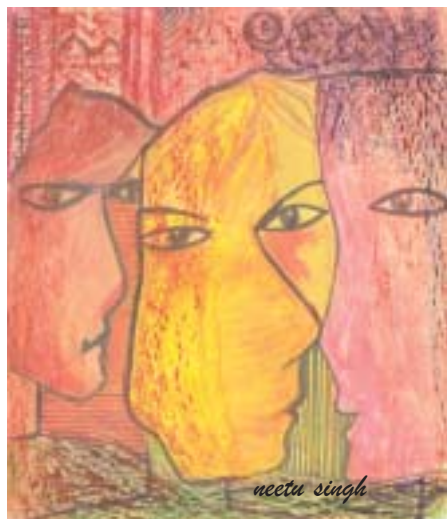


## Word Of Mouth marketing is back!

*WOM is here once again. If used judiciously, consciously, responsibly and technically, WOM marketing will pay rich dividends*

- By Harish Bijoor



Word of Mouth is today becoming the biggest thing going in the world of marketing. Call it Buzz, call it Viral Buzz, or simply put, word of mouth, it is the biggest weapon in the arsenal of the marketing man, woman and child out there in the great big marketing space where consumer meets products, services and brands.



Did it ever go out of fashion? Not really. All the same, word of mouth has played a varying degree of a role in the marketing mix of many a product and service that satisfies our latent needs.

In the very, very old days it was only word of mouth. The only known form of advertising, marketing and indeed selling, was word of mouth. Positive and negative strokes that a brand got in the great marketplace of yore. If a product was good, it got its plaudits. If it was bad, it was condemned immediately. Whatever was the verdict, it spread through the marketplace to the benefit or detriment of the brand in question. All brands were indeed bought or not bought on the strength of consumer verdict of

the friendly neighbor in question.

The best research you could embark upon when in search of a brand in the market was the way early consumers of the item were reacting to it. The early adopters were not only the guinea pigs of marketing society, but they were also the harbingers of WOM marketing. You wanted to buy into that rather expensive brand of Murphy radio, the best way to do it was find out from all the accessible owners of the Murphy transistors you could catch and trust. Murphy radio and its immense success in the early years of the last millennium is attributable most certainly to the role of WOM!

WOM played its role not only in the realm of the consumer durable. It played its potent role in the case of many a fast

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*Continued from page 1...*

moving consumer good that costed even much less in the marketplace. Det detergent, Swastik detergent, and a host of early Indian consumer brands were built solely on the firm tenets of WOM marketing. One satisfied consumer spreading the good word to seven others and these seven evangelists spreading the word even further with the gusto that can only be best felt in the realm of WOM marketing!

Many a brand failed in the early years of Indian marketing, thanks to WOM as well! A potent tool in the early years of Indian brand building. A double-edged weapon of the marketer at large! The consumer verdict was immediate and damning as well. A bad product could not aspire to survive long enough in the Indian market. WOM was its nemesis!

For many, many years, the Indian practitioner believed word of mouth marketing to be something of an adjunct to the marketing process itself. There are indeed many in the marketplace even today who believe word of mouth to be something that just about happens on its own. Something that is organic to the marketing process itself. Something that is natural and something that cannot be controlled, calibrated and leveraged. How wrong they are!

Word of Mouth marketing today is a recognized form of marketing itself. Yet another mantra in the marketing Vedas being written and re-written all the time! Word of Mouth is possibly the most potent form in the entire marketing mix that can be leveraged to the benefit of your own brand, and surely to the detriment of the competitor's offering, if properly and intelligently used.

Yes, while the consumer verdict is natural and immediate, it is certainly one that can be technically leveraged, channelised and disseminated meticulously to ensure a sure-fire and quick strategy that makes or breaks brands, either your's or the competitor's!

Word of Mouth is it! I have just returned from a travel into the continent of Europe, parts of South East Asia and lands akin. Wherever I have been, there is but one product that best signifies the role being played by Word of Mouth marketing in contemporary days. The product is the collapsible scooter, a two-wheel push-along contraption, which many of us have played with in the early days of our childhood, an item that is a rage across markets today in a more sophisticated and sturdy format. All steel, all rugged, suiting the requirement of all heights and weights and ages of consumers. Rubber and silicon wheels and a trendy look that is today fast spreading across markets. The US, UK, Continental Europe, all of Asia literally and large parts of the landmass everywhere else is caught up with this product.

WOM marketing is indeed less expensive and more reliable in its delivery than the mediums of advertising, sales promotion and other marketing mantras the modern marketing man is used to. If used well, if used judiciously, consciously, responsibly and technically, WOM marketing will pay dividends much richer than the traditional means we have used over the last decades gone by.

And guess what? WOM can be used for the latest brand of liquid gel-filled push-up bras that offer a natural feel and so also for your brand of 'chakki fresh atta' with equal panache and effectiveness!

*The author is a brand-domain specialist and CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults Inc., a private label consulting outfit with a presence in the markets of Hong Kong, London and the Indian sub-continent. Email: [harishbijoor@hotmail.com](mailto:harishbijoor@hotmail.com)*

## The CXO tribe multiplies

There's a fresh clamor from a new generation of Indian managers for the word 'chief' in front of their designations.

The new titles staking claim to the C-suite are: chief risk officer (in banks and financial institutions), chief fun officer, chief purchase officer, chief talent officer, chief growth officer, chief security officer and many more. These are in addition to the existing chief financial officer (CFO), chief technology officer (CTO), chief information officer (CIO), chief operating office (COO) and of course the chief executive officer (CEO). The American lingo for the C-level corporate executives is CXO – whose title begins with the title chief and ends with officer.

Why is there such a craze from specialists in organizations to aspire for the 'chief' title? Management gurus believe that functional heads today see themselves as potential CEOs unlike even five years ago, when they would be happy to retire as heads of operations or HR or IT. This leap in aspiration is because organizations today are more open, meaning, the functional heads have a direct access to the top management, unlike earlier when they had to go through normally sloppy general managers or lost-in-wilderness COOs or even some innocuous presidents.

Also, organizations today expect functional heads to wear a business cap along with that of their departments. They are now expected to understand and evaluate business implication of each of their business plans. What does this mean to the CFOs or marketing heads who are used to seeing themselves as natural heirs to the CEO throne? Simply put, the CEO seat will be contested more fiercely than ever before.

Is this trend good for the company? Yes and no. Yes because CEOs of today and tomorrow will have a greater clarity of the various arms of business and more importantly, they will be surrounded by specialists who will think business and not just the advantage of their departments.

There is a flip side as well. It's a high-risk decision to elevate CIOs or CTOs, who've spent a large part of their work lives in their departments, to CEO's position. This trend will also impinge on the popularity of the COO who is often criticized for giving too much of an operational and less of strategic direction to the company. A recent study of 300 quoted American companies found that 20 percent of these companies abolished the COO position between 1986 and 1999.

Skeptics believe that bringing in too many 'C' level positions is like adding a new layer or bringing back the discredited middle managers through the back door. Or is it a fight back by middle managers to stake their claim for greater recognition? The new additions to the C-suite means that corporate structures will soon be recast.

There may be no clear winners here but the good thing is players are playing harder to become the captains of their teams. The logic is – if a goalkeeper or a wicket keeper can become a captain these days, which used to usually go to the strikers or star batsmen, then why can't a chief purchase officer become the CEO?

### Bonanza even when you fail



It's strange how the American system works, especially when it comes to CEOs' exit compensation. Carly Fiorina was booted out by the HP board earlier this year but she went home \$42 million richer. Michael Eisner, the controversial Walt Disney CEO, who was almost thrown out of his job by shareholders, received a bonus of \$7.25 million last year.

A Boston Consulting Group study of public companies recently found that the value of stock options granted to the CEOs of those firms in the years before the frauds became public was 800 percent greater than those granted to other cleaner CEOs.

There is a demand now from shareholders against deals which pay up big money even if the CEOs fail. One thought the open market system rewarded only successful people. Incentive for failing may be a new addition to American Capitalism.

And there's the envy factor to worry about. A recent study among Harvard University students shows that they would prefer to earn \$50,000 a year when their peers are earning \$25,000 and \$100,000 a year when their peers are earning \$200,000. This is a clear sign that relative wealth matters more than absolute wealth everywhere.

But Apple's Steve Jobs' case is a little weird, to say the least. He draws an annual salary of only \$1 which has earned him a listing in Guinness World Records as the "Lowest Paid Chief Executive Officer". Although his current salary officially remains \$1 per year, he has traditionally been the recipient of a number of lucrative "executive gifts" from the board, including a \$90 million jet in 1999, and just under 30 million shares of restricted stock in 2000-2002. Earlier, in 2003, the board had paid Jobs nearly \$75 million. Why do successful entrepreneurs need salaries anyway?



## Boards on the offensive

After years when accounting scandals and charges of inadequate governance put them on the defensive, boards are today looking to step up their engagement with core areas of corporate performance and value creation. Clearly, a new energy is stirring in corporate boards. How good it is to organizations' future? Only time will tell.

A recent McKinsey survey published in the latest issue of *McKinsey Quarterly* shows that directors are tired of playing defense. The principal finding of more than 1,000 directors is that having focused for a time on accounting-compliance issues, they are now determined to play an active role in setting the strategy, assessing the risks, developing the leaders, and monitoring the long-term health of their companies.

