

# CIB on wings



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Initiatives of Change  
Caux Initiatives for Business

Dear Readers,

Drawing from close to 50 years of experience in business, R. Gopalakrishnan, who recently retired as Director, Tata Sons Ltd., spoke to delegates from business and industry who had participated in the 6th Biennial CIB Conference that was held in January this year. We are delighted to carry in this issue of CIB on Wings a brief extract of some of the things that this businessman and author of four books shared with delegates.

In addition, we provide a glimpse of the discussions that the CIB India Working Group had while reflecting on the activities that the Indian body of Caux Initiatives for Business should focus on in the next two years.

We do hope that you will enjoy reading what we have included.

**Mrs. Ishika Banerjee**



# Learning what's not Taught

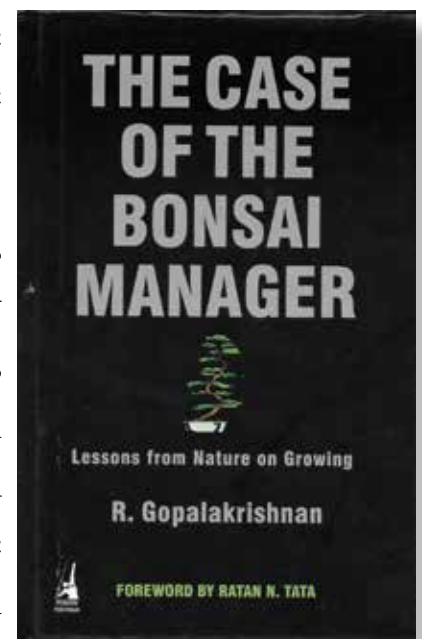
*The following is taken from a session at the recently concluded Biennial International Conference that Caux Initiatives for Business conducted at Panchgani from January 22 to 26, 2016. Speaking on the theme, 'Making Business an Engine for Sustainable Growth' R. Gopalakrishnan, former Director, Tata Sons Ltd. drew greatly from his career that spanned close to 50 years; his learning and the four books that he eventually penned.*

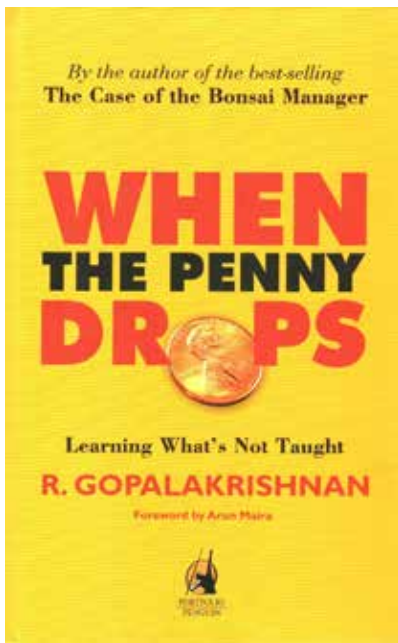


Great business leaders (or any other leader for that matter) are trained to be analytical. However, there is intuition and most fail to listen to intuition. The reason that many get toppled from their positions after a lot of hard work and effort is because they fail to listen to their intuition. His book, 'The Case of the Bonsai Manager', deals with this issue. In it Gopalakrishnan likens the

Manager to a bonsai plant because often he is not able to reach his full potential. This is when all his roots are trapped preventing him from achieving what he is otherwise capable of.

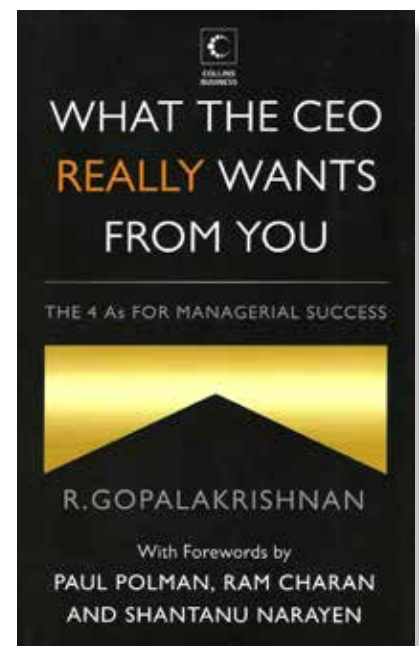
The other issue that leaders need to be conscious of is the need to be aware of them self. They are aware of the economy, running a business and creating cash flow analysis but they fail to recognize the need for self-awareness. In Gopalakrishnan's study and observation he came to a startling conclusion: When an individual





starts his career in a company, his emotional quotient (EQ) is of a certain length. As he rises up, his EQ increases. However when he has reached the top, the individual's EQ drops. 'When the Penny Drops' is a book that covers this subject.

