

Mentor your customer

Kumar Malavalli has been crowned as the guru of storage networks. He combines a heady mix of terrific technical talent and an uncanny ability to invest in right companies. But he attributes his success to his unique understanding of his customer

- By Benedict Paramanand



Kumar attributes his phenomenal success to his ability to match technology with customer needs. He says people are generally hung up on technology without realizing that technology is good only if it solves user problems.

What's led an emigrant Indian engineer to be counted among the top technology innovators of the world today makes for a fascinating story. He belongs to the elite club of Indians who have made it big through sheer grit, enterprise and an exceptional technical foresight.

Kumar's Brocade Communications Inc has emerged as the reigning champion of Fibre Channel SANs (storage area networks), with well over 50 percent market share today. In 2003, he also co-founded InMage, a data continuity company. He is an avid angel investor and plays golf apart from doing a bit of philanthropic work in education and e-learning. In 2003, the Silicon Valley Engineering Council (SVEC) recognized Kumar's distinguished accomplishments and contributions to technology and society by inducting him into the SVEC Hall of Fame.

Kumar is a customer's delight as he does a lot of thinking for them and a wee bit of selling to them. He does not draw a distinction between the art of successfully managing a company and a blind focus on the customer. "Managing a technology company is different. We treat customers as our colleagues."

To Kumar, everybody in the company has to be salesman/saleswoman. "Initially, you should treat your customer as an extension of your lab. You got to work with them and show them that you got expertise in the given field. You are selling not because you have a product, you are selling because you also have expertise. You should be a mentor and at the same time cater to their requirements. To me that's a cultural issue. Companies have to make it part of their culture – it's not just having an open mind but also being a mentor to the customer."

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An essential requirement to play the role of a mentor is to have domain expertise. “If you don’t have it you cannot be a mentor. Indian IT companies are getting better at meeting global customer expectations, but they have to work harder at domain expertise.”

“When you are a mentor it’s not just domain expertise and the understanding of customer psychology but the frankness to tell them or sell them what they really need. Don’t try to sell them beyond their need. Then they trust in you. When you oversell you lose the customer.”

How has Kumar been taking his ideas to market so successfully? “You don’t do it alone. You got to associate with the right people and the right team. This is the industry where the customer gets products pushed to them. It’s not a consumer type industry where consumer says I want this. What’s important is you really got to be with the customer for a very long period of time.”

Kumar’s team works on the premise that success comes only if they are able to translate features to benefits. “Instead of telling the customer that they got to have deterministic backup, a better way to convey the same message is to tell them that they need better bandwidth management and a guaranteed back-up window. You can have the best technology in the world and not go anywhere. That’s what separates technologists from visionaries.”

Why do technology companies normally fail? Why are customers bombarded with loads of features they don’t need? “Many engineers become emotional about technology without looking at what benefits it can bring to the end user. By doing that you miss the market window. Then companies fail. You got to step back and ask whether this technology

“When you are a mentor it’s not just domain expertise and the understanding of customer psychology but the frankness to tell them or sell them what they really need. Don’t try to sell them beyond their need. Then they trust in you. When you oversell you lose the customer.”

is solving real user problems and how do we release that in stages. You should also be able to understand when the market is ready for your products. Not many people do that.”

His mantra is simple. “The best way to manage a company after picking good people is not to micromanage. Assign their goals and don’t watch over their shoulders. With responsibility accountability also comes.” Kumar believes in an open work environment where colleagues should be able to tell their CEOs what may work and what may not. “Don’t hide the bad news. Get the bad news soon on the table so that you can make a course correction quickly.”

Having taken his first co-founded company, Brocade Communications Inc, public in the US in 1999, Kumar now has to satisfy two masters – the never-happy customer and the ever-greedy shareholder. How does he manage it? “I tell the shareholders that this is the cycle and this is what they want and this is what we can provide. You cannot just put some figures just to satisfy them. It’s better to tell the truth. If you tell the market that customers totally believe in you and that it’s a question of time revenue will start to come. You should set their expectations right at the very beginning.” A tough call indeed.

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New corporate democracy



The position of trade unions as democratic symbols in organizations is losing its strength. But a new power brigade is emerging that will give corporate democracy a totally new meaning.

According to Charles Handy, renowned writer on management whose

book *The Elephant & the Flea* received rave reviews, the front-end staff – the employee at the check-in desk of an airline, at the end of a telephone in a call center, a waiter in a restaurant, a nurse on the ward or even a policeman on the beat are the ones who will embody the values of their organizations. These individuals have become the unintended guardians of their company's brands. They are beginning to realize their importance and the power they wield, albeit it is often disproportionate to their pay.

In just-in-time organizations, people are beginning to feel that they are no longer humanized machines but living communities that “have to be governed and led like any other community.”

Handy believes that the front-end staff will begin to demand greater recognition and more control of their personal time. Organizations could expect increasing demands for a greater work-life balance and greater discretion in 2005. And if organizations don't recognize the simmering trend, they will face more absenteeism and higher attrition – a vote by the feet.

Other powerful trends organizations have to watch out for is that managers/employees want to be regarded as belonging to something, not just used by it, as members, not employees, citizens not human resources. “They want a voice in what concerns them, the chance and the right to make a difference.”

Lessons from Politics

New words like citizens, community and members that are being used are concepts drawn from political theory and not from the language of machines. Globalization is resulting in regional offices gaining greater control over their operations. Here, Handy believes the definition of Federalism and its effectiveness will be more apt. “Federalism is a tried and trusted way of combining local responsibility with a necessary degree of central control and organizations might usefully go back to the handbooks of political theory to find out how it works.

Federalism, if properly designed, is a way to introduce a practical form of direct democracy, where more people have more influence over the decisions that directly concern them and their group.”

Cost of strategic mismanagement

More shareholder value has been wiped out in the past five years as a result of strategic mismanagement and poor execution than was lost in all of the recent compliance scandals. A Booz Allen Hamilton analysis of 1,200 firms with market capitalizations of more than \$1 billion found that the poorest performers — the 360 companies that trailed the S&P 500 between 1999 and 2003 — destroyed almost seven times more value through strategic missteps than by compliance failures.

87 percent of value destruction was attributable to such failures as management ineffectiveness in reacting to competitive pressures or forecasting customer demand, or operational blunders, such as cost overruns and M&A integration problems. These findings suggest that even in the face of Sarbanes-Oxley, to manage for growth, companies must design a robust and integrated strategic planning process built on a broad understanding of all risks to the business.

Global execs less optimistic about future

Executives are markedly less optimistic than they were a year ago, according to McKinsey's latest survey of executives from around the world. Although The McKinsey Global Confidence Index shows that more executives than not are still confident about the economic prospects of their industries and countries and of the world as a whole, the index has fallen by 12 percent since January 2004, and executives in developed Asian countries are the least confident of all.

The McKinsey findings, based on the responses of some 16,500 businesspeople from 148 countries, confirm a spate of bad economic news. The weak dollar, volatile oil prices and geopolitical uncertainty seem to have depressed economic prospects around the world; a respected US consumer confidence survey fell to an eight-month low in November, for example, and in early December the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development forecast that in 2005 economic growth would be 10 percent lower in the United States and 24 percent lower in the euro zone than it had predicted just six months earlier.

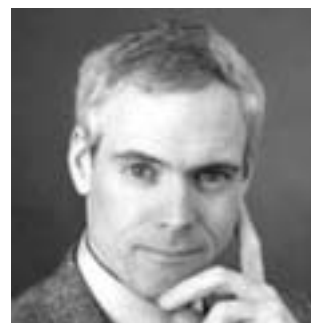
Since much of the world's economic growth depends on international trade, the McKinsey survey's findings on trade liberalization are cautionary.

Why *Good to Great* will still be the 2005 bestseller

According to *The Economist's The World in 2005* the best selling business book of 2005 “has almost certainly been published already. And it may well be the same as in 2004.”

Jim Collins' *Good to Great – Why Some Companies make the Leap... & Others Don't* was first published in 2001 and has since overtaken the 1982 classic Tom Peter's *'In Search of Excellence'* as the best selling business book of all time.

What is great about a book that simply studies 11 companies and how their managers transformed them from ordinary to extraordinary? The answer could well be the surprise element. The book does not study the Wal-Mart's of the world but some innocuous companies that have not found their names on business papers' headlines. The book perhaps gives confidence through some absorbing prose to ordinary people that they too can dream of achieving such results.



Collins discovered common traits that challenged many of the conventional notions of corporate success. Making the transition from good to great doesn't require a high-profile CEO, the latest technology, innovative change management, or even a fine-tuned business strategy. At the heart of those rare and truly great companies was a corporate culture that rigorously found and promoted disciplined people to think and act in a disciplined manner. Peppared with dozens of stories and examples from the great and not so great, the book offers a well-reasoned road map to excellence that any organization would do well to consider.

All of Collins's conclusions are drawn from a subjective definition of 'great'—namely, that only those companies are truly great that can demonstrate 15 years of sustained, above-average stock market results. There is no accounting for what these companies actually do, only for what they return to shareholders. A debatable definition, but suspend your disbelief if you must, because Collins's research nevertheless delivers some keen insights into the makings of some of today's most successful companies.

