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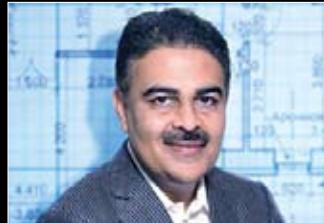
Stay Inspired

Rahul Gandhi on India Inc.

Praises skill to thrive in complexity but wants a better system for working with government



Making Learning Simple
Krishna Kumar of
Simplilearn



Gen. Ray on
Sushil Mantri



Vinita Bali on
Employer Brands



Mantras for Successful
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Benedict Paramanand

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Romi Malhotra

Contributing Editor
Sharmila Chand, Delhi

Editor - Sustainability
Sangeeta Mansur

Assistant Editor
Suchitra Jayaprabhu

Contributing Writer
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Illustrator
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Editorial Advisors
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Rishikesh T. Krishnan, Faculty, IIM, Bengaluru
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Jessie Paul, MD, Paul Writer

Advisor
Ranganath Iyengar,
Partner, Strategic Interventions

Ravi Shankar,
Media Consultant

Letters and Article Submission
benedict@managementnext.com

Advertising
www.managementnext.com/advertise
+91 80 4171 4161

Design
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Rahul Gandhi @ CII Complexity is India's Strength



Rahul Gandhi's speech at the CII Summit on 04 April, 2013 in Delhi was akin to that of a CEO-in-waiting addressing his executives. Unfortunately, the media focused on two imageries – 'one man on a horse cannot solve India's problems' and 'honeycomb' and ignored the other more relevant stuff in his session. ManagementNext looks at Mr. Gandhi's Q & A session to draw a few insights which have the potential of accelerating India's transformation.

"If you can thrive here and build here like all of you have done, I am not worried. You can do it on the moon."

Mr. Gandhi may not be much of an orator but he made it up with some interesting insights on the current political and systemic challenges facing India. His analysis was refreshing and were backed by action plans. The talk's larger purpose appeared to offer the Indian industry a new boost of self-confidence. He addressed three themes:

- a. Why the political system is clogged and a possible solution

- b. A sound structure for industry-government dialogue
- c. How India's 'complexity' could become its biggest asset

The emergence of third factor in Indian politics

To an observation on how dissonance in the centre-state relationship is hurting business, Mr. Gandhi said: "The legislative engine in India is basically run by 5,000 people – over 4,000 MLAs,

600-700 MPs. How many people do you think choose these legislators? In the whole country including the BJP, the Congress, and others would be between 200 and 300 'party 'leaders'. So how can you talk about a state- center relation, if only 200 people are defining Vidhan Sabhas and Lok Sabhas?" Mr. Gandhi said he is working on institutionalizing a system similar to the primaries in the United States – that elect leaders within the party who then go and seek mass mandate. This system, he believes, will give more voice to the new and powerful third structure.

He said current dysfunctionality is because the system is clogged. Senior leaders shouldn't be dealing with most of the issues they do now. He said a strong third force has emerged in the country – of village heads – and they are demanding decision-making powers. Because this is not happening, and senior leaders and MPs are expected to take small decisions, the system has got clogged. "If you open out the value chain most of your problems will be solved," he said. The clash of interest at all levels is imposing huge costs and "we call it

"So that is the strength of India, it is a completely different system than the American or Chinese. It is a decentralized system and its power is soft, unheard, unseen, but it's there. Embrace the complexity of this country."

corruption." You open this thing out, large numbers of your problems will be fixed far faraway by lower level people," he emphasized.

Industry voice in government

Mr. Gandhi felt the industry bodies in India are yet to build deep partnership with the government. "We have not built the systems that actually integrate voice. Tell me something, is there a systematic way for the voice of business to come into government. Not just I am a friend of Montek (Montek Singh Aluvalia, Chairman, Planning Commission) or I know Montek, but a systematic structural way for you to say, this is what we think, this is what should happen. Is there such a system? In the political machine, in the government machine, does such a system exist?"

Embrace complexity

"We are actually much more powerful than we think we are. The West looks at us and says give us simple answers. Boss, our environment is not simple; we cannot give you simple answers." As the world is getting complex, India is ready because we are very well trained to handle it. "This is what I see as our strength." Mr. Gandhi gave beehive as an analogy for India and not that of an elephant. He told business leaders: "What is happening is all of you are masters of complexity; you understand complexity and you are entering a century of complexity. Simple answers in a connected world will not work."

He said people on the developed markets such as US and Europe have been trained to keep things simple. In India nothing is simple. "I will tell you who will win, you will win!"

Mr. Gandhi said he was under no illusion that things have to improve a lot in India especially infrastructure. "A lot of the times we get worked up and say you know why this thing is not working. There are a lot of things that we need to fix, structural things, highways, things are slow. We need to speed them up. It's not good enough to say if its complex we can't do anything, no, you have to push the envelope. There is no better training than this, and if you can thrive here and build here like all of you

He said people on the developed markets such as US and Europe have been trained to keep things simple. In India nothing is simple. "I will tell you who will win, you will win!"

have done, I am not worried, you can do it on the moon."

"So that is the strength of India, it is a completely different system than the American or Chinese. It is a decentralized system and its power is soft, unheard, unseen, but it's there. Embrace the complexity of this country."

Mr. Gandhi offered to interact more with the industry to build partnership with business, which did receive some applause. If openness is the credo Mr. Gandhi is promoting, then future interactions should be more open, not stage-managed like this one.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLNGqk4SfUM>

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Market Myopia: Blame the SWOT!

by Verne Harnish

We've observed for decades how market-leading firms eventually fall behind startups because they just couldn't see the future, in what Harvard Business School Professor Clayton Christensen labeled the innovator's dilemma.

So why do leaders miss seeing sweeping global trends that are about to broadside them? I put a big part of the blame on the standard SWOT analysis used in strategic planning - the age old tool used to identify an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It's time to update this methodology.

"Inside/Industry Myopia"

Almost by definition, the SWOT process drives leaders to look inward at both their company and industry challenges, creating what I term "inside/industry myopia." While helping executives see the forest and the trees, it tends to lead them to forget that there's a world outside the forest. With this introspective

focus, the SWOT isn't the right tool to spot the trends from other industries and distant markets that CEOs need to factor into their plans.

I don't want to throw the SWOT away. It still has its place in the strategic planning process. It's an excellent tool for gathering ideas and input from middle managers who are more internally focused and closer to the day to day operations of an organization.

SWT Instead

For senior leaders I propose replacing the SWOT with the SWT - an updated approach that identifies inherent Strengths and Weaknesses within the firm while exploring broader external Trends beyond their own industry or geography.

The strategic planning process comprises two distinct activities: strategic thinking and execution planning. Strategic thinking is coming up with a few big-picture ideas. Execution planning is figuring out how to make them happen.

The traditional SWOT is a great tool for execution planning - the focus of middle management - resulting in a laundry list of accolades for successful endeavors and planned fixes. However, for the senior team, the SWOT can be a trap. It tends to pull executives down into operational issues, distracting them from the much bigger forces around the globe that can take the company by surprise if they are not prepared.

Inherent Strengths and Weaknesses

To do the right kind of strategic thinking, the senior leadership team needs to use the SWT. What's different about it? In the SWT, senior leaders do a deeper dive - and face the brutal facts of their reality, as Jim Collins puts it so well. They need to call out

inherent weaknesses that will likely never change -- so they can say no to situations that would require the organization to be strong in those areas.

