

ICB on wings



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 **Initiatives of Change**
for Business

Editorial

We are often at crossroads, faced with tricky situations. Time and time again we find ourselves in a dilemma. What is the right thing to do? How do I minimize the damage stemming from my decision? How do I explain to those who are observing, the reason for my decision? Leaders today frequently stand at such crossroads each day, several times a day. Emmanuel David, Director of Tata Management Training Centre (TMTTC), Pune shares one incident and juxtaposes it with a larger canvas.

The ICB Pune Chapter conducted a Workshop at Thermax Ltd., inviting several business leaders to discuss the theme, "Reinventing Organizations". In this issue, we have included their report for your reading. While you may see the initials CIB in it, it refers to the same program, using the old name instead of the new, ICB

As in the previous issue, we continue to update you with the programs listed on the Asia Plateau calendar, should you want to join in on any of them. Also, the IofC India Archives newsletter would be gladly shared with you, should you be interested.



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Discovery or Disclosure

by Emmanuel David



About two decades ago, I had the opportunity to head the Human Resources function for a start-up and we were in the throes of recruiting people for the firm. It was close to the New Year when I received a greeting card, affixed to a small packet from one of the sourcing agencies. I chose not to open the packet and instead enquired from the person who brought it.

I was informed that it was a wrist watch. I acted upon two things — I upfront informed the MD that I had received the gift and conveyed that I had decided to return it back to the recruiter. The MD was supportive of my decision. I returned the gift to the recruiter immediately thereafter. Normally, in start-ups there are not too many norms or guidelines about how to handle such transactions. Later that evening I received a frantic call from the MD. He conveyed "I also received a gift from the recruiter. I too want to return it to him."

These incidents triggered in us the realisation that we needed to frame a policy for the company on how to handle gifts received in the course of business.

This incident from the past re-emerged at a point of reflection for me while I was facilitating a high energy ice breaker called 'Building the Tallest Tower' at a training intervention a few years ago. [I have used this ice breaker over the years in various learning interventions, catering to a variety of audiences]

Building the Tallest Tower:

In this ice breaker, the participants are divided into groups of 5-6 members and each group is entrusted with the task of building the tallest tower. However, they need to accomplish the task in just five minutes. Participants are clearly instructed that the tower has to be a free-standing one and portable. They are not permitted to use any other resource material beyond what is allotted to them. To help them accomplish this task the participants are provided with resource material in terms of (a) a bundle of old newspaper, (b) a roll of sticking tape and (c) a pair of scissors.

In this context, I have been introduced to different groups of people over the years. I have noticed participants who have taken to this activity with immense enthusiasm, collective & competitive endeavour and more than anything else this task has stimulated a lot of fun at work and resulted in a pleasurable learning outcome for those involved.

I was faced with an immediate dilemma. How do I call out deviant behaviour in a group setting? Should I remain silent? Could I ignore the matter and play along?

Generally speaking, I have found groups which had Sales and Marketing personnel who did eventually manage to build tall towers, others when they wore their thinking hats in the group did not get started till almost the half way mark. Some groups who were more grounded and risk averse ended up with a tower that was not very tall but with a relatively stronger base or foundation.

I distinctly remember this group of project managers as I expected them to perhaps build a really large tower owing to their collective years of

experience. In one of the cohorts, a senior leader who was also a project manager, looked around and spotted some water bottles kept aside for the participants. He kept a watch out for a seemingly innocuous moment where he felt everyone else was busy building their own tower and no one was watching him. He quickly grabbed a few of these bottles and quickly wrapped the newspapers around them. He then proceeded to use this contraption as the foundation to help build his group's tower. This feature certainly helped his group build their high tower by providing the structure with a firm and strong base that imparted the required stability. They went on to build the tallest tower in that group exercise. The team felt elated and overjoyed at their success.

[While this senior leader believed no one was aware of his action, a few participants other than me, had also noticed him wrap the newspaper around the water bottles. Some participants from other groups whispered into my ear about the same.]

Once the recorded time of five minutes was up, we had to judge the tallest tower and of course this group's tower stood tall and they were eager to win the prize. They felt confident they had the winning formula which was smartly applied in building the tallest tower that day.

I also wondered about the thoughts and choices which would have emerged in the minds of members who were part of this senior leader's team? Why is it that not one of them acted to stop, delay or prevent this act?