Reality bites



Do a majority of CEOs live in a make-believe world? Or when they really realize what is happening around them, is it too late? Or so Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan think. The authors of *Confronting Reality: Doing What Matters to get Things Right* (Crown Business October 2004) tell E. Brooke Gilbert of Amazon.com in an interview that “At the time we wrote *Execution*, we saw that people were failing to deliver results not necessarily because they didn't have good strategies, but because they did not execute. As we looked back on the book, we came to see that the failure to confront reality was the larger issue—responsible not only for poor execution, but also for poor strategies. In order to execute, you have to have a clear perception of reality. Maybe, that sounds obvious, but it's painfully clear that a lot of leaders don't.”

Since the publication of *Execution - The Discipline of Getting Things Done* in 2002 the authors see significant changes in the business ecosystem. “The key differences today are increased competition and unanticipated change. Whether the overall economy is up or down, products and services are becoming commoditized faster, and structural changes are increasing. These trends developed faster than most of us in business imagined, and with the increasing pace of globalization, they will only become more pronounced.”

The authors believe that *Confronting Reality* is not just a buzz phrase but also the foundation of business success. They believe their book can make significant contribution because “People haven't previously had a tool specifically designed to help them understand and face reality in all areas of their businesses. That's what our version of the business model is, and we expect that people will adopt it as they discover how well it works.”

They say that all leaders should be concerned – even paranoid – about whether they can sustain their current positions. “By the time you're in visible trouble, it may be too late.”

How will the immediate future look? “Technology and the Internet will continue to drive rapid change, raising both threats and opportunities for all kinds of businesses. Commoditization and outsourcing will continue. And we'll see the flip side of outsourcing: The arrival of new multinationals, notably from China, setting up businesses on to the home turf of companies in the United States, Europe and elsewhere.”

How Richard Branson manages 350 companies

Richard Branson is a people's man. How he manages diverse companies and at the same time finds time for publicity antics is amazing



Richard Branson, the founder and owner of The Virgin Group - an empire of 350 companies that includes Virgin Atlantic airlines as well as ventures in telecommunications, trains, cosmetics, credit cards and several other industries - participated in a satellite telecast organized by Linkage, a Massachusetts-based

organizational development firm, in collaboration with WHYY, a public television broadcaster in Philadelphia, as well as Wharton School Publishing and Knowledge@Wharton.

Branson's approach to building the Virgin brand figured several times during the discussion, particularly since he said his goal is to turn Virgin into "the most respected brand in the world." It is difficult to separate the success of the Virgin brand from the flamboyant man behind that brand. Branson says he wouldn't have it any other way. He travels the world weekly, reinforcing his good-natured, visible, jet-setting, billionaire reputation as a reflection of the companies he owns.

A Young, Fun Culture

Branson firmly believes in the happiness of his employees. Branson says his philosophy of "look for the best and you'll get the best" helped him build an empire recognized for its young, fun culture. "For the people who work for you or with you, you must lavish praise on them at all times," Branson says. "If a flower is watered, it flourishes. If not, it shrivels up and dies. It's much more fun looking for the best in people. People don't need to be told where they've slipped up or made a mess of something. They'll sort it out themselves." Branson feels strongly that if an employee is not excelling in one area of the company, he or she should be given the opportunity to do well in a different Virgin Group job. Firing is seldom an option.

Motivational strategies extend to innovative ideas. The key to encouraging innovation within the Virgin ranks, suggests Branson, is to listen to any and all ideas and to offer feedback. Employees often leave companies, he reasons, because they are frustrated by the fact that their ideas fall on deaf ears. Interaction between employees and managers is fundamental. For the companies in which he serves as both chief executive and chairman, Branson writes his staff "chitty-chatty" letters to tell them everything that is going on and to encourage them to write him with any ideas or suggestions. He gives them his home address and phone number. He responds with a letter personally, even if he doesn't follow up and deal with the

details. Sometimes people come to him with personal problems, while others have suggestions for improvements in their companies. Either way, they get the chance to be heard.

And then, of course, there are occasions when the boss needs to connect with employees while leaning up against a bar. "Some 80% of your life is spent working," says Branson. "You want to have fun at home; why shouldn't you have fun at work? I think leaders have got to make a bigger effort to make sure the people who work for them are enjoying what they're doing. If a chairman of a company visits Seattle, that chairman should take all the staff out in the evening and have a few drinks together, talk together and party together and not be embarrassed about the staff seeing the weaker side of you. They don't lose respect for you because they see your human side. They actually gain more respect for you."

Building Trust

Branson has developed a level of trust with his top managers by setting the direction and then stepping back to let them navigate. "I come up with the original idea, spend the first three months immersed in the business so I know the ins and outs and then give chief executives a stake in the company and ask them to run it as if it's their own," explains Branson. "I intervene as little as possible. Give them that, and they will give everything back."

Trust in managers and employees is particularly important as Branson looks to build Virgin. Adding more companies to the cache makes it that much more difficult to be everywhere at once. Yet, for Branson, expansion is always a priority. "Virgin is an unusual brand," he notes, because it is a "way of life" brand, unlike Western brands like Coca-Cola or Nike that focus on one type of product. Virgin challenges big businesses in completely different sectors. "In Nigeria, we've been asked to set up a national airline," he explains.

"In India, we're going to build a phone company. In South Africa, the financial services industry is still stuck 30 years back with incredibly high prices. We're looking at getting in there and shaking up the industry. In America, we're looking at space travel. Around the world we're looking at taking the brand into a number of different industries. Our criterion is, will it fulfill the Virgin yardstick of being good value for the money? Will it enhance the brand by bringing great quality? Will we have fun doing it and can we make it profitable? If those criteria work, then we'll seriously look at a new industry."

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Vaccine jockey

Stud farms and vaccines are indeed an eclectic concoction. To Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla the alchemy of mixing passion and mission into a highly profitable enterprise has been a way of life for the last three decades.

By Benedict Paramanand

Dr. Poonawalla's Serum Institute of India made a humble beginning in the 1960s with a 20-man operation. It's today India's largest vaccine manufacturer. One in every two children around the world is vaccinated with his vaccine.

People are more familiar with Dr. Poonawalla's association with racing and stud farms. He sponsors the richest juvenile race in the country - the Poonawalla Breeders' Multi Million. He's also the cheapest manufacturer of several life-saving vaccines in the world. BioSpectrum recently honored his company as the best biotech firm for 2004.

Success has come, but after a great deal of toil and sticking to his fundamental business model - low-price-high volume. His innovative distribution strategy of selling straight to the customer without involving intermediaries and expensive advertising has helped him stick with his pricing strategy even today.

Dr Poonawalla is not just a flamboyant punter and an entrepreneur. He has acquired a doctorate for his thesis "Improved Technology in the manufacture of Specific Antitoxins and its Socio Economic impact on the Society" - a clear mission of taking technology to the bottom of the pyramid.

With a bureaucracy such as India's, Poonawalla's journey could hardly have been smooth. "I faced tremendous challenges during the socialist period. Securing permission for construction, power, and drug licensing - all were new to us. With no help or support from the government authorities, it was really a very challenging part of my career, which commenced with little in my pocket to take care of such situations," he told an interviewer recently.

Multi-product strategy is what kept his business rolling. After Serum rolled out many other products - anti serum vaccines, diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccines followed. All these products have been in short supply and India has been completely dependant on UNICEF and imports.

With the launch of a range of products such as polyvalent anti-snake venom serum, measles, vaccine on human diploid

cells, measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, polyvalent anti-snake venom serum (Central Africa), mumps vaccine, measles and mumps vaccines measles and rubella vaccines and several other products, within a short period, Serum Institute was able to make profits.



Dr. Poonawalla was able to hit back at the MNC brands when his institute received the accreditation from World Health Organization (WHO) and pre qualified to supply for the United Nations agencies such as UNICEF and PAHO (Pan American Health Organization) ten years ago. Thereafter, there was a meteoric rise in the turnover of Serum Institute.

The institute is a market leader in measles, DPT and MMR vaccines in the world with manufacturing capacity of 170 million doses per year for DPT and 300 million doses per year for MMR vaccines. It meets the total demand of the Indian market. It is now focusing on

other range of products like Hepatitis vaccines, Rabies vaccine, BCG, TB vaccines. Around 85 percent of revenues of Serum Institute are from overseas market, chiefly UNICEF and WHO organizations and remaining 15 percent come from India. The products are available in over 138 countries

His innovative distribution strategy of selling straight to the customer without involving intermediaries and expensive advertising has helped him stick with his pricing strategy even today.

across the world

Dr. Poonawalla's ambition is to enter the tough American and European markets. "The road map is clear. "We want to become a world leader in pentavalent vaccines and also want to enter into the regulated market like USA and Europe where the products are sold 10 times the price what we get from UNICEF. We also want to become strong in anti cancer products in India and the US, as a lot of products will go off patent soon. We are already manufacturing several anti cancer products. Now we are putting up a state of art facility for this."

But Dr Poonawalla rues the fact that Indians still don't believe that Indian science can deliver. What's worse are Indian doctors who seldom articulate the specific needs of the market, thereby stifling innovation opportunities. With recent accolades and publicity for achievers, it may not be too long for Indians to recognize their worth.

