

Are you a Value Merchant? ManagementNext™

Stay Inspired

Monthly for CEOs & Aspiring CEOs

www.managementnext.com

BENGALURU 2.0

The New Bengaluru can become a reality only if citizens start asking – what can we do for the city?

By Rajeev Gowda



A century ago, the farsighted Maharaja of Mysore, Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV, granted land to Jamshedji Tata to establish the Indian Institute of Science.

The Tata Institute laid the foundation for Bengaluru's emergence as a centre of the knowledge economy. The following decades saw the central government establishing many technology-focused public sector companies, further enhancing our knowledge workforce.

More recently, various state governments enabled educational entrepreneurs and community organizations to establish private engineering colleges. These moves were driven more by the latter's lobbying power rather than by any grand design to make Karnataka an education hub. This had tremendous impact when the IT outsourcing boom came alive. We had enough engineers ready to code, enabling companies to scale rapidly.

Why dwell on these background notes from history? Well, because it's important to note that Bengaluru's success owes a lot to design and some to

luck. More importantly, entrepreneurs don't just emerge in a vacuum. A constellation of different background factors is typically needed to create the environment which can spur visionary risk takers to action, to enable them to inspire others to join them in turning concepts to reality. As we contemplate Bengaluru 2.0, we need to think about what we need to do now to take our city, and our state, to a dramatically different dimension of economic action and inclusion. Let's work on the design; the luck will follow.

As we proceed, let's start with acknowledging that only a section of population has benefited from the boom. High paid jobs have gone to those equipped to take advantage of globalization—urban, urbane, English educated knowledge workers. Along with that, the multiplier effect has generated jobs in education, entertainment, housing, transport and other service sectors. But Bengaluru has also become an extra-ordinarily expensive city. Those not plugged in to jobs in the boom sectors are falling behind and becoming marginalized, and voicing their resentment very vocally.

Continued on page 4...

JANUARY 2008 Vol.4 - ISSUE 6 Rs. 40/-

What's in

Bengaluru Special – 9 - 15

Global Knowledge City
- **Balaji Parthasarathy**

People Power

- **Ravi Rao**

Stop Meddling

- **H.S. Sudhira**

Brand Bengaluru

- **Harish Bijoor**

Entrepreneur City

- **Ravi Narayan**

Fact File

Trends 2008 – 3 - 6

What's your true value?

Mega trends in Management

Mega Trends in Technology

Entrepreneurship – 7

Self-help is best help: **K K Pai**

Subroto Bagchi's

success mantra

TiE Institute

Managing Technology - 8

Ranganath Iyengar

Digital Business Ecosystems

Spirituality – 16

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Happiness Message for 2008

Impact - 17

My Delayed Honeymoon

Vikram Mehmi

Regulars: BookShelf,

Crossword, OffBeat

Demonstrate or Die

It's time Indian outsourcing companies stop competing on price and start demonstrating the superior value they offer. It isn't easy, but there's help



By **Benedict Paramanand**

It appears global companies are nearing the end of the dramatic cost saving cycle and will now look for those who can demonstrate superior value offering through hard data. If they don't, they face commoditisation.

In a recent book *Value Merchants: Demonstrating and Documenting Superior Value in Business Markets* by James C. Anderson, Nirmalya Kumar and James A. Narus (Harvard Business School Press, Nov. 2007), the authors have sounded the warning bell to Indian outsourcing companies. "Stop competing on price and start demonstrating superior value." Put simply – Demonstrate or die!



Prof. Nirmalya Kumar
Faculty, London Business School

In a chat with *ManagementNext*, Prof. Kumar, who teaches Marketing at London Business School, said most Indian exporters, including auto components, IT and ITES, go to business markets, not consumers. Therefore, they need to now lace their proposals with hard data and not vague promises to retain their growth numbers. "For Indian IT companies, it will increasingly become difficult to demonstrate superior value to global customers especially because many offer similar services," he said.

What's new in what the three authors are saying? They claim that, for the first time, they are presenting a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data in monetary terms to substantiate the superior value that a company can deliver to customers. By doing this, salesforce literally is elevating its role to an advisory position.

"This strategy is the foundation of an innovative new business philosophy developed specifically for the business markets. Dubbed *customer value management*, this analytics-driven approach focuses on gathering and analyzing data in order to demonstrate, in monetary terms, the superior value that products deliver to customers."

The CVM program will be of greatest value to C-level executives who are convinced that their companies are delivering superior value to their customers but have not

convinced them of that. In fact, using this approach, those who offer superior value stand to gain by retaining the customer for a longer period.

Going a step further, the authors suggest that merchants should be driven to provide superior value to two categories of customers: directly to their own, of course, but also indirectly to their customers' customers. "I cannot think of a better way to lock in a valued customer than to do whatever is possible and (yes) prudent to help that customer to strengthen each of its own customer relationships," Prof. Kumar said.

The authors suggest that merchants should be driven to provide superior value to two categories of customers: directly to their own, of course, but also indirectly to their customers' customers

Now the question of where to start arises. Prof. Kumar has the answer: "The best way to get prepared is to pick one customer and do it for the first time. Pick an easy customer because it is easy to build on success. Start small, start easy. Once you get past the first one, subsequent ones will become easier."

The authors base their unique approach on extensive research and detailed case studies of companies like Sonoco, Tata Steel, and Quaker Chemical. They hope that *Value Merchants* will change the mindset and behavior of executives, sales management, representatives, and marketers as well as customers. Todd Snelgrove, Global Manager; Customer Value. SKF, in his review said: "Not only is it filled with theoretical ideas of why it is important to create and document value for customers, but it gives a practical roadmap of how to transform a company into a value "merchant."

There's a catch though. The biggest challenge may not be mastering the techniques given by the authors about demonstrating superior value, but to grasp the value perception of the customer before doing that. Warren Buffett's observation that "price is what you charge and value is what others think its worth," makes a lot of sense.

ManagementNext™

Stay Inspired

Monthly for CEOs & Aspiring CEOs

Vol. 4 - ISSUE 6

Printed, published and owned by Benedict Paramanand and printed at Rukmini Prakash & Mudra, 38, Behind Modi Hospital, Nagapur, Bengaluru – 560 086; and published at Bengaluru.

Editor – Benedict Paramanand, # 2, Bilden Park, G M Palya, Bengaluru – 560 075.

Mission

To be an effective resource of information, knowledge and perspective to CEOs and aspiring CEOs

Publisher & Editor	Benedict Paramanand
Associate Publisher	Sangeeta Mansur
Contributing Editor	Rohtas Kumar
Subscriber Relations	Radha Prasad
Illustrator	Neetu Singh
Support	Satish Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar (Delhi)
Media Consultant	Ravishankar N., Media Planning Associates
Management Consultant	Ranganath Iyengar, Strategic Interventions

Editorial Advisors

Ramesh Ramanathan	Founder, Janaagraha
Harish Bijoor	CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults
Rishikesh T Krishnan	Faculty, IIM Bengaluru
Rajeev Gowda	Faculty, IIM Bengaluru

Contributions in this Issue

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar	Founder, Art of Living
Balaji Parthasarathy	Faculty, IIITB
Ravi Rao	President, Prestige Group
H S Sudhira	Research Scholar, IISc.
Harish Bijoor	Harish Bijoor Consults Inc.
Ravi Narayan	MD, MentorPartners
Vikram Mehmi	CEO Birla Sunlife Insurance
M. V. Rajeev Gowda	Faculty, IIMB
Ranganath Iyengar	Strategic Interventions

emagazine - <http://emagazine.managementnext.com>

For advertising details

www.managementnext.com/advertise

Subscription details

Print : Annual Subscription: Rs. 400/- (12 Issues) Two years Rs. 750/-, Three Years Rs. 950/-

emagazine : Annual Subscription: Rs. 200/- (12 Issues) Two years Rs. 400/-, Three Years Rs. 600/-

Payment options: DD, Cheque, Credit card or PayPal

Send to

Rishabh Media Network
2, Bilden Park, G.M. Palya, Bengaluru - 560 075
Ph: 91 80 25343404
email: benedict@managementnext.com

Information in this publication is drawn from a variety of sources, including published reports, interviews with practicing managers, academia and consultants. While doing so utmost importance is given to authenticity.