Questions of Conscience:

- As a facilitator, I was faced with an immediate dilemma! How do I

call out deviant behaviour in a group setting? Should I remain silent? Could I ignore the matter and play along with the highly enthusiastic expectation of the 'winning' team? [It is not an easy situation to act upon, amongst peers, I said to myself]

- Then I wondered about the kind of thoughts or questions that had possibly traversed the mind and conscience of the leader of that team, when he chose to act in the manner he did, quite understandably to assist his team in winning!
- I also wondered about the thoughts and choices which would have emerged in the minds of members who were part of this senior leader's team. Why is it that not one of them acted to stop, delay or prevent this cheating act? [After all, instructions were very clear to all other groups. What is the price and consequence of inaction, I pondered?]
- I also wondered about the kinds of thoughts and questions that had emerged in the minds of the other persons who had observed this manner of winning the prize. Wouldn't they too have similar questions to the ones I harboured in those moments?

So I paused, took a deep breath and I asked this question, quote, "I hope you have used whatever materials were allotted to each of your groups?" The group in question responded 'Yes' and they appeared very confident.

I wondered about the thoughts and questions that had emerged in the minds of other persons who had observed this.

I repeated the question a couple of times more, yet received the same answer from them. The senior leader thinking that I was ignorant of what he had done said with a smug expression, 'let's get on with declaring the

winner since it is evident that our group's tower is the tallest'.

Finally, I decided to do the tough but right thing. I asked them to remove the newspaper covering the water bottles at the base of the tower they had built. The few from other groups who had witnessed the act of cheating felt a sense of justice at what was being revealed. All those who were not aware of what had actually transpired in this group's tower building process let out a gasp. Each and everyone in the room other than the group in question resonated with the revelation that something unfair had happened when the bottles were discovered as part of the tower base of this team's tower structure.

Some members from the other groups had witnessed something unfair happening. They had an expectation that the leadership would intervene at some stage to take action.

This incident has left me with some deep and reflective learning. Some members from the other groups had witnessed something unfair happening. They had an expectation that the leadership would intervene at some stage to take action. In organisations, this is one general expectation although not explicitly expressed to the leadership. Though unpleasant I believe I did what was needed and that is to call out the deviant behaviour at that point in time, in the given scenario.

I was left wondering about this senior leader's decision and action. When the stakes for winning or losing were so low what is it that compelled him to do what he did to win and why he had not deliberated upon the consequences of his actions and how it could impact his own reputation, and that of his team?

Why should anyone try to win, even small prizes, at any cost, when losing

wouldn't actually be significant, and winning could actually turn out to be a massive loss?

Despite providing this leader and his team mates repeated opportunity to come clean and disclose their action of cheating, why did he/they choose not to do so?

More significantly, I surmised, a prompt upfront disclosure is better than discovery.

This incident came to mind as recent news of governance failures have come to the fore particularly in the Financial, Banking Sector and media. While each of us is prone to make errors of omission and commission, we are unable to reflect upon the writing on the wall and take corrective action, in time. Interestingly, what we fear is losing one's reputation if there is a disclosure hence one chooses to keep things under wraps (an illusion of a safe place). This is a predicament one ends up as a loser when we do not explain our position. Another aspect we perhaps fail to recognise is the opportunity to build a culture where people proactively and voluntarily disclose their misdemeanours, thereby seizing the choice to change something in themselves and become better citizens. When one commits an error and makes a disclosure proactively about the same (having realised the mistake), such an action can also be viewed as affirmative and help build a positive culture.

More significantly I surmised, a prompt, upfront disclosure is better than discovery!

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Reinventing Organizations

Program Report by ICB Pune Chapter

Theme : REINVENTING ORGANISATION

As a book 'Reinventing Organizations' covers a wide range of issues for a diverse audience. Orchestrated in a workshop mode, it was decided to focus on the relevance to what entrepreneurs from the small and medium sector industry would gain personally and as a company, from the book essence.

1. From the interactions through the event it seems that the idea of getting organizations to embrace the concept of "Self-Management" was a prime takeaway. MSME enterprises are challenged to innovate, reduce costs and deal with challenging constraints at a micro level all the time. The modern employee is awesomely independent and skilled. To be nimble and excite the new generation, an open and self-managing community is a great competitive advantage.
2. The second concept discussed at length was Humanization in Business. Jamsetji N Tata brought the industrial revolution to India in a holistically humanized manner. What seems to have surfaced on the 27th October 2018, is to bring a professional form to that behavior which can be shared and scaled. This takeaway was useful in getting participant's to share some actual experiences!
3. For the small and medium sector in industry it is going to be a great opportunity ahead as a number of large units are passing businesses down the line. But we realized that it is also a great responsibility. By developing a sense of purpose and vision even small enterprises will develop far sightedness to understand sustainability better from multi stakeholder perspective. At the next event we look forward to hear your personal experiences in this regard.