Dos and don'ts at job fairs

Job fairs are to be taken seriously not just by candidates but also by the companies that participate in them

By Anish V



Job fairs have become a new medium for companies to 'deep dive' and get fresh and lateral talent across locations and geographies. The reasons are manifold; faster process cycles, easier reach, opportunity to meet face-to-face, possibilities in branding the company from a 'great place to work' perspective. While recruiting, teams focus on getting the right talent, there are communication angles which need to be addressed quite consciously.

From my experience in attending fairs (as an onlooker, a candidate, as part of a recruiting team and also as an undercover placement consultant!), there are two key aspects which need to be looked at - creating awareness among the target and engaging them actively.

Educating the audience on the company, its background and its reason for participating in the fair are important. Even established companies fall into the 'We are a big name: they will know us' trap quite easily. Placing collaterals, explaining company history, culture and values help give a first hand feel of what prospective executives can look forward to.

Usually, the full 50 percent or more of the attendees at job fairs are 'window shoppers' who are just browsing to see what is available. While this approach may seem valid, take note that job fairs are not a 'get acquainted session' for you to meet prospective employees.

With multiple interview sessions, the plain vanilla candidates are stepped on and over by those who are targeted and prepared. Yes, even the two to three minute greeting and exchange of sound bites is considered a real first-hand feel for the candidates. As a company, you are being evaluated, whether it is for thirty seconds or thirty minutes. You always need to

be at your very best. You got to have a very aggressive yet structured approach.

Here are some ways to build your rapport and image at job fairs

Know the psyche of the audience: Do a quick tour in advance of the city/town where the fair would be held. Talk to students from prospective colleges or poll employees from target companies. Use the good office of the job fair organizers to get a pulse of the expected turnouts and key expectations.

Make your presence felt at the location ahead of the event: Do some PR exercises a week ahead of the event to supplement your branding efforts during the event days. Try some below the line promotions/contests to evaluate general interest/awareness levels of prospective candidates. At the end of the fair, your return of investment can be maximized using these techniques.

Ensure consistency of messages: Clarity of messages will send prospects back with a good impression. Brief your team ahead of the event so that all are on the same page. Evolve a set of FAQs and a code of conduct for handling queries that are tough and sometimes irritating or irrational.

You always need to be at your very best if you are to succeed at the job fair of the new millennium. You got to take a very aggressive yet structured approach.

Try and make the meeting interactive: Give prospects a reason to keep the channels of communication open even if their profiles do not match your immediate requirement. Maybe sending them back to the website to post information/answer a quiz/take a test - might be a good idea.

Respect privacy: Some candidates do not want to be seen holding their CVs at fairs. Maybe their companies are also participating in the fair itself! Provide them with an alternate avenue and you could win a loyal spokesperson for a long time.

Follow-up again: Build your database. Don't lose momentum after the fair. Keep the channels warm by providing feedback to the organizers, ensuring presence and content for your company on their website and sending mails to prospects who attended your stand but may not be the right fit this time around.

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Wireless ahoy! WiFi, WiMax, UWB, wOzNet...

by *Ranganath Iyengar*



What do iPass, Roku, Network Instruments, Stacatto Communications, Bluesocket, Wavesat and Airespace have in common? - Well, all of them are companies that develop cutting edge products and solutions for the wireless or wirefree market. Perhaps, this technology originated to address the proverbial last mile access problem and the maze of wires on our desk that seem to keep increasing with the maze of gadgets around us!

Technologies: Wi Fi and beyond

In the technology business, the storyboard is always predictable - first come the mavericks, then the enhancers who compete incrementally and then marginalize or even eclipse the initial discovery. The Wi Fi market is no different...

Wi Fi started initially focusing on removing the immediate clutter in our offices and campuses and that technology is mature as can be seen in our laptops and other access devices although hotspots beyond our workplace are still not as pervasive.

However, there is the urge to go beyond the magic 90 meters and higher data speeds as we have multimodal access needs and the age-old last mile access problem.

Wi Max is one of the fastest emerging technologies which will have a 50 km radius and will first be used by DSL providers to address last mile issues and will help users to 'roam' beyond their current perimeters and truly telecommute!! WiMax is stated to offer data transmission rates of upto an unbelievable 70 MB per second.

UWB (ultra wideband for the uninitiated) allows data to be transmitted at a rate of 1 gigabit per second (nearly 10 times faster than the current Wi Fi) although it has a limited range of 30 to 60 feet. This is ideally suited for homes as well as businesses such as healthcare that need large data transfer within a small area.

There is also the yet to be nicknamed 802.20 (currently being tested) that could extend the hotspot to cover an area as large as a city and offer 1.5 megabits per second far outperforming the current Wi Fi hotspots.

Challenges remain on convergence of technology standards and embedding these technologies into the devices that we use. There is also the usual problem of vendors agreeing to disagree on standards.

Products & Solutions: The hard sell

Let us look at some products and solutions that are emerging across access facilitation, security, end user solutions and enterprise solution enablers.

Enterprise enabling solutions include Propogate's Autocell technology, Airespace's Wireless enterprise platform, Bluesocket's WG-400 wireless gateway, smartBridges

airBridge TOTAL Wireless LAN bridge, security devices such as DeciveID from iPass to name a few.

There are testing and emulation tools such as Communication Machinery Corporation's Emulation Engine, Network Instruments Observer etc.

End user solutions and embedded devices space, wOZnet will offer wireless solutions in tandem with GPS, Stacatto offers single chips incorporating radio and baseband for super fast wireless access, Bluesocket offers WiFi gateways, pocket access points from Wiflyer, WiMax baseband chips from Wavesat, Dlink's Gamerlounge Gaming router, Infoexpress's Cybergatekeeper, Patronsoft's hotspot management software and Roku's streaming digital audio solutions for home.

As you can see, there is enough of technology and lots to learn and unlearn...

The Future: Networks, Devices and Services

For the common end user, the technologies that we are talking about need to go into networks, devices and services in a logical sequence for day-to-day usage. These technologies can be expected to be user-friendly and ubiquitous probably by 2009.

The first visible trend will be adoption of these technologies by combining Wi Fi with cellular data networks (e.g. WiMax). Next software on our devices will extend existing capability and leverage the wireless networks and lastly we will start seeing next generation embedded devices.

The most visible new generation devices will be cell phones since the life cycles are shorter and device adoption quicker. Enterprise computing will start leveraging the backend of these technologies as they replace existing communication gear. A few businesses with communication and commute heavy needs will adapt the wireless enterprise computing platforms.

Homes will be the last to adopt these with the push driven by the service provider and the most visible will be the last mile access and eventually high-end application for wireless content streaming as these become more affordable.

To summarize, Wi Fi will truly enable the virtual office as the ability to access, communicate, move large chunks of data becomes a reality within the foreseeable future. At home, you could consider the same technologies embedded in the various home use gadgets that you could control from where you are - the uses would be only limited by your imagination!!

Ready to get un'wired'? - do check out the upcoming standard 802.11n which is supposed to deliver 100 times better than the current Wi Fi networks.

The author is the founder of Strategic Interventions India P Ltd. (www.siplconsulting.com). He was till recently a country solutions business manager with HP ISO.

New Business with the New Military

Harvard Business Review Research Report

Is your business missing out on the \$200 billion military market revolution? This HBR Special Report identifies emerging opportunities in dozens of non-war fighting product and service categories and provides expert direction on how to profit from them. It is an indispensable guide not only for established military suppliers and consultants but also for companies and entrepreneurs outside the traditional defense-contracting arena.

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CRM—The Right Way 2nd Edition

Think CRM is just over-hyped technology? Discover new strategies for unleashing its power. This collection offers the following strategies: Clarify your strategy before implementing CRM; Use CRM to contact customers who want a relationship with you—in ways they value; Identify who in your company needs real-time customer data—and who doesn't; and extend CRM's power by applying lessons from small-scale implementations to new, well-defined opportunities.

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Planning Essentials

Strategic IT planning is evolving away from the traditional, yearly big-bang approach, toward a dynamic and continuous process that has both traditional and highly strategic, digitally innovative components based on portfolio and scenario planning concepts.

Dynamic planning forms the basis of balanced value, innovation, and agility programs that manage proactive technology investments and enable organizational dexterity. Experienced CIOs should exploit integrated planning with their customers as extensively as possible.

<http://www.itproportal.com/>

Marketing Financial Services: Strategic Issues

By Prof. S Anand & Dr. V Murugaiah, SCMS Journal of Indian Management, July- Sept. 2004

The paper discusses issues such as designing services strategy, tangibilisation of services, developing service systems. It highlights the importance of managing market information systems competently. It talks about the need to adopt new marketing strategies and tactics to capture maximum opportunities with lowest risk.

Choose CEOs from inside

If all corporations take Rice University's advise, then you will all be looking for new gigs. In a recent study they found that despite a sharp increase in the number of CEOs in U.S. they are being increasingly recruited from outside their firms,

a new study suggests. The study suggests that boards of directors should look inside their organizations before filling this critical position. The study is by Yan (Anthea) Zhang of Rice University's Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Management and Nandini Rajagopalan of the University of Southern California — *When The Known Devil is Better Than an Unknown God: An Empirical Study of the Antecedents and Consequences of Relay CEO Successions*.