Letters and Article Submission

www.managementnext.com/submit
E-mail: benedict@managementnext.com

Copyright © Rishabh Media Network

Continued from page 1...

This is a warning sign that we must heed. Bengaluru has traditionally been cosmopolitan, welcoming people from far and wide. The warmth of the Kannadigas and the coolness of our weather have made Bengaluru a destination of choice. Now, we need to identify the divides that have emerged and bridge them creatively and sincerely. If we can demonstrate that those who benefit from Bengaluru are also working to ensure opportunities for all, then we can usher in an environment of inclusion and progress.

So how can we give back to the city and its people, how can we create a better Bengaluru? Instead of coming across this pro-active attitude, all we read in the newspapers is carping about the decaying infrastructure and worsening traffic. That carping does not focus on the travails of the pedestrian or the bicyclist but only about making life easier for those in cars. It's this sort of attitude that triggers the backlash from those left behind by the boom. Thankfully, the Metro rail project will soon make life easier for the four-wheeled and the barefooted. But instead of just railing at our government's inability to deliver, what can we do to enhance Bengaluru's livability and competitiveness?

We have some examples of corporations making a difference to our community. The Bengaluru Agenda Task Force and its work on improving city government services. The Nirmala public toilets. Efforts by some foundations to improve primary and secondary education. And some early efforts at affirmative action. But given the potential power in the hands of Bengaluru's corporates and executives, this is massively underwhelming.

There are many ways to unleash the potential of Bengaluru and all its people. Some call for individual efforts, some for concerted action. Consider the latter. In terms of the knowledge economy Bengaluru is an underperformer. Our fabled IT companies typically do lower-end work, not cutting-edge product design. Our academic institutions do not interact enough with each other or with industry to have much impact. Worst of all, we do not nurture a culture of creativity and innovation in our education system.

This can be changed. Outside of the existing curriculum, corporates can create competitions that engage and encourage bright minds. Internships, mentoring and other industry engagement can transform the confidence and horizons of our youngsters. Open source courseware can level the playing field on the education front. Industry support of quality teaching can ennoble this crucial profession. When we think of the millions of companies spend on training, it's clear that it would be smarter to contribute to improving the education system itself.

Finally, we must pay attention to cultural issues. Individuals and corporates must reciprocate the warmth of their welcome by embracing Kannada and its culture. Learn the language and share in the heritage. Corporates also need to think of ways to reach out beyond Bengaluru and usher in progress elsewhere across Karnataka. A concerted initiative to move BPOs to second- or third-tier towns will actually reduce real estate costs and attrition rates, balancing sound economics with inclusive growth. There are numerous such win-wins out there. Let's identify and capitalize on them, and then Bengaluru 2.0 will become a reality.

M. V. Rajeev Gowda, is Professor of Economics and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Management-Bengaluru.

Mega trends in Management 2008

Forum, Boston headquartered consultancy firm (www.forum.com) recently did a meta analysis of research studies on business trends published between 2005 and 2007, comprising a combined sample size of over 7,000 global executives and short listed key trends most cited across the many studies.

Navigating Uncertainty

92 percent of executives believe the challenges they face are more complex than they were just 5 years ago. To mitigate risk and ensure growth, executives plan for different scenarios and think in more future and market focused ways.

Creating Agility for Sustainability

Eight out of ten organisations perceive the pace of change to be speeding up; 88% percent of companies have either speed or agility on their agenda and 55% are taking steps to increase one or both.

Collaboration: Bridging Divides

Cultural differences are often stumbling blocks to growth, particularly for multinational companies expanding their reach into emerging markets. Support for globalisation is waning in the West. The implications are enormous and suggest a real need for leaders who can lead across cultural, generational and geographical differences.

Redefining the Term “Co-Worker”

Many companies will increase the number of their collaborative relationships with third parties, such as strategic alliances, and will also include the customer over the next 3 years.

Using Web 2.0 Technology

Web 2.0 technologies are used for both internal collaboration and as an interface with suppliers and customers. 79% of organizations view the collaborative aspects of Web 2.0 as a way to increase corporate revenue and/or margins.

Differentiating Through Customer Engagement

Customers seek more than service—they seek a more customised, emotional experience as well. Infact, executives believe that deeper customer engagement will have almost double the impact on their company's growth in 5 years as it does presently.

Creating Processes and a Culture for Ongoing Innovation

Seven out of ten organisations experienced disruptive change

over the past year. High performing companies strive to be the game changers, rather than scramble to react to the bold moves and ingenuity of others.

Corporate Social Responsibility

In 2000, 42% of executives and investors believed that CSR was a “central” or “important” factor in business and investment decisions. In 2005, that figure jumped to 85%.

Talent management

75% of executives believe talent management is a critical issue. Increasingly, executives view talent management not as a “nice to have,” but as a critical tool used in the service of achieving business objectives.

These issues (change, collaboration, customers and talent management) are not new—far from it. But the pace, urgency and methods of approaching these issues are different today.

Environment replaces jobs as biggest concern



What's the issue that's on top of the minds of most executives when it comes to sociopolitical factors impacting shareholders value? According to a recent report in McKinsey Quarterly, a study of 2,687 executives around the world - 36 percent of them CEOs or other

C-level executives, it is environmental concerns.

90% of the executives worry about the impact of global warming themselves and more than half of the sample pick the environment, including climate change, as one of three issues that will attract the most public and political attention during the next five years, compared with 31 percent in the previous survey. The previous study in 2005 had pointed out that job losses due to offshoring was of highest concern. With this study, environmental concern has moved up from the third place to the first place.

It also indicates narrowing gap of perceptions among executives and consumers. We may recall that in a 2006 McKinsey Global Survey of consumers, almost half chose the environment as one of the top three issues.

As for how companies deal with the sociopolitical issues they face, this survey suggests that they are getting a bit better at it. In 2005 respondents had an issue with the effectiveness of the tactics employed by companies but the current survey shows a reduced gap between what's being done by companies and what executives believe to be effective CSR.

Strategic technologies to watch in 2008

Strategic technologies, as defined by Gartner, are technologies that could disrupt IT or business in the next 18 to 36 months. If you are late in adopting, they can shake up your job and cripple you! Here's a trend list you need to watch out.

Green IT

Here to stay. Many companies, from Dell to small companies are touting Green IT as a component of the company mission. Make no mistake, the software that schedules which applications should run where will and must factor in server energy efficiency.