Program Footprint

Pre Session:

Mr M S Unnikrishnan, MD of Thermax Ltd, the Chief Guest arrived at TLA by 9 AM. He was warmly greeted by members of the CIB Pune organizing committee, as well as guest audience members who had started arriving for the event.



Kind courtesy Thermax Ltd., all present were invited to a sumptuous breakfast prior to the main event.

At about 9.25 AM, an outdoor group photograph was taken with the Thermax Learning Academy (TLA) as the back drop. Guests and committee members then entered the main hall "Aryabhata", within the TLA premises.

Main Session:

A Safety Pledge was administered by the Safety Officer of Thermax Ltd.

Mr Mohan Nair, MD of Ensigns Software & Communications Pvt. Ltd, introduced the guest speaker Mr M S Unnikrishnan to the audience and requested him to deliver the opening address.

Mr Unnikrishnan spoke about his humble beginnings. He mentioned about how early in his professional life, he was mentored by brilliant person like Mr Asis Ray (who was present at the event) and a few others. He fondly remembered the Aga family and Mr Aga in particular who had laid the strong foundations for this organization's culture. He also remembered his father for his principled approach to life. Mr Unnikrishnan believes that it is because of people like these mentors in his life, that humanitarian values are deeply rooted in the culture of Thermax.

He highlighted the importance of Ethics and Core Values in his life and how MRA/IofC (Moral Re-Armament/Initiatives of Change) at Panchgani has played a key role in sustaining the virtues in the lives of many other beneficiaries. He emphasized that it was mostly 'people-power' among entrepreneurs in this gathering, and much less the government that will play the most important role in ensuring Sustainable Economic Growth in India, in the near future.

He mentioned that Indian industry suffers mostly from closed mindsets and said that it's the mental pollution we need to worry about the most for the future. He said this is the space where organizations like CIB come into the picture in terms of remedying these ills. He mentioned how cleansing and reinventing India on the ethics and values front, is a priority need of the hour.



As token of thanks from the CIB-Pune team, Mr Asis Ray then presented a hardcopy of the book "Reinventing Organisations" to Mr. Unnikrishnan. Mr Mohan Nair briefly introduced Lt. Col. Allan Burby, Convenor of CIB-Pune chapter to take the session ahead.

Lt. Col. Allan Burby thanked all guests and appreciated their commitment for making the time to participate in this event. He also made a brief mention about each member of the organizing committee. He briefed the audience about the sessions planned for the day & went on to spread awareness about Caux Initiatives for Business (CIB). He then briefly introduced Mr Sudhir Gogate, Director of Keihin Fie Ltd. and senior most member of CIB-Pune core team. He requested him to inform the

audience about the genesis and work of Initiatives of Change (IofC), and its endeavors stemming from the Asia Plateau, Panchgani, platform.

Mr Sudhir Gogate conveyed about the philosophy and work of "Initiatives of Change- IofC". He then briefly introduced his IofC and CIB colleague Mr Kiran Gandhi, Trustee, Friends of Moral Re-Armament and requested him to inform the audience about the salient lessons from the book – "Reinventing Organisations".

Mr Kiran Gandhi started by acknowledging the contribution of Mr Anant Nadkarni and Sudhir Gogate in getting the Indian edition of this book to the CIB platform.



Mr Kiran Gandhi conveyed a brief synopsis of the book, authored by Frederick Laloux. He mentioned that the foreword for this book was written by Mr Sarosh Ghandy, Chairman of CIB. He mentioned the example of an organization like FAVI – France and Sun Hydraulics – Florida USA and how both

these organizations chose to operate their business in a manner very closely related to the concepts talked about in this book. He explained the concept of TEAL Organizations – where the main purpose is to do meaningful work by giving and receiving love and respect from clients and all stakeholders in a humanistic and self-managed manner and the objective was beyond garnering profits. He presented a short film of an Indian business PolyHydron Pvt.Ltd, Belgaum founded by the Late Mr. Suresh Hundre in the last century. Kiran referred to this company as a TEAL Organization, in India.