For instance, I'm leading the five-year strategic planning process for Ben Franklin International School, which my children attend. It will always lack a large corporate or government base from which to draw funds and students, given its location in Barcelona rather than Madrid.

At the same time, leaders need to be crystal clear on the inherent strengths or core competencies of the organization that have been the source of its success. In the school's case, its fashionable location has continually driven enrollment from Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, helping it thrive during one of the worst economic periods in Spain's history.

An organization has the same strengths and weaknesses as an individual's, which tend to be baked in by age five. So the

process is less about changing them and more about playing the hand the firm was dealt.

Trends

Instead of sizing up a company's immediate opportunities and threats, as they typically do in a SWOT, the senior team should rise above this and look at the major trends - significant changes in technology, distribution, product innovation, markets, consumers, and society around the world that might shake up not only the business but the entire industry.

Forget about the competitor down the street. Is there a company on the other side of the globe that's going to put you out of business? Is there a new technology coming onto the startup scene that could change the way all companies must do business overnight?

Since some of the students at our school won't be in the workforce for more than a decade, we're looking at positioning the

school for the future. One question we're considering: How is robotics changing the very nature of work? And how will that affect our students?

Mining All Levels

To feed the strategic planning process properly, the key is using different techniques to mine ideas from all levels of the organization. From frontline employees, ask one simple question: "What should the organization start, stop, and keep doing?" From middle management, require a standard SWOT.

And demand that the senior team to go deeper and broader using the SWT. Knowing what trends are going to shake up your industry - and having a plan for dealing with them - will help you stay ahead of the competition - and sniff out new rivals who want to take over your turf while you can still do something about it.

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The Making of a Good Executive



Dr. Sanjay Mode, Senior Dean, Lovely Professional University, on best practices during the build up to a successful career and after

Recruiters are known to seek good management graduates for various positions. That explains the popularity of management programs in the last few decades.

The big question is whether an MBA degree or an equivalent academic program is a sure gate pass to a successful and bright career ahead? If you see across the sea of management graduates and postgraduates passing out from various Universities, the answer is an emphatic NO. Just getting a management degree is not enough; what matters is from where; what exposure you received to the industry and who mentored you.

Importance of good practices in school

The foundations of a promising career in management are laid very early during childhood. Admission to a reputed

business school is just the beginning. The first steps are taken during teenage years when basic skills in management such as effective communication, analytical and managerial aptitude are honed. Time and people management skills too are shaped early on.

Admission to a good MBA institute helps. Business school with good placements capability helps too. But good placements are a result and not the cause of all the good that is associated with a superior institution. What makes a good business school is its high class faculty and robust and modern infrastructure. Besides, it is worth mentioning that the campus culture of the business school has a lot of bearing on the quality of talent enhancement. What's also critical is a learning culture in the campus and exposure through conclaves, seminars and guest lectures.

Post MBA learning crucial

Once a student has graduated education does not end. Students have to remain in a learning mode – learning every day from daily experiences. It is equally essential to ensure that one does not lose touch with formal learning and keeps oneself updated with new developments. Participation in management programs, attending seminars/conclaves and enrolment to EDPs (Executive Development Programs) certainly give a management professional an edge.

Learning is a continuous process and the same applies to a manager. Make good use of time, exhibit an eagerness to learn new things and develop an appetite to improvise yourself. All this will ensure that you will be a front runner in any position – a junior executive or a CEO.

Making Learning Simple



In India, a skill certificate today from a credible agency is more valuable than a degree certificate from a university for a lot of people. It is also a passport to good jobs and global opportunities and promises a premium salary. Ease of learning, ease of paying and credibility of certificate issuers are crucial differentiators between a few players in the market. Simplilearn, a new entrant in this market, is disrupting the way online education is delivered.

Simplilearn won the TiE Lumis Excellence award in 2012. Currently, it is training 3,000 people and plans to take this number to 7,000 to 8,000 professionals a month by March 2014. **Krishna Kumar**, founder of Simplilearn, shares his experience and the future challenges in conversation with **Benedict Paramanand**, Editor of ManagementNext

Is your certification for professionals or is it like a finishing school?

Anyone who has two or three years of experience can use our service. We focus on project management, HR, sales, customer service, IT security, finance, quality, among others.

We are focusing on skills which are global in nature. Once you acquire them you can use it in global markets anywhere. You get the same credentials whether you do it in India or in the US.

The courses are flexible - either you can do online, 1-2-3 months subscription or you can do a mix of online and classroom. We call them blended courses. There are multiple options available depending upon your learning ability, speed or time available.

Who gives these certificates?

For different courses there are different bodies. They are both Indian and internationally well-known bodies.

What is your USP?

Is it convenience, price, credibility or all of them?

Before we came into picture three years back, professional training used to take place primarily in a classroom. There was no concept of courseware as such. It was based more on the trainer - I am a great trainer, so you attend my course - types. We brought in the concept of courseware and at the same time, it is in line with users' schedule.

Is good faculty a challenge?

We are changing this paradigm. If you look at our website nowhere we talk about faculty, yet, we train maximum number of participants in the country. We say - here's a course, you can look at our sample courseware, get free access to it for some time, try our tests to see how well prepared you are, get your doubts clarified whenever you want. In a way, we are saying that faculty is not important.

Interesting model! Do you use largely legacy content or live video-based classes?

We don't do video, we create courses for online delivery, we design the course ourselves so that it can be delivered online. Suppose some concept has to be taught, we create courseware on how to introduce the concept. We are focused on professional certification. Our focus is on people who have a job.

We are looking at porting these courses on mobile. We are looking at Android and IOS systems.

How expensive?

There isn't much of a difference in pricing, perhaps we could be cheaper by 10 percent compared with conventional course providers. We are not selling it on price, it's more of an integrated model, classroom is the starting point and then you complete the entire training online. There is a relationship angle to it; there is a commitment that we will support in all possible ways with the objective that the candidate clears the exam. We also offer 100 per cent money back guarantee. So far hardly anyone has asked for it.

What are the new areas that you will be focusing on?

We started cloud computing recently. It's popular now.

Certification challenges in India

Currently, we are affiliated with not-for-profit bodies. Most of them are US or UK based. So when they define their skill requirement it is more aligned to their geography and their local market needs.

In India we need the government to set up a body that can clearly identify competency standards needed for a particular job and

What's unique?

- **High quality, updated online courseware**
- **Ease of use**
- **Certification process simple**
- **Skills for global market**
- **Good spread of offering**
- **Courseware on mobile**
- **Money-back guarantee**

Yes. All the courses are owned by us, created by us, the certification body lays out the syllabus and they have a guide which talks about how the topic needs to be approached; the entire courseware is done by us. That takes time; it takes us six months to do a decent courseware.

When you say we are better what do you mean?

Education is a very subjective area. Look at the competitors, if they do training, the kind of courseware they talk about is a book, but there is no audio video content to support that, there are no online practice tests, there is no analysis. The moment users subscribe to us, their learning process starts. The moment they swipe their credit card, they get access to courseware. The courses are also designed keeping no prerequisites in mind.

What's your pricing strategy?

We are not cheap. We could be only 10 percent cheaper than our competitors. People are not so bothered about price; first they want to get convinced about the quality.

What does moving up the value chain mean for you?

To continuously improve our courseware. If our customers take even one course from us, we treat them as our partner for life. We will increase our course catalogue exponentially.

