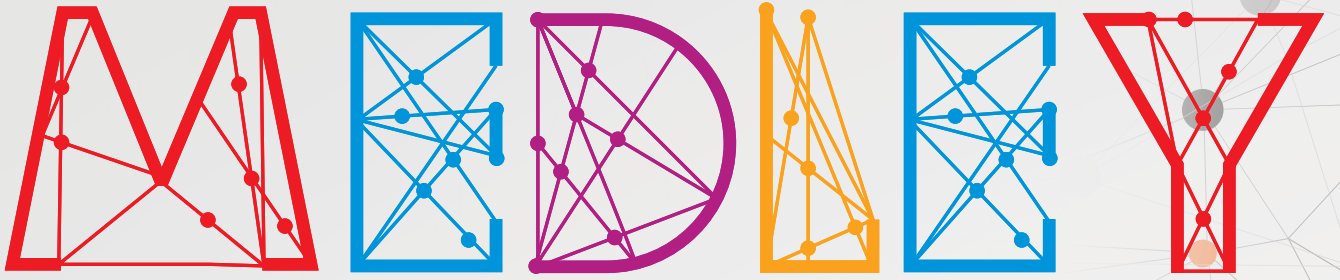


ISSUE 22 • June 2018



ORGANIZATIONS TODAY ARE GOING BEYOND **CREATING**
TRADITIONAL MARKET OFFERINGS OF **A** PRODUCT.

GOOD **DESIGN** ENTAILS CAPITALIZING ON THE EMOTIONAL
PROPOSITION OF THE PRODUCT OR SERVICE.

A CUSTOMER - **CENTRIC** DESIGN **CULTURE**
IS WHAT IS DEFINING THE NEW AGE OF DISRUPTORS.



A Symbol Of RISE



SUSANNE RODRIGUES



PRANAV PRIMLANI

EDITORIAL NOTE

In-no-wait. Yes you got that right! There is no need to wait for innovation. It can be as simple as using a pencil in outer space as opposed to a specially developed pen or as big as building a tower off an asteroid. The only thing constant about it is that it is solving new problems, generating new solutions, all while happening 'here' and 'now'.

Taking off from our new look and feel from the previous issue, this issue gets better. Bolder. Aligning with our businesses, we bring to you innovation through Design Thinking. Our unconventional cover may have already given you an idea of why this concept has gained relevance in the recent past. A hot box for innovation, it is revolutionizing the way products and services are designed and used across the globe. At Mahindra and Mahindra, these initiatives have taken root in different forms and sizes too. Right from process development, to investment strategies, to creating a conducive work environment, it has been guiding innovation in different ways.

Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar gives us a comprehensive introduction on the Design Thinking process. Tushar Vaidya talks about how Design Thinking was used effectively in Mahindra Finance. In the Trending Now section – we look at Mahindra Susten, Mahindra Accelo and Mahindra Retail, and their efforts in innovating through this model.

A special this issue is the story of Bakul Sheth, who is retiring after over 40 years of service in Mahindra Group and 17 years of service in MSSCL. This issue also encapsulates the Signature Learning Program (SLP) that completed its flagship leg and Mind Games Season 4 that brought about many exciting stories. A first for this issue are sections on unconventional Leadership Lessons, Futurise for Innovation and Rise for Good for sustainability. Capturing varied aspects from personal, organisational and empowerment journeys, this issue holds a piece of inspiration for everyone. Beating the gloomy weather, we are announcing the winners of the writing competition, Meddle in Medley and an exciting opportunity to win more prizes with our Rise crossword (check last page). Grab a cup of garam chai and catch up with hot news from around Partners and other fun quick reads too! We would love to hear about your feedback on this issue or even your ideas in general. Do write to us at hr.partners@mahindra.com