Unified communications

PBX is passé. Companies are doing trials of IP telephony. In three years, a majority of companies will be using it, Gartner predicts. This is the first major change in voice communications since the digital PBX and cellular phone changes in the 1970s and 1980s.

Business process modeling

The imperative for 2008 for this perennial list maker is to bring enterprise architects, senior developers, process architects and process analysts together to jointly define top-level process services. The modeling goal is faster and highly flexible processes.

Metadata management

'If your aim is to have the ability to re-hook the IT systems to rapidly support any change your business might make, then you're talking about connections you don't know in advance. Metadata management is part of the magic sauce to that.'

Virtualisation 2.0

Instead of selling and shipping just the application to you, the software supplier might send you a virtual machine file that has everything, the OS and the application,

pre-integrated. But licensing issues have to be sorted out before pre-integrated applications become widespread.

Mashup and composite applications

Web mashups will be the dominant model (80%) for creating composite enterprise applications by 2010. Mashups will replace internal portals for employees, who now have to flip between applications to get what they need. Businesses will use mashups to talk to customers about their orders.

Web platform and Web-oriented architecture

Emerging Web platforms are offering service-based access through Web-based "cloud computing" environments. Now is the time to look beyond SaaS (Software as a Service) and examine how Web platforms will change business in three to five years.

Computing fabric

You treat memory, processors and I/O cards as components in a pool, combining and recombining them into particular arrangements to suits your needs. You use the fabric to hook them anyway you want. For example, a large server can be created by combining 32 processors and a number of memory modules from the pool, operating together over the fabric to appear to an operating system as a single fixed server.

Real World Web

The Real World Web delivers augmented reality as opposed to virtual reality, in real time, not before or after the fact. It gives tripping a whole new meaning.

Social software

Web 2.0 products such as wikis, RSS feeds and tagging will be used to communicate and foster collaboration in your company.



Self-help is best help for entrepreneurs: K. K. Pai



Mr. K. K. Pai, Chairman, Governing Council, T. A. Pai Management Institute, is bitter about education still under tight control. “It is high time education is

liberated from the bondage of politicians and bureaucrats,” he said while sharing the romantic story of Manipal. He said the history of Manipal between 1937-2007 is a unique experiment in entrepreneurship. Manipal has succeeded because of the cooperative effort. It is an ideal example of ambition driven by self-help. He was speaking recently at TAPMI in Manipal on the occasion of the ‘International Research Meet on Entrepreneurship in India and China.’

“India cannot afford to progress at the pace it has done so far,” Mr. Pai, 87, said, adding, “Generations cannot wait for opportunities to be created. Whatever the aspirations we have, we have to achieve it in our lifetime.” He advised entrepreneurs not to wait for ideal conditions to present themselves. “Time and tide wait for none,” he said. Mr. Pai wants the next phase of managerial energy to move to the agriculture sector. He believes that India’s future still lies there.

Subroto Bagchi's success mantra

Rampant corruption has taken the nation to the brink. It is affecting the ability of Indian entrepreneurs to compete in the global economy. In fact, young Indian entrepreneurs are feeling victimized, Subroto Bagchi, Gardner at MindTree Consulting Limited said while delivering the inaugural address at T.A. Pai Management Institute in Manipal recently.

The keys to success of entrepreneurs today, Mr. Bagchi observed, are “on-time delivery, inclusion and humility.” He asked entrepreneurs not to be obsessed with amassing wealth since “when you go upstairs, it is a cashless transaction.” He emphasized that wealth is not about ownership but about focusing on sharing.

He warned that the corruption obstacle is hindering the coming up of small businesses which are the real job providers in any economy. He said the governments’ role is not to provide jobs and big businesses are simply reengineering to cut jobs. Therefore, high performance companies should be allowed to perform to their potential if India has to foster a high and inclusive growth.

Mr. Bagchi called for fight against another version of AIDS afflicting India – Acquired Integrity Deficiency Syndrome in Indian business. The difference is, while the AIDS as we know it, spreads from physical contact, the new version spreads from mind to mind, which can be quite lethal.

TiE Bangalore launches education institute

TiE Bengaluru recently launched the TiE Institute to accelerate the growth of entrepreneurship in Bengaluru. The workshops and courses offered by the institute are designed to provide immediate and practical value to budding entrepreneurs.

The institute is modeled on the lines of the TiE Institute in Silicon Valley, which started about 4 years ago. Its vision is to be the “Entrepreneur’s University”, offering practical training in soft and hard skills, delivered by a world-class faculty drawn from TiE Charter Members around the globe, and their networks cultivated over the years. The institute aspires to develop more holistic, value-centered business leaders through concrete and interactive education, which is entrepreneurial in spirit, ethical in focus, and global in orientation.

Contact TiE at: <http://Bangalore.tie.org>

Our Management Mantra



Your Cargo-OUR CONCERN

SURFACE LINES
CARGO & LOGISTICS PVT. LTD.

WE MAKE THE GOING EASY

* Bangalore 080-41281668, 41283724, 22900597,
9343714469, 9341159496 * Chennai 044-9382727889
* Hyderabad 9391205015 * Mangalore 0824-2496793,
9343347671 * Mysore 0821-2412061, 9448064985,
9448357061

Service available throughout the country

Redefining customer value through digital business ecosystems



By Ranganath Iyengar

In 1993, James Moore, an expert on leadership and strategy wrote an article called “Predators and Prey: A new Ecology of competition” wherein he defined “Business Ecosystems”. The analogy is similar to a biological ecosystem – in a business ecosystem; companies co-evolve capabilities around a new innovation: they work cooperatively and competitively to support new products, satisfy customer needs and eventually incorporate the next round of innovations”. As in a biological ecosystem, each company, big or small, plays a role in the business ecosystem.



Another definition, from Ray Wang of Forrester, talks about ecosystems as specialized communities that rely on Intellectual Property (IPR) innovation networks of partners, suppliers, financiers, inventors, transformers and brokers. ‘As the software vendors and systems integrators expand into new markets, they will form solution centric systems to enable exclusive, complementary and co-opetive relationships’. We take a look at such communities that have leveraged technology to create unique customer value.

Online communities and content

One of the simplest methods of forming communities has been to aggregate content – examples include product and supplier directories, best practices, books, auctions, gaming, industry news, leads, deals, forecasts, social and business networking etc. While a lot of such communities started as B2B, such communities are being re-evaluated to make them more dynamic, interactive, feedback enabled

and self sustaining with a strong business model.

A digital business ecosystem shows a high level of evolution. Some of its features are – global dynamic connection and aggregation of businesses, sharing of knowledge - ideas - capabilities, selection and evolution of services and solutions pretty much similar to biological ecosystems. Open source communities are an excellent example of consumer response compared to locked in technology vendor dependency and despite the constraints, open source communities continue to prosper.

Example: IBM’s Service Management Partner Ecosystem

IBM’s clients demanded that vendors demonstrate not only their differentiating performance and features, but also integrate with other vendors’ products – which are a business reality in today’s multi platform IT infrastructure. IBM brought together networking companies, ISVs, systems integrators, consultants, resellers and distributors to take advantage of open standards and created a fully integrated Service Management Partner Ecosystem. Each partner contributes and exploits the content in Tivoli’s Change and Configuration Management database (CCMDB) which is the heart of the system and there are various toolsets as well which are built around industry’s best practices. In addition, the open systems approach is leveraged to the hilt – a built to manage toolkit for Java instrumentation and an open process automation library (OPAL) completes the picture.