How deep is the learning here for your candidates? Is it just enough to do the work or is it also closer to knowledge management?

It's more practical as it is offered by professional bodies. It is more on learning the tricks of the trade, knowing the best practices and what to do in a particular scenario.

How do you get your courseware?

We have a framework for developing a course; we take raw content in a particular form so that we can work on it further. We rely on global sourcing for content. Creating a good course takes time; I think that's our differentiator. Most other courses just put out PPT and call it online course. We write the entire story board.



Social CRM – Unplugged and People Centric!

By Ranganath Iyengar

CRM had humble beginnings with activities like database marketing for tracking sales transactions to customers. CRM then evolved into serving needs of Marketing and Customer Service teams as it provided a range of data for marketers and customer service managers in the form of trends, patterns for product/service usage, consumer behavior etc.

The recent focus on Sales, Social media, Analytics and Big data has brought back a lot of focus on how CRM systems are being used more actively. Social CRM sits at the convergence of such technologies.

What is Social CRM?

As Social media started getting used more extensively, it was often difficult to assimilate data related to different tools and platforms and use it efficiently. Social CRM evolved to help manage social media interactions around products, customers and people as it provided a process oriented and efficient way to engage people. Social CRM combines collaborative/analytical tools, social networking/media and customer engagement/feedback software.

Why do we need it?

Since a lot of product / service AND customer experiences are managed online, the entire continuum of marketing activity resulting into sale and further into customer engagement across the life cycle of the product is effectively bridged by Social CRM.

Social CRM manages the data within the company ecosystem and the external environment seamlessly and empowers people within and customers outside. Most important it is extremely cost effective to engage with customer volumes in a scaled up business.

Social CRM players

As per Gartner, players like Jive, Lithium and Salesforce are viewed as leaders, Bazaarvoice and Oracle as Challengers, Attensity and Telligent as visionaries and niche players like Kana, Artisan, Questback, Demand media, Visible technologies, Get Satisfaction and Visible Technologies complete the picture.

Social CRM today is all about getting to know people, markets and companies; collaborating with them; engaging and monitoring social media; gathering social and usage analytics which give pointers to behaviors, enabling sales teams; feedback management; content management etc.

Contrarian thinking

To really leverage Social CRM, thinking contrarian is about using Social CRM in the office for employee engagement, creating policies that allow the company to be more transparent, creating the bandwidth to seriously engage with customers beyond the sale, creating channels for capturing voice of customer and using feedback from multiple channels into better products, services and experience.

In simple terms, brands today are more about trust and value and a lot of that comes from how customers are engaged and memorable experiences created.

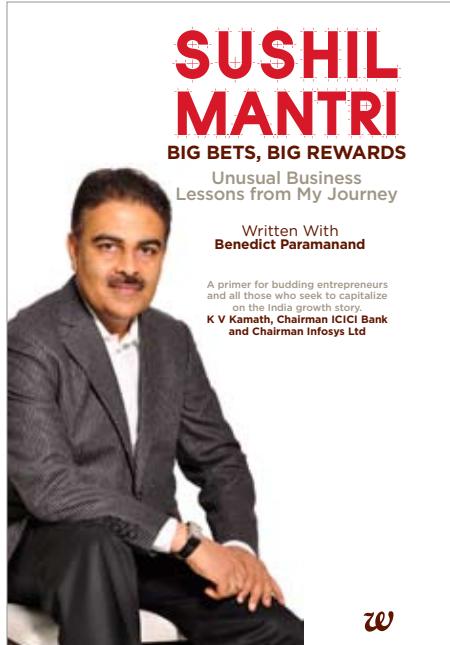
Way forward

Social media transactions are estimated at a couple of billion every 24 hours. Social media is often controversial and provocative – however, it has brought in a sense of responsibility and accountability to customers in general and people in particular.

Some of the interesting aspects to watch are how brands use these for advocacy, rewarding customers, giving marketing activities a facelift, promoting innovation, helping sales people connect with customers in new ways, better customer engagement and bringing down negative brand sentiments– in essence improve any activity that calls for people engagement – some of the companies who have benefitted are Hyundai India, Starbucks, MTS India, Vodafone India, Flipkart, Airtel, ICICI Bank, Argos, eBay etc.

Ranga is a Senior Industry Advisor, Entrepreneur, Business Coach, Mentor, Researcher and Sustainability expert with 26+ years of industry experience. He engages with mid to large corporates across select industry vertical.
ranga@strategicin.in.

Entrepreneur + Leader = Good Businessman



In my eyes, Sushil Mantri (one of the four promoters of Indus Trust and MD of Mantri Developers) is a man who combines leadership and entrepreneurship well. This is like two sides of the same coin which is generally a very rare attribute. Reading this very lucidly written book, 'Big Bets, Big Rewards,' two things stand out.

Sushil Mantri is endowed with three competencies that are essential for a new-age leader. In the Industrial Age thinking, people of ideas and people who executed these ideas were different. In the 21st Century, we have to be an idea man and an action man rolled into one. You have to have the ability to come with ideas and you got to have the power of execution to execute them yourself and I think that is where Sushil Mantri's strength lies.

The second characteristic is that he is a big picture man and he practices a directive style of leadership. My experience working with him is that he is very clear about his mission, his goals and more than that, he gives a lot of autonomy, and freedom to

achieve that goal. If there is a single factor responsible for Indus Bangalore being the number one school in the country and for the other two schools in Hyderabad and Pune doing so well in so short a span of time, it is because of the autonomy he gives us. And autonomy to people who are capable, who don't have to look over their shoulders and say what do we do now? It's a great trait of a 21st Century leader.

The third is his ability to operate through uncertainty and chaos. I think in real estate, it's all about the ability to operate through ambiguity, uncertainty and chaos. This is where I find Mr. Mantri displaying these tremendous competencies. He is very comfortable with ambiguity; he thrives in chaos; his ability to turn disadvantage into advantage, in other words, looking for opportunity when things go wrong.

Sushil Mantri's journey from 20,000 dollars to 1 billion dollars in just about 14 years is a story of a man who has walked down the road armed with nothing but his vision. Against impossible odds it's a story of risk taking, of vision, of creativity, of courage and I think the narrative which this book is all about is an inspiration for all of us.

I would strongly recommend this book. I have learnt a lot personally from this book, very simple ideas, very practical ideas about business and you don't have to be a businessman to be able to understand and implement his ideas. There are a lot of lessons for business and there are a lot of lessons for leadership, both are two sides of the same coin. You can't have successful business; you can't have ethical business unless you are a great leader and a smart entrepreneur.

Excerpts from Gen. Ray's talk at the launch of SUSHIL MANTRI - Big Bets, Big Rewards



Lt. General Arjun Ray (retired) is any hardcore army man with a big heart. In his last assignment, he commanded the newly raised 14 Corps in Ladakh. His success in forestalling insurgency in the region by winning over alienated communities into the nation's mainstream has been nationally and internationally acclaimed.

In recognition of his services in nation-building, he was awarded the Param Vashist Seva Medal, the highest award in the armed forces for distinguished service. His success story in change leadership has been selected as a case study for business and management schools in India.

As CEO of the Indus Trust, he provides the vision and strategic direction to Indus International School in Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune.

His book 'Peace is Everybody's Business – Strategy for Conflict Prevention (Sage 2012) has been well received.