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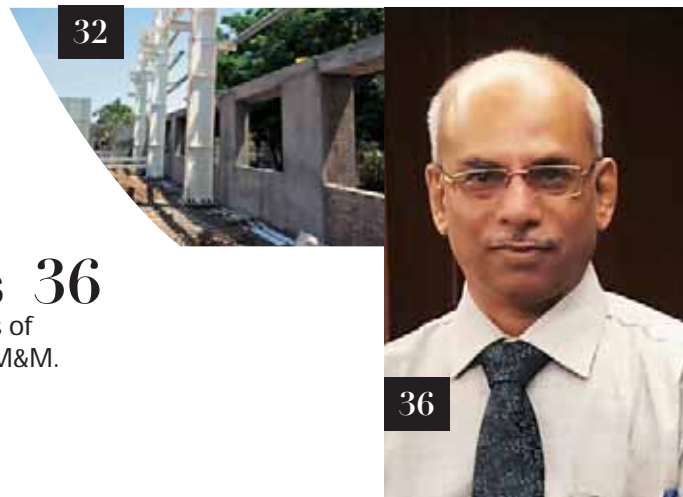
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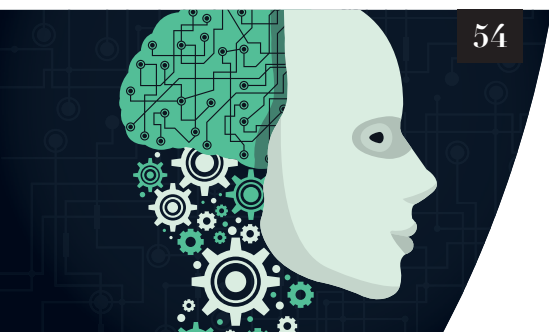
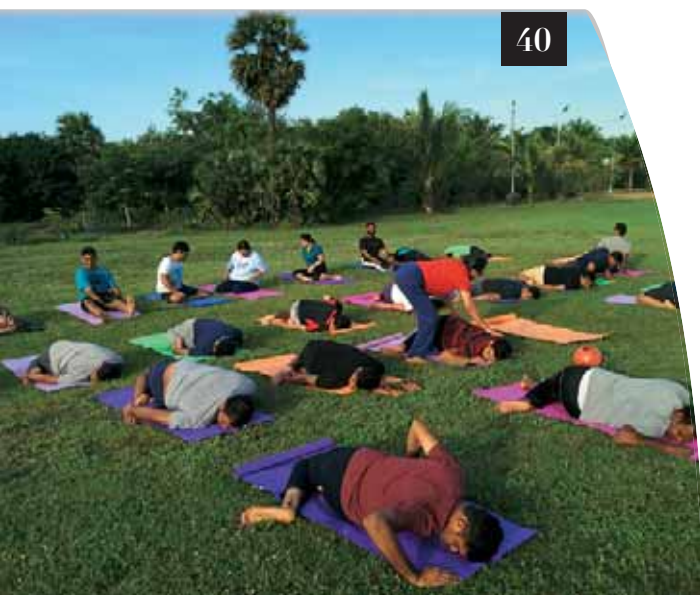
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ZHOOBEN BHIWANDIWALA
President-Mahindra Partners &
Group Legal, Member of
The Group Executive Board



PARAG SHAH
Managing Partner,
Mahindra Partners

FROM THE MANAGING PARTNERS' DESK

Our parent company, Mahindra and Mahindra had one of their best year ending quarters and this resulted in the achievement of a big milestone - market cap of the Group crossed Rs. 1 Trillion. Mahindra Partners contributed in a significant way to these numbers with their achievements: Mahindra Logistics' beat market expectations with their stellar performance and has been one of the best performing scripts on the India Logistics index. Since listing, the stock is trading at a premium of 47%. Mahindra Accelo had their highest ever profits and have successfully kicked off their auto recycling venture, Cero. Cero helps us move closer to reducing India's carbon footprint one vehicle at a time. Mahindra Susten had a great year and have made some phenomenal breakthroughs by expanding its footprint in the foreign markets of Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh. Similarly, all other companies have made significant progress in their respective businesses.

On the investments front, Mahindra Partners, USA made an investment in Avaamo, a conversational Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform for enterprises. Along with our first investment, Cloudleaf, this increases our footprint in the Silicon Valley and digital tech space.

Our theme for this issue of the Medley is Design Thinking, an approach to problem-solving that utilizes elements from the designer's toolkit like empathy and experimentation to arrive at innovative solutions. Design Thinking has been revolutionizing the way products and services are designed and deployed across the globe. We look at some stellar examples of these applications in product and process development - within the Mahindra Group and beyond. As our markets become more competitive, it is all the more essential to reinforce the main tenet of Design Thinking: keep the customer top of mind. With some excellent instances of this in Mahindra Susten, Retail and Accelo, we can be assured that our optimism for the future of Mahindra Partners is truly well founded. Going ahead we wish all our companies an excellent FY19.

PRADEEP D.P
Mahindra Consulting
Engineers

IYAPPAN S
Mahindra Consulting
Engineers

ARUN KUMAR V
Mahindra Water
Utilities

MEHR ARNEJA
Mahindra Retail



CONNECTRONS

Our 'Partners' in putting together this magazine.