At one level, the survey underlines the way the US Sarbanes-Oxley Act is holding boards—not only in the United States, but also around the world—more responsible for meeting high standards in reporting and controlling the financial affairs of their companies. Yet the implications for governance are even more far reaching, states the survey.

To achieve as much involvement as directors say they want, they will have to use their time in meetings more effectively and develop a new understanding of their roles and responsibilities; otherwise, they will give management the impression that they intend to take on day-to-day roles. Moreover, the composition and culture of boards, as well as the agendas of board meetings, will require fresh thinking.

To understand the long-term health of a company, directors should monitor not only its current financials but also a broader range of indicators: market performance, network positioning, organizational performance, and operational performance. Risk—including credit, market, regulatory, organizational, and operational risk—plays an important part in each dimension. Without this knowledge, directors will have only a partial understanding of a company. Developing the right perspective on the balance between short and long-term performance is important.

More than 75 percent of the directors say that they want to spend more time on strategy and risk. This refocusing seems to reflect three forces at work among boards: a shortfall of knowledge about the current and future strategy of their companies, a certain lack of confidence in management, and a desire to assume a more active overall role.

The survey results show clearly that boards want to engage more actively with management teams. Such a relationship can prove fruitful, but it will also be more complex than the present one. Making it work will require effort from both sides.

### Marketing is guesswork



Of all the slams on marketing, one of the biggest is that it is, in a word, guesswork. Only problem is: it's true. Saying so can be heresy. Most especially in the eyes of all those selling services and software promising to "eliminate the guesswork from marketing." Says Michael Fischler in MarketingProf's March 15 Newsletter: "But I must tell you—based on nearly 30 years of guesswork—if ever something qualified as "marketing BS," it's phrases like that.

Research gives us guidance. But after the focus groups and the perception audits and the segmentation studies and the Niensens and the customer surveys—we make those decisions based on interpretation of research data—based on experience, knowledge and creativity. In other words: we guess.

**But guess-making is a Learned Skill.** That's what makes marketing so difficult, so risky, so satisfying. It's those guesses, far more than snappy headlines or dazzling designs that push our creativity to the limit—and put our professional necks on the line.

This is the organic career path of the marketer: reaching increasingly important levels of guesswork—moving from executing someone else's guesses to being the head guess-maker. From "what have you done" to "what do you think." Marketing specialist to CMO. If we want to be great marketers, we must learn how to be great guess-makers.

Great guess-makers are not born—they are not, like the white squirrel, the product of some partially predictable recessive gene. Great guess-makers are built, formed over time by diligent labor. A great guess is the product of the sum total of the guess-maker's knowledge, and experience, and creativity.

So what makes a great guess-maker? To the four Ps, Fischler propose four Cs of guess-makers: *Curiosity*—They have to establish a base of knowledge that drives smart guesswork. *Confidence*—They have to believe that their guess-making is up to the challenge. *Courage*—They have to be unafraid to stick their neck out. *Creativity*—This is, after all, marketing.

## Ratan Tata's M & A lessons



Mergers and acquisitions of companies are like marriages. The American style marriages often turn sour more quickly than anyone else's. The recent mega merger of Compaq with HP is going through such intense adjustment pangs that its architect Carly Fiorina had to step down. The Japanese take so long to effect a merger that the romance often ends even before the marriage starts showing results.

India's most respected business conglomerate, the Tatas, has some lessons to teach the world about how to win hearts and minds while effecting a merger. The 80 company, US\$15 billion Tata group, has had high profile acquisitions in the last couple of years like UK's tea giant Tetley in 2002 followed by South Korean Daewoo Motors and American telephone networking company Tyco.

When Ratan Tata, the non-executive chairman of the Tata group, found that 16 people were being sent to South Korea to work on integrating his company with Daewoo Motors, he was aghast! He insisted that only two – a finance person and an integration person are sent. The message behind this measure, he said: "Don't just bombard the organisation with Indians and give everyone a feeling that this is an Indian takeover. People in the acquired companies need to retain their visibility and their sense of belonging to the family." This strategy seems to work. In a short time, Daewoo's market share in trucks business moved up from 26 percent to 33 percent.

Oddly, Daewoo Motors management and its employees preferred the Tatas to General Motors because of the Buddhist connection. And to amplify this point, Ratan Tata had lunch with the employees on the first day in their canteen, which seems to have gone very well.

Ratan Tata's M & A philosophy is simple. He told *Business Standard* in an interview recently that "After doing careful checking to see whether the chemistry is right, leave that company alone. The acquired company is allowed to retain the face, touch and feel of a local company, while still managing to integrate product plans and strategies." A typical American merger plan, on the contrary, is to stuff the acquired company with its own people and systems resulting in high post merger attrition rate.

### Clarity is the essence of great leadership

The question about the attributes of a good leader might have been asked and answered a million times. Yet there isn't a conclusive answer. But searching for that perfect answer could be fun. That's what Marcus Buckingham 39, did most of his work life with Gallup.

Drawing on Gallup's studies of 80,000 managers and 3 million employees, he wrote two best-sellers: *First, Break All the Rules* and *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. Eighteen months ago, he decided to dig deeper. He left Gallup, and instead of focusing on the many, he set out to find the very few leaders who truly excelled. "By studying one person deeply, you might learn as much if not more than studying 10,000 broadly," he told a *Fast Company* writer recently.

Marcus is distilling his key findings into a new book, due shortly, titled: *The One Thing You Need to Know...About Great Managing, Great Leading, and Sustained Individual Success* (Free Press). Here he maps out the core concepts that mark superior leadership.

There's something unique and different that makes a leader, and it's not about creativity or courage or integrity. As important as they are, you can have those attributes and still fail to be a great leader. A leader's job is to rally people toward a better future. Leaders can't help but change the present, because the present isn't good enough. They succeed only when they find a way to make people excited by and confident in what comes next. With leaders, the future calls to them in a voice they can't drown out. The future is more real than the present; it compels them to act.

For a leader, the challenge is that in every society ever studied, people fear the future. The future is unstable, unknown, and therefore potentially dangerous. So in order to succeed, leaders must engage our fear of the unknown and turn it into spiritedness. By far the most effective way to turn fear into confidence is to be clear — to define the future in such vivid terms that we can see where we are headed. Clarity is the antidote to anxiety, and therefore clarity is the preoccupation of the effective leader. If you do nothing else as a leader, be clear. Leaders can be wrong. They can't be confusing.

Of course, a leader must take action — action leads to impact. But actions also possess a separate, equally powerful quality. Actions are unambiguous. If leaders can highlight a few carefully selected actions, then their followers will no longer have to infer the future from theoretical pronouncements about "core values" or your "mission statement."

Effective leaders don't have to be passionate or charming or brilliant. To Marcus, what they must be is clear — clarity is the essence of great leadership.

## How Immelt is giving GE a cultural flair



Jeffrey R. Immelt, 49, is initiating a makeover quite different from what his mentor Jack Welch was hailed for doing. Immelt is demanding a far more risk-taking culture and innovation in place of hard-driving, process-oriented management system.

Immelt is scared that GE's famous obsession with bottom-line results — and tendency to get rid of those who don't meet them — will make some execs shy away from taking risks that could revolutionize the company.

The GE chairman and CEO has been quietly pushing for a cultural revolution for the past 3 1/2 years. A *BusinessWeek* March 28, 2005 report observes that Immelt hasn't turned his back on the old ways. But in his GE, the new imperatives are risk-taking, sophisticated marketing, and above all, innovation.

This is change borne of necessity. The Welch era reached its zenith in the booming, anything-goes economy of the late 1990s. Back then, GE always seemed to beat the consensus forecasts by a penny a share — and investors felt no burning need to figure out exactly how they did it. "Immelt has no such luxury," the report adds. With a slower-growing domestic economy, less tolerance among investors for buying your way to growth, and more global competitors, Immelt, like many of his peers, has been forced to shift the emphasis from deals and cost-cutting to new products, services and markets.

How Immelt is going about it is interesting. For a start, he banished some long-cherished traditions and beliefs. Immelt has welcomed outsiders into the highest ranks, even making one, Sir William M. Castell, a vice-chairman. That's a serious break with GE's promote-from-within past. He is pushing hard for a more global workforce that reflects the communities in which GE operates. Immelt is also encouraging his homegrown managers to become experts in their industries rather than just experts in managing.

Clearly, from a stock-market led \$152 billion behemoth, Immelt has launched GE on a journey to become one of the best sales and marketing companies in the world. At annual meetings, business leaders are required to submit at least three "Imagination Breakthrough" proposals that ultimately go before the council for review and discussion. They are now asked to develop real prowess in areas such as creativity, strategy, and customer service that are harder to measure. They are being told to embrace risky ventures, many of which may fail.

Immelt's GE can be seen as a grand experiment, still in its early days, to determine whether bold innovation can thrive in a productivity-driven company. Risking failure is a badge of honor at GE these days. He's spending big bucks to create the kind of infrastructure that can equip and foster an army of dreamers.

### How to be a creative contrarian

The term "contrarian" is usually used with respect to investors who make decisions that contradict the prevailing wisdom of the market. But a contrarian can also be described as anyone who takes a contrary position in a situation. A good contrarian does not disagree with the prevailing view simply to be disagreeable, although she often starts out that way. She usually has her own path of logic behind her disagreement. For example, when Galileo Galilei announced that the Earth, together with the other planets, orbited the sun, his contrary opinion was based on substantial research and logical calculations. Indeed, being a contrarian got Galileo into all kinds of trouble with the Church.