Tata Chemicals' Recipe for Creating Sustainable Value

Business innovation that has significant social impact and is profitable at the same time is a dream blend very few companies are able to achieve. There are some exceptional companies that even do it repeatedly as if it is a habit. Tata Chemicals is one of them.

The list is long. It began with iodized salt to address iodine deficiency. It recently introduced fortified iron in Tata Salt to reduce anaemia. Tata Chemicals also invented a nano-technology-driven water purifier, an affordable and EPA-certified safe drinking water. The once dry, barren, and poverty stricken Mithapur village in Gujarat where the company started its operations, is now a vibrant ecosystem with the company's strategic business interventions.

Dr. Aarti Sharma caught up with **Dr. Arup Basu**, president of Tata Chemicals' new businesses and innovation centre, to further understand how the company's innovation culture has been built around social issues. Dr. Basu said Tata Chemicals' sustainability consciousness towards communities has led to its dynamic innovation culture.

Today, Tata Chemicals is the world's second largest producer of soda ash with manufacturing facilities in Asia, Europe, North America and Africa, with a turnover of Rs 13,800 crores.

Please tell us about the Tata Chemicals' Innovation Centre

The Innovation Centre was set up during the 2005-2006 period acknowledging that the future would require us to focus on sustainability, and use resources in a calibrated manner. We have to address resource scarcity as more and more people move up the prosperity curve. So, we set up the innovation centre based on themes of sustainability and green chemistry. We recognized business potential in two domains -first on the natural resources side, it was nanotechnology that lies at

the intersection of physics and chemistry. The second, biotechnology, is at the intersection of chemistry and biology.

How is nanotechnology adding value to your sustainability theme?

We view nanotechnology as a platform to magnify and sometimes even modify product attributes. We want to use it to improve product attributes such that one can do more with less. For example, how can we use smaller sized Titanium Dioxide or Zinc Oxide particles in industrial formulations such that the material



Dr. Arup Basu

President of Tata Chemicals' new business and innovation centre

requirement is far lower and yet the corresponding properties are far superior? This doing more with less stems from the reality that natural resources are scarce, not abundant.

Are concerns around resource constraints driving your sustainable business innovation model?

Well, our choices are driven by this view. When you look at Mithapur, we have created a chemical complex which does not create stress on fresh water which is scarce there. We don't use ground water.

TATA
I-SHAKTI™
UNPOLISHED DAL



We want our community to use fresh water to meet their needs rather than for our industrial use. We have introduced rainwater harvesting in the community. And to meet our business needs, we take sea water, reuse and recycle it, and reduce its usage. That way, we earn the right to co-exist.

We don't chase reputation. We chase what we believe is the right and proper thing to do. If we have a good reputation, that's a happy by-product.

When did sustainability consciousness arise within Tata Chemicals?

It existed since inception. We intuitively understand sustainability. We have a cement plant whose raw material is a solid waste of our soda ash process. We are not a cement company, but we run the cement plant. We take a holistic, life cycle view of operations and products, and work towards zero waste. Our first instinct is to evaluate potential of any by-product as a raw material for another product.

But why invest corporate resources on a waste? Why diversify in an area which is not the core focus of your business?

Many people looked at our strategy and said you should not be in cement when you are a chemical company. After all, we are known as Tata Chemicals! It's perfectly fair thinking from a blinkered strategy perspective. However, on adopting a sustainability lens, a different view emerges. For us, the cement plant is a vehicle to run a cleaner ship and so it matters.

We want our community to use fresh water to meet their needs rather than for our industrial use. We have introduced rainwater harvesting in the community.

Is Tata Chemicals investing in such practices to attain higher reputation?

We don't chase reputation. We chase what we believe is the right and proper thing to do. If we have a good reputation, that's a happy by-product. For us, it is about value. What do we stand for? When a consumer is buying something from us, it's important that the consumer knows what we stand for. So, if you will take our salt, you will have no issue with our Iodine content. Our product value proposition is linked to our company value proposition and what we stand for. This relationship has to endure for any business to be sustainable.



Dr. Aarti Sharma is an international corporate sustainability and sustainable development strategist. She is the founder of Sustainable Value Alliance sustainablevaluealliance.org aarti@sustainablevaluealliance.org

Product Thinking

Product Brands and Employer Brands are Alike



Vinita Bali, MD, Britannia Industries

Excerpts from her keynote at Randstad Award Ceremony

My background is in marketing and so I always think in terms of brands and markets and target audience. In a way there is very little difference between product brands and employer brand. There's also a very big point of contrast. As the employer brand our target audience, which is our employees, actually experiences us every day and experiences us repeatedly. They experience us in many multi-faceted ways. All of us represent some part of the employer brand.

One of the things that we say in Britannia is, at the end of the day people are responsible for people, HR is not responsible for people.

I think if we internalize that as managers,

as people interacting with our peers, managers, as people in whom other people in the organization look up to, what becomes absolutely clear is that the employer brand is nothing but the sum total of experiences all of us have about our company each day. When those experiences add up to something that is worthwhile, something which is enriching, and when those experiences culminate in each one of us in building our own brand equity, we give out our best. At the end of the day the company performance is nothing but the sum total of the performance of people who work in that company.

Each of us brings certain energy to what we do, that energy can be positive,

infectious, in a very favorable manner or that energy can be tedious and tiring in another manner. I do believe that in survey after survey when you look at great brands, when you look at great individuals and great companies there is one thing that distinguishes them and that is the pursuit of excellence in what they choose to do. And if you have employees buy into that whole concept, whole philosophy that entire belief of excellence this simply means that I will do better than what my peer group is doing every day. I am going to bring to my work that positive energy that distinguishes me, differentiates me, and makes me distinctive amongst other options that people have to choose from.

Employee democracy

I do believe that we live in a way in a consumer democracy and certainly in an employee democracy when it comes to employer brands. So what do I mean by that? In a democracy each one of us can choose to be where you want to be. None of us is forced to be in a position where we don't want to be. And products are successful because they have consumers who buy them every time they want to experience that category and they buy them in preference to any other alternatives that are available. Equally employer brands are successful when consumers choose to be part of your company as compared with other alternatives. And as we know that employer brands are not necessarily those companies that play the balance.

There are some people who are motivated primarily by money and they want to make money very fast and each of us as employers have to determine whether those are the types of people we want in our company or do we want to create an environment that attracts good, smart people, that attracts people who have a vested interest in creating success in the company in which they work but also that has people who work with the heart. That has people

who bring to their place of work not just their mind or intellect but also their compassion, their understanding, their heart. Their belief that each one of us individually cannot do what all of us can do together.

All of us have responsibility because many people in our companies are looking to us for inspiration, motivation. I think it is our responsibility to demonstrate through our behavior consistently the values of the employer brand we represent.

Employees touch everything a company touches. If you are a happy employee no matter who you are, a receptionist or the CEO, a marketing head, supply chain head it does not matter – you are representing the values and behaviors of the employer brand. Those then get communicated very loudly and clearly not just to other employees but also to all the stakeholders, vendors, suppliers and competitors.

In times of stress...

I don't know of any company that at

all periods of time is successful. Any successful company has seen an equally aggressive competitor, has seen hard times, has seen the rough with the smooth but what distinguishes successful companies is that at times of stress the values of the company are not sacrificed, behaviors of leadership are not sacrificed and the positivity and the positive energy that is required to turn a company around is never sacrificed.