Example: Evolution of online content communities into Business Ecosystems

Most of the basic communities are based on content and collaboration. Common features include easy navigation, search, editing, posting, support for extended record types such as polls, theme flexibility, personalization

and support for technology standards such as XML, databases and web. Good examples are social networking sites, Bootstrap Network, Indianapolis Museum of Art etc.

The next level of communities has several additional features such as advanced search and comparisons, referral on deals, correspondence and email integration, workflows, reconciliation, privacy, knowledge notebooks, support for business content standards etc.

Advantages and disadvantages of Digital Business Ecosystems

CRM software that is available in a hosted environment is the most visible example of a highly leveraged business ecosystem and as we speak, more and more software is seen moving into SaaS (software as a service) environment which if extended into a marketplace forms a full digital business ecosystem.

Sometimes, an ecosystem is a combination of specialized sub-marketplaces (e.g. uShip, Tradenet) and a collection of such sub-marketplaces unlocks the true value potential.

Trends in Business Ecosystems

Today these ecosystems overlap with consumer oriented communities since business networks can be built on top of these (e.g. Facebook). Public self service oriented ecosystems are now coming online leveraging brick and mortar models and such communities are regulated by government or legal mechanisms. IP specific trade associations are an excellent example of industry collaboration that brings together knowledge assets, training, products and services for an industry since they also bring in strong reference mechanisms. So finally, one can say that the web means business!!

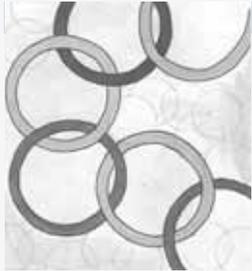
e-mail: ranga@siiplconsulting.com

MULTIVERSITIES IN BENGALURU?

There is a strong case for collaboration and networking among local academic and research institutions if they are to be relevant to the industry and the government



By Balaji Parthasarathy



If by a “knowledge capital” we refer to a location from where new ideas, discoveries and

innovations regularly emerge, it is crucial to have some form of vibrant scholarship in such a place. Although Bengaluru has many scholars who do a fine job of teaching and research, they are too few, because academic institutions don’t do enough to intellectually nurture and professionally sustain such individuals. While any systemic transformation of academia is a long-drawn social and political process, it need not prevent us from thinking about how we would like it to change. Without pretending to provide easy answers to all the complex issues, this piece will highlight the importance of collaboration and networking among Bengaluru’s academic institutions as a necessary condition, even if not a sufficient one, to ensure that they remain relevant to the emerging socio-economic needs of the city.

A compelling argument for academic institutions to collaborate and network is that they are small by international standards and function within ossified hierarchical structures. Indian universities may enroll large numbers, but they are little more than degree legitimizing bureaucracies. Teaching, especially at the undergraduate level, happens in smaller affiliated colleges, where the resources for facilities such as the library or computing infrastructure are hardly sufficient to meet the demands of a curious mind. Expansion efforts also pay more attention to adding sub-critical investments rather than reinforcing existing investments and creating a critical mass. Even stand-alone

degree granting institutions, which have greater flexibility than affiliated colleges in deciding what to teach or research, have limited capabilities. This is because most of them, such as the IIMs, are typically dedicated to one field of study or another and are not “multiversities”.

The lack of intellectual facilitation is also evident in the reluctance of teaching departments, research programs, and academic institutions, to work together to enhance their relatively limited capabilities that result from their small size. The option of enrolling across disciplines, such as allowing an electrical engineer an introduction to music, or an anthropologist to gain exposure to genetics, is almost non-existent. It is even harder to transfer credits across programs and institutions: one trained as an accountant is doomed to remain one, with little hope of becoming an architect if she so desires. In an era when innovation can be had from figuring out how best IT – a general-purpose technology – can be meaningfully deployed in various spheres of human activity, inter-disciplinary work is especially critical. Lacking mechanisms to support such work, our academic institutions are characterized by intellectual parochialism and navel-gazing, despite rhetoric about the importance of “out of box thinking” and “thought leadership”.

It is against this backdrop that academic institutions in Bengaluru would do well to create a collaborative educational network for various goals. One is to share academic resources. For instance, a city-wide inter-library loan system can improve the reach of individual libraries. A more important role is to encourage interaction and learning between faculty and students across institutional and disciplinary

boundaries. Thus, it should be formally possible, at a low cost, for an IIIT student to enroll for a course at ISEC, or a student from a VTU affiliated college to take up advanced engineering courses at IISc. Ultimately, the goal is to encourage the transformation of a set of mediocre institutions, with thinly spread academic and intellectual resources, to institutions that focus on developing capabilities to excel in select disciplines. When such institutions emerge and shed a fortress mentality to benefit from the presence of other, similar, institutions in the city, it is likely to encourage networking beyond academia.

Ultimately, the goal is to encourage the transformation of a set of mediocre institutions, with thinly spread academic and intellectual resources, to institutions that focus on developing capabilities to excel in select disciplines

As things stand, government and industry are reluctant to approach academia for help with problems that they face, suspecting a lack of expertise. This suspicion is reasonable as academics often lack the exposure and resources to tackle either policy or commercial problems. It is likely to be overcome only as academic institutions develop more specialized teaching and research capabilities. Enhanced interaction between academia, government and industry will not only offer more real-world problems demanding innovative solutions but also a means of supplementing limited academic resources.

The author teaches at the Indian Institute of Information Technology, (IIIT), Bangalore. pbalaji@iiitb.ac.in

Come on, Team Bengaluru!

Ravi Rao reminisces on what Bengaluru stood for and believes it is still possible to blend its old charm with modernity if the citizens join hands



I was born and brought up in a large joint family. I lived in Basavangudi in a sprawling house, built room by room between 1920 and 1963, as and when the family size demanded it and funds became available (not easily, of course). Cricket teams were formed by innumerable cousins and neighbours and we played in the open compound!! Climbing the neighbour's guava tree without getting caught was a special skill and unforgettable thrill!! Winning at marbles and the collection one owned were great status symbols (quite like one's skill in video games and the mobile phone one flashes today!!).

Walks to Lal Bagh with my grandfather used to be either great fun because you could escape running errands for ones mother, aunt or grandmother, depending on whose path you crossed just as you were about to run off to play, or a punishment because he walked so fast (quite like Mahatma Gandhi) that we had to run to keep pace with him!!

One way bus fare to school (near Cash Pharmacy) was 5 paise. After years of waiting, the day I got my shining new bicycle (and no longer had to beg for a ride from someone who owned one) is still etched in my mind as one of the happiest! Nothing has as yet come close to the unbounded joy of riding to school with friends and going on well-planned picnics to the HAL Airport!!

I left Bengaluru in 1967, to study, live, work and travel across India and overseas. My family and I returned to Bengaluru at the end of 2004.

■ 2007: Age 56

I have been visiting here regularly over these 40 years. I have been witness to Bengaluru's metamorphosis. Its changes have been silently creeping upon me in such small doses that I did not realize how the little insect fossilized in amber has suddenly been awakened to become a dinosaur (I am merely referring to its size) !!

Bengaluru is now a metropolis. It is no longer the sleepy, quiet pensioner's paradise. It is bustling, throbbing with life and new found energy. It is a verb. It is an icon. The world sees the new India through Bengaluru!! Bengaluru welcomes the world with open arms.