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Mahindra Susten

KETAKI SULE
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OMKAR GAWDE
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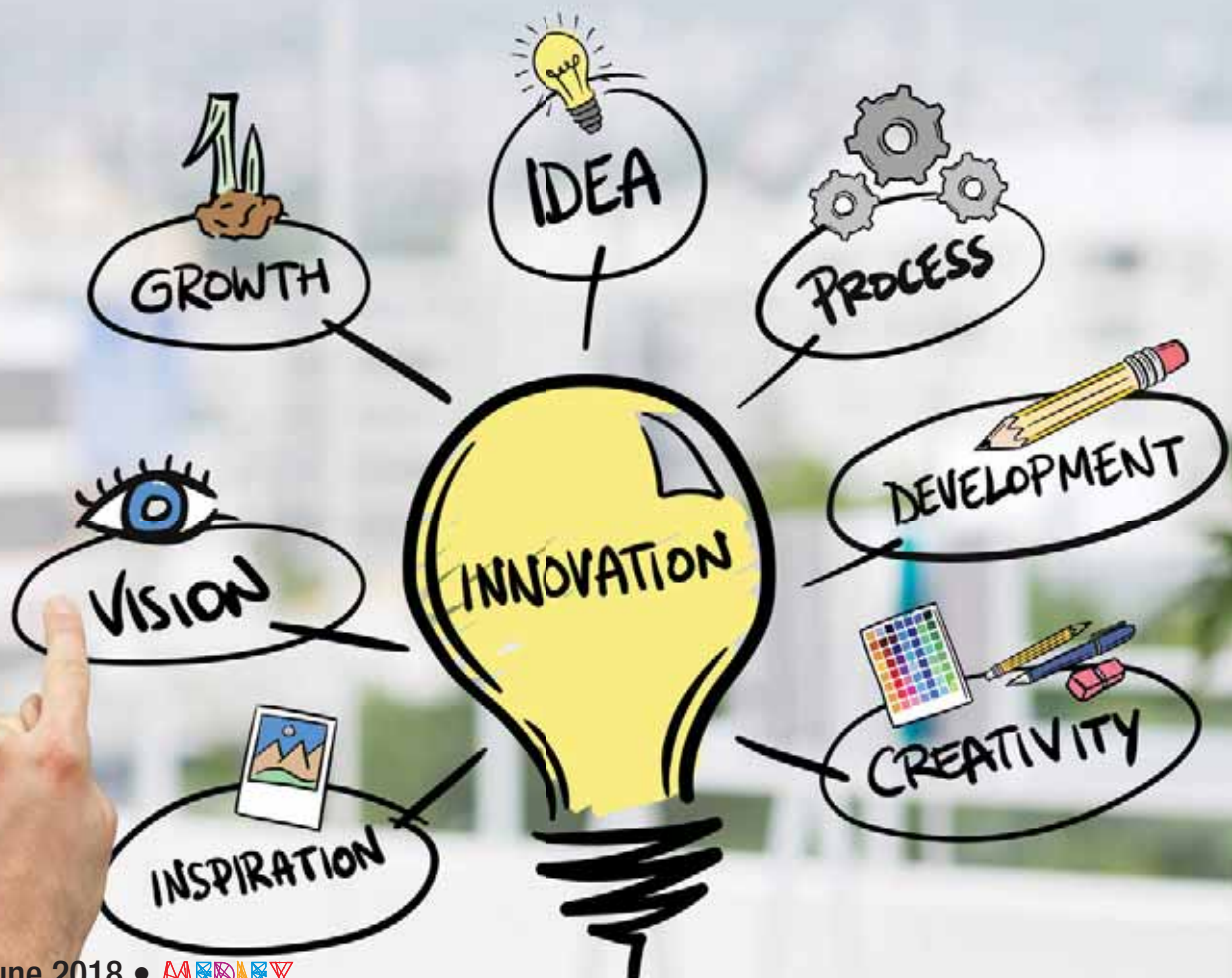
Potentials & possibilities

Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar *(Ph.D-Corporate Innovation & Design Thinking)*

As an engineering student in the 80s, I had heard of something called Moore's law that stated, "The number of transistors in a dense integrated circuit doubles about every two years (later on revised to eighteen months)". As a tech-inclined individual, I attributed this to the advances in material technology. Later when I was pursuing my MBA, I interpreted Moore's law to predict the 'Obsolescence Quotient' of an invention, be it a product or a service, i.e. something invented then would become (more or less) obsolete in the next eighteen months.

So what would happen to an organisation that uses the invention to create a business around it? Obviously, it would become obsolete too.

Over the last two decades, we have witnessed tremendous disruption across all walks of life. In the 1990s, the American military coined an interesting acronym for this situation—VUCA—which stands for volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, which means things are getting unpredictable. Do we, as business professionals like anything that is unpredictable? Does our education system teach us to face up to situations that are VUCA? What happens





when there is no relevant data available for decision-making? What does the manager rely on? How does s/he formulate strategy? This is where the 'open-ended, exploratory, deeply human-centric, imaginative approach' of a designer comes into the picture and proves to be of immense help. (Design Thinking by Tim Brown, Harvard Business Review, June 2008).

Why call it 'Design' Thinking?

If you look at conventional education systems, you will realise that it is history-based and not future-based. Go back to your school and college days and try to recollect a prescribed text book that was revised less than ten years prior to when it was recommended for you to read? Practically none? We were brought up on a surfeit of old, obsolete information, sometimes passed off and glamourized as 'Case Studies'.