None of us can guarantee any of our employees a smooth ride. But I think all of us can guarantee fairness, equity that we bring to the company, values that we live by and most important the character of the employer brand we want to create.

At the end of the day, people are attracted to people of character, authenticity, people who are genuine, who in the midst of uncertainty, tough economic environments that they are going through have belief in people.

Companies are successful because they

have people who believe in the purpose of the company, who bring their best to work every day, create an environment where people do their best work. Of course we are dealing with a situation where people have different demands, some of us want to be in an organization where we want to learn, grow and contribute. Others want to come in make as much money as they can as quickly as possible and go out and do something else. There is no value judgment. The important thing is to recognize as the employer what kind of employee that you want to attract.

At the end of the day, a brand is nothing but a sum total of images, but most of all its experiences that are communicated by that brand whether that brand is a company, product, service, government, every entity that we deal with is a brand and every brand has a reputation, history and a future that it is going to create. It's important to understand the brand you represent, the brand all of us represent and the brand you want to create.

Product Manager vs. Entrepreneur



Prof. Rahul Abhyankar, director at ICPM Programs at the Institute of Product Leadership, offers insights to this year's graduating class on the theme 'Product Management - Is it more of a mindset than a skill set?'

Product Management has many definitions but most experts will agree that it's essentially the art and science of delivering delightful solutions to real market problems and doing it rather predictably.

A product manager (PM) is supposed to get customer insights; validate a proposed solution; develop a business/monetization model; develop specifications/requirements for teams to build a delighting solution and help launch and figure out the go-to-market strategy.

So, how is PM different from an entrepreneur? Here is my take on how PMs need slightly different skills than start-up entrepreneurs.

Leadership Skills: Conflict management, stakeholder management, influence building. PMs have to influence multiple stakeholders for decision making and leadership skills are more critical.

Internal vs. External: PMs have to

spend more time internal to the company compared to an entrepreneur who might be completely customer/market focused. Funded start-ups have boards to answer to but time investments are lower.

Plumber vs. Oil Digger: As a PM you have potentially lots of resources that one needs to be aware of and know how to leverage (existing customers, brand, sales force, budgets etc.). So the key thing here is to 'connect' the right pipes in the organization so oil falls in your bucket as opposed to dig for oil (find early adopters, investors etc.)

Risk Appetite: Emotionally a PM might be less attached to the business as personal wealth is not at stake (reputation is on the line though!). A good PM should have the right passion for the product and a good entrepreneur knows when to quit and pivot based on market feedback.

While there are differences in skill sets, the end goal for both seems to be aligned on delivering value.

Team Leaders' Aide

By Ravi Venkatesam, MD, OnTrac



One of the biggest challenges in the BPO industry is the performance of team leaders (also known as supervisors). Every BPO company employs team leaders with the expectation that they perform certain managerial activities. But this is easier said than done because of two reasons.

- a. Team leaders have numerous tasks that they need to get done. Therefore, it is imperative that they stay organized. However, team leaders find it very challenging to stay organized because of a lack of experience in handling multiple tasks. Also, they are usually not provided with sufficient tools for this purpose.
- b. Managers and process heads do not have visibility into the team leaders' activities. Without any data relating to their activities, it is very difficult for managers to help team leaders get their jobs done. Considering the above challenges, we created Starworks.

Our company, OnTrac, is a leading global provider of consulting services, training and software in the area of BPO operations management for mission critical roles in the BPO industry. We have worked with over 100 companies in 8 countries such as China, Canada, Philippines, Malaysia,

Sri Lanka, etc. Through our certification programs, we have upskilled over 50,000 team leaders.

Using our insights and expertise in the industry, we have created Starworks, which is an innovative Supervisor Management Software that helps BPO team leaders stay organized in their work. It helps them plan and track their managerial activities through a visual dashboard, so that they are able to get all their tasks done on time.

Starworks also helps operations leaders track and monitor their team leaders'

activities on a daily basis. It provides them with objective performance information to conduct deep and meaningful operations reviews with their team leaders. It captures information about team leaders' critical operational activities, quantifies them, and makes them visible to all managers, through a visual dashboard. This means operations leaders can proactively prevent performance problems by detecting areas where team leaders need help.

With a combination of these functionalities, Starworks provides BPO companies with powerful tools to manage operations by ensuring that their team leaders are doing the right things at the right time.

Starworks can work for other fields as well. However, it has been contextualized to the BPO industry. In the future we could launch other versions for other industries.

Starworks can work for other fields as well. However, it has been contextualized to the BPO industry. In the future we could launch other versions for other industries

We offer a SaaS model. We charge based on the number of team leaders using the software. Patenting of software products, especially in the SaaS environment where changes can be made almost on a daily basis, is very challenging. At present, one can only have a copyright on products, but when changes are made frequently, it becomes difficult to maintain the copyright. Therefore, we have decided to keep the software proprietary for the present time.

What Pournami Can Do to You

by Sadguru

On a Pournami some 2500 years ago, something very tremendous happened after which the world has never remained the same. After almost eight years of intense meditation, Gautama Siddhartha had become very weak. His body was destroyed almost to a point of death. At this time, he came to the river Niranjana, which was actually just a large stream with knee-high water flowing swiftly. He tried to cross the river, but halfway across, he was so weak that he could not take one more step. But he was not the kind to give up so he just held on to a dead branch that was there and just stood.

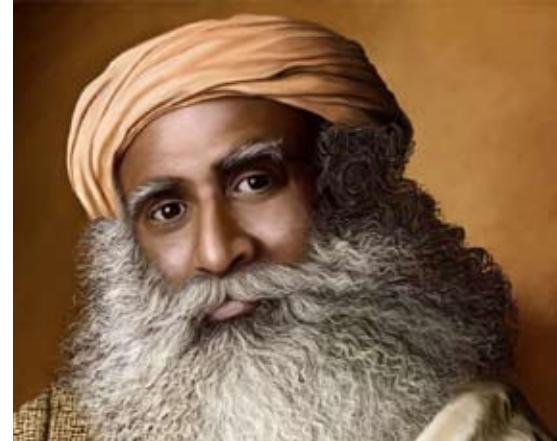
It is said that he stood for many hours. We do not know whether he actually stood for many hours or a few moments which seemed like hours in that state of weakness. But at that moment, he realized that what he was seeking was after all within himself, so why this entire struggle? "All that is needed is absolute willingness, and it is right here. Why am I searching around the world?" When he realized this, he had that little extra ounce of energy to take that step, walk across the river and sit down under the now famous Bodhi tree. He sat down with the determination that, "Unless the ultimate happens to me, I will not move. Either I will get up as an Enlightened Being or I will die in this posture." And in a moment he was there, because that is all it takes. All it takes is that it should become the only priority. Then it is just one moment.

Gautama has left an unchangeable impression on the world. In his own silent way, he changed the world forever. He brought about a change in the world on the spiritual path. He brought about a different quality in the whole aspect of man's aspiration to seek something higher. That man's flowering on that full moon day 2500 years ago has made a significant change for every spiritual seeker all over the world, whoever they are. A person who grows on the spiritual path cannot ignore Gautama.

See more of you

Pournami is significant because there is a certain aesthetic quality about it. Anything that you look at, if it is beautiful, your receptivity to that object suddenly becomes a little more, isn't it? Anything that you consider as ugly, the moment you look at it, your receptivity to that just comes down. So one thing is it has a certain aesthetic quality about it, which definitely improves your receptivity.

