded to their core values as they venture into planned lines of Industrial activity, new and emerging businesses. The Group firmly believes in ethical and transparent Corporate Governance which is critical to the long-term success and ability to create value for the stakeholders.

The Group is committed to creating a more sustainable enterprise. Besides business performance, the group also makes significant investments in community engagements through the implementation of various meaningful philanthropic programmes. Corporate Governance and ethical management have always been the guiding principles of carrying out the business at Dempos.

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MEPSC caters to the skilling needs of mandated sectors with an aim to create a world-class workforce competent both technically & professionally and to create successful and sustainable entrepreneurs.



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03 Professional Skills

04 Non-Teaching Job Roles
in Education Sector

05 Entrepreneurship

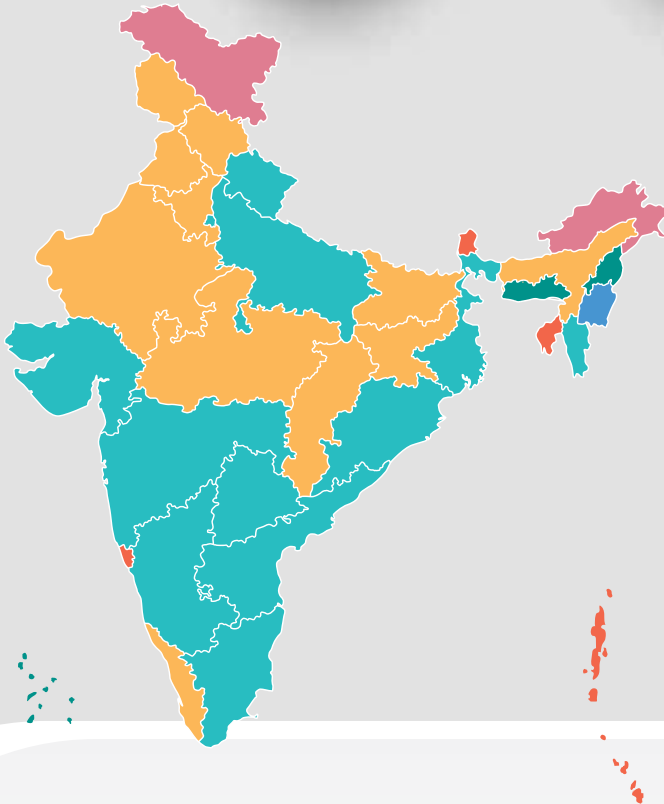
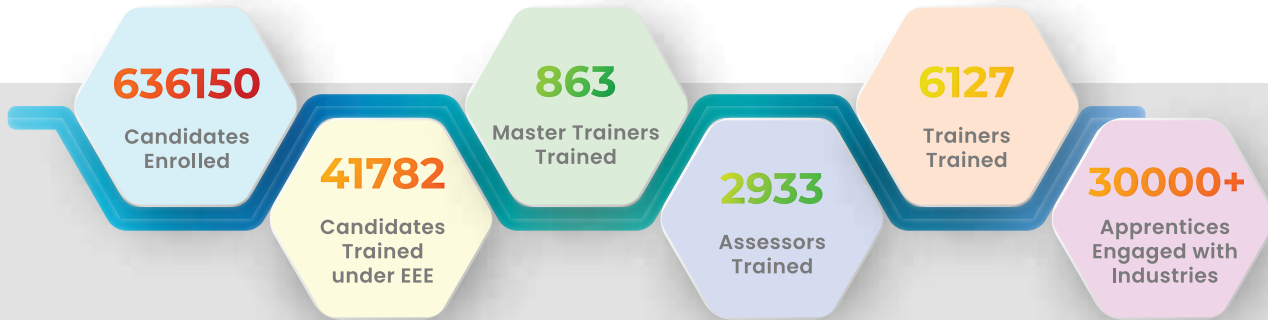
06 Private Security

07 Retail

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- 03 Master Trainer
- 04 Trainer
- 05 Career and Education Counsellor
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- 07 Pre School and Day Care Facilitator
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- 09 Fire Fighter
- 10 Retail Sales Associate
- 11 Retail Trainee Associate
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The Snapshot (till now)