Transforming the Public Sector

Today, public-sector organizations everywhere find themselves squeezed between their constituents' rising expectations and their own financial constraints. Citizens' needs are ever increasing. Yet continuing fiscal pressures limit government's ability to maneuver.

Many governments are responding by trying to radically improve their performance. They are embracing innovative reforms—everything from making services like motor vehicle registration and corporate filing less cumbersome to privatizing transportation, energy and communications agencies.

However, a select group of government agencies has achieved remarkable results through reform initiatives that have dramatically increased the value of the services they provide. Here is a framework, based on their experiences, that gives public-sector leaders a practical and comprehensive view of the principles and capabilities that contribute to high performance.

<http://www.accenture.com/>

Absenteeism in Small Scale Industry – A Study of Causes, Cost and Control

Dr. Inder Jeet, University of Delhi, Review of Professional Management, A Journal of New Delhi Institute of Management, Jan-June, 2004

The research paper offers survey reports on various causes of absenteeism in good detail and is backed by numbers. The author lists practical suggestions to improve the record but most important is commitment and support from all levels of management and an open communication system. "If absenteeism is to be controlled physical and emotional needs of employees must be addressed," is the verdict of the study.

Business Process Outsourcing: An Overview

Ashok Sharma, Faculty, Jaipuria Institute of Management Review of Professional Management, A Journal of New Delhi Institute of Management, Jan-June, 2004

The paper does a SWOT analysis of the Indian BPO sector and discusses various models and their implication to future trends. It highlights the point about enhancing the quality of human power and moving from quantity to quality of contracts.

The paper also throws light on the pros and cons of several BPO options such as captive units, third party service provider, etc.

BHAG

BHAG stands for Big Hairy Audacious Goals. The term was used often by Tom Watson Jr., son of the founder of IBM. He took a great company and made it even greater. His story teaches how to stop a successful company from becoming trapped in the "we've arrived" syndrome. A BHAG serves as a powerful mechanism to stimulate progress--a finish line to shoot for, a summit to reach, the business equivalent of the NASA moon mission. Whereas many companies languish in the second generation after the driving intensity of a founder, Watson Jr. was unusual in challenging the company to new levels.

AMELI

Wohland.de, a German software developer, has launched a new Java-based idea management application that it calls ameli. Based on a Babel fish translation of the product page, it appears to be more of an open-ended suggestion system than a campaign-based (i.e., time limited assignments where all employees are asked to contribute ideas to meet a specific need or objective) idea management tool. According to a posting by an official from Wohland.de in the InnovationTools discussion area, ameli is recommended for companies with more than 500 employees, and the application is translated into German, English and French. A Chinese translation is also under development.

Massputers

A term coined by Om Malik, Massputer is a computer that costs \$300 for the computing hungry masses in emerging economies like India, China and Brazil. Users of this massputer should be able to do basic tasks like writing documents, Internet surfing, email and perhaps some business-related tasks like data entry.



Rajesh Jain, MD of the Mumbai-based NetCore Solutions says there are nearly four billion people who live in these emerging markets and assuming that only 10 per cent of them can afford \$300 it is still a market of 400 million. Currently, the PC troika of Intel, Microsoft and Dell typically charge \$750 for every computer, which most people in these emerging markets find unaffordable. Even the so-called network computers cost an unaffordable \$500-plus.

So this is a perfect opportunity for brave entrepreneurs. It

is not an easy task, but it isn't impossible. With free open source software like Linux and powerful low-cost processors made by companies like Texas Instruments, the ingredients are all right there for someone to build this Massputer. Sure, it isn't as exotic as building a super fast optical system, but it can definitely be lucrative.

Ambush marketing

Ambush marketing - a term often hissed in industry circles - occurs when one brand pays to become an official sponsor of an event (most often athletic) and another competing brand attempts to cleverly connect itself with the event, without paying the sponsorship fee and, more frustratingly, without breaking any laws. Ambush, or guerilla, marketing is as undeniably effective as it is damaging, attracting consumers at the expense of competitors, all the while undermining an event's integrity and, most importantly, its ability to attract future sponsors.

It is no surprise that ambush marketing techniques are at their utmost when the stakes are highest. And the stakes are never higher than at galactic sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics - the hands down, undisputed, two most mammoth events on modern earth.



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YOUR CARGO · OUR CONCERN

Defining success

Subroto Bagchi shares his life experience and its impact on his corporate journey



I was the last child of a small-time government servant, in a family of five brothers. My earliest memory of my father is as that of a District Employment Officer in Koraput, Orissa. It was and remains as back of beyond as you can imagine. There was no electricity; no primary school nearby and water did not flow out of a tap. As a result, I did not go to school until the age of eight; I was home-schooled. My father used to get transferred every year. The family belongings fit into the back of a jeep - so the family moved from place to place and, without any trouble, my Mother would set up an establishment and get us going.

Raised by a widow who had come as a refugee from the then East Bengal, my mother was a matriculate when she married my Father. My parents set the foundation of my life and the value system which makes me what I am today and largely defines what success means to me today.

As District Employment Officer, my father was given a jeep by the government. There was no garage in the Office, so the jeep was parked in our house. My father refused to use it to commute to the office. He told us that the jeep is an expensive resource given by the government - he reiterated to us that it was not 'his jeep' but the government's jeep.

Insisting that he would use it only to tour the interiors, he would walk to his office on normal days. He also made sure that we never sat in the government jeep - we could sit in it only when it was stationary.

That was our early childhood lesson in governance - a lesson that corporate managers learn the hard way, some never do. The driver of the jeep was treated with respect due to any other member of my Father's office. As small children, we were taught not to call him by his name. We had to use the suffix 'dada' whenever we were to refer to him in public or private. When I grew up to own a car and a driver by the name of Raju was appointed - I repeated the lesson to my two small daughters. They have, as a result, grown up to call Raju, 'Raju Uncle' - very different from many of their friends who refer to their family drivers as 'my driver'. When I hear that term from a school- or college-going person, I cringe. To me, the lesson was significant - you treat small people with more respect than how you treat big people. It is more important to respect your subordinates than your superiors.

Our day used to start with the family huddling around my Mother's chulha - an earthen fire place she would build at each place of posting where she would cook for the family. There was no gas, nor electrical stoves. The morning routine started with tea. As the brew was served, Father would ask us to read aloud the editorial page of The Statesman's 'muffosil' edition - delivered one day late. We did not understand much of what we were reading. But the ritual was meant for us to know that the world was larger than Koraput district and the English I speak today, despite having studied in an Oriya medium school, has to do with that routine. After reading the newspaper aloud, we were told to fold it neatly. Father taught us a simple lesson. He used to say,

"You should leave your newspaper and your toilet, the way you expect to find it". That lesson was about showing consideration to others. Business begins and ends with that simple precept.

Being small children, we were always enamored with advertisements in the newspaper for transistor radios - we did not have one. We saw other people having radios in their homes and each time there was an advertisement of Philips, Murphy or Bush radios, we would ask Father when we could get one. Each time, my Father would reply that we did not need one because he already had five radios - alluding to his five sons. We also did not have a house of our own and would occasionally ask Father as to when, like others, we would live in our own house. He would give a similar reply, "We do not need a house of our own. I already own five houses". His replies did not gladden our hearts in that instant.

Nonetheless, we learnt that it is important not to measure personal success and sense of well being through material possessions. Government houses seldom came with fences. Mother and I collected twigs and built a small fence. After lunch, my Mother would never sleep. She would take her kitchen utensils and with those she and I would dig the rocky, white ant infested surrounding. We planted flowering bushes.

The white ants destroyed them. My mother brought ash from her chulha and mixed it in the earth and we planted the seedlings all over again.

This time, they bloomed. At that time, my father's transfer order came. A few neighbors told my mother why she was taking so much pain to beautify a government house, why she was planting seeds that would only benefit the next occupant. My mother replied that it did not matter to her that she would not see the flowers in full bloom. She said, "I have to create a bloom in a desert and whenever I am given a new place, I must leave it more beautiful than what I had inherited". That was my first lesson in success. It is not about what you create for yourself, it is what you leave behind that defines success.

My mother began developing a cataract in her eyes when I was very small. At that time, the eldest among my brothers got a teaching job at the University in Bhubaneswar and had to prepare for the civil services examination. So, it was decided that my Mother would move to cook for him and, as her appendage, I had to move too. For the first time in my life, I saw electricity in homes and water coming out of a tap. It was around 1965 and the country was going to war with Pakistan. My mother was having problems reading and in any case, being Bengali, she did not know the Oriya script. So, in addition to my daily chores, my job was to read her the local newspaper - end to end. That created in me a sense of connectedness with a larger world. I began taking interest in many different things. While reading out news about the war, I felt that I was fighting the war myself. She and I discussed the daily news and built a bond with the larger universe. In it, we became part of a larger reality. Till date, I measure my success in terms of that sense of larger connectedness.