Another thing is, the planet has moved into a certain position with the moon. The vibration and the feel of the moon are very different when it is full than when it is in other states. And the pull is also different. The pull of the moon is working upon the surface of the planet which is exposed to the moon. When there is a natural pull like this, because your spine is vertical, there is a tendency for the



energy to go into a natural upsurge of upward movement. Within you, the blood and the prana – the fundamental life energies, flow in a different way because the vibrations have changed. So just as the tides rise more on that night because the gravitational pull of the moon is working on the water more than on other nights, your blood is also being pulled and the circulation of blood increases to your brain.

When this upward movement happens, whatever is your quality can get enhanced. You may have heard that people who are a little off their mental balance will become more imbalanced on those days because the upsurge in energy enhances whatever is your quality. If you are little imbalanced, it will make you more imbalanced. It is also doing the same to the other qualities in you, but most people may not be sensitive enough to notice it. If you are meditative, it makes you more meditative. If you are in love, it heightens it more. If you are in fear, it makes it more. Whatever is your quality, it enhances that.

So people on the spiritual path, if they are on the meditative path especially, it is more conducive to meditate on those nights because without an upsurge of energy, without a heightened sense of energy, there is no question of awareness. What you call as awareness will come naturally to you when you have a heightened sense of energy in your system. So make use of that night, of that natural phenomenon which is occurring. On this day it is like you have a free ride of energy and awareness.

Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic and visionary, and a prominent spiritual leader. An author, poet, and internationally-renowned speaker, Sadhguru's wit and piercing logic provoke and widen our perception of life. www.ishafoundation.org



Mantras for Successful Expat Career



Stefano Pelle is a rare expat executive with rich experience across continents. He is an avid student of Economics, Political Science and Management with degrees from Insead and London School of Economics. He teaches International Business in Rome and has authored two books – *Understanding Emerging Markets: BRIC by Brick* and his recent book *When not in Rome don't do as the Romans do*. Pelle chats with ManagementNext on various things that interest expats

What's your motivation for writing the book When Not in Rome

My motivation to write is to share my experience with others. I like the idea that what I learn through my work and travel for many years and to several countries could be useful to somebody else. This book is an intercultural trip across almost two decades and dozens of countries. The message I try to leave to the reader is that of the immense learning one can have while working in many countries, more so if these are emerging and fast changing ones.

Five suggestions for budding Indian expatriates?

Be open minded, curious, willing to

experiment, "culturally intelligent" and never take anything for granted.

Three suggestions to make expats enjoy their job...

The great thing about the expatriate life is the chance to learning continuously from the environment around you. However, moving around often may, in the long term, create the need of going back to one's origins or at least decide when and where the final settling down will happen. To those who start feeling the weight of such an experience I would suggest they stay only till they feel that they are still enjoying the lifestyle and the opportunities. Ways to mitigate such unusual living are more frequent returns to the country of origin;

receiving frequent visits from close friends from the home country and sharing with them the peculiarities of the place where one lives and works.

It helps to decide on the final settling down or "retirement" destination and building or buying of a house in such place. However, if the wish to end the expatriate life is strong, it may become counterproductive to remain in such status. Then, it becomes necessary to agree with the employer or at least state for oneself a definite date when one would eventually go back to his home country. Such a return may even be a phased one, when for instance the family moves back progressively and is followed by the main earner only at a later stage.

Stay only till you feel that you are still enjoying the lifestyle and the opportunities

How would you describe a typical Indian expat – the funny side if possible?

Somebody with a box of curry and masalas always in his suitcase! We know that Indians are very particular about food and cannot do without the same. Whenever I used to visit Italy with Indian colleagues for more than two days they would go to have dinner at least once in an Indian restaurant! Jokes apart, Indian expats are usually very versatile, adaptable and capable of networking (particularly with their own communities).

You have successfully meshed between executive and teaching roles, what's the secret?

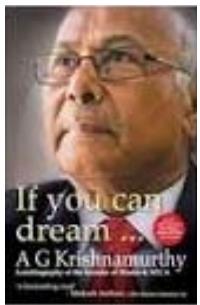
I love my job but I also love to learn and share. The interaction with the academic world enriches me and provides a good break from the business world. Dealing with students forces me to be up to date and ready to be questioned without much hesitation or reservation. I find that mixing business with academics is a win-win for my work as well as for the students, since very often traditional academic professors are too much of theory and much less of practical reality.

Book Shelf

If You can Dream: Autobiography of the Founder of Mudra and MICA

By A. G. Krishnamurthy

Tata McGraw-Hill Education, 2013



Veteran ad man A G Krishnamurthys life story reads like a fairy tale come true!

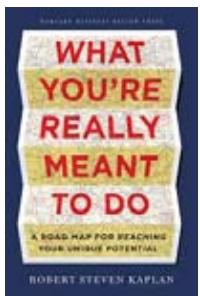
Colorfully detailed and peppered with surprising twists and turns, the narrative sweeps across three wide canvases. On the surface, this can be just another story of an ordinary small town boy who made it big despite the odds. It is the authors gentle humour and the almost self-deprecating story-telling style that make all the difference.

A fascinating life journey, the read becomes all the more engrossing because AGK (as he is fondly known) is the creator of two of the countrys most respected advertising institutions Mudra and MICA and he makes these monumental feats seem so achievable by anybody anywhere. Passionately arguing that dreams are achievable, he takes the reader by the hand as he presents his story, not shying away from listing the consequences, good and bad, of every decision made and every road not taken.

What you're really meant to do: A Road Map for Reaching Your Unique Potential

By Robert Steven Kaplan

Harvard Business Review Press, April, 2013



Building a fulfilling life and career can be a daunting challenge. It takes courage and hard work. Too often, we charge down a path leading to "success" as defined by those around us—and ultimately, are left feeling dissatisfied.

Each of us is unique and brings distinctive skills and qualities to any situation. So why is it that most of us fail to spend sufficient time learning to understand ourselves and creating our own definition of success? The truth is, it can seem so natural and so much easier to just do what everyone else is doing—for now—leaving it for later to develop our best selves and figure out our own unique path. Is there a road map that will enable you to defy conventional wisdom, resist peer pressure, and carve out a path that fits your unique skills and passions?

Drawing on his years of experience, Kaplan proposes an integrated plan for identifying and achieving your goals. He outlines specific steps and exercises to help you understand yourself more deeply, take control of your career, and build your capabilities in a way that fits your passions and aspirations.

Give and Take: A Revolutionary Approach to Success

By Adam M. Grant

Viking Adult, April 2013



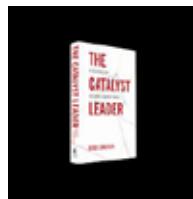
For generations, we have focused on the individual drivers of success: passion, hard work, talent, and luck. But today, success is increasingly dependent on how we interact with others. It turns out that at work, most people operate as either takers, matchers, or givers. Whereas takers strive to get as much as possible from others and matchers aim to trade evenly, givers are the rare breed of people who contribute to others without expecting anything in return.

Using his own pioneering research as Wharton's youngest tenured professor, Grant shows that these styles have a surprising impact on success. Although some givers get exploited and burn out, the rest achieve extraordinary results across a wide range of industries. Combining cutting-edge evidence with captivating stories, this landmark book shows how one of America's best networkers developed his connections, why the creative genius behind one of the most popular shows in television history toiled for years in anonymity, how a basketball executive responsible for multiple draft busts transformed his franchise into a winner, and how we could have anticipated Enron's demise four years before the company collapsed-without ever looking at a single number.