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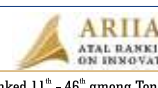
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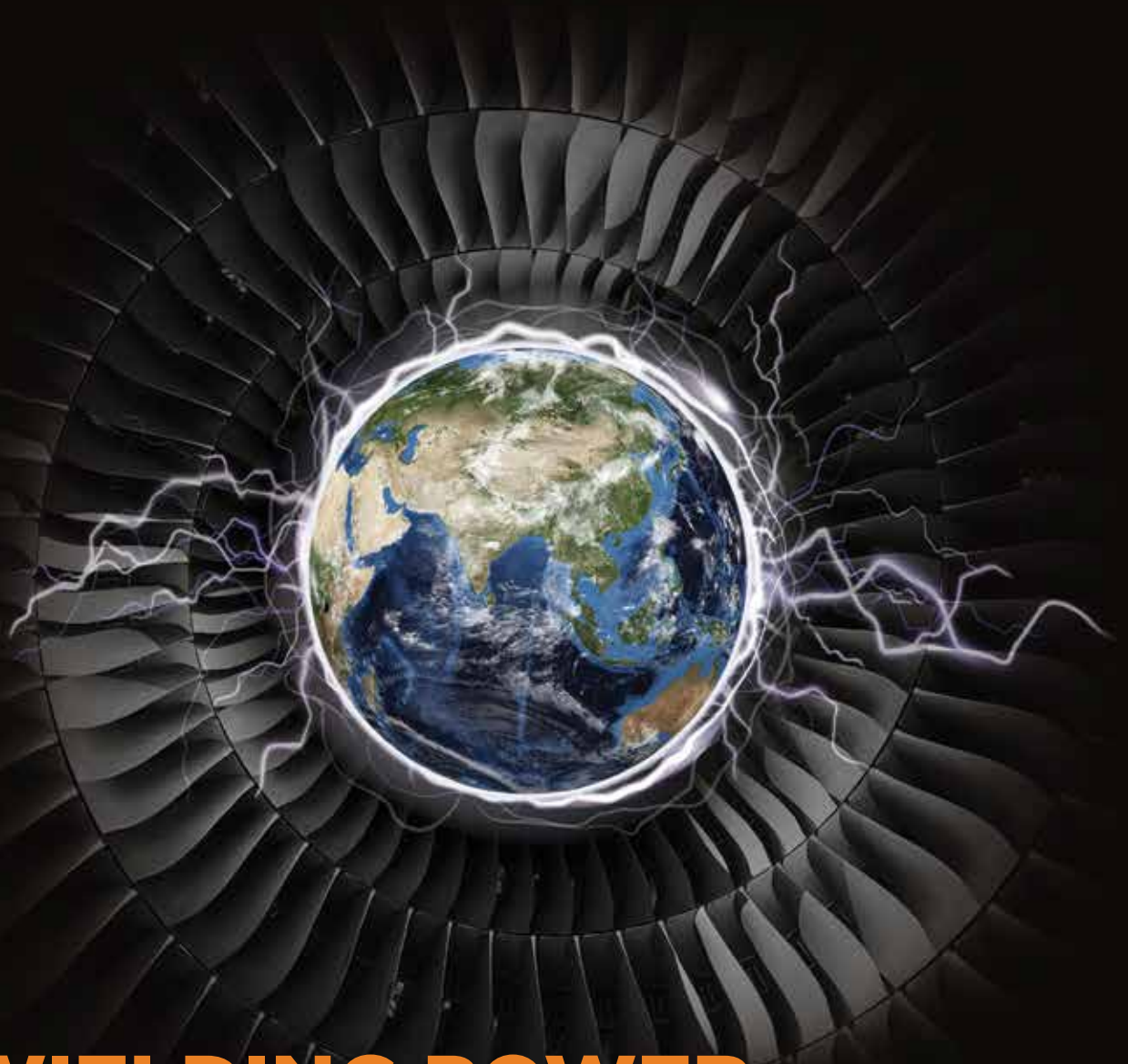
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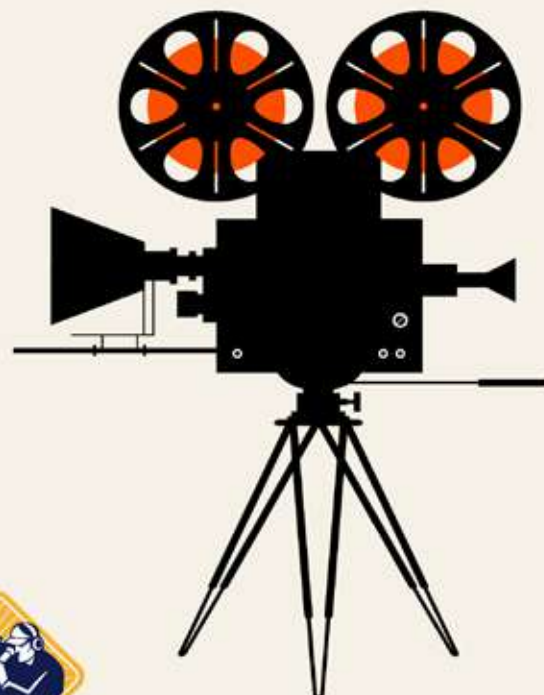
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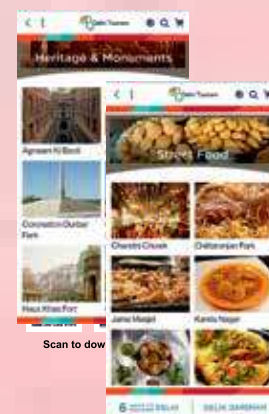
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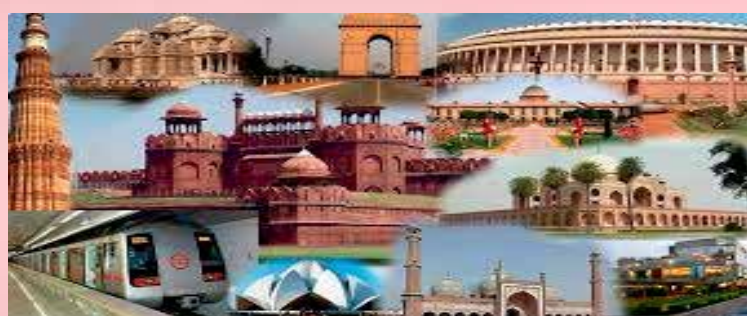
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The Director of LIBA , Dr. C. Joe Arun, SJ holds a D.Phil (Oxon) from Oxford University, United Kingdom (UK), an undergraduate and postgraduate degree in Philosophy, Economics and an MBA in Marketing and Human Resources Management. He has received many medals and awards including a postdoctoral fellowship from Loyola University, Chicago, USA. He is an original thought leader. His thought process is innovative, creative and far-sighted. He is an institution builder, a system creator and multitasking leader who has a great ease in moving from art to literature, music to dance, behavioural studies to management studies. He is a visiting faculty at business schools in India and abroad.