■ My vision

To have the simple life back again so that we can all enjoy

the wonderful benefits of modernization. To have clean, abundant water; roads and basements that do not become lakes when it rains; uninterrupted power; garbage that is collected promptly and disposed of hygienically; footpaths where I can walk (and not be run over by two wheelers and autorickshaws), wider roads that help me move faster (than the present average of 8 kmph which is the cause of road rage); safety when I cross the road; designated spaces where I can park my two-wheeler or car; strict enforcement of all laws that are made for my good; penalties and punishments if I (or anyone, however well connected) disobeys the law. Is this asking too much?

■ What can I do?

I can teach my children and they in turn their children that civic sense and discipline are not old fashioned. That common sense and respect for my fellow Bengaluruian does not reduce my imaginary status. That raising our collective voices as citizens when things go wrong and asking the powers that be for what is rightfully our due is possible. That wherever we may live, work, travel or entertain ourselves, we can nurture what nature has provided us and take care of our environment.

When Bengaluruans meet at any forum, the subject these days invariably centers around the garden city's crumbling infrastructure. I see a sense of helplessness. A sense of "I'm ok, you're not". That I am doing everything I can but "they" (could be you or someone else or everyone else) are not. That things could be better if only "they" did what they are supposed to do. We seem to have become like a cricket team where everyone is a captain, everyone is a batsman, everyone is a bowler, but no one seems to know (or care) what we together need to do to win. We could perhaps take some lessons from the cricket teams that played in our compound in 1960!!

The Bengaluru of 2007 is no "future shock" for me. The shock for me, for all of us, for generation next, is yet to come. Unless we all act, together. I am more than willing to bat, bowl, field or even carry the drinks, if only I had a captain I can respect, a captain I can look up to, a captain that desperately wants Team Bengaluru to win, and makes the Team believe they can win!!

The author is *President, Prestige Group*

State's meddling hurts Bengaluru

State governments have not allowed Bengaluru to govern itself resulting in over-planning and poor governance. It's time to reverse the trend!

By H S Sudhira

In November 2007, the much awaited Comprehensive Traffic and Transportation Plan (CTTP) was finally out after a delay of more than a year. The CTTP is among the four important plans prepared for Bengaluru in last two years alone was hailed as a panacea for all the traffic woes facing the city.

The preceding plan to CTTP is the much-debated Comprehensive Development Plan – 2015 (CDP-2015) prepared by the Bengaluru Development Authority. This was formally notified by the State government only in July 2007. CDP-2015 being a key plan deciding the future spatial growth of Bengaluru is essentially about zoning of land-use for different activities. The State government has taken more than two years to mull over the recommendations given by the public, which was consolidated by the PSS Thomas Committee. Concerns about effective community participation along with change in certain land-uses, relaxations in building height restrictions and reduction of green belt still remain.

The third plan, City Development Strategy Plan (CDSP) was prepared by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (Greater Bengaluru City Corporation) in accordance with the much-hyped Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) guidelines. Accordingly, the CDSP was prepared for two sub-missions of JnNURM: Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) and Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP). The CDSP outlines only an investment plan and financial strategy for taking up various initiatives envisaged in the mission. The total investment outlay during the seven-year plan period (2005-2012) was to the tune Rs. 22,000 crores. Unlike the other plans, this is reforms-driven with the Centre and State governments as party to the reforms agenda. That apart, this envisages fast track, planned development with focus on improving efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms, through community participation and ensuring accountability of urban local bodies and parastatals towards citizens.

The first among the recent plans was Infrastructure Development and Investment Plan (IDIP) prepared in 2005 by KUID&FC. This plan is now considered as an earlier version of the CDSP prepared for JnNURM and addressed most infrastructure related challenges ranging from transportation to water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste management and housing.

In last two years alone, the city has witnessed four major

plans by three government organisations for Bengaluru and is now left to wonder the rationality of these different plans and its implications for the citizens. In spite of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, passed by the Parliament in 1993, planning is still carried out by different parastatal agencies. This Act requires that the planning function be vested with the (elected) urban local body and not with any parastatal agency. But, in the case of Bengaluru, the City Corporation has not been granted adequate powers by the State to plan and deliver the different services in the city!



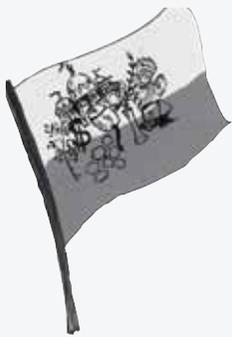
On aspects concerning the governance, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is the key 'urban local body' (ULB), that is, the local governmental structure representing and responsible to the citizens. Independent of the Corporation, which is supposedly governed by locally elected representatives, parastatal bodies controlled by the State government are responsible for many essential services.

The result of the State created parastatal organisations to manage various services is the absence of a common/uniform jurisdiction, leading to complication for coordinating different activities. Apart from the issue of a common jurisdiction and the lack of coordinated effort, even basic information related to different sectors is extremely difficult to collect, collate and to correlate. The consequence of which is poor and inefficient delivery of services to the citizens.

For effective operations management it is imperative that all the basic information is gathered across a common jurisdiction and the urban local body empowered bringing in accountability and transparency in delivery of different services. Subsequently, planning should be integrated to accommodate delivery of services, land-use zoning and regulation, resources management and mobility with an overall emphasis to enhance the quality of life of the citizens.

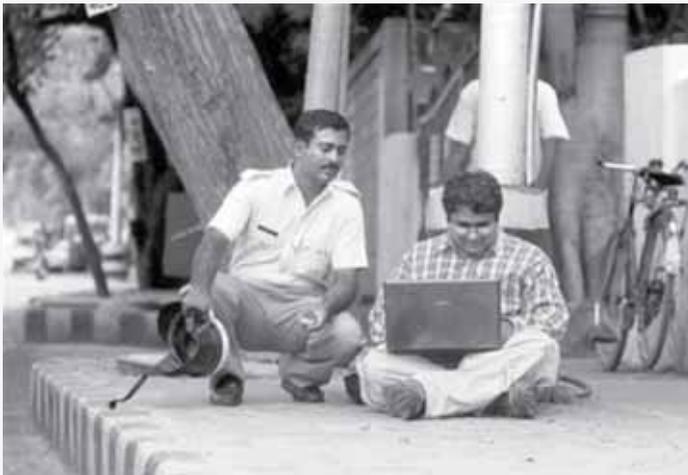
The city is paying a big price for uncoordinated plans by several agencies and inadequate powers for managing itself. What's worse, there are no signs of things getting better.

H S Sudhira, *Research Scholar (Ph.D.), Department of Management Studies and Centre for Sustainable Technologies, IISc. Email: sudhira@mgmt.iisc.ernet.in*



Five Deadly Sins of

*Bengaluru has lost its sheen for those who live within this city much more than to those who don't. **Harish Bijoor** suggests ways to restore this sheen.*



I would urge every citizen of this city to think like a citizen of the city. Time to let go of those tags that title us as one from Delhi, or one from Gujarat or one from West Bengal. Time to show ownership.

Every citizen wants the IT industry to pitch in and take care of the development needs of a much-stressed city. It's time we got out of that mindset altogether. This city does not belong to the IT companies that have made it their home. This city belongs to each one of us. Everyone needs to pitch in.

I have defined the brand differently. The brand is a thought. A thought that lives in people's minds.