The third issue that Gopalakrishnan then reflected on was how managers are more conscious of their privileges than on their obligations. While doing an exercise in the Tata Management and Training Centre (TMTTC) he would ask those with him to create a balance sheet of their career expectations— what they owe the company on the left side and what the company owes them on the right. Almost inevitably he noticed that the obligations to the company never usually exceeded four items. They were the predictable—hard work, loyalty, competence and struggle to make the company a leader. What the company owed them was endless. There would be 20 to 25 items on that list—career, training programs, promotions, everything. Gopalakrishnan would then tell his 'students' that the first thing any accountant will teach is that an asymmetric balance sheet cannot carry on. This caused him to develop a training called, "Learning what's not taught" and thereafter to write his third book, 'What the CEO Really wants from you'.



Gopalakrishnan's latest book, 'Six Lenses' focuses on empathy. In this he dwells on the misconception of each individual—our view and our perception is the right one. The former Director's belief is that there is no reality in the world. Everything is a matter of perception.

Taking on a number of questions, following his talk, R. Gopalakrishnan answered each one in his inimitable style.

*Q: You spoke of an asymmetric balance sheet. How does one ensure that it is balanced properly?*

**RG:** The person who is to balance his sheet, must first become aware that it is asymmetric. Each of us must recognize that we are like an onion with four different layers—the physical self, the intellectual self, the spiritual self and the psychological self. Unless these four are in alignment, we cannot lead a peaceful life. We do not need to tell the individual anything. The mere awareness that the balance sheet is asymmetric itself does wonders.

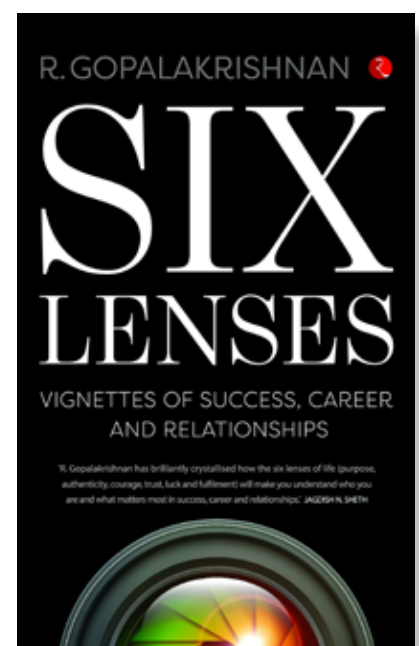
*Q: What is the secret to building relationships?*

**RG:** I have found that conversations are the real key to relationship building. As technology increases, the tools to cope with change are also increasing. However the gap between the two has not changed—it remains constant. I believe the good Lord has made that gap for us to indulge in conversations. The nature of powerful conversations—where one is really interested in the other person—to me is the essence of true relationship.

*Q: It is easy for large companies to institutionalize compliance and cope with losses. What about smaller businesses? What is the inherent responsibility of business to prevent corruption from taking place?*

**RG:** My experience is that it is wishful thinking to imagine that corruption is going to be institutionally mended. Corruption has been prevalent from the time of the Romans and before. Corruption is present not just in India but in every country in the world. I liken corruption to a virus. It is present everywhere. Each one has to learn to insulate himself (or herself) from this bacteria or virus.

Corruption, to an extent, can be contained institutionally through democracy, large public



organizations or NGOs, civil society, technology and the formation of pressure-groups. All these help but it must be remembered that these are but tools. They will not eliminate corruption but can certainly help reduce it. However if we use our absence of size and scale to think that we can play the game, then we too become that virus.