Likewise, Google became what is probably the world's biggest advertising business by taking a contrary view to advertising on the web. Rather than offer loud, flashing animated banner advertisements similar to those that adorn every commercial web site, Google took a contrary stance. They offered advertisers only simple, short text ads. Of course there was a logic behind their contrariness. Google reasoned that people browsing text-based links to find information would be more impressed by text based advertisements related to their information search than they would be by flashing banners. Google was clearly right about that. Although most of us see Google as a search engine, they are in fact a highly successful advertising business.

Being a contrarian is not really difficult, writes Jeffrey Baumgartner, founder of Bwiti bvba, a Belgian-based company that helps organizations to become more innovative and more creative in [www.innovationtools.com](http://www.innovationtools.com)'s *weekly newsletter*. Whenever you are in a situation where a group of people immediately wants to follow a particular course of action, consider the alternatives - or contrary courses of action. If there is a good argument for the contrary action, promote it to the group. Even if the group follows its own original course of action, your contrary suggestion will have made them rethink - and possibly modify - their course of action. So go on, don't be shy. Be a contrarian.



## Secrets of Timken's success

*This traditional company has stuck to the basics to survive and prosper for over a century*

*By Benedict Paramanand*

In 1899, Henry Timken's ideas reduced friction. Today, they defy gravity. An apt introduction to a company that is responsible for making the ride in an automobile and space missions more comfortable.

The Missouri-based Timken Company is a leading global manufacturer of highly engineered bearings and alloy steels and a provider of related products and services with operations in 27 countries. The company reported record sales of \$4.5 billion in 2004 and employs approximately 26,000 people, 1,000 of them in India.

'Products don't change the world. Ideas change the world.' The 106-year history of The Timken Company is one of the great success stories of American manufacturing through cutting edge innovation in products as well as in managing the business. That the company is one of the oldest giants to have lasted for over a 100 years bears testimony to this fact. Timken is today a global organization and a leader in two key industries: bearings and steel.

A major force in the early automotive supply industry, Timken was one of the large enterprises that made the United States an economic and military superpower and the American corporation a model for business organizations in the decades after World War II. It was also on the forward edge of the industrial renewal that has revived the Midwestern economy and restored U.S. manufacturing to a position of leadership after the competitive crisis of the 1980s.

How the old-economy company was able to sustain its market leadership for so long makes for a good case study. To W R Tim Timken Jr, chairman of The Timken Company, who was in Bangalore recently to oversee India operations, the lessons are simple, yet profound.

Focusing on only two products – bearings and steel – without getting tempted to enter related or other categories, helped the company to focus and not dissipate its energy and money.

Independence was another key factor. "We never over-leveraged ourselves – we didn't want outsiders to dictate terms to us. So, retaining a strong balance sheet was critical."

A strong focus on innovation in technology and processes resulted in the company's ability to contribute

significantly to the modernization of machinery and automobiles for over a century.

In 1898, the company founder Henry Timken patented the tapered roller bearing and revolutionized motion, and the way we travel. Henry built a new product, and a new company, based on managing a critical physical phenomenon – friction. Now, Timken is a technology leader not only in engineering alloy steels, tapered roller bearings and related products, but also in needle bearings, motion control system-technology, and steering systems.

Timken has taken the concept of 'customer centric' to a new level. "Today, we are taking the concept of "customer centric" a giant step forward. It means working so closely with customers that we contribute strategically to their success," Tim adds.

To Tim, right ethics and moral integrity are the most important factors that contributed to his company's success. "We always knew we were in the long-term business. So, people have always been treated ethically. We always carried the strong commitment to doing it right and selling it right."



W R Tim Timken Jr.

**To Tim, right ethics and moral integrity are the most important factors that contributed to his company's success.**

### From Missouri to Mars

Bettye H. Pruitt's *Timken: From Missouri to Mars-A Century of Leadership in Manufacturing* offers strong insights into the challenges the company faced and overcame all these years. More than just a chronicle of the company's growth, this absorbing account examines the factors that have sustained its vitality and competitiveness through dramatic changes in the business environment. It looks beyond strategy, structure and organizational capabilities to corporate purpose and culture for an explanation of Timken's sustained success over the long term.

Yet *Timken* is primarily a book about colorful personalities, individuals with integrity and nerve, bureaucrats, autocrats and visionaries. It is a book about the shaping of an organizational culture, the emergence of rigidities in a managerial hierarchy and the rejuvenating force of deep cultural change. This is a story full of inspiration and insight for anyone who works in or studies large organizations.

## MAA Bozell means business

*MAA Bozell has swung its fortune back with some brave moves. It's now all set to reclaim its past glory*

*By Ravi Shankar*



The dotcom bubble was more like a tsunami. It engulfed millions of IT and an equal number of non-IT companies. Very few resilient ones managed to survive, although badly bruised. While business acumen and rare ability to survive adversity did help, some were able to wade through by falling back on their values.

The Bangalore-based media and advertising house MAA Bozell is one of them. After being hit badly by defaults, the company announced profits this year after struggled for four long years.

Until the late nineties, MAA Bozell was ranked among the top 10 Indian agencies. It was the largest agency in Bangalore and spawned talent, which was grabbed by most of the MNC agencies having offices in the city.

MAA Bozell was a pioneer in establishing focused divisions encompassing the entire gamut of marketing services



organization left them with one choice – stay put and fight. MAA Bozell decided to tackle this as just another business problem and was determined to manage and take it in its stride. The confidence came from the history of strong leadership and a sense of pride of its founder Mr. Ayaz Peerboy.

The process began with clearly defining the objectives as:

- Explore all legal options to recover the dues from defaulters
- Despite default on payments, all other existing clients should not experience any adverse effects. They have the right to expect and demand the best from MAA Bozell.
- Take into confidence all partners (either media or suppliers or employees) and see that they are least effected
- All mandatory payments have to be made.

MAA Bozell, despite further loss of revenue due to some of the long associated brands, have through astute financial management adhered to the schedule and made the payments out of their earnings. The agency today has set a new benchmark in the industry by transforming a sinking business into a trustworthy brand.

(Corvo-PR, Sabre-Brand Strategy, RAMMS-Retail, Odyssey-TV Software). It was also one of the first few to look beyond the top four metros, setting up full-fledged offices in Kochi and Hyderabad.

In the second half of 1996, the IT market was hit by the prolonged discount war, and margins of even the large players were badly affected. MAA Bozell, which used to handle one of the 'large' players had to withstand a default on payment to the tune of Rs.4.0 Crores. As the saying goes, trouble never comes alone and additional defaults from Mumbai and Delhi added up to a whopping Rs.8.0 Crore.

Advertising being a '85% risk for 15% returns' business (though even this 15% is under tremendous pressure due to the fragmentation and competitive marketing dynamics), it was mandatory for MAA Bozell to pay up, irrespective of whether the client pays the agency or not.

Under such a scenario, it would have been completely justifiable to take the easy way out and be done with it. But the business integrity and belief in corporate principles of the

Media publishers, who were expecting to wait till the results of the long legal wrangle, before they could see the color of money, welcomed this attitude. The account receivables were restructured through the negotiation process and a time schedule was drafted. MAA Bozell, despite further loss of revenue due to some of the long associated brands, have through astute financial management adhered to the schedule and made the payments out of their earnings. The agency today has set a new benchmark in the industry by transforming a sinking business into a trustworthy brand.

So, what makes some organizations go to extraordinary extent to protect and preserve their identity while most others run away? Is it the quality of leadership? Is it the commitment to business ethics? Is it a vision to differentiate a short-term drawback and long-term business opportunity? Or is it the internal branding, which acted as a strong bond? It was indeed a combination of all these.

*The author owns, Media Planning Associates, Bangalore*



# Computer Forensics or Junk Science?

Soon cyber crime will enter our household. Are we ready for it?

by Ranganath Iyengar



Cyber crimes are here to stay. It is not unusual to come across articles/debates on data security, privacy, vulnerability, identity theft, online credit card frauds etc. This is the negative side of the internet which is an intrinsic part of our lives.

Computer forensics, often called junk science, is the emerging and rapidly changing science of analyzing computer crimes, understanding and interpreting the evidence with the emerging legal systems that apply to different countries. Computer forensics most certainly goes beyond being a geek preserve as it involves people from diverse backgrounds such as law makers, law enforcers, financial specialists, domain/industry specialists and IT professionals.

## Cyber crime boundaries

Cyber crimes occur mostly within the enterprise network or on the internet itself. Both these environments present opportunities for cyber crime to happen, since computers were not built with the internet in mind nor are people trained adequately to protect themselves when accessing the net.

Cyber crimes range from simple hacking, identify thefts, destruction of data, intrusion of privacy, piracy, application hijacking or stealing of valuable enterprise information. Detection is a big challenge since individual users could log in from anywhere and portable notebooks/USB storage devices only make it harder to detect.

## Monitoring vs. Compliance: Role of the ISP

It is almost impossible to police the net although a lot of control can be vested with the regional feeder networks and ISPs. There is public debate on how appropriate logs and trails can be maintained and leveraged as evidence.