Brand Bengaluru is therefore a thought. A potent thought that lives in people's minds. People who live and work and thrive in Bengaluru, and equally in the minds of people who do not live here, but enjoy some thought of this city or the other. Bengaluru therefore is an exocentric thought and a City-centric thought. Both cause for Brand Bengaluru and its image.

If the brand is a thought, Brand Bengaluru must evoke the right set of thoughts in the minds that partake of this Brand Maya that is Bengaluru.

A recent study of ours covering sample sizes of 600 people each in all the eight big metropolises of India threw up very interesting "thoughts" when it came to Brand Bengaluru. 4200 people gave us an exocentric view of Bengaluru and 600 contributed a city-centric view.

Without going too much into the detail of it all, let me encapsulate some of the line imageries that emerged from the thought patterns of the peoples met.

Exocentric imageries took the following dominant words. And do note that "dominant words" mean words expressed for a city by more than 60% of the people met for the exercise. Here are the words (top 8) in hierarchical order of mention:

IT. Biotech. BPO. Green. Pensioners. Brainstrust. Retail. Mis-planned.

City-centric words that emerged (top 5) were as follows.

Traffic. Bad-roads. Bad-infrastructure. Peaceful. Corrupt.

The two respective images collide with one another. People living in the city think differently of it than people living outside. Yes, there is a small bit of an intersecting circle when it comes to the 8th exocentric comment and all of the city-centric ones.

The problem then. Bengaluru has lost its sheen for those who live within this city. Much more than the loss of sheen to entities exocentric to the city. The challenge then is to restore this sheen.

Brand Bengaluru



How to bring the sheen back to Brand Bengaluru?

I do believe Brand Bengaluru has a very firm foundation. The city remains one of the most peaceful cities of India where the different communities of people live peacefully with one another. Bengaluru is possibly the least “Ghettoized” city in India where you find populaces of every major religion and community co-existing in harmony. Religion in many ways is dead. So is caste and community. This foundation is solid and one of the pillars of Brand Bengaluru.

Let’s build on this firm foundation then. If the sheen is to be brought back, it is important to focus on the following slugs of differentiation.

☒ **The Sin of Leadership:** Bengaluru needs a leader. A city leader we can all look up to. The city has had many a Dewan in the past who has been such a leader. SM Krishna, our former Chief Minister was one such. Bengaluru needs a leader who can actually represent everything that Bengaluru is. A decisive, firm leadership that believes in inclusive development of the city and its many woes.

Many years ago, in complete frustration, I had suggested the status of a Union Territory for Bengaluru as well. Such a status would delineate a clear urban agenda for the city. An agenda that will not get mixed up with the bigger and definitely needed rural development agenda of the state. An agenda with a clear leadership that is vested with the power, authority and duty to take care of the city and its myriad needs of today, tomorrow and the medium-term future in the least.

Follow that up then. Forget the Union Territory status even. Create for Bengaluru a structure of governance and leadership that will have an empowered Sheriff of the city who will run and supervise urban governance that is future-proofed.

☒ **The Sin of Participation:** There is an acute need to knit the social infrastructure of this city. While everyone cries hoarse on the physical infrastructure, there are very few who offer their time and energy and thoughts (if nothing else) for the city. Everyone out here is out to curse and cry. Not enough out here to participate in the bigger task of city building.

Every citizen wants the IT industry to pitch in and take care of the development needs of a much-stressed city. It’s

time we got out of that mindset altogether. This city does not belong to the IT companies that have made it their home. This city belongs to each one of us. Everyone needs to pitch in.

☒ **The Sin of Attitude:** Time to correct our “Navu irode heege swamy” (We are like this only!) attitude. Time to yank up the socks and build that positive image for the city that it is crying for. Starting from our traffic sense, where it is evident that traffic sense is inversely proportional to education of its masses, we need to get onto the fast-track of citizen participation. PPP means public-private partnership. And “private” does not necessarily mean the private sector companies of this city. It means the private individual. Every one of us!

☒ **The Sin of corruption:** We need to weed this out of the city. This two-way process for the taker and giver being equally guilty needs to be enforced with vigilance. We need vigilante groups who will catch the guilty on both sides and get them punished, speedy and quick. Can this be India’s first 100% corruption free city? Quite like the status of the 100% literate state status attained by Kerala several years ago?

☒ **The Sin of adoption:** I would urge every citizen of this city to think like a citizen of the city. Time to let go of those tags that title us as one from Delhi, or one from Gujarat or one from West Bengal. Time to show ownership.

This ownership is best shown by first adopting the language of the city and its denizens. I do believe Kannada can play a big link role in creating for a city that is inclusive in its sweep. Language adoption knits peoples and their common purposes faster. Time to offer respect to the language and get inclusive in our stances. Time to take ownership (albeit temporary even) of the language, its culture and everything else local.

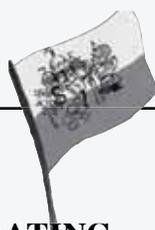
I do believe bringing the sheen back to Bengaluru is possible. Let’s correct the 5 Deadly sins of our own making. The city-centric denizens of this city need to wake up. Till that happens, no amount of top-down brand building approaches will help.

Brand Bengaluru will need to be built bottom-up. By the bottom-up efforts of everyone who lives here. Let’s do it! Rather than just talk about it! Time to walk the talk!

Any takers? The problem: all need to be takers!

The author is a business-strategy specialist and CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults Inc., ceo@harishbijoorconsults.com

Bengaluru Fact File



Demography and Geography

The population of the Bengaluru urban agglomeration (2001 census): **5.7 million**

Current population in BBMP limits: **7.2 million**

Literacy rate: **75.1 %**

Percentage of Kannadigas in Bengaluru: **38.7 %**

Percent migrants (2001 census): **35 % (2 million of 5.7 million)**

Percentage of urban poor (slum) population in the city: **16 %**

Mean annual rainfall in Bengaluru: **880 mm**

Average rainy days in a year: **90**

Elevation of Bengaluru: **920 m above mean sea level**

Governance

Corporation limits in 1949: **69 sq. km**

The area of the newly formed Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike: **741 sq. km**

The corporation limits of Bengaluru in 1949: **69 sq. km.**

The number of wards proposed in newly formed BBMP: **145**

Proposed budget of BBMP for 2007-08: **Rs. 3,312 crore**

No of parastatal agencies responsible for delivery of services: **more than 7**

Economy

Work force: **39 % of total population**

Net District Income: **Rs. 262,592 million (approx. US \$ 5.8 billion)**

Per capita income of the Bengaluru urban district: **Rs. 39,420**

Avg. per capita income in the state: **Rs. 18,360**

The largest industrial estate in South and South East Asia: **Peenya Industrial Estate with more than 4000 SMEs**

Density of shops and markets: **1 shop per 100 persons**

Infrastructure:

No of vehicles registered in Bengaluru limits: **2.8 million**

Road length in BBMP limits: **5,000 km**

Arterial and Sub-arterial roads: **320 km**

No of street lights: **0.25 million**

Water supply: **900 million litres per day**

Wastewater treatment capacity: **458 million litres per day**

Solid waste generation: **4000 tons per day**

CITY RATING

Bengaluru continues to be a top destination for investment and work in India. But the other cities are inching closer and even taking over some of its credentials in recent months. Where it has slipped badly is what it used to be known for the most – quality of life. This is mainly because of inaction or slow response to infrastructure issues. With the city's greater Bengaluru plan now in place, it should reclaim its lost sheen in the next three to five years.