Meanwhile, the war raged and India was fighting on both fronts. Lal Bahadur Shastri, the then Prime Minister, coined the term "Jai Jawan, Jai Kishan" and galvanized the nation in to patriotic fervor. Other than reading out the newspaper to my mother, I had no clue about how I could be part of the action. So, after reading her the newspaper, every day I would land up near the University's water tank, which served the community. I would spend hours under it, imagining that there could be spies who would come to poison the water and I had to watch for them. I would daydream about catching one and how the next day, I would be featured in the newspaper. Unfortunately for me, the spies at war ignored the sleepy town of Bhubaneswar and I never got a chance to catch one in action. Yet, that act unlocked my imagination. Imagination is everything. If we can imagine a future, we can create it, if we can create that future, others will live in it. That is the essence of success.

Over the next few years, my mother's eyesight dimmed but in me she created a larger vision, a vision with which I continue to see the world and, I sense, through my eyes, she was seeing too. As the next few years unfolded, her vision deteriorated and she was operated for cataract.

I remember, when she returned after her operation and she saw my face clearly for the first time, she was astonished. She said, "Oh my God, I did not know you were so fair". I remain mightily pleased with that adulation even till date. Within weeks of getting her sight back, she developed a corneal ulcer and, overnight, became blind in both eyes. That was 1969. She died in 2002. In all those 32 years of living with blindness, she never complained about her fate even once. Curious to know what she saw with blind eyes, I asked her once if she sees darkness. She replied, "No, I do not see darkness. I only see light even with my eyes closed". Until she was eighty years of age, she did her morning yoga everyday, swept her own room and washed her own clothes. To me, success is about the sense of independence; it is about not seeing the world but seeing the light.

Over the many intervening years, I grew up, studied, joined the industry and began to carve my life's own journey. I began my life as a clerk in a government office, went on to become a Management Trainee with the DCM group and eventually found my life's calling with the IT industry when fourth generation computers came to India in 1981. Life took me places - I worked with outstanding people, challenging assignments and traveled all over the world. In 1992, while I was posted in the US, I learnt that my father, living a retired life with my eldest brother, had suffered a third degree burn injury and was admitted in the Safderjung Hospital in Delhi. I flew back to attend to him - he remained for a few days in critical stage, bandaged from neck to toe.

The Safderjung Hospital is a cockroach infested, dirty, inhuman place. The overworked, under-resourced sisters in the burn ward are both victims and perpetrators of dehumanized life at its worst. One morning, while attending to my Father, I realized that the blood bottle was empty and fearing that air would go into his vein, I asked the attending nurse to change it. She bluntly told me to do it myself. In that horrible theater of death, I was in pain and frustration and anger. Finally when she relented and came, my Father opened his eyes and murmured to her, "Why have you

not gone home yet?" Here was a man on his deathbed but more concerned about the overworked nurse than his own state. I was stunned at his stoic self.

There I learnt that there is no limit to how concerned you can be for another human being and what is the limit of inclusion you can create. My father died the next day.

He was a man whose success was defined by his principles, his frugality, his universalism and his sense of inclusion. Above all, he taught me that success is your ability to rise above your discomfort, whatever may be your current state. You can, if you want, raise your consciousness above your immediate surroundings. Success is not about building material comforts - the transistor that he never could buy or the house that he never owned. His success was about the legacy he left, the memetic continuity of his ideals that grew beyond the smallness of an ill-paid, unrecognized government servant's world.

My father was a fervent believer in the British Raj. He sincerely doubted the capability of the post-independence Indian political parties to govern the country. To him, the lowering of the Union Jack was a sad event. My Mother was the exact opposite. When Subhash Bose quit the Indian National Congress and came to Dacca, my mother, then a schoolgirl, garlanded him. She learnt to spin khadi and joined an underground movement that trained her in using daggers and swords. Consequently, our household saw diversity in the political outlook of the two. On major issues concerning the world, the Old Man and the Old Lady had differing opinions. In them, we learnt the power of disagreements, of dialogue and the essence of living with diversity in thinking. Success is not about the ability to create a definitive dogmatic end state; it is about the unfolding of thought processes, of dialogue and continuum.

Two years back, at the age of eighty-two, Mother had a paralytic stroke and was lying in a government hospital in Bhubaneswar. I flew down from the US where I was serving my second stint, to see her. I spent two weeks with her in the hospital as she remained in a paralytic state.

She was neither getting better nor moving on. Eventually I had to return to work. While leaving her behind, I kissed her face. In that paralytic state and a garbled voice, she said, "Why are you kissing me, go kiss the world." Her river was nearing its journey, at the confluence of life and death, this woman who came to India as a refugee, raised by a widowed Mother, no more educated than high school, married to an anonymous government servant whose last salary was Rupees Three Hundred, robbed of her eyesight by fate and crowned by adversity - was telling me to go and kiss the world!

Success to me is about Vision. It is the ability to rise above the immediacy of pain. It is about imagination. It is about sensitivity to small people. It is about building inclusion. It is about connectedness to a larger world existence. It is about personal tenacity. It is about giving back more to life than you take out of it. It is about creating extra-ordinary success with ordinary lives.

Go, kiss the world.

The author is COO, MindTree Consulting. This paper was presented at IIMB recently.

CMMI – A fad or a value-add

Has CMMI become another ISO 9000? For CMMI to become a differentiator it has to offer real benefits to all stakeholders

By Jyoti Sahai

I still remember an incident with great amusement. Recently, while on a vacation in Delhi, I decided to call up a close friend working in a software company in Noida. I tried calling up his office board number, but no one picked up the phone even after several rings. After several tries, a person picked up who said he was an office boy, and asked me to call up later. Finally, about half an hour later, I was able to get through to the receptionist, who promptly connected me to my friend's extension; even more promptly, the call went into his voice mail. I called up again asking the receptionist to please confirm whether the person was in his seat before transferring the call. Ultimately, she was able to locate my friend and transfer the call. After an exchange of pleasantries, I casually informed him of the trouble I had faced in getting connected to him.

He said "Oh! Today you really cannot blame us. We are in a celebration mood as we were assessed to be a CMMI Level 5 company yesterday." I dryly replied: "Yeah, I know how capable and mature at least your external call handling process is." Of course, my friend totally missed the sarcasm in my comment.

The incident left me wondering whether being known as a CMMI (Competency Maturity Model Integration) Level 5 (or for that matter Level 3 or 4) company is just fashionable or gives real benefits to all stakeholders.

It is really ironic that in spite of CMMI being a very strong model of continuous improvement – which if implemented well surely results in great levels of process improvement – its credibility as a differentiating benchmark is perceived to be at stake.

Recent years have seen a spate of CMMI assessments at Level 5 in India. Initially it was imperative for Indian companies to get assessed at CMMI Level 5, primarily to prove maturity and quality of their software development processes to their customers. However, as more and more companies are joining the CMMI bandwagon, it is gradually losing its significance as a real differentiator.

So what's new?

It is not at all surprising now that more and more vendor presentations on their process improvement achievements are listened to by prospects/customers with an expression that clearly screams out – "Tell us something new. All your competitors too claim the same achievements." What is in it for the customer?

Another set of questions that most of the process champions (of companies who have been assessed at Level 5 in CMMI) dread to hear from their customers is, "So you have achieved CMMI Level 5, but what is in it for us? Reduction in price? If not, why should we be interested? Will you please elaborate on how we are benefited?"

Faced with the skepticism of customers and community at

large in real value-add of CMMI adoption, it has become imperative for the companies to adopt a better approach for its implementation. It is heartening to note that recent trends in CMMI adoption clearly demonstrate that.

Focus on sustenance

Companies that have already been assessed at CMMI Level 5 are gradually realizing that treating this achievement just as a tick in the box has not brought them (or their customers) any business benefits. Thus the focus is now on to ensure continued institutionalization and adherence to processes. This approach helps maintain the same efficient level of quality service to customers.

Focus on knowledge management

Companies have also found that to sustain continuous improvement over long periods of time, relying on adherence to a set of processes only is not sufficient. It has to be ably supported by building up an appropriate knowledge management system that contains heuristics, best practices, historical data on risks, defects, etc. This data is ploughed back to review and optimise the processes, ensuring that these processes remain dynamic and be responsive to changing demands and profile of the business.

Six Sigma and CMMI

Another trend gaining increased attention is using Six Sigma approach to deploy and institutionalize CMMI framework and processes. Use of Six Sigma methodology brings the requisite rigor and speed to process deployment and its performance measurement, and may significantly contribute towards its successful implementation.

Gaining business benefits through CMMI

Companies have also discovered that a typical CMMI implementation gives greatly improved and predictable performance, primarily in project management and delivery related areas only. An emerging trend is to apply CMMI model to define its rigor and discipline to monitor and optimise business processes too. That would ensure enterprise-wide business benefits for an organisation.

Benefits to customer

Companies have begun to realize that the real value-add of a CMMI implementation will come only if the end-customer benefits from its adoption, whether by way of reduced price, or by way of shortened delivery periods.