The Catalyst Leader: 8 Essentials for Becoming a Change Maker [Hardcover]

By Brad Lomenick

Thomas Nelson, April, 2013



It's time for a new generation of leaders to rise up and take charge. The Catalyst Leader is the ultimate guide to get there. After thirteen years of gathering, influencing, and inspiring hundreds of thousands of young leaders through cutting-edge experiential events, conferences, and resources, Brad Lomenick understands leadership and the next generation.

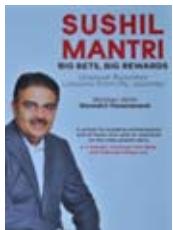
The Catalyst Leader provides practical help for all leaders at any stage of their leadership journey, ultimately defining what it means to be a Catalyst in this generation, and inspiring us all to be true change makers wherever we lead. The question isn't how do we lead now; its how do we lead well. This is the new generation of leaders' handbook for influence. Practical. Inspiring. Timely. Defining. Get ready for your own leadership to be taken to a new level.

Book Shelf

Sushil Mantri : Big Bets Big Reward - Unusual Business Lessons from my journey

by Sushil Mantri

Westland, March 2013



Circa 1999. A man, a dream. And not much else...

Circa 2006. Mantri Developers is the cynosure of all eyes after Morgan Stanley's 300 crore investment in the firm and billion dollar valuation.

Circa 2012. Mantri Developers is numbered among India's top real estate firms famous for its delivery, quality of work and ethics in a market where real estate firms are viewed with much suspicion. What is the Mantri story? How does a man from Pune start from scratch in Bangalore and build a billion-dollar firm braving customer cynicism, government hostility and financial ups and downs? Find out about all this and more

Follow Every Rainbow – The inspiring stories of 25 entrepreneurs

by Rashmi Bansal

Westland, March 2013



Meena Bindra did it.

Jasu Shilpi did it.

Nina Lekhi did it

Follow Every Rainbow is the story of twenty-five enterprising women who took up a challenge. They raised a family as well as a company, with love, laughter and patience. Managing multiple equations - never giving in or giving up. These stories say one thing, loud and clear. Women think and act differently than men, but they can be just as successful. What 'success' means, is something only you can decide.

Celebration – spontaneous or planned – brings joy, fun and positivity to the workplace and has the potential to dramatically affect the bottom-line.

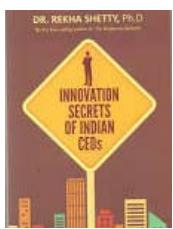
This practical handbook will tell you how celebrations when strategically managed can make your organization a fun place to work in and also result in greater productivity.

So whether you are a HR Manager, business owner or a business leader, soon you will see that a healthy dose of celebration will raise your organization – along with yourself – to higher levels of engagement, productivity, well-being and success... one celebration at a time!!

Innovation secrets of Indian CEOs

By Rekha Shetty

Westland, March 2013

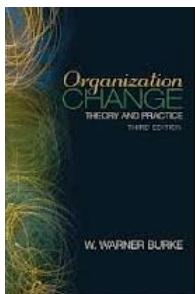


Indian CEOs have their own brand of innovation. A people oriented, low cost innovation on the run. This kind of innovation is born out of thrift and a desire to squeeze the last ounce of value from limited resources. It is jugaad in spirit and respectful of all forms of potential wealth. This book gives you a glimpse into this unique form of Innovation.

Organization Change: Theory and Practice (Foundations for Organizational Science series),

By W. Warner Burke

SAGE Publications, 2013

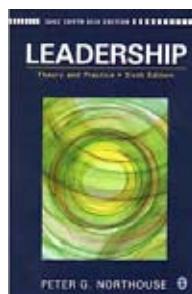


The Third Edition of this bestselling text continues to make clear how effective organization change is grounded in sound knowledge about human behaviour in the workplace. Author W. Warner Burke reviews various models and cases to demonstrate how to diagnose change issues in organizations. Greater emphasis is placed on planned, revolutionary change over the gradual, evolutionary change typically experienced by organizations. The book combines and integrates theory and research with application for insight into all aspects of organization

Leadership: Theory and Practice

By Peter G. Northouse

Sage Publications, 2013



A dopted at more than 1,000 colleges and universities worldwide, the market-leading text owes its success to the unique way in which it combines an academically robust account of the major theories and models of leadership with an accessible style and practical exercises that help students apply what they learn. Each chapter of Peter Northouse's Leadership: Theory and Practice follows a consistent format, allowing students to contrast the various theories, and three case studies in each chapter provide practical examples of each theory or trait discussed. The Sixth Edition adds an important new chapter on Servant Leadership.



Film and theater actor **Boman Irani** was introduced to cinema at a very young age; when he was only 12, his mother used to insist that he go and watch the same movie 20 or 30 times and learn from it. But he took a meandering path to becoming an actor. His first job was working as a waiter. He then sold burritos from the family store, and later became a photographer. Getting into acting was almost an accident.

Today, with more than 60 films under his belt including hits such as *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* and *3 Idiots*, Irani has also forayed into television with an interview-based serial titled "*The Achievers Club*." The problem with Indian cinema, he notes in this interview with Wharton operations and information management professor **Kartik Hosanagar**, is that there are no good scripts. Irani was a participant at the recent Wharton India Economic Forum (WIEF) held in Philadelphia.

An edited transcript of the conversation follows.

Film Personality Boman Irani: 'An Actor Has to Feel Unfulfilled'

You joined films a little late in your career. Can you tell us a little bit about how you got into acting?

I've always been interested in cinema. I was a student of cinema even when I was a 12-year-old in Bombay. We had a theater called Alexander Cinema and my mom used to actually encourage me to go and watch a film almost every day. If I watched the film, the next day she would ask me what I was doing. "I'm just playing." So she would tell me to go and watch the movie across the street. "But I watched it yesterday," I would say. She would ask me the name of the film. "Pyaasa," I replied. Then she would tell me to watch it again and this time pay attention to the lyrics. And she would send me again and tell me to pay attention to the cinematography and the lighting. I never really understood why mom would encourage a person -- her son -- to watch so many movies. I used to watch movies 30 or 40 times, movies that were way beyond my age group. I wasn't watching Disney movies.

I was probably dyslexic when I was a kid. In those days, we didn't have a name for that kind of deficiency. We were known as the duffers of the class. That was the terminology and I was not really academically inclined. When I [graduated from] school, opportunities were not great for someone like me. So I took up a waiter's course and was a waiter for a couple of years at the Taj Mahal hotel in Bombay. Then my mom had an accident (I had never had a dad.) We had this little shop, which I took over. It used to make and sell burrito chips. That wafer shop was in the heart of the cinema district. So every night, after I closed the shop, I would go and watch a movie. We had about 30 cinemas around us; half of them have shut down today.

After 12 years of sitting in the shop, I got married. I had responsibilities. The money that came from the shop ran the family. I needed to do something different and I

picked up photography. I bought myself a camera. I started doing very basic photography -- wedding photography, going to the airport and shooting groups that were going away. I made Rs. 20-Rs. 30 (40 U.S. cents to 50 U.S. cents) a picture. By the time I was 32, I had started doing professional photography.

