



A Glimpse Into Factual Success Mantras Of Business

Management – Getting Out Of One's Comforter

■ By Rajeev Aggarwal

STAYING snug inside one's comforter on a cool night is an idea of bliss, security, and it's not a welcome feeling when one has to leave that domain and step out to face the climate of the real world. With a sigh one gets out with a great deal of reluctance. Getting out of one's comfort zone is not easy, we all like to stay within our domains where we feel comfortable; the sense of security, peace, joy is quite dear to each one of us. But then why do we see all successful entrepreneurs and professionals exit their comfort zones and do different things? What drives them?

I was talking to a CEO recently, he heads a medium-large enterprise that has shown a good growth trajectory, the organisation commands good reputation in the industry and is doing quite well. His organisation is a vertical in the multi-dimensioned entity, and he shared how he started the specific division that he heads at this time, about 2 decades ago. As a young professional, with about 5 years of experience, armed with the educational qualifications, he had joined a short while ago as a junior executive in the organisation. One day this person noticed a tender in the newspapers, and approached the promoter of the group to talk about it. The promoter was truly a first generation industrialist though he belonged to a family of well-to-do traders, and the promoter looked at the him rather quizzically.

The promoter stated that he had no idea about this business at all and wondered if the young lad facing him could handle it? All the while, this person said, the promoter continued to look deep into his eyes as if peeping into the soul of his, and was assessing if he could trust the young man and invest the sum required to proceed with the tender. The young man in front of him assured him good profits and held his stead with confidence, internally feeling quite unsure if his request will be granted. A few hours later the promoter summoned the young man again, and called his accountant as well, and directed the accountant to release the monies required.

This CEO stated that he was actually stunned with the decision, the speed with which the promoter moved out of his comfort zone of regular business, and granted a significant amount to an untested person just based on one short discussion. The entire process, from initial request to final release of sum of money, took just a few hours. He still wonders how such entrepreneurs think, without any technical skills in the field, and the field was itself an emerging line of business and untested commercially, the decision to proceed and entrust a recent employee with such a commitment?

The ability to move out from one's comfort zone, the rapidity of the decision, and the volume of associated risk marks the magnitude of the entrepreneur present within the individual. Entrepreneurship is not a group activity, the onus of taking the decision rests on one individual, and cannot be formed by a committee. One may consult a committee, but the deci-

sion is purely singular in nature.

In 1991 Snamprogetti, of the ENI group of Italy, made me an offer to join them in Italy to work for their global oil & gas projects. When faced with a decision of moving overseas and quitting a secure job in a PSU, it was a tough call, and a lot of hmms and hahs, my wife and I decided to decline the offer. We were in love with our comfort zone – defined by a secure job, own house (on mortgage) and our country. The lure of better monetary gains, international experience and an opportunity to work for a Fortune 500 company were not enough to sway us. A few weeks later we met with a friend who had joined Snamprogetti a few years earlier and was living in Italy. When we were discussing the low wages

in the PSU and other aspects, he just told me flat on my face – you are a frog in a well and very reluctant to move, so don't complain. My wife and I realised that he was correct – we loved our “well”, our own comfortable “well”. A few months later, got an offer from Ansaldo, another Italian giant, and we jumped out of our well. Truly speaking, the transition was not easy, but then the results have been awesome. We conquered our fears of the unknown and ever since, I don't feel even the slightest challenge when I have to take tough decisions.

Even in our professions, we take business risks, sometimes its with our own money or with the money of our promoters/ investors. The urge to grow, the urge to try something new, the urge to create something, innovate something, continuously challenging status quo – these spell desires to step out of our comfort zones. If we have done our study well enough, and have taken timely decisions then success awaits such persons who become movers and shakers. Timely decision is paramount in such scenarios. In the first case I shared, the promoter decided to make the investment within hours, had he taken days then the opportunity may have been missed. I over-analysed the offer made by Snamprogetti and, with my limited knowledge, came to the conclusion that it made no financial sense – maybe it was my lack of desire to leave my comfort zone that took me to the logical conclusion of staying put.

Paralysis by Analysis, that's what quite a few people suffer from, spending so much thought in over analysing an opportunity that, in the meantime, the opportunity vanishes. With a bit of rational analysis, one has to follow one's instinct, the ever present “gut feeling”, and move quickly.

Getting out of one's comfort zone, getting out of the snug comforter is essential to take steps for progress and growth.

(The author is an Adjunct Faculty at Indian Institute of Management-Nagpur in the area of Production & Operations Management. He has been appointed as Professor of Practice following his extensive experience of working around the globe, holding top management positions in Fortune 500 MNCs. He can be reached at rajeevagg@gmail.com)



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