The challenge always remains in achieving balance between monitoring and user compliance and process, solutions and laws seem to be still a long way off from a workable solution. As an individual user of the internet, we have to contend with legal aspects of content, protecting data on our hard disks from malicious programs (viruses et al), understanding what terms we sign up for (end user agreements), doing online commercial transactions on the internet and ensuring safety of data that we transmit on the internet.

The ISP has a large role to play to ensure a safe harbor for the transactions, data exchanges and making users aware of the issues and challenges whether the user is at home or in a cyber café.

## Data security & privacy

The modern enterprise is the single biggest commercial user of the internet and today businesses run 24/7/365 owing the ease of connectivity and ease of information availability. Enterprises today protect themselves by deploying private networks and thereby limiting outside interaction to fewer machines. However, the biggest threat to the enterprises is the traveling executive who is accessing information through various devices – in fact working on a wireless network in an airport/hotel is the easiest way to get hacked!!

Electronic surveillance is now an accepted method of protecting information and companies try to balance between ensuring data privacy (emails, voice mails) and ensuring enough levels of backups/offsite storage to recover quickly from any impending disaster. Failure to comply with information security and intellectual property protection norms results in termination and helps in being a deterrent.

The individual user on the internet is even more vulnerable owing to the awareness levels, availability of software to protect home users and also monitor usage. The only way this could be achieved is through education, awareness, training and a strong legal framework to take on people who do not comply.

## Emerging Legal Frameworks

Across the world, there is increasing awareness of cyber crime. Some of the emerging acts and statutes include the Sarbanes-Oxley, Grahmm Leach Biley, US Patriot Act, USA Patriot Act, HIPAA, Basel II and the Information Technology Act in India. It would be useful to read case studies that explain how we could protect ourselves and our data/intellectual property.

## Protecting ourselves

Individual users need to look for tools, software and process to address protection (authorization, authentication, encryption, physical access restriction etc); detection (data history and reporting compliance); business continuity & response plans (to recover from any such situations).

Most important of all is to be sure of the information that you are sharing in cyberspace especially people whom we do not know or have not interacted with. The biggest threat that all of us will have are with financial transactions and that is where we need to be real careful about identity theft.

Cyber crimes are going to be a part of cyberspace. Just imagine what we would have to contend with when our refrigerators, cars and scores of other gadgets are all internet enabled and accessible through the internet!!

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## Got a Good Strategy? Now Try to Implement It

For nearly 30 years, Wharton management professor Lawrence G. Hrebiniak has taken the art of business strategy and put it under a microscope. Over time, he has brought one critical element into irrefutable focus: Creating strategy is easy, but implementing it is very difficult.

In his new book, *Making Strategy Work: Leading Effective Execution and Change* (Wharton School Publishing), Hrebiniak presents a comprehensive model to help business leaders bridge the gap between strategy making and successful strategy execution. He challenges executives to recognize that making strategy work is more difficult than setting a strategic course — but also more important — and he documents the obstacles that get in the way of successful performance.

The book relies on Hrebiniak's research as well as case studies from companies like GM, Chase Manhattan, Disney and GE. After examining why businesses find strategy execution so difficult, Hrebiniak provides a roadmap that incorporates the critical areas of organizational structure, coordination, information sharing, incentives, controls, change management, corporate culture, and the role of power and influence in a company. The book concludes with a case study on mergers and acquisitions which Hrebiniak uses to show "how practical execution can be in confronting an important and pervasive real-work issue and how it can save management a lot of time, effort and money."

In April and September, Hrebiniak will lead two executive Wharton School workshops on "Implementing Strategy" that will focus, in part, on why the devil is in the details when it comes to strategy execution. Below, he discusses his book with Knowledge@Wharton.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** The premise of your book is that "making strategy work is more difficult than strategy making." Why do you think this is so difficult for companies to grasp?

**Hrebiniak:** I've asked myself that question for years. In the book, I talk about how managers in MBA and undergraduate business programs are well-versed in how to plan but not to execute. They first learn about it in the work place, and that's difficult because people tend to jump into execution without thinking about why it is so important.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** So execution is like the strategy stepchild?

**Hrebiniak:** Yes. Only recently have people begun to realize that effective execution is a competitive business advantage. Companies are now seeing that if they execute better, they perform better. If they integrate long-term and short-term objectives, if they consider incentives, controls and feedback, they execute better. And if one company has that and the other doesn't, the competitive advantage is clear.

Another reason why it's so difficult for companies to grasp this, is that there are more people involved in executing strategy today - and execution takes longer than people expect. Political and organizational problems typically surface. So you develop a strategy, but you have to go throughout the organization and through dozens of planners to make sure it is carried out. It takes longer. Once execution starts, it could be one or two years, or even require a three-to-five year time frame.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** You write that managers often dream up ambitious scenarios but leave the execution of strategy to their underlings - which leads to the perception of what you call the strategy "grunt." To achieve successful execution of a strategy - and to make sure that it gets the right emphasis - isn't it important to change this hierarchy of planning vs. executing strategy? Don't managers have to get rid of the idea that executing strategy is somehow inferior to making strategy?

**Hrebiniak:** Absolutely. There is still the perception that smart people plan and grunts execute. The short answer is that those who have power or influence have to embrace, believe in and foster execution. Some people think it is a lower-level responsibility - that's the older perception of execution - but this simply isn't true. I'm talking with a CEO of a global aerospace company who is starting to see that changing strategy is a high-level execution issue. If the CEO gets his VP involved and they get their managers involved, people take it more seriously through the organization.

When companies separate the planning and doing - that's wrong. Executive strategy requires ownership at all levels, from corporate level managers on down. Strategic success really demands a simultaneous view of planning and doing. The greater the overlap of doers and planners, the greater probability of success. It's so important for managers to be thinking about execution as they are formulating the plans.

Execution takes longer. Execution is a process, and not an action or a step. And execution involves more people than strategy formation.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** In *Making Strategy Work*, you point out that managing change, including "culture change," is an important but often elusive concept.

**Hrebiniak:** Managing change has always been a problem. Look at the Wharton-Gartner Survey from the book [a joint project between Wharton and researchers at the Gartner Group that asked managers about the challenges they face]: Based on responses from 223 managers, we know that their number-one problem is the inability to manage change effectively or to overcome internal resistance to change. Why? Because change is difficult. It creates resistance. People lose power, resources, autonomy, or they *perceive* that they might lose

autonomy. The real problem, though, is that people don't lay out a change plan. They don't even *think* about a change plan. They do everything at once. They don't set priorities. This makes coordination difficult. And if you fail, you can't explain it. If there is a problem, and you are doing 22 things wrong, you don't know if it's the interactions of the 22 or the interactions of the subsets.

What accounts for the failure? People try to change, and when they can't, they turn around and say, 'We can't manage change. We tried this three times and screwed up.' Change has to be taken seriously, not 'What's hot this week?' You set priorities and decide up front what it is you want to change. Every plan should have an action agenda, with steps laid out for accountability and follow-up.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** What about a timeframe?

**Hrebiniak:** It means different things in different industries. Management doesn't like sequential change. It takes longer. It's too boring. I often say to them, 'Factor in some smaller, more manageable pieces in your strategy, so that you can celebrate each step and move sequentially.' But managers love to jump in, grab the low-hanging fruit, grit their teeth and get it done. The problem is, speed kills. You jump in and do change all at once, and you can't coordinate and you don't understand the cause and effect, and you can't explain mistakes. The biggest error is that we do too many things at once. I warn people about speed. Excessive speed or moving very fast when it comes to culture change sometimes sounds desirable but it's dangerous.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** Who should be in charge of making strategy work? Do companies need a CSO - a chief strategy officer?

**Hrebiniak:** This is a difficult issue. Some companies are large enough and so complex that they need someone who literally is in charge of integration, so companies are creating these roles. In most good organizations, there is delegation. Let's say we are entering a new market and we are going to execute a new global strategy. Who is involved with that? The CEO says, 'Me and my executive committee,' so the VPs get together, and now we have changed the structure worldwide. This affects IT capabilities.

Then who is in charge of that? The chief information officer who reports to the CFO has to get involved, and then that person has to deal with the IT people worldwide. My point is, there has to be a logical flow of strategic information between the upper and lower levels in terms of strategy and tasks, and there has to be accountability along the way.

If you come up with a good goal - but don't identify the who, what, when and why up and down the organization -- accountability varies along the way. Also -- and I want to stress this point -- I don't want people to think that execution is doing something different. We do it every day.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** In your model of strategy execution,

you stress that business strategy is important to the execution of the corporate strategy. Why isn't this given more priority? And would this be at the heart of why more mergers and acquisitions don't work?

**Hrebiniak:** Yes. The two are interdependent. In a corporate plan for diversification or, if a company is acquired, as an acquisition strategy, the business has to know where it fits in and have clear performance metrics from the corporation -- such as, 'Here's why we bought you.' Often there is not clear communication between corporate and the business. I do say in the book that the dog should wag the tail, but sometimes the tail wags the dog if the division is powerful and it's not integrated into corporate-level strategies.

**Knowledge@Wharton:** You call your concept the "model of strategy execution." No catchy phrase, no clever acronyms. Was this intentional?