Then [dance choreographer and Hindi film personality] Shiamak Davar walked into my studio and said: "You know, you're an actor." I said: "How do you figure that?" "Because I'm telling you," he replied. He took me to meet [theater personality and ad filmmaker] Alyque Padamsee, who auditioned me for a musical. Davar insisted that I act in that play. I was paid Rs. 200 (around US\$3.50) a night. We only did 10 shows. Five months of rehearsal and that was it. But I got great reviews....

Then I got another offer for a play. We'd booked three shows for it. It was an experimental play -- two men on a park bench having a conversation. It ran for 10 years in the big theaters. It became a huge hit and people started talking about me as an actor. I had never bargained to be an actor. Suddenly, I realized that I was learning acting on the job. I read a lot of books; I observed. I used to do a lot of exercises on my own, developed by myself, take notes all the time. I was naïve. Because I was naive, I had no ego about learning. Long answer, sorry.

No, I appreciate that. It set up the context really well. You have acted in close to 60 films by now. Today, as an actor, what kind of opportunity excites you? Is it working with a certain kind of actor? Is it working with a certain kind of director? Is it a certain kind of screenplay?

I have this theory about screenplays. I think that you can give a great performance in a mediocre movie and it will demote itself to an ordinary performance because the screenplay isn't great and there's

no resonance. But if you do a good performance in a great film, it promotes itself to a great performance. So I think it's very important to pick scripts that are relevant.

Why should every movie be about social change? Why can't we have movies that touch your heart and talk about human nature -- relationships? Where's the social change involved in all that? I want to be challenged as an actor but only in good scripts. Otherwise, I am very happy to lend myself to an entertainer. I am very happy doing that also, but [there is] always one for the people and one for the soul. That's my mantra at this point of time. Like all actors, I think no actor can really operate or do better if he's not frustrated as an actor. He should feel unfulfilled at all times, even if he's got six Academy Awards. He should feel unfulfilled because it is only when you are angry with yourself that you need to go out there and say, "I have a lot more to give you and to myself and I'm not doing enough." It is not about opportunity; opportunities come. But Indian cinema is suffering from mediocrity today. We do not have scripts that can make a mark on the international stage.

How do we fix that?

I wish there was a quick fix....

What is the underlying issue? Is it that good scripts are not being green-lit? Is it that good scripts are not being written?

I think good scripts are not being written. There were some very important films that were made last year. It was like a good French wine year for cinema. But not one of those films could hold its own internationally. Sometimes good scripts need not be [successful]. But if there is a plethora of great scripts, at least a few will get green-lit. If there is just one great script hanging around somewhere, nobody's even going to know. There has to be a plethora of great scripts coming from every angle because, from that, five or seven good films will come out in that year. But we don't have great scripts.

Do you think the industry is not nurturing writers?

Yes. But, of late, there have been attempts. We are moving in the right direction and certain people have been working on it with great sincerity. But, otherwise, the scripts

that are being green-lit are about business.

You have a great script, come to me. But those great scripts aren't really internationally great. I'm not saying they should be winning Oscars. But they should receive respect and credibility across the board -- across the world -- in festivals. Oscars are not the ultimate thing. We believe that only because we have grown up on Hollywood films. I think we can do well internationally. We have the talent. We might not have the education.

Let me switch gears for a little bit and talk about your recent participation in the TV side of media. You've had your own show. Can you tell us a little bit about how TV as a medium differs from cinema? What are some interesting challenges you face there? What were some of the factors that motivated you to move in that direction?

I think when you talk about TV, there are two types of television. One is the soap. Let's not talk about news because it's not about entertainment, even though news is very entertaining these days. The other is the reality show. The soap to my mind is a little regressive; the reality show is sensational. I had been offered a few reality shows and I have no problem as long as they entertain people the right way.

This opportunity -- "The Achievers Club" -- came along and I ... asked the studio head: "What is the idea behind this program?" She put it in a nutshell and said something that made me agree to it immediately: "It should be like a handbook for young entrepreneurs to become achievers." The moment she said that, I said, "OK, done. Let's do this. We won't get great ratings. We won't get great advertising. But what we will have is respectability. If there is a generation of youngsters watching and one line that can influence a young mind, I think victory is ours." [I asked Infosys chairman emeritus N.R. Narayana Murthy]: "You're a rich man. What's your definition of money?" He said: "The power of money is the power to give it away."

I remember that.

That shook me completely. I said it changes a young man's perspective. I got some wonderful reactions for that.

[UTV Group founder and chairman Ronnie

Screwvala's] crew said on the show that to fund your first project may be easier than funding your second project and he gave reasons. [Screwvala] was the first cable operator in India; look where he is today.

I think it's important that we highlight achievers, not famous people. Successful achievers need not be famous and all famous people need not be successful. I feel that everybody wants to become famous at some point. The people who came on the show didn't have to be entrepreneurs. But their lives had to have an impact on the youth of India. I would be [like] a little schoolboy sitting and listening to these people [talking about] what they're doing and their philanthropic work. It makes you feel small and that's a good feeling. One should feel small, only then can one grow. I used to happily feel small and dwarfed by all these wonderful people.

Do you have an interest in the business side of cinema?

Baby steps. I am a creative person, so I write and direct. My interest in the business side is not necessarily to make money. It is to protect the creative person in me. I will not let an entrepreneur twist my arm to make the kind of cinema that will make him money. So if I am making or losing money, I would like to be a producer so that I can protect myself as a creative person. That's a stupid policy to have, but that's what I believe in.

It's not uncommon for a creative person to say that. Finally on a lighter note, what's your favorite movie of all time?

You know, you are going to be very disappointed because you are not going to get a very intellectual answer. It is "The Sound of Music."

Why? That's a really nice movie.

Because it brings back fabulous memories of innocence. I think it's one of the most innocent movies ever made. It's about the genesis of music, which is very close to my heart. It's shot magnificently. It is great cinema, but it is cheesy cinema that was actually palatable. When I watched it after many years -- I watched it again recently -- and the moment the titles came on, I had tears in my eyes because that movie pulls. There's something very special about that movie. I'm sure people who believe in cinema will say "What a bad choice." But I don't care.

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<http://www.cii.in>

Session on Moving your Organization to the Next Orbit of Growth: Lessons on Acessing VC/ PE/Angel & New Generation Funding Options

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MSME funding - Opportunities & Challenges

May 23, 2013

Hotel the Lalit, New Delhi, India

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Program on Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

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7 to 8th June, 2013

VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH, India

<http://www.imrf.in/icmbe2013.html>

National Retail Summit 2013 - Winning the Consumer in a Multichannel World

Jun 12, 2013

Hotel Hyatt Regency, Mumbai, India

<http://www.cii.in>

Manufacturing, Innovation Conclave

Jun 21, 2013

India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India

<http://www.cii.in>

Improving Market Share and Financial Performance through Service Quality Excellence

28 to 29th, 2013

CII Naoroji Godrej Centre of Excellence, India

<http://www.cii.in>

NASSCOM EMERGEOUT Conclave (SURGE 2013)

18th June, 2013

Hotel Westin, Chennai

<http://www.nasscom.org/emergeoutchennai/overview>

NASSCOM Big Data & Analytics Summit 2013

27th June, 2013

Westin hotel, Hyderabad

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NASSCOM HR Summit 2013

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Exp: 10-20
Location: Chennai
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SAP BASIS

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Exp: 10-15
Location: Mumbai
Job Id: 280213002353

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