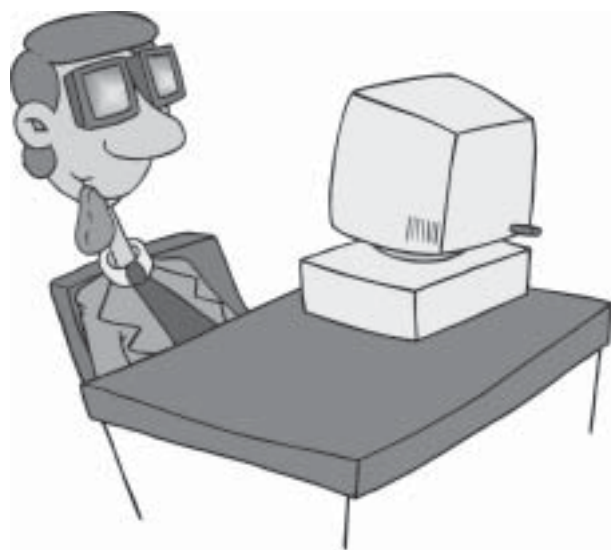
The above trends, if sustained over a period of time will ensure that for companies adopting CMMI as their vehicle of process improvement, it will be a real value-add and not just remain a fad.

The author is an executive vice president with vMoksha Technologies Pvt. Ltd. E-mail: jyoti@vmoksha.com



By Robin S. Sharma

How to beat the Monday morning blues



Link Paycheck to Purpose. One of the deepest needs of every human being is the need to make a difference in the lives of others. Take the time to connect with all the people who count on you and the lives you affect through your work. Often we forget the men, women and children who rely on our work to live high quality lives of their own.

Find Work that Excites You. We spend most of our lives at work so we might as well find an occupation that fires us up and engages our hearts. Most people stay in jobs they don't like because they feel they need the security or because "it could be worse."

" Yet, one of the most universal truths of all is that when you find work you love and have the courage to pursue it, success is certain to follow. We are all here for a special purpose and we all have unique gifts and talents. Discover your calling and have the self-discipline to follow it.

Set Weekly Goals. Goals offer hope to the hopeless and inspiration to the uninspired. Big, exciting goals give you a reason to get up in the morning and fuel your thoughts as you move through your day. People without life goals are like a leaf drifting in the Fall wind, moving in whatever direction it decides to take them.

Get Up Earlier. Rather than beginning your week in the eye of the tornado, why not get up 1 hour earlier and take the time to enjoy some of life's simpler pleasures, pleasures that you may have neglected in your fast-paced lifestyle.

Go for a walk in natural surroundings, watch the sun rise or read a good book. Contemplate how you will spend the week ahead and create a plan for success. Remember, failing to plan is planning to fail.

Stop Blaming Others. Successful people accept complete responsibility for every aspect of their lives. They realize that if the way they are living is not ideal, they have the power to make changes and improve their life's quality. They accept

We spend most of our lives at work so we might as well find an occupation that fires us up and engages our hearts. Most people stay in jobs they don't like because they feel they need the security or because "it could be worse."

total responsibility for their current circumstances and continuously strive to make things better.

They understand that for their life to improve they must improve and so they read more, learn more and do more than the average person. They don't blame others for setbacks but, instead, have the wisdom to know that they alone affect their destinies.

Keep Your Perspective. Too many people focus on the little annoyances of work. They complain about colleagues they don't like or a boss who doesn't care. They complain about the long hours or the endless commutes. But when you remind them that many people are unemployed, their sense of perspective returns.

When you inform them that some people have been searching for work for years, they begin to appreciate their good fortunes. When you mention that their salary is far higher than most salaries in the rest of the world, they grow more positive about the positions they hold. Maintain a sense of perspective about your work and your life.

Focus on the Positive. Our thoughts form our world. Your mind can be your best friend or your worst enemy. Through the thoughts you run through your mind every minute of every day, you can create a rich, rewarding life or a living nightmare. Remember, there is no objective reality.

We see the world through our own set of unique lenses and we all have the power to interpret the world in a positive way if we so choose. As one wise thinker said: "we see the world, not as it is but as we are."

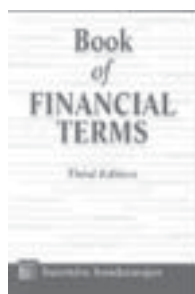
Grow Wiser. Rather than wishing for fewer problems, wish for greater wisdom. Rather than hoping that life will get easier, why not focus on working smarter. In these change-crazed times, he who learns most wins.

Become a lifelong student. Learn more about your industry and field than anyone else around you. Read more than others. Go to more seminars and get serious about the work you do. This is how you become a person of great value whose success is assured.

*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*

Book of Financial Terms

By: Sundararajan, Surendra, rs.225.00, Tata McGraw Hill



This book can come to the rescue of readers who find it difficult to cut through the jungle of financial jargon... Lot of theories like Capital Asset Pricing Model and others are explained succinctly and in a student-friendly language. It provides a welcome break from the regular textbooks"... The Economic Times The Book of Financial Terms is a single source reference for all those who wish to:

Supplement their basic proficiency in finance; Brush up the fundamentals just before an interview; Keep pace with the latest in financial jargon... The Book of Financial Terms offers a quick, reliable and up-to-date coverage of terminology from the world of corporate finance, investments, public finance and financial economics. Written in a language that is comprehensive even to the uninitiated, the book helps the readers to easily grasp the nuances of financial terms. The revised edition covers terms from: Banking; Corporate Finance; Derivatives; Financial Intermediaries; Financial System; International Finance; Investments; Merchant Banking; Mutual Funds; Portfolio Management; Public Finance; Taxation; Technical Analysis; Working Capital.

Restructuring for Growth

Michealson, John c., rs.595.00, McGraw-hill

The business world is just now beginning to regroup from its latest merger wave in history. But after more than half of all acquisitions failed to enhance shareholder value, the "bigger is better" mantra has given way to new, leaner value-creation strategies- and to the increased use of subsidiary equity redeployments (SERs) to redeploy and gain access to value hidden in subsidiary operations. Restructuring for Growth is the first comprehensive guide to creating value by redeploying the equity value of subsidiary operations and assets.

Creative New Employee Orientation Programs

Sims, Doris M, Rs.695.00, Tata McGraw-Hill

New employee orientation is the most commonly offered type of training in organizations, yet very few books have been published on the topic.

Creative New Employee Orientation Programs is filled with downloadable, customizable training games, sample curriculum, handouts, and checklists used in leading organizations such as Arthur Anderson, Ford, Micron, and Alcatel. Whether creating an orientation program for the first time, enhancing an existing program, or moving orientation on-line, HR pros will find ideas and tools they can use immediately.

Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge: Leveraging Knowledge Management for Strategic Change

Tojo Thatchenkery, A Taos Institute publication, 2005



How to manage knowledge effectively is a question that has run through the literature of the field of organizational behavior for many years. Knowledge has been examined from many angles: how it is created and how it is applied. What the author has done in this book is to help the reader understand a simple process for getting at what it takes to actually improve these processes in an organization. Although

the Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge or ASK approach described in the book is focused primarily on the act of sharing knowledge, the methodology described in this simple book can be applied to a wide range of knowledge management challenges and opportunities.

Conquering Complexity In Your Business

By Michael L. George And Stephen A. Wilson, Rs 1440.00 (approx.), July 2004

Over the past two decades, the authors claim to have helped many businesses create genuine economic value primarily through process improvement. They often found that clients who restricted their efforts to Lean and/or Six Sigma would hit a ceiling in profit generation: though progress was significant, there was only so much they could accomplish through these process improvements.

Where did this ceiling come from? Their most recent research and experience over the last few years led them to a startling conclusion: that there is an entirely separate dimension to operating improvement that presents the single largest opportunity for cost reduction and the most significant hurdle to profitable growth in most companies. This mysterious force is product and service complexity.

The book show you how to identify the offering and process complexity in your business; Quantify the cost impact of that complexity; Decide which complexity you want to keep and exploit, and which you should eliminate; Select specific approaches to eliminate different kinds of complexity.

Together, this knowledge will enable significant improvement in your ability to grow profit, revenue, and shareholder value.

kkbooks@vsnl.com

Managing Constant Change

P.N. Rastogi Dr P N Rastogi is a professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow., Rs 375.00

The only certainty today is uncertainty and the only constant is change. Rapid, relentless change in products, markets, technologies, business structures, and competitive arenas, is



the new reality confronting companies and managers across the world. New products, processes, and even whole markets emerge, mutate, and disappear with an increasing frequency. Change today, therefore, needs to be viewed as a continuous, incessant and pervasive phenomenon, and managed accordingly. It can no longer be managed in terms of any one-time program or project.

To manage today, is to manage change. To manage change, is to manage today and tomorrow simultaneously.

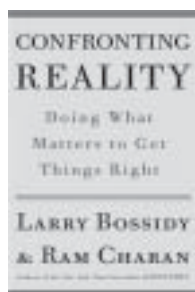
The present volume delineates a new approach to, and style of managing change. It maps a spiral pathway for steering the enterprise through volatility and turbulence in terms of insights and capabilities. Capabilities, in turn, based on knowledge and skills, synergy and momentum, vision and values.