**Hrebiniak:** No, not really. I'm pretty straight forward. The only time I come close to [using a catchy phrase] is when I claim that the model offers the "25,000-foot view" -- an important integrative perspective to help the reader understand the logic of the entire strategy execution process. I hope it gets people to see the whole picture of making strategy work.

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## How to strike work-life-balance

*Parthasarathy shares how he's able to work hard and yet find time for family and hobbies*



**B**elieve me, striking the right balance is the key to a fulfilling life. How do I know? I know because I have been in the hurly-burly of the Information Technology revolution for two decades and haven't suffered a burnout, mentally or physically.

Whether you are spiritually inclined or not, the truth is that, balance is central to our very universe. The earth revolves around the sun and as long as that happens, the human race will continue to exist. From the Upanishads to The Bible, from The Talmud to The Koran, numerous passages call upon individuals to lead balanced lives.

Yet, in the rat race of our present-day existence, especially in the long-working-hours ethos of our industry, we forget to maintain a balance between work and family. The result is devastating; high levels of stress, trauma and even nervous breakdowns. Numerous world bodies, including the International Labor Organization (ILO), have in recent years prescribed balance coupled with honoring workers' rights, to create the right working atmosphere, especially in countries that have latched onto the services bandwagon.

In short, the industry buzz, whether in low-tech or hi-tech industry, is about creating Work-Life Balance (WLB). The phrase Work-Life Balance was coined in 1986 in the USA and until 1999 remained on the fringe of corporate usage and public dissemination. Post 2000, WLB has gone mainstream, with hundreds of dedicated Internet sites, including those of mega corporations, helping spread its usage. There has even been legislation enacted in many countries making WLB crucial to the functioning of a corporation.

All this translates into HR departments paying more and more attention to the aspirations of every employee and creating parameters of social interactivity to enable them to constantly discover their true potential. That's a tall order, because every individual is different and unique.

Being a senior executive with heavy responsibilities, as well as a family man, I have been fascinated with WLB because it makes both logical and emotional sense.

Having studied WLB at a personal level, I have concluded that an individual's life can be divided into four basic quadrants - self, workplace, family and friends and community.

### The Why Factor

All of us face the 'Why' factor from the time we take our first breath. And as we grow, the 'Why' follows us like a shadow. The manner in which we tackle the question determines the manner in which we function. Why does one seek a higher salary? Why does one long for a better house? Why does one go to work? Why does one want to do well? Why? Why? Why?

Two simple concepts determine the answer: the sense of achievement and the resultant joy.

I worked hard at my studies and then at my workplace to fashion a career for myself. I got married and worked at making my family life happy. Remember, if a person works too much, sacrificing quality family time, he might reach the top of the corporate ladder quickly, but the achievement and material gain will not commensurate the price he's forced to pay in the long run.

On the other hand, being in this competitive world, one has to prioritize one's business or professional career to financially support one's family, as well as maintain a steady growth curve.

While more and more employees are attempting to strike a balance between work and family, thanks to the information blitzkrieg on the subject, there are still myriad ways for technology to intrude on personal time.

E-mail, voicemail, mobile phones and laptops allow employees to take their work home. Many do this on a regular basis, which means they may be away from the office but are connected by the umbilical cord of technology to the server. I do agree that sometimes one can't help but take one's work home. But one shouldn't make it a habit. There is no use blaming the organization or globalization or 24x7 operations. There is no point blaming the industry; someone else did the estimates and I've ended up doing 70 hours/week."

It is up to you to strike the balance. There are times when you must take a break. I like to surprise my family, take them on a short holiday. One must make the time. It demands logic and discipline. IT, BPO and other hi-tech corporates are constantly upgrading and reframing their WLB policies because of high employee attrition rates.

Happier employees are more productive and more loyal. More productivity adds to a healthier bottom line. WLB

enables a company to retain the best candidates for their open positions, increasing productivity even further.

In short, there's everything to gain for both the employer and the employee.

Remember of course, WLB does not mean an equal balance. It isn't a constant either. It varies over time. There is no one-size-fits-all WLB and it definitely doesn't mean it reduces the time spent at work! Here are tips to a better life, gleaned from personal experience:

### **Simplify**

- Learn to say 'No' if it affects your schedules. You don't have to be busy all the time. Remember nobody is indispensable.
- Choose your best time to do the toughest work. Look for tools to improve productivity.
- Stay home once in a while. Don't carry the frenetic madness of the workplace home - rushing from cinema to restaurant to club. Chill out.
- Don't commit yourself to anything, especially avoidable social engagements while at home and don't feel guilty. I like to listen to music, to do little chores. It relaxes me.

**De Stress:** Sure, it's easier said than done. A degree of stress enables creative people scale new heights. But one must manage stress so it can enrich and motivate, not result in high blood pressure.

The best relief from the debilitating affects of stress is to 'take it easy' at times. Get your second breath and then tackle the problem. Learning yoga or doing a course in breathing at the Art of Living Foundation has helped many a stressed-out individual. I take my dog out for a walk in the morning. It's wonderful.

**Be a child:** Read with your child. There is nothing to beat a fairy tale to bond with your child, as well as improve your voice modulation.

Get down on the floor and cuddle your little one. Take a walk to the nearby park with your child and point out the flowers and trees. If you have a teenager, have regular conversations; talk to him or her about the birds and the bees.

Go for a movie impulsively with the family. Become a little child yourself. Buy that popcorn, cotton candy or ice cream cone. Nobody is looking. Go on a holiday at least once a year. It doesn't have to be a long one. You can have a number of short holidays.

Get yourself a pet. (Believe me, there's nothing to beat the welcome you get from your pet dog when you return home.)

**Share the load:** A clean, orderly home reduces so much unnecessary tension. Everything in the right place makes existence so much simpler. Sit down as a family and assign

**Happier employees are more productive and more loyal. More productivity adds to a healthier bottom line. WLB enables a company to retain the best candidates for their open positions, increasing productivity even further. In short, there's everything to gain for both the employer and the employee.**

each other tasks. Dusting books and CDs can have a calming affect on your nerves.

At the workplace, learn to share your burden. Don't take all the load on your shoulder. Learn to say 'No' if it affects your schedules. Trust your colleagues and delegate. Don't do their fishing for them, teach them how to fish.

**Slow Down:** Sure that's a contradiction in terms. At the workplace we want the assignment done yesterday, not tomorrow! If only we could bend  $e = mc^2$  to our will! Yet, one mustn't get pulled in different directions. One step at a time, that's the key.

Sometimes one must let go to see the light, to discover a new way of doing the same thing.

**Take care of your health:** It's the most neglected aspect of existence. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.'

Don't make grandiose plans: take a walk, go to yoga class, join a gym if you are so inclined, and take a swim. Take up a sport, any sport.

Eat a well-balanced diet; reduce junk foods and pesticide-contaminated soft drinks. And don't forget adequate rest, meaning 'Please Sleep'

**Don't postpone:** When something needs to be done. Do it. Never procrastinate. Avoidance uses up more energy than actually doing it.

**Have a positive approach:** Look around you. There is so much to be grateful about. Take time to list things that you are thankful for it will be a good reminder of how much is going right for you. Remember it could have been worse.

**Take charge:** It's your life and as far as we know the only one we have. Plan ahead: short term, medium term, long term and then work towards them.

Don't feel guilty if you don't know what you want to do with your life. The most interesting people I know didn't know at 22 what they wanted to do with their lives, some of the most interesting 40 year olds know still don't.

*Mr. Parthasarathy is senior vice president, global delivery and operations, MindTree Consulting. This article is based on a presentation at the MindTree Lecture Series.)*

# How to make good service more common



By Vijay Kumar

*It is possible to enhance service standards by aligning systems to intent*

Common Sense they say is uncommon; Good Service too is rarely served. There seems to be a relationship and possibly even a solution in the analogy.

Use common sense – good service will follow. An experience a senior corporate executive encountered recently springs to mind.

The executive, his wife and kid were to board a flight from the US to India. He was travelling on work and was booked business class, his family, who decided to accompany him subsequently, was booked economy class. On the day of the journey he realised he could use his frequent flier miles and upgrade the other tickets to business class.

He went to the appropriate counter at the airport and went through the formalities. Everything seemed to be fine - he had enough points and business class seats were available.

The clerk however told them that she was sorry but she could not make the change. The reason cited was that his wife and kid had requested for special meals! The executive could not quite understand the relationship between the meal request and the seat upgrade. Attempts to get the staff to forget about the meal request, but trigger the upgrade, were futile.

Supervisors and managers were called in and the rigid rules (more likely the computerised system constraints) were explained in detail. A lot of arguing ensued, but the staff stuck to their guns right until they had to board the flight.

After the flight had taken off one of the stewardesses came over to him, said she had overheard the argument and was profusely apologetic. She got his wife and kid to move to business class and even served them their special meals there. The executive and his wife were more than appreciative of the attitude of the staff member in extending good service.

What was possible on the flight was not done on the ground. What was the missing element?

Why doesn't staff seek to change systems when they clearly come in the way of providing customer satisfaction? How many employees are asked to defy the system to provide superior service? What processes exist to help correct current processes when they are clearly not delivering service?

There are a number of positive examples from companies like Nordstrom, Home Depot, Walt Disney that are cited - but they get highlighted also because they are rare?

Should good service continue to be rare? Should common sense continue to be uncommon?

Appropriate technology and trained staff are surely capable of delivering the goods.