In conclusion, Gopalakrishnan spoke of courage in the face of disagreements. He said that the acid test of courage is not about winning an argument. Courage is about finding a solution. There are a few different types of disagreements. If it is an ethical disagreement, we need to dig our heels into the ground in what we believe is the right thing. However if the disagreement is of opinion then we must respect the right of each to have their opinion. In such situations, it would be right to give in. That would not be lack of courage. Rather it provides elegance to courage.

*The above books are available from the author at <[rgopal@themindworks.me](mailto:rgopal@themindworks.me)>*



# CIB India Working Group Meeting

The CIB India Working Group met together in the conference room at the beautiful Indo-Italian Furniture showroom in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai on April 5, 2016 to dwell on the activities that CIB should be focusing on in the next two years. It was very inspiring to hear the ideas that came through, each having a very pointed intent. Sarosh Ghandy journeying from Bengaluru and Luis Gomes [Trustee, Friends of Moral Re-Armament (India)] despite his long train ride from Goa added to the wisdom of the Mumbaikars like Rajendra Gandhi [CMD, GRP Ltd.], Vivek Asrani [MD, Kaymo Fastener Company] and Anil Chopra [VP - Technical Skill Development Environment & Safety, Siemens Ltd.].

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Some of the plans that unfolded were the pursuit of Round Tables with heads of business and industry especially from Small and Medium-scale Enterprises. To ensure penetration and assimilation to the rank-and-file of these industries, it was also discussed how the second and third levels from these enterprises could participate in subsequent Round Tables thus causing a tangible effect in encouraging business to

be ethical while remaining competitive. Taking a page from the Pune Chapter team and considering some of the aspirations of the Mumbai Chapter team; it was felt that such Round Tables should be conducted by the CIB City Chapters in India.

Another proposal that got considerable attention was to get persons from business and industry committed to the ideas of CIB, to a weekend gathering at Asia Plateau or any other suitable venue. The intent of this weekend would be to create an environment of care for these CEOs so that they can talk from their heart, especially on what can be done to make India better. It was also proposed that invitations should go out to a few opinion-makers to participate in this gathering. Thoughts on the theme and design of an 'intimation flyer' for the next CIB conference and other matters were also pondered over by the team.

Thanks to the gracious hospitality of Vivek and Rashida (MD, ABACA) Asrani the serious discussions not only gave one the satisfaction of having had a fruitful meeting but gave rise to a sumptuous meal with a lot of banter.





# Calendar of Events

## **CIB Jamshedpur Chapter Meeting**

**Apr. 24**

*[Venue: Cozy Nook, Sonari / Time: 5:30 pm]*

*RSVP: Dr. Amit Mukherjee at amitmuk@hotmail.com or +91-9835178258*

## **Lead for Change\***

**May 01 to 05**

*Program for young professionals and youth from 18-35*

*[Venue: Asia Plateau, Panchgani / Time: 4:00 pm]*

*RSVP: Parag Shah at leadforchange@in.iofc.org or +91-9923199310*

## **CIB Mumbai Chapter Monthly Meeting**

**May 07**

*followed by IofC Mumbai Monthly Meeting*

*[Venue: Kumaram, Worli Seaface / Time: 3:30 pm]*

*RSVP: Anil Chopra at cib.mumbai.india@gmail.com or +91-9920803282*

## **ELL Program for Families\***

**May 12 to 15**

*[Venue: Asia Plateau, Panchgani / Time: 10:00 am]*

*RSVP: Sanjay Lele at programs@in.iofc.org or +91-8380093276*

## **CIB Pune Chapter Round Table**

**June 24**

*for CEOs from business and industry*

*[Venue: Thermax Ltd., Chinchwad / Time: 9:00 am]*

*RSVP: Sanjiv Mehta at cib.pune.india@gmail.com or +91-9890016167*

## **CIB 7th Biennial International Conference**

**Feb. 2 to 6, 2018**

*[Venue: Asia Plateau, Panchgani / Time: 4:30 pm]*

*RSVP: CIB Secretariat at cib.ap.india@gmail.com or +91-8408 940 940*

*\* Programs run by IofC India    ELL = Effective Living and Leadership*

*If you happen to be in any of the above cities on dates of meetings, please consider joining in after being in touch with concerned reference person.*