Index Rank	Urban Governance	City Prosperity	Index Rank
1	Greater Mumbai	Delhi	1
2	Delhi	Greater Mumbai	2
3	Bengaluru	Bengaluru	3
4	Ahmedabad	Kolkata	4
5	Surat	Pune	5
6	Pune	Chandigarh	6
7	Vadodara	Hyderabad	7
8	Chennai	Chennai	8
9	Rajkot	Thiruvananthapuram	9
10	Hyderabad	Surat	10
	INFRA-STRUCTURE	BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT	
1	Delhi	Delhi	1
2	Chennai	Greater Mumbai	2
3	Hyderabad	Hyderabad	3
4	Greater Mumbai	Bengaluru	4
5	Kolkata	Chennai	5
6	Bengaluru	Pune	6
7	Visakhapatnam	Kolkata	7
8	Ahmedabad	Ahmedabad	8
9	Pune	Panaji	9
10	Nagpur	Visakhapatnam	10
	QUALITY OF LIFE		
1	Greater Mumbai	Kolkata	6
2	Delhi	Panaji	7
3	Chennai	Chandigarh	8
4	Hyderabad	Pune	9
5	Bengaluru	Ahmedabad	10

Source: Ernst & Young 2007

Entrepreneurship 2.0

Entrepreneurial energy, ecosystem mismatch

By Ravi Narayan

Bengaluru has been the cradle for IT and ITES industries for more than 15 years that now contribute almost 4% of the GDP of India. It has attracted the attention of the world over for the successes in the IT sector. It is a demonstration of globalization at its best. Clients from all over the world choose to work with companies in Bengaluru for they bring the deep expertise, professionalism and “problem solving” attitude.



Over the years, the work has moved up the value-chain from body-shopping, to off-shoring, to ODM, to strategic R&D centers being setup in Bengaluru. These R&D centers now impact anywhere from 2% to 25% of the parent company's

revenues. It is also interesting to note that several vendors to large MNCs spend more time in Bengaluru centers than the CIO/CTO's office of the MNCs to clinch a large deal as larger proportions of technology decision making is now done from Bengaluru.

Bengaluru is touted as the next Silicon Valley. It has several things going for it. It has the largest critical mass of IT professionals in one city. And with the collaboration of IISc, IIMB and IITB, the premier educational institutions of the city among themselves and the industry there would be more relevant talent available. The city also has the largest critical mass of senior professionals with 10+ years of experience who have developed a deep understanding of the technology and broad understanding of how it solves a business problem. Their training has been in professional settings, they are articulate and are ready to think “big”. Generating ideas, discussing them, refining them and taking them to the next level is not uncommon. The stage is being slowly set for innovations and “world-class” ideas for global markets.

At the same time, the ecosystem to put IP-based companies together is still in its infancy. Availability of seed capital, mentoring and access to markets are huge challenges. Also, it will be hard to replicate the Silicon Valley ecosystem of having markets, software development activities, hardware development activities, manufacturing, partners, vendors and

customers in close proximity. This poses a huge challenge for new companies, and has to be addressed in innovative ways. Bengaluru may be the center of gravity for these companies but the ecosystem they tap into will be global. Initial efforts are being made by global organizations, governmental bodies and agencies to setup liaison office in Bengaluru to establish conduits between the local ecosystem and their home bases.

While 1.0 took advantage of labor-cost arbitrage and opportunities such as Y2K and advent of personal computers, the IT 2.0 wave is looking to address large opportunities that the Indian markets and global markets are throwing up. They are constructing business models from grounds-up based on sound business principles, intimate understanding of the market and innovative ways of delivering their products and solutions to the market.

While these make for logical progression of 1.0, other areas that will contribute 2.0 would be through induction.

Seeing the success of the IT, the rapid growth of the Indian economy and the opportunities opening up in this environment, many other sectors are emboldened to think beyond their comfort zones. The small and medium enterprises (SME) will carve out market share in adjacent markets, up and down the value chain and beyond their current geographic territories.

Bengaluru boasts of a large established base of public sector units (PSU) in aeronautics (eg. NAL & HAL), electronics (eg. BEL & ITI), telecommunications (eg. ITI & CDOT) and others that will help generate a lot of entrepreneurial activity in these areas due to availability of talent and a semblance of an ecosystem. Similarly, other new sectors that are also establishing themselves are clean technology, Biotechnology and Nanotechnology.

When you look at IT as an enabler of scale, efficiency, optimization of talent and knowledge in an organization a whole lot of vistas open up like financial services, logistics, retail, infrastructure and transportation. There are several greenfield opportunities in these areas. The business models incorporate IT as an integral part of the launch of the business and scaling it to meet global opportunities.

Bengaluru is uniquely poised to leverage the successes of 1.0 and tap into the larger economy to catapult it to 2.0. The process is not easy, and has several challenges and obstacles along the way. Entrepreneurial energy will drive the orbit change.

The author is MD of MentorPartners. www.mentor-partners.com

Finding True Happiness This Year



By Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Every year, we celebrate the New Year wishing others happiness and prosperity. But have we really looked at what is the true sign of happiness and prosperity? The true sign of prosperity is an unconditional smile on your face.

Welcome the year 2008 with a smile from within. As we flip the calendar, we need to keep flipping our mind as well. Often, our diaries are full with memories. See that you don't fill your future dates with past events. Learn and unlearn from the past, and move on.

Everybody keeps postponing happiness. A child thinks he will be happy when he goes to college. Once in college, he thinks he will be happy when he starts earning. Then he thinks he will be happy once he is married. And the story goes on and that special day never comes! Instead of preparing to be happy all the time, make your conscience happy now.

In the New Year, let your devotion flower and give it a chance to work. Prayer is a vital tool to improve your life. It also nurtures values such as integrity and honesty. If you are not grateful and prayerful, you will be miserable.

The mind totally forgets the divine. You should experience the divine's presence, the divine's light around you. You should have a desire in your mind to experience the divine light. The higher goals in life can be realised only through a few minutes of meditation and introspection. A few quiet moments are sources for creativity. Some time during the day, sit for a few minutes, get into the cave of your heart, eyes closed, and kick the world away like a ball. But, rest of the time, be 100 per cent attached to your work. Eventually, you will be able to be both attached and detached. This is the skill of living, the art of living.

Don't be feverish for perfection. If you are too much of a perfectionist, you are bound to be an angry person. The world appears imperfect on the surface but, underneath, all is perfect. Perfection hides; imperfection shows off. The wise will not stay on the surface but will probe into the depth. In this world, everything cannot be perfect all the time. Also don't

make a mistake by pointing out mistakes! Mistakes keep happening all the time. To correct mistakes you need authority and love. Authority without love is stifling. Love without authority is shallow. When you allow room for mistakes, you can be both authoritative and sweet.

Learn to communicate effectively with everyone. Communicating without prejudice is vital for success. If you are faced with someone who knows more than you, be like a child and keep your ears and eyes open for learning. If you are faced with someone who knows less than you, be humble and strive to make them as good as or better than you. This New Year make up with someone with whom you are not in good terms. Drop all your prejudices against gender, religion, caste and class as they do not allow you to mingle with everyone around you. Break that barrier.