Why then do we continue to find good service so rare? Where technology can provide solutions, why does the human

become an obstacle rather than a service enabler?

How can we encourage staff to use their head before the rule book? How can we get them to use common sense more often and challenge rigid systems that don't deliver service? Where technology has limits, how can human involvement complement it to produce the desired effects?

The following areas of customer service are examples where a change in approach can provide a significant likelihood of improved customer service.

1. If a customer brings up an issue it is assumed to be a complaint - not an opportunity to understand a need, provide a service or create an impression.

*Making the best use of face-to-face meetings with customers should be an objective for all customer service executives. This can only happen if there is a quick analysis of the feedback and a subsequent internal communication that reflects both positive and negative aspects with appropriate guidelines for subsequent action.*

2. Use of rules and procedures is considered too important to be bent, reasonableness and fairness are not used to make service decisions.

For organizations it is important to first recognize these occurrences where enforcement of rules causes customer pain and then determine guidelines that can provide flexibility. A study of the actual use of the flexibility and the reasons for the same can provide a lot of insight to further improve customer service.

3. A call centre staff is, increasingly, the only one you interact with - this is a different person talking to you each time and is rarely equipped to deal with anything other than the most trivial issues.

*Using newsgroups and encouraging all employees to actively contribute in supporting customers can be a good way to improve support and minimize individual call handling. Taking a cue from the open source community, Microsoft employees seem to be more active participants in the public newsgroups that deal with their products.*

With services constituting an ever-growing percentage of the economy, it is critical that service delivery gets better and better. The impact on customer satisfaction, productivity and profitability is worth the constant effort in transforming the quality of service. Encouraging the use of common sense is a very good place to start.

*The author is CEO, CogentView, a firm specializing in designing solutions and practices to transform customer service. email: vijay.kumar@cogentview.com*





## Management lessons from Dharmasthala

*Read how a temple town in Karnataka has been applying ancient management practices that seem modern today*

*By Veerendra Heggade*

I am a religious head of Dharmasthala. The temple's deity is a Shivalinga, Shri Manjunatha Swamy, the priests are Vaishnavites, normally you don't see them together, and I'm a Dhigambar, a Jain *Dharmadhikari*.

Many people ask me how this can happen (such diverse and seemingly opposing entities working together). I tell them that I don't know, but it is possible. This system is 600 years old and I'm the 21<sup>st</sup> *Dharmadhikari*. This is possible because it is not abnormal or unnatural. Harmony, understanding and brotherhood are very natural to human beings. The present chaos in the society makes everyone wonder how this is possible.

For understanding how the system works, we have to look back to Indian ancient wisdom which gave importance to *Dharma* (religion), *Artha* (economics), *Kama* (sex), *Karma* (work) and *Moksha* (spiritual salvation).

You will be surprised to know that ancient Indian texts offered a very organized and a disciplined management system. When I took over the reigns of the temple, I was only 21 years old. I was surprised to find that all the systems were so well organized. There were structures, designated positions, disciplined system of administration. How can this happen?

I was surprised to see in an Udipi (in coastal Karnataka) *mutt*, an 800-year old system called *Pariyaya*, which is being followed strictly even today. Here, every two years, the eight *mutts* will take over the administration for two years. And after two years the next man will take over. If you see politics or family or industry, there is fight for power and position. Here in these *mutts* for the last 800 years, no seer has overruled this system. At the early hours of the second year, even the rope of the well and ashes of the oven are taken away and within six hours the next person takes charge as the seer.

When I took over I found management principles of responsibility, authority, accountability and transparency were embedded in the system. The system evolved, based on experience, consent and reason. For example, on every *Sankarmana* day, every month, when the Hindu calendar changes, the Heggade (the head) has to be in the temple to face the '*Dharma Devatas*' (a jury of elders who oversee the functioning of the temple).

On this day, performance evaluation of the previous month is undertaken. I'm made to stand on a pedestal and they sit a level below. This is to indicate that I'm the unquestioned authority of Dharmasthala. Yet, they can question me about how the charities and *pujas* are carried out and if there were any lapses in feeding thousands of people who come there everyday. Everyday, we feed about 30,000 people and on busy days, it even goes up to 70,000. So, everyday is a day of test for us.

First is the enquiry, and then if any mistakes are committed intentionally, they warn me. But if any mistakes are committed unintentionally, then they tell me that they will wait for me for 12 years to rectify it. They have a lot of patience. The next step is about guiding me, primarily about the spirit of Dharmasthala. Then they finally bless me.

Perhaps, if this system of accountability and guidance were there in our governments, we would be better off. The corporate world follows some of these accountability systems but the message here is – our action should speak for us, and not just words.

### Dharmasthala Way

Over the years, we have created a standard of functioning known as the **Dharmasthala Method** and the **Dharmadhikari way**. The basic philosophy here, as propounded by Lord Krishna in Mahabharatha, is to follow the eternal values like focusing on actions, not the results. Following a system of detachment with attachment. Attachment to our actions - Karma and detachment to the results - Hawa. This system yields maximum efficiency with minimum efforts through introspection and inspection of individual performance.

This philosophy has a tremendous impact on the functioning of both individuals and institutions. Institutions are a collective force of the individuals. If individuals perform well, the institutions perform well too.

It's my experience after managing several institutions that if you practice care, compassion and internal discipline, success will follow. This philosophy will apply to any condition – whether in chaos, normalcy or to a mutually cooperative situation.

If values like trust, transparency and accountability are optimally blended, they will serve institutions well even during hard times.

I appreciate the efforts of Shri Shri Ravi Shankarji to take the Indian system of value based management system to the world. Our ancient holy texts are filled with universal truths and practical insights. Unearthing the hidden treasures of *Vedas* and *Puranas* is not easy. Shri Shri Ravi Shankarji has shouldered a stupendous task. If Indian governments, corporates and civic bodies can learn from them, India can emerge as a powerful force.

*Excerpts from Shri Veerendra Heggade's talk to senior executives at the Art of Living Centre, Bangalore, recently*

**Best Face Forward: Why Companies Must Improve Their Service Interfaces With Customers**

Jeffrey F. Rayport, Bernard J. Jaworski  
Harvard Business School Press, January 2005

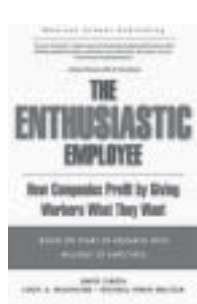
Now more than ever, success is based on how well firms manage interactions with customers. Short on appropriately skilled labor and flush with new intelligent technologies, visionary managers are not just outsourcing or sending work offshore for greater efficiency; they are recruiting machines into the workforce for greater effectiveness. Technology is taking over "front office" roles in customer relationship management-sparking a revolution in how firms serve customers and compete with rivals.

In Best Face Forward, Jeffrey F. Rayport and Bernard J. Jaworski argue that as this "front-office automation" revolution unfolds, competitive advantage will increasingly depend on deploying the right mix of interfaces with customers-human, automated, and hybrids of both-to surpass current levels of performance and service.

Based on extensive research inside both start-up and established businesses, Best Face Forward proposes guiding principles and a practical auditing tool for determining how humans and machines can best collaborate in mediating critical customer interactions.

Far from dehumanizing the workforce, the authors show how this revolution will create a "people-rich" workplace-one that combines the unique capabilities of humans and machines to create a better world for all of us.

**The Enthusiastic Employee: How Companies Profit by Giving Workers What They Want**



David Sirota, Louis Mischkind, Michael Meltzer, Feb 2005, Wharton School Publishing

The book is based on research with more than 4,000,000 employees in 250+ companies across 30 years. The research points to fair play, achievement, and camaraderie as the most important factors in a healthy workplace.

With an enthusiastic workforce, employee turnover can be reduced by as much as 80% and stock performance can increase by 25%. "The Enthusiastic Employee is a breath of fresh air. David Sirota's insights-drawn from his years of working with a variety of corporate cultures-have helped our organization's multi-cultural management team build bridges and better understand the unique needs of our organization. This book provides practical insights into the relationship management should have with its employees," Bill Taylor, President & CEO, Mercedes-Benz U.S. International.

The Enthusiastic Employee provides universal learning-

for any organization, in any industry, in any country. The authors give us a wealth of ideas, insights, and case studies from the world's greatest companies on a wealth of management topics-from setting the mission statement to providing performance feedback. Whether you are just starting out in management or are the CEO of a large multinational company, I know that you will find The Enthusiastic Employee to be extremely useful and truly inspiring." Chris Gibson-Smith, Chairman, London Stock Exchange

**Managing Customers as Investments**

The Strategic Value of Customers in the Long Run  
Sunil Gupta, Donald Lehmann, Feb 2005, Wharton School Publishing



Are You Spending More on Your Customers Than They Are Really Worth? Read about

- a. Linking customer lifetime value to business value: powerful techniques for both executives and investors.
- b. Driving better decisions about process, organizational structure, IT, and much more.
- c. Includes practical, easy-to-use metrics and real-world case studies.

This book proves the adage that nothing is as practical as a good theory. The concept of lifetime value of a customer is presented in a straightforward and very practical way that will be extremely useful to marketers who are charged with improving financial accountability and managing ROI. It gives the reader enough information to get started with readily available data to understand how to think about and how to take action on customer management issues.