The conclusions reached in the book are insightful, any may even appear surprising. They are, however, firmly grounded in the abiding purpose and meaning of man and society.

kkbooks@vsnl.com

Confronting Reality : Doing What Matters to Get Things Right

by Larry Bossidy, Ram Charan, Crown Business, October 2004



On the heels of their business bestseller Execution, retired Honeywell chairman and CEO Bossidy and corporate guru Charan take a step back and focus on the more fundamental issue of figuring out what to execute in the first place. The message is simple ("relentless realism"), and their solution is a return to the "ancient analytical tool" of a three-part business model that includes external realities (such as customer

demand and industry conditions), financial targets (such as cash flow and revenue growth) and internal realities (such as operational and workforce capabilities). Bossidy and Charan use that model to analyze how companies such as EMC, Cisco and Sun reacted to the meltdown of the high-tech sector, and how Home Depot built efficiency, 3M reignited growth through innovation and Thomson Corp. restructured its focus.

The Necessary Nature Of Future Firms: Attributes Of Survivors In A Changing World

Edited by: GEORGE P HUBER University of Texas, Austin, June 2004, Response Books, Rs.650

The business environment in which organizations operate is now changing rapidly, and will change even more rapidly in the future. Survival for firms today therefore depends on the ability to anticipate and respond to these changes. The



Necessary Nature of Future Firms is an insightful look into the landscape of the dynamic business of the future. It describes this landscape clearly and credibly and makes explicit the organizational attributes and management practices firms must possess to be among the ranks of the 'future firms'

Microsoft to publish book of creative PowerPoint strategies

Cliff Atkinson has developed better ways to utilize PowerPoint effectively. His new book, *Beyond Bullets*, will be published by Microsoft Press in February 2005. Beyond Bullets will introduce advanced PowerPoint users to innovative communication techniques inspired by Hollywood storyboarding, Greek philosophy and pop culture. "By publishing this book, Microsoft Press is throwing the door wide open to fresh thinking about PowerPoint," Cliff said in a press release announcing his new book earlier this year.

The ideas that will be contained in Beyond Bullets will be an expansion of what Cliff has been talking about in his weblog of the same name for months -- you don't HAVE to use PowerPoint in the same boring way as everyone else. There are better, more creative techniques you can use to get your key messages across and to persuade your target audiences.

Books to watch out in 2005

1. **Jim Collins, the author of the best-selling *Good to Great*, is working on a yet-to-be-named new book. The book examines companies that had an IPO (initial public offering of stock) in the 1990s but somehow survived the business cyclones at the turn of the century.**
2. **Jack Welch's second book after the hugely successful '*Straight from the Gut*' scheduled for May, this year, is *Winning: The Ultimate Business*.**
3. ***The Allure of Toxic Leaders* by Jean Lipman-Blumen, a California academic**
4. ***Bad Leadership* by Barbara Kellerman, lecturer at Harvard Business School**
5. ***Why Most Things Fail* by Paul Omerod, a British economist**
6. ***Churchill's Wizards* by Nicholas Rankin**



The Brand is a religion!

At a time when most brands face commoditization how do some manage to sustain consumer passion?

-by Harish Bijoor

Brands create cults. Cults of consumers. Some cults are small and some big. Whatever their size though, every brand has its own cult following.

As the pure commodity traverses its way to become a quasi-commodity for a start, the process of distinction of the offering happens. The plain old rice becomes a “Nellore” rice and the plain old tea becomes a “Nilgiri” tea!

The quasi-brand then morphs on. It becomes a brand. A brand with that much more of a specific appeal and that much more of a distinction. A Kohinoor Basmati rice and a Red Label tea for sure as examples of the popular brand.

Brands are common enough in our lives. Ask any self respecting brand manager and the journey is not complete as yet. Legions of managers of the brand and its appeal will have you understand that their journey is one to end with the achievement of the status of super-brand for their offering of condiment and condom alike.

The super-brand is therefore the end-goal for many a brand. Few brands achieve this status and there are indeed few we can talk about today. A Harley Davidson and maybe a Rolls Royce!

Will Nescafe get there soon? Is Ovaltine already there? We are not too sure of that, but let's wait for the polls to be out on this. And this might just take a hundred years ahead of us!

What makes a super-brand then? A lot of warmth? A lot of positive feel? A feel-good factor that dominates all else? A bonding that is so sacrosanct in the consumer-brand interface? Or is it all about a whole big dose of the intangible? A whole big dose of the unexplainable? A whole dollop of passion and fire that just happens when you think of this super brand?

I think it is primarily about consumer passion. It is most certainly about the process of the consumer adopting a brand for more than what it physically stands for. It is 99 per cent about the non-physicals and 1 per cent of the body, the gut and the gore of the brand. The super-brand is fundamentally all about a bonded-consumer. It is about the consumer bonded to the brand with a great big garnish of the irrational. It is quite like religion as well. Brand religion, let's say!

The super-brand happens over a long number of years. Long number of trusted years when the brand subliminally enters the psyche of the consumer in manners that are best left to the imagination to describe, rather than the

fundamentally weak word to attempt.

The super-brand needs to have all those trusted ingredients of the reliable brand that delivers. Functionality apart, the super-brand brings with it a hoary past of advertising appeal. An appeal that swims entirely in the territory of the mind and mood. An appeal that knits together every consumer with the basic thread of similar passion.

And then it is all about a brand cult. A Brand religion that creates from among its consumers passionate beings who look far beyond the commercial purpose of the brand. The brand is therefore a religion of sorts. A religion that breeds similar minded souls into cults of worshippers.

I have been to McLaughlin (very,very close to the mother of them all gambling towns, Las Vegas) on a day through Harley week. More than 60,000 worshippers of the Harley cult, out in their drag attire....all with their beautiful flying machines! All with a passion that is common and crazy! This sure was a brand cult celebrating their own festival of the brand. In this case, the Harley legend!

As Ovaltine, the Swiss brand of powdered barley, malt, egg and cocoa is being put on the selling block, there are hundreds and thousands of appeals coming from the Ovaltineys (a veritable club of Ovaltine users of the UK, founded in 1935) asking for Novartis AG, its owners to reconsider selling out to non-Swiss interests! There are protests galore! The common link: passion! Brand passion!

Consumer passion is therefore possibly the one common thread that makes for the super-brand. Brands that build cults of followers of this kind reach the status of the super-brand!

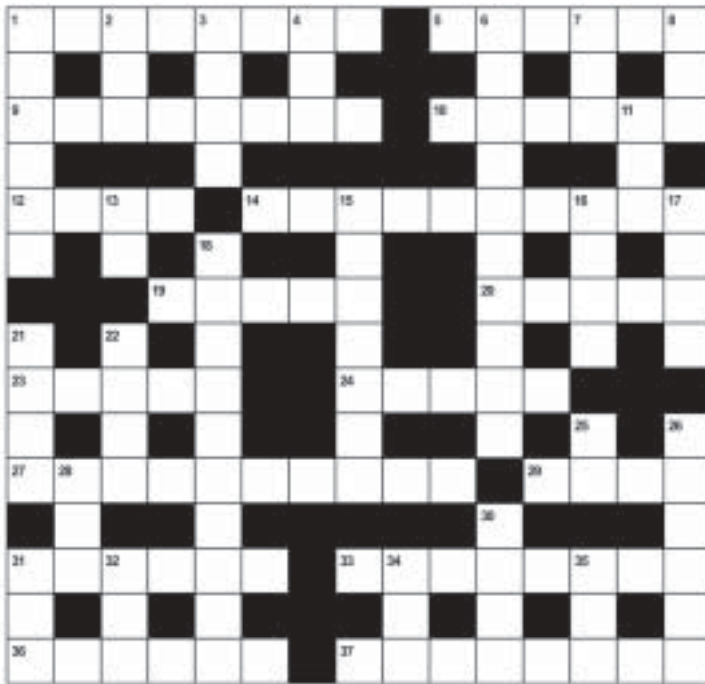
And these brands are far and few. Can an Amul aspire to become one then? In the next hundred years? Depends then on the number of followers ‘Religion Amul’ will nurture in the years to come.

In a nation where temples are built for starlets who capture the imagination of the public, is it too far fetched then to find a temple dedicated to the religion of brands? One never knows!

Touche!

The author is 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. harishbijoor@hotmail.com





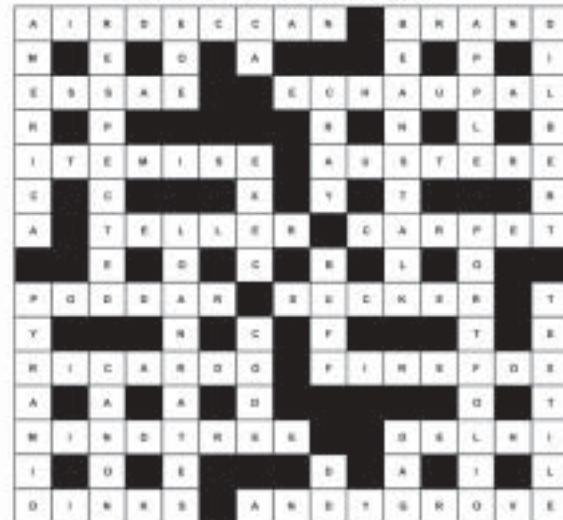
Across:

- 1 Despite the feud, still India's only private Fortune 500 company (8)
- 5 Short and easily remembered tune in an advertisement (6)
- 9 The "E" in GE! (8)
- 10 What counsellors can give (6)
- 12 Elevator inventor and the company he started (4)
- 14 The new Chairman of the All India Management Association (5,5)
- 19 The _____: popular Chennai-based newspaper (5)
- 20 _____ Carbide (5)
- 23 One of the famous business districts of Mumbai (5)
- 24 Cinematic films are normally sent to distributors in this form (5)
- 27 Capt. Krishnan Nair's original hotel at Sahar airport in Mumbai (5,5)
- 29 _____ boomers: Americans born between 1945 and 1965 are sometimes referred to as this (4)
- 31 The "I" in IOC! (7)
- 33 Toyoda _____: founder of world's most efficient car manufacturer (8)
- 36 Data arranged in horizontal and vertical columns (6)
- 37 Geert _____, who made culture a major issue in a diverse workplace (8)

Down:

- 1 The footwear company that pioneered "pump" technology (6)
- 2 Popular brand of jeans (3)
- 3 The catchphrase for this car is "Let's go!" (4)
- 4 India's premier business association (3)
- 6 The country's leading retail financial services company (10)
- 7 The most commonly used computer interface, exemplified by Microsoft Windows and MacOS (3)
- 8 The common three-letter suffix for a computer application file (3)
- 11 The head of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department (3)
- 13 Is Bangalore really the _____ capital?! (2)
- 15 _____ Jack: what Jack Welch is sometimes called (7)
- 16 The younger of the Ambani brothers (4)
- 17 Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan's home town (first part of name) (4)
- 18 Britannia's new CEO (6,4)
- 21 This WWI English acronym for unauthorised absence is often ascribed to Bush! (4)
- 22 The US and Japanese economies are based on _____ enterprise (4)
- 25 The American state in which the Silicon Valley is located (2 letter code) (2)
- 26 India's first Wi-Fi city (6)
- 28 A very long period of time (3)
- 30 Central Excise and Customs Tariff are examples of these (4)
- 31 India's premier management institute (3)
- 32 Pitroda was the founder of C-_____ (3)
- 34 The _____ 9000 series is probably the most popular generic international standard in use today (3)
- 35 Brand of Kingfisher beer (3)

Solution to Crossword No 3



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Matchmaking - Wipro style

Innovation in people management is nothing new at Wipro Technologies. But this one takes the cake. Faced with high attrition rates for several reasons, Wipro has hit upon a novel idea to tackle one of them – techies relocating to be with their spouse or do tiring and risky weekend trips.

Wipro has launched a matchmaking site where 30,000 of its unmarried/separated techies can find their suitable grooms/brides within the vast campus or from multiple locations within the city. The intranet portal Channel W is to provide the profile of the most eligible ones. Whether the portal also provides e-horoscope is not known. What about courtship allowance or a marriage loan? Just to make the process a bit easier.

Intel gives Indians some sleep

The time difference between the United States and India has worked well for Americans. Most Americans don't think twice before waking up their half-asleep or sleeping colleagues or business partners in India. Indians have put up with this inconvenience grudgingly.

Now Intel has taken the lead in democratizing the telephone etiquette. It's coming up with a system where Americans and Indians would take turns to wake each other up every two months. Will the others follow suit? They better do!

Mumbai coolies

The Mumbai *dabbawallas* have hogged all the limelight although another fascinating system has been in place at the Victoria station for years. According to the system, every coolie deposits 75 percent of his daily collections with the union and keeps the rest. Out of the collection, all the registered coolies are distributed equal sum end of the day. The unique system has resulted in very high service standards without the coolies undercutting one another. In fact, they are seen helping one another. Karl Marx would have been too happy to hear this.

Chinese rooster

The Economist expects growing interest for business books in China in 2005 and publishers would do well not to ignore the big potential. There's also a big fad now to use extended animal metaphors in business books. The challenge then is how to combine the two trends to get the Chinese managers to buy business books.

2005 happens to be the year of the rooster in China. But the bird does not have strong characteristics like that of pig, rat or a monkey. It's happy to crow a few times in the morning and is too lazy to do it the whole day.

It doesn't hunt nor steal its food but is happy to eat what's thrown at it or scavenge. Perhaps, it's time someone discovered its new traits or the publishers would have to wait one more year for a better animal to work the metaphors.

US bans junk faxes

A recent rule bans junk faxes in America. A company or an individual must have a signed permission slip before sending an ad by fax. But some analysts feel that loopholes in the legislation will certainly be found and Americans will end up getting more junk faxes than they did before. But in the age of email why should people use fax anyway? That's American for you!

How Branson tricks newspapers

At a recent videoconference Richard Branson let out his secrets about how he saves millions from his publicity antics. "Generally speaking, I think being a high-profile person has its advantages," he said. "Advertising costs enormous amounts of money these days.

I just announced in India that I was setting up a domestic airline, and we ended up getting on the front pages of the newspapers. The costs of that in advertising terms would have been considerable." Visibility is good, said Branson, "as long as you're not in the headlines for the wrong reasons."

Australian management funda for Indian cricket

Cricket Australia is as much a saga of management success as it has been in the cricketing arena in recent years. Three of its big boys recently held a five-day course on strategic planning, administration and management for Asian cricket administrators in Bangalore.

The trio emphasized that very good administration is reflected on the field. "You just can't have the players, you need to have a governing body to run the show." Will this *gyaan* make any difference to the highly politicized and patronizing Indian cricket board?

Are you dressed to chill out?

Here are some winter clothing guidelines that will help you take the sting out of the cold so that you can enjoy chilly outdoors

For those of us who live in the warm plains of India, a vacation in a cold place with real winter weather is an exciting proposition. Brisk morning walks near icy streams, watching sparkling snowflakes, an uphill trudge in two feet of ice and snow or even a go at skiing, are all thrilling thoughts. But when you expose yourself to the cold you also need to take precautions. If you are inadequately dressed you will not enjoy the outdoors, and in extreme cases end up getting ill. Prolonged exposures to low temperatures and strong winds can result in cold-related injuries. Take a few protective steps and you can have a blast.

The most important strategy in dealing with the cold weather is learning to dress properly. Cover your neck and head well as they lose heat more than any other part of the body. The secret is to dress in layers. Three layers are ideal. Wear loose clothing to insulate your body by trapping dry, warm air inside.

Loosely worn cotton and woolen clothes best trap air and resist dampness. Layers work best because you can take something off when you are sweating or add something if you are chilly. And take heart, fashionable folks, the loose fitting look is in now.

Everyone has shivered in sopping wet clothes, huddle under the nearest doorway when caught in a downpour. There's nothing like wet clothes to dampen your mood and attract all sorts of unsavory cold-related infections. Keeping your clothes dry helps your body stay warm. When moisture starts evaporating from wet clothes, it has a cooling effect on your body. If the wind blows over you and you have wet clothes on, you will feel even colder. So not only should you stay dry, you must also protect yourself from the wind.

You should also not get over-heated from wearing too many warm clothes. Make sure you wear closed footwear and avoid sandals or high-heeled shoes when you are outdoors in freezing temperatures. Don't bring along tight footwear which may inhibit circulation of blood in the lower extremities and cause cold feet. There should be enough room in your shoes for a pair of thick socks as well as some movement of toes. If you still find that your feet are getting incredibly cold, check to see if your hat is warm enough. There's an old saying, "if your feet are cold, put on your hat." And it is absolutely true.

Dehydration and hypothermia

In the heat of the boiling midday sun, the first thing we want is a glass of chilled water, but when it is cold we often forget to drink enough. Dehydration seriously impairs our

body's ability to produce heat. Drink fluids as often as you can throughout the day even if you are really thirsty. Room heaters also dehydrate the body, so make sure you keep some water beside your bed to sip on if you wake up in the middle of the night.

Be aware of hypothermia, which is a condition in which the body's temperature falls dangerously low, usually 90 degree F. It isn't the feeling of stiffness you get when you play in the snow and your fingers get chilled. That kind of cold is mostly superficial and can be easily controlled by the body when you get out of the cold and head indoors. Science of hypothermia includes forgetfulness, drowsiness, slurred speech and change in appearance (eg. puffy face), weak pulse, slow heartbeat, and very slow and shallow breathing.

If you feel serious pain or numbness in fingers, toes, nose, ear, or any other part of your body while you are outside, go indoors immediately and warm up.



Skin care and hot baths

Winter is hard on the skin. This is not something women should be concerned about; men and children too need to give their skin a little extra care when the air outside is cold and dry.

Because it is cold outside you may favor having a bath with very hot water but take a rain check on that. When long hot showers or a leisurely soak in the bathtub sound very appealing, they strip the skin of its natural moisturizing lipids. Instead, take a short warm shower, pat your skin almost dry, and then put on moisturizer while the skin is still damp. Pay special attention to areas like your hands, heels and feet, or wherever else you experience especially dry, cracked skin. Don't forget your lips as they can get painfully dry and chapped; protect them with lip balm or Vaseline.

Additionally, when you are in the mountains you need to continue to protect your skin from damage from the sun. Don't make the mistake of thinking you only need protection from the sun during summer.

Finally, it's a good idea to prepare for the weather to be colder than you expect. Take a little extra time to plan your clothing before you head out on your wintry vacation. Borrow an extra jacket, windproof vest or pants or woolen hat from friends and family-you won't regret it. Then get set to stay warm and have a bundle of fun.

This article is reprinted with permission from Club Mahindra's Hello magazine December 2004