Don't forget to nourish your emotions. A person without emotions is like wood without any juice. You need to make your life interesting to make people be with you. This will happen when you nurture yourself with music, prayer, service and silence. Silence heals and rejuvenates and gives you depth and stability. Service leads to the dynamic experience of heart. It creates a sense of belongingness. Do some acts of kindness without expecting anything in return.

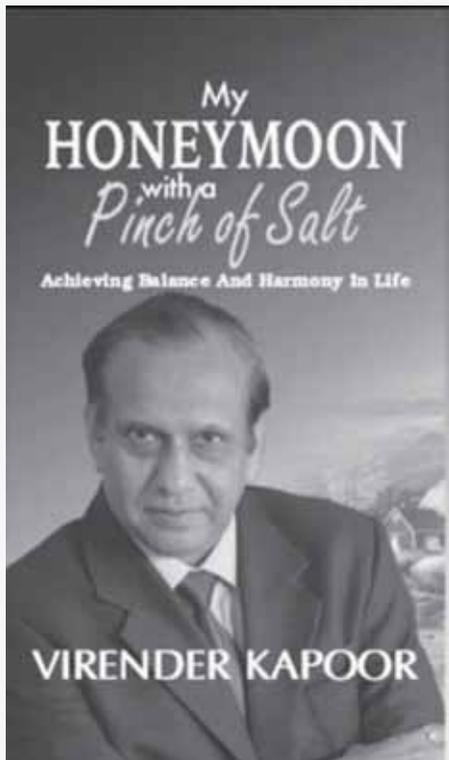
Unless you have a dream, you cannot realise it. Dream the impossible. Give yourself the freedom to dream and think big. Have the courage and determination to achieve those dreams that are dear to you. We often have a tendency to put cold water on other's enthusiasm. Reverse this tendency. Take every opportunity to praise others and support their enthusiasm.

When the New Year arrives, wish everyone with a sankalpa (intention) for peace and prosperity for all the people on the planet.

my delayed honeymoon with life



By Vikram Mehmi



"Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself"
- Chinese Proverb

What do we want from life? Do we want success? Or do we want happiness? How do you define these? These are some of the questions that everyone, from teenage till the end of life wants answered. It is important to note that questions are asked about what we expect from life. Not about purpose of life. Not about what we can give. I have personally gone through two events during the last four years, which have transformed my life.

The first time I looked at my workaholic life seriously was when I had a heart attack some four years ago. After that, I changed my lifestyle. I quit smoking. I started regular exercise. I controlled my food intake. I practiced management of stress. In short, I became disciplined good boy. I am actually leading a much better life since then.

The second was when I changed my last job. I took off for a month. Initially, I found it difficult to survive without work pressure. I spent lot of time doing introspection. I drew up Balance Sheet of my life. **This is the first time I realized after 30 years of non-stop working, what I had missed and thoroughly enjoyed doing what I always wanted to.** In effect, I was my own master and in one month, I saw a different side of my life. Now I can switch on and off at will. With practice, I have learnt to live in the "present".

Last week, it was the third time when I reflected back at how I lived my life. This is when I finished reading "My honeymoon with a pinch of salt".

I finished the whole book in almost one sitting. The book is written in very simple language with liberal use of spoken English. The book describes the importance of work-life balance through story-telling mode and concludes with how we can live life fully. The style has a touch of subtle humour, which makes it an interesting reading.

Although main characters are from next-generation, the book is equally interesting for old generation as well.

The story starts around a bunch of intelligent kids who pass together from IIT, Mumbai. Each of them comes from different parts of India and backgrounds. The central characters are Santanam who comes from a rich family background, his life partner Yamini who comes from "cantonment" family and his DIL (Dad-in-law) & MIL (Mom-in-law). Then there are very interesting and familiar characters like Subbu, Kulwinder, and Venkat etc. picked from our day-to-day life. This book has some pieces from everyone's life.

It is interesting to see how stress level in the current generation can affect their life and how individual preferences can play with their marriage. We are gradually moving towards a society where each one of us is becoming more and more self-centered. This is true even within families. At the same time, our eco-space is fast transforming into a complex place to live. It is highly fast paced and competitive. The measures of success for the next-generation have changed - these are where you live, what you wear and what you drive. So there is a blind race for riches. There is no time and concern for friends, family or society. Honeymoon is transformed into a "Quicke".

Virender Kapoor has encapsulated 'gyaan' inherited through living with parents and grand parents of the current generation in this book, e.g., what behavior is desirable and acceptable as per Indian traditions.

*The author is CEO
Birla Sunlife Insurance*

Tata's second snub?



When the Tatas bought Corus last year, it was the most definitive slap back to the British, who had insulted them several decades ago, by saying that they would even eat steel if the Tatas could produce one.

Now with Jag and Rolls Royce almost in their bag, the Tatas might pull out another insult that they would be hiding to tell the world. Otherwise, from the business point of view, buying the two colonial brands, especially when fuel guzzlers are fading in fashion, makes little sense.

COO to Gardener

Effective April 1, 2008, Subroto Bagchi, will renounce his designation of COO of MindTree Consulting and don the role of a Gardener.

It's interesting why Mr. Bagchi didn't go for the most common designation of that of a mentor and chose a non-glamorous title. A lot of thinking has gone into the choice of this title. To start with, half of the company's name is 'tree'. And the big challenge for MindTree today is how to reap bigger harvest in a shorter period of time.

This can be done not merely by growing the balance sheet or through acquisitions but cultivating and grooming future leaders. This cannot be achieved by mentorship, which is vague and typically one-sided.

'Gardener' title would mean the MindTree is a garden for Mr. Bagchi to focus on anything that needs attention. For a start, Mr. Bagchi will work with the Top 100 MindTree Minds on their 'personal-professional' issues of leadership and with MindTree's 45 communities of practice in a pull-based manner.

The Gardener at MindTree is a non-structural role. He does not report to anybody and no one reports to him. This non-structural persona should make the Top-100 leaders to be able to confide in him, trust him so that he can help them to rise to their potential.

Bagchi has said that people should not experiment with fancy designations; they must experiment with substance and then, wrap it around with whatever designation that best explains it. "Substance must precede symbolism to be worthwhile."

Indian advertising is showing guts

Indian advertising is beginning to show that it has guts and is no longer willing to hide behind the safe zone.

Three recent ads have broken away from the staid crowd and are reflecting the political/social mood in the country. The Idea commercial, featuring Abhishek Bachchan, which has caste differences and a subsequent riot sequence as its foundation. The Greenply ad, which is a satire on India's judicial system, and the Tata Tea TVC, which has a young man questioning a political candidate's qualifications to govern the country (awakening with Tata Tea, instead of just waking up).



The credit should also go to clients as well who would usually shy away from controversial topics. Ad gurus attribute the rise of such commercials to the evolving Indian psyche, particularly that of the youth who are egged on by movies such as 'Rang De Basanti'.

Indian film industry caught on to this form of cinematic expression a long time ago, but advertising continued to hide. As they say, it's better late than never.

Unemployment among Christians increasing

This is an irony. One hears of talent crunch in India and here, the National Sample Survey 2004-05 shows that more number of educated Christians are unemployed. The extent of unemployed Christians has increased from 4% to 4.4% in rural areas, and from 7% to 9% in urban areas between 1999-2000 and 2004-05. For other communities, it has remained broadly the same, or it has slightly decreased. It was assumed that Christians are easily employable due to their education and culture. Can't argue with data !

Send Offbeat and win Surprise Gifts
benedict@managementnext.com