The notion that it's better to be 'vaguely right, than precisely wrong' is just the right thing for companies that know they need to move on these issues but are struggling to get results. I strongly recommend this book for marketers who want to get more effective at customer management. The methods introduced in this book are important building blocks for a long-term testing and learning process to improve business performance

**Making Strategy Work**

Leading Effective Execution and Change, Lawrence Hrebiniak, Jan 2005



Without effective execution, no business strategy can succeed. Unfortunately, most managers know far more about developing strategy than about executing it -- and overcoming the difficult political and organizational obstacles that stand in their way.

In this book, leading consultant and

Wharton professor Lawrence Hrebiniak offers the first comprehensive, disciplined process model for making strategy work in the real world.

Formulating strategy is one thing. Executing it throughout the entire organization... well, that's the really hard part. Without effective execution, no business strategy can succeed. Unfortunately, most managers know far more about developing strategy than about executing it-and overcoming the difficult political and organizational obstacles that stand in their way. In this book, Larry Hrebiniak offers a comprehensive, disciplined process model for making strategy work in the real world.

Hrebiniak shows why execution is even more important than many senior executives realize, and sheds powerful new light on why businesses fail to deliver on even their most promising strategies. He offers a systematic roadmap for execution that encompasses every key success factor: organizational structure, coordination, information sharing, incentives, controls, change management, culture, and the role of power and influence in the execution process.

Making Strategy Work concludes with a start-to-finish case study showing how to use Hrebiniak's ideas to address one of today's most difficult business execution challenges: ensuring the success of a merger or acquisition. The advice on making M&A strategies work justifies the addition of this book to any execution toolkit.

## Managing Marketing

The Highly Effective Marketing Plan (HEMP): A proven, practical, planning process for companies of all sizes, Peter Knight, Apr 2004

A Highly Effective Marketing Plan will stop you wasting thousands, maybe millions of pounds, dollars, euros or yen on marketing initiatives that should never see the light of day. HEMP is a straightforward, simple, 17 step plan which you can use to address your problems and opportunities whatever their size, whatever your business, whatever sector you operate in. And it's tried, tested and proven.

## GoInnovate

Andrew Papageorge



This newly published 170-page soft-cover book explains why innovation is a global business imperative, the most common myths of innovation, his thinking behind the creation of the GoInnovate! System and then outlines in detail the components of the System and the 13 Essential Elements. Includes a glossary of terms.

Contains a wealth of advice that can help your organization to overcome resistance to change and to successfully implement a culture of innovation. In this short

but very informative book, Andrew spends a considerable number of pages discussing the people side of innovation. In one particularly interesting passage, he explains why people tend to resist change, and what can be done to help them to understand the need for it. This part of the book then goes on to explain how communication and education are key strategies to help your employees to understand the need for change and to accept and support it.

## The Power of Strategy Innovation

A new way of linking creativity and strategic planning to discover great business opportunities, Robert Johnston and J. Douglas Bate, Amacom, December 2004



Primarily, this is a book for managers in the product and service development field who want to launch their companies toward the best in class. The book addresses current strategic planning activities and cites examples of several leading companies that have implemented new approaches to strategy - essentially strategy innovation.

Therefore, those who aspire to become leaders (and as Johnson and Bate point out, merely survive in the not-too-distant future) will find the book a useful starting point. It may serve for convincing top-level management of the importance of a new, innovative approach to strategy, as well as putting in place the basic infrastructure for realizing that approach.

The core message of the book regards "breaking out of incrementalism," by which the authors mean creating more breakthrough products to complement incremental product line extensions. Although this is nothing new in its own right, the authors argue that "the strategic planning process is more often one that perpetuates, and at best revises, the current strategy every year."

## Managing Finance

Handbook of Corporate Finance, A Business Companion to Financial Markets, Decisions and Techniques. Glen Arnold, Nov 2004

The Handbook of Corporate Finance is a comprehensive, authoritative, crystal-clear guide and directed at real world problem solving, it will ensure that managers have the financial knowledge they need to succeed.

## Managing Performance

How People Work: A Field Guide to People and Performance, Roderic Gray, Dec 2004

What motivates employees and managers is changing, and managers will have to get better at motivating rather than instructing. How do managers rise to that task? This book will help managers close the gap between what people want and what they want people to do.



## Time Tips For Top Salespeople



As I wrote in my first book *MegaLiving*, time is your most precious commodity. Manage it wisely and you are certain to achieve personal, professional and even spiritual fulfillment. Spend it ineffectively and sooner or later, you will be flooded with a sense of regret over missed sales opportunities, triumphs and achievements.

The heart of skillful time management lies in devoting your time to the things that count. Yet in these information-crazed times we live in, where salespeople are faced with endless voice mail messages, stacks of faxes and a steady stream of e-mail messages, focusing on those high-leverage priorities can be an enormous challenge. Here are 6 practical strategies to manage your time more effectively in these turbulent times:

- **Embrace Technology.** It is to offer a blinding glimpse of the obvious to state that technology has the power to rule your life if you don't take charge. For example, a chief financial officer at a company in Silicon Valley returned to work after a 7-day vacation to find 2,000 E-mail messages waiting for him. His response? He deleted them all on the assumption that the important ones would be sent again.

Modern "smart tools" ranging from voice-mail to the internet, are a wonderful servants but tyrannical masters. As the IBM motto said: "Machines should work. People should think." Set aside specific times during the day to review E-mail and voice-messages. Become an expert computer user.

By Robin Sharma



Keep faxes under one page in length (the recipients will appreciate you to no end) and send them during off-hours.

- **Master Multitasking.** As I teach in my time management seminars for sales companies, it is essential to master the art of doing two things at once to save time. Sort mail while on hold, read while exercising on a stationary bike at the gym, pay your bills while watching television. Listen to motivational tapes over breakfast. Effective time control requires nothing more than a little creativity and a strong desire to enhance the quality of your personal and professional life.

- **Join the 5 O'clock Club.** From Mahatma Gandhi to Ted Turner, one of the best strategies to get more done in your day is to rise early. Plan to get up at progressively earlier times for 21 days in a row, the period it takes to create a new habit. Set up a series of small rewards to keep you motivated to follow through on your goal. In time, this habit will become a part of you and offer you a few extra hours every day.

- **Renew Yourself.** "Find the right balance in life. Man is body, mind and spirit. Give the right attention to each," wrote Montapert. Top performing salespeople understand that time spent renewing themselves, whether through watching the sun rise once a week or going for a run every evening, is time well spent. You cannot do good unless you feel good. By scheduling time for stress reduction, physical fitness and care of the spirit, you will nourish every other hour with energy, creativity and effectiveness. As Abe Lincoln noted sagely "if I had 8 hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend 6 hours sharpening an axe."

- **Use Your Commute Time Wisely.** If you commute thirty minutes each way every day, by the end of one year, you will have spent six weeks of eight-hour days in this activity. Use your commute time to reflect, to return phone calls, to dictate or to listen to motivational cassettes. Make your car a college on wheels, using your drive time to learn and improve.

- **Be Unorthodox.** Run your own race. Break away from time traditions and start doing things when no one else is doing them. Call your prospects between 8 and 9 am. Dine at restaurants during non-peak hours to beat the line ups and get better service. Do your weekend errands early Saturday morning to beat the rush; what might normally take you three hours to accomplish can be done in half the time. Schedule your flights at low traffic times rather than rushing to catch the seven o'clock flight for a day of business in another city. Remember, good time management is good life management.

*Robin S. Sharma, is an internationally known speaker and corporate trainer. His latest book is the top-selling motivational fable **The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari**. Visit his site [www.robinsharma.com](http://www.robinsharma.com)*

### Governing joint ventures

Few joint ventures employ the same standards of governance that have become common to their corporate parents. As a result, weak governance leads many ventures to fail or fall short of expectations because of divided loyalties, gridlock, weak performance management, mistrust, and stagnation. Despite the challenges of governing joint ventures—often stemming from their divided structure and the conflicting priorities of their parent companies—it is possible to develop a set of guidelines for joint-venture governance against which companies, and perhaps their public shareholders, can assess performance.

Joint-venture-governance guidelines should promote accountability, transparency, simplicity, and speed. Where possible, they should also encourage operational independence from corporate parents, which tends to encourage all the desired traits in good governance.

[www.mckinseyquarterly.com/](http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/)

### The Essentials of Managing Change and Transition: Business Literacy for HR Professionals

Today's HR professionals work side by side with senior executives to devise strategies for their organizations and to marshal the talent and resources to implement it. This paperback provides an overview of the various approaches to change management, provides assessments and tools for preparing employees and the organization for a change initiative, and offers strategies for successfully managing the human and business aspects of the transformation as it rolls out.

Harvard Business School Publishing

### When and How to Hire Your Next Employee

You are running a consulting business, hardware store, advertising firm...you name it. Your business is growing. So much so you are starting to feel a bit overwhelmed, and perhaps so are a few others working with you. The question you are struggling with is if and when you should hire the next employee.

Like you, I have gone through this challenge, as have so many of my clients. Let's start by considering what you are doing. What activities should you be delegating? Who should you delegate them to and how does that end up defining whom you ought to hire?