Mr Mohan Nair, MD of Ensigns Software & Communications Pvt. Ltd., was invited to express his experiences as a practitioner-entrepreneur.

Mohan narrated that having read the book he truly believed the way in which he treats human beings in his business, runs very similar to a TEAL organization.

Mohan then invited one of the guests in the audience, a practitioner in the same vein to speak about his experience in changing the manner of running his business based on values like Trust, empowerment, Self Management and Humanizing his organizations. (over last two years). He invited Mr Pawan Gupta, MD of Uma Plastoware, Pune to share his experience.



Pawan Gupta, shared his experiences with a lot of zeal and joy. His son Rishi too (who was present at the event) has become a part of this reinvented journey of operating a successful business in a happy and cohesive way with all member of the workforce. He thanked Mr Mohan Nair for guiding and hand-holding his company's transformation over last two years.

Mr Shrivardhan Gadgil, CEO of Behr-Hella Thermo Control (BHTC), Pune was then invited to share his perspectives from the viewpoint of leading the business of a MNC. Mr Gadgil recounted his early days at Thermax and spoke highly about the soil of Thermax that stands solidly even today. He thanked personalities like Mr. Unnikrishnan, Mr Asis Ray and others who had partnered him on his journey with Thermax in his early days. He shared insights from his experience in bringing about change in his company's workplace and how the concepts from this book also resonated with the way in which he interacted with his people, and other stakeholders in his business.

Workshop Session:

The audience re-grouped after the tea break and Mr Kiran Gandhi facilitated the practice of "Quiet time", where everyone had to ponder in silence making short notes about their reflective thoughts.

Here after Lt. Col. Allan Burby geared up the session into workshop mode, where audience was split into five groups. On basis of takeaways from the book they were asked to discuss for an hour and answer two simple questions and make a three-minute presentation each. Each group was guided at five different discussion rooms by CIB team members.

The group presentation began at 12:45 pm. Almost all groups expressed certain Humanistic practices they follow with their stakeholders. They also expressed some ideas on which they planned to work upon after this event.

Concluding Session:

Mr Sanjiv Mehta delivered a sharp closing speech. He acclaimed the chemistry and energy levels among the audience were noticeably high after the group activity. He said these were the reasons why good people should continue to work together for larger good and how forums like CIB served entrepreneurs to do just that.

[When one treats the janitor (safaiwalla, butler, waiter, security guard, peon, driver etc.) as well as or at par with one's Boss/CEO's, the human potential of the workforce one's gets multiplied several times over.]

He invited suggestions from audience on the duration and frequency of these sessions, going forward.

Question – Answer session began with Lt. Col. Allan Burby inviting questions from the audience. He stressed that CIB Pune will stay connected to ensure this fraternity sustains for doing "good" business.

The event was declared closed after a brief feedback and vote of thanks by Mr Manish Deoghare – who thanked the audience, Thermax Team, Mr Unnikrishnan for the keynote address and finally the CIB Pune Core team for the initiative taken.

Asia Plateau Program Calendar

December 2018

- 10 to 14 Education Today, Society Tomorrow - Educators
17 to 20 Effective Living & Leadership Program for Industries
26 to 29 Heart of Effective Leadership Program for Industries


January 2019

- 9 to 12 Effective Living & Leadership Program for Industries
16 to 19 Heart of Effective Leadership Program for Industries
26 to 30 International Dialogue: Breaking Barriers and Building Trust

February 2019

- 6 to 9 Effective Living & Leadership Program for Industries

The design of the Effective Living and Leadership programs for industries is prepared for shop-floor workers; while that of the Heart of Ethical Leadership is for middle-level and senior managers. Lead for Change is for young professionals.



Programs mentioned above are subject to change.
For enquiries and confirmation, please write to programs@in.iofc.org
For more information, please visit www.in.iofc.org

IofC India Archives Newsletter Subscription

Since September 2018, the Archives of IofC India has been publishing a monthly e-Newsletter titled, "ONCE more valuable". The several features in these issues cover various facets of IofC India's journey dating as far back as the 1950s when IofC first came to India.

Since many of you dear readers, both from India and overseas, have at some point or the other been to Asia Plateau, Panchgani or interacted with IofC's team members spread over 40 countries, we felt that you may be interested in taking a peek at the history of IofC. Should you be interested in this periodical and would like to receive them every month, you could write to: <archives.in@iofc.org>. The team there would be happy to add you to their mailing list.



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