He has held several administrative positions including, the Secretary and Correspondent of Loyola College, Chennai. He single-handedly built The Xavier Institute of Business Administration (XIBA), at Palayamkottai, South Tamil Nadu and served as its Director, elevating the institute to one of the top promising B-schools in the country , He was also the Director of Goa Institute of Management (GIM), Goa, where he restructured the curriculum and infused a new academic rigour and evolved an innovative academic ecosystem. He also was the Director at St. Joseph's Institute of Management (JIM), Tiruchirappalli and was bestowed with CSR's award of 'Eminent Director of a Leading Institute of India' in January 2017, He has recently been awarded as an Innovator of Education by India Today and Economic Times nominated him as One of The Most Influential Leaders.

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For further information, please contact:

Manager (AMT), Centre for Management Service,

All India Management Association, 15, Link Road, Lajpat Nagar 3, New Delhi -110024

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Course Highlights

- Teaching based on case studies to build and strengthen decision making and analytical skills.
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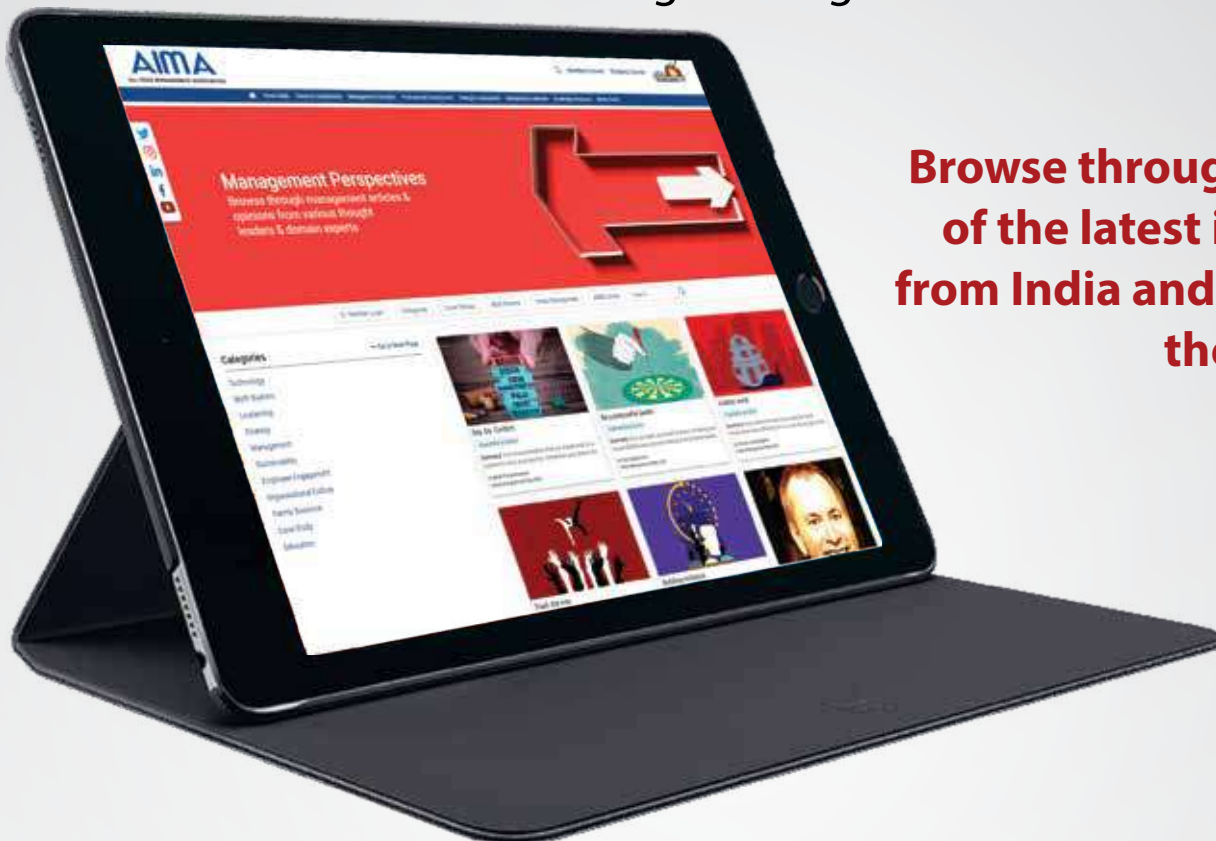
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Programme Manager

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Programme Director

Solomon Darwin

Executive Director, Garwood Center Corporate Innovation, Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley

Programme Objectives

- Identify opportunities for profitable growth.
- Respond and adapt to the challenges in the changing landscape due to rapid global economic trends.
- Examine the latest concepts, ideas and tools to help them align their business practices with global economic developments and conditions.
- Learn to build sustainable and innovative business models.

Programme Framework

- Class Room Lectures and Interactions
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Participation Fee

Delegate Fee per participant: INR equivalent of USD 12500 per participant

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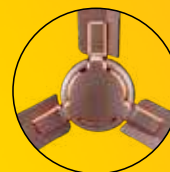
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