<http://hiring.fastcompany.com>

### Women in Management

Dr. A S Ahluwalia, Productivity Promotion, Management Journal of Delhi Productivity Council, Oct-Dec - 2004

Women today are leaders in industry, government and organizations worldwide. Much progress has been made for women's advancement, with yet more to achieve. Women in the workplaces still trail women. There is a need to explore the institution and societal barriers that affect women's

advancement - and how human resources professionals and organizations can address these issues. This article is an attempt to spotlight this gray area.

### Designing the Factory Footprint for Competitive Advantage

Dermot Shorten, Michael Pfitzmann, and Curt Mueller

Most companies wait until their costs are demonstrably out of line before they scrutinize their manufacturing topography. But a forward-thinking firm can reduce unit costs by as much as 40 percent of total acquisition costs by asking: How many plants should we have? Where should they be? What should their focus and mission be? Designing an appropriate manufacturing footprint is not an easy process, but the complexity is manageable when a few essential principles are followed.

<http://www.strategy-business.com>

### Survey: U.S. CEOs take conservative tack on innovation

Many companies don't spend enough time tracking competitors. U.S. technology executives agree that innovation is essential to improving their competitiveness, but their approach to innovation is conservative, focusing mainly on existing products and services, according to a study published yesterday by consulting company A.T. Kearney Inc. Top executives at manufacturers, software companies and IT service companies in the U.S. clearly see the risk of falling behind global competition in technology and telecommunications, according to a survey of more than 300 executives conducted in late 2004 and early 2005.

<http://www.computerworld.com>

### Can Your Supply Chain Move People?

Mar 15, 2005, Ken Cottrill

The recent decision by IBM to exit the PC business it pioneered is an industry milestone, but that is only half the story. The sale of IBM's PC hardware division to Chinese computer manufacturer Lenovo Group brings Big Blue one step closer to creating an "on-demand business" driven by a mix of products and services and with a new breed of supply chain at its core—one as efficient in deploying people as it is in deploying assets. To accomplish this, the company is attempting to take the principles of its supply chain for products and apply them to how it organizes and deploys its employees' vast array of skills. This is a groundbreaking concept in the supply chain field, one that blurs traditional organizational lines between supply chain management, human resources, and the operations of IBM's many business units. Read more about IBM's attempts to create an efficient labor-based supply chain.

<http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu>

## How an HR manager outwitted a Chambal bandit

By Benedict Paramanand

This story doesn't have the heady mix of a typical Bollywood flick because the hero here isn't saving his kidnapped girlfriend or his fiancé, after single handedly demolishing men, machine and stray animals that come in his way. But if used as a case study in a classroom, there are plenty of lessons to be learnt from how a kidnapped HR manager managed to wriggle out of a near-death situation. This could well be one of the most exhilarating true-life stories with rich takeaways.

When Keith Mendez, 33, HR manager with Cadbury India, at the Gwalior plant, was on his way for an early day at office, he was kidnapped by a gang of four armed dacoits on 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2005 and holed up for five days in the deepest of jungles in the dreaded Chambal Valley. Even as hectic negotiations for ransom were on between the dreaded gang leader and his wife, with the police getting into the thick of action later, Keith had to dig into his HR skills to plan an escape.

How he did it is a lesson for all managers who often find themselves in situations that require quick wit, opportunity-seizing ability, instant decision-making, hard bargaining with soft negotiation skills and most importantly, guts to face the unknown.

Keith has a masters degree in HR and has worked with AV Birla, Pfizer and now Cadbury India Ltd. During his nine years experience he's had exposure in Factory HR, Corporate and Sales HR.

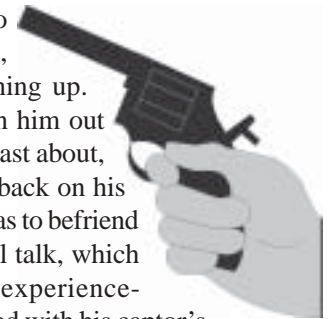
The eerie surroundings of the Chambal Valley would reverberate with gun shots all through the day and intensify in the night. One could also hear dacoits offering loud prayers and chants from nearby temples at dusk. The constant threats by the dacoits could unnerve any normal person. Keith would focus his thoughts on his domain trying to convince his captors that he was a small time employee and that he would not be able to raise the ransom demanded by them (reportedly to the tune of 20 lakhs).

He also told them that even if the company helped his wife raise the money, it would be after taking an undertaking from him to repay the money. All this talk helped in lowering the expectations of the captors who then felt that the information that Keith was a company owner given to them by their accomplice in Gwalior was false and then they brought down the demand to 5- 6 lakhs

On the fifth day of his captivity, Keith found himself guarded by only one of the dacoits wielding a pistol, while the leader was busy arranging to collect the ransom money at Agra.

Keith was oblivious of what was happening outside. But he had to make good his escape before the second captor returned, since he reckoned that after collecting the ransom the captors would not come back to release him the same day due to police cordoning a 15 km radius around where he was holed up.

With only one dacoit to handle, as against the usual two, Keith saw an opportunity opening up. Five days of captivity had worn him out and with a frame not much to boast about, Keith had no choice but to fall back on his survival instincts. His strategy was to befriend his captor. He started with small talk, which gradually developed into an experience-sharing session. Keith empathized with his captor's miserable life without taking a high moral ground.



Keith realized that his captor had lowered his guard after the chat and was ready for a deal. But before going straight into it, Keith took this 20 something youth, who was doing this for a small fraction of the total ransom that was being negotiated, into confidence. He aroused his inner sensibilities and cajoled him to dream of a better future, with a bit of his help.

After a daunting mind-gaming session, Keith mustered enough courage to offer a deal that his captor wouldn't refuse. The deal was that his captor would facilitate the escape and if it failed, Keith would own up, thereby protecting the youth. Keith does not wish to divulge other details to keep his word. Although it matters little with the whole saga behind him, Keith still feels the need to protect him by not sharing more details which is a sign of rare integrity.

When Keith got out of the jungle (the captors would often blindfold him and move him from one location to another, often walking for about 3 hours by foot) around 4 pm with not a single penny in his pocket, he instinctively knew his saga was only entering another chapter and was ready for more action. Villagers who are normally sympathetic to the dacoits, and often get a cut from the ransom, did not spot him. He climbed barren hillocks and walked through ravens to reach a semblance of a road after a good two-hour walk.

As the evening sun started fading, Keith had by then lost all hopes of escaping. On trekking uphill he found a 'pucca' road and after a quick hike for about 30 minutes, he found a telephone booth and called the control room. The police, which still takes the credit for his freedom, picked him up in five minutes.

The proactive role Cadbury's played in facilitating its executive's release is another lesson for Indian companies who often wriggle out when the stakes get too high. Cadbury's flew in a director from London and two Directors from their Head Office at Mumbai to manage this crisis and give support to the family of Keith and to apply pressure both on the central as well as the state governments. Although the police used all its technology and men at its disposal, it was Keith's people skills that finally worked. Who said HR guys are wimps!!!



**CEOs in government?**



President Abdul Kalam recently suggested to the business community that if they want the government to be more business-friendly they should join the government. Sounds like a preposterous idea. But there is a caveat. Business leaders above the age of 65, when they are normally not active in the boards or executive positions, can join the government. An innovative idea if it's worked out well.

What could be the impact on business? Could be significant if one looks at this data given by Mr. Tim Timken, the chairman of the \$5 billion Timken Company – The cost of poor government policies to business in the United States is 22% of sales. Now, what this figure could be for India could be anyone's guess.

**Progress from tsunami**

Sriram Ayer quit his job at a software firm in 2004 to run NalandaWay, a foundation matching poor kids with mentors from the booming professional class in and around Chennai, India. Then, on December 26, the water walls rose. Of the 375 children, 175 had died.

That's when Ayer began his new part-time gig: managing logistics of installing public toilets in 16 coastal villages near Chennai. Until now, seaside residents have been accustomed to relieving themselves on the beach, creating public health hazards. Now, Parryware, part of a large Indian company, plans to install 10 commodes for every 50 families. Ayer volunteered to oversee the project.

Ayer sees his emergency project as a lever: If villagers adopt new hygiene practices, he thinks, they'll be more receptive to mentorship. "Getting to terms with their conditions and prejudices will definitely take time," he says. "But by being more acquainted with their needs and having gone through their disaster, there is an appreciation of our agenda and our approach."

**IT Realities**

Project Manager is a person who thinks nine women can deliver a baby in One month.

Developer is a person who thinks a single woman cannot deliver a baby in nine months.

Onsite Coordinator is one who thinks single woman can deliver nine babies in one month.

Marketing manager is a person who thinks he can deliver a child whether a man and woman is available or not.

Resource optimisation team thinks it doesn't need a man or woman, it'll still produce a child with zero resources.

Documentation team thinks it doesn't care whether the child is delivered, it'll just document 9 months.

An Auditor is the person who is never happy with the PROCESS to produce baby.

And the client is one who doesn't know why he wants a baby.

**Cracked pot**

A water bearer in China had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole, which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After 2 years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them.

For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral: Each One of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots, so to say. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are, and look for the good in them.

**Ayaz Peerbhoy's fetish**



Ayaz Peerbhoy, the founder of MAA Communications, took his job very seriously. Rolex was marketing its ability to withstand very cold temperatures – even on Mount Everest. When Ayaj Peerbhoy heard that Edmund Hillary finally conquered the tallest mountain, he met him up half the way and asked him to endorse the watch's claim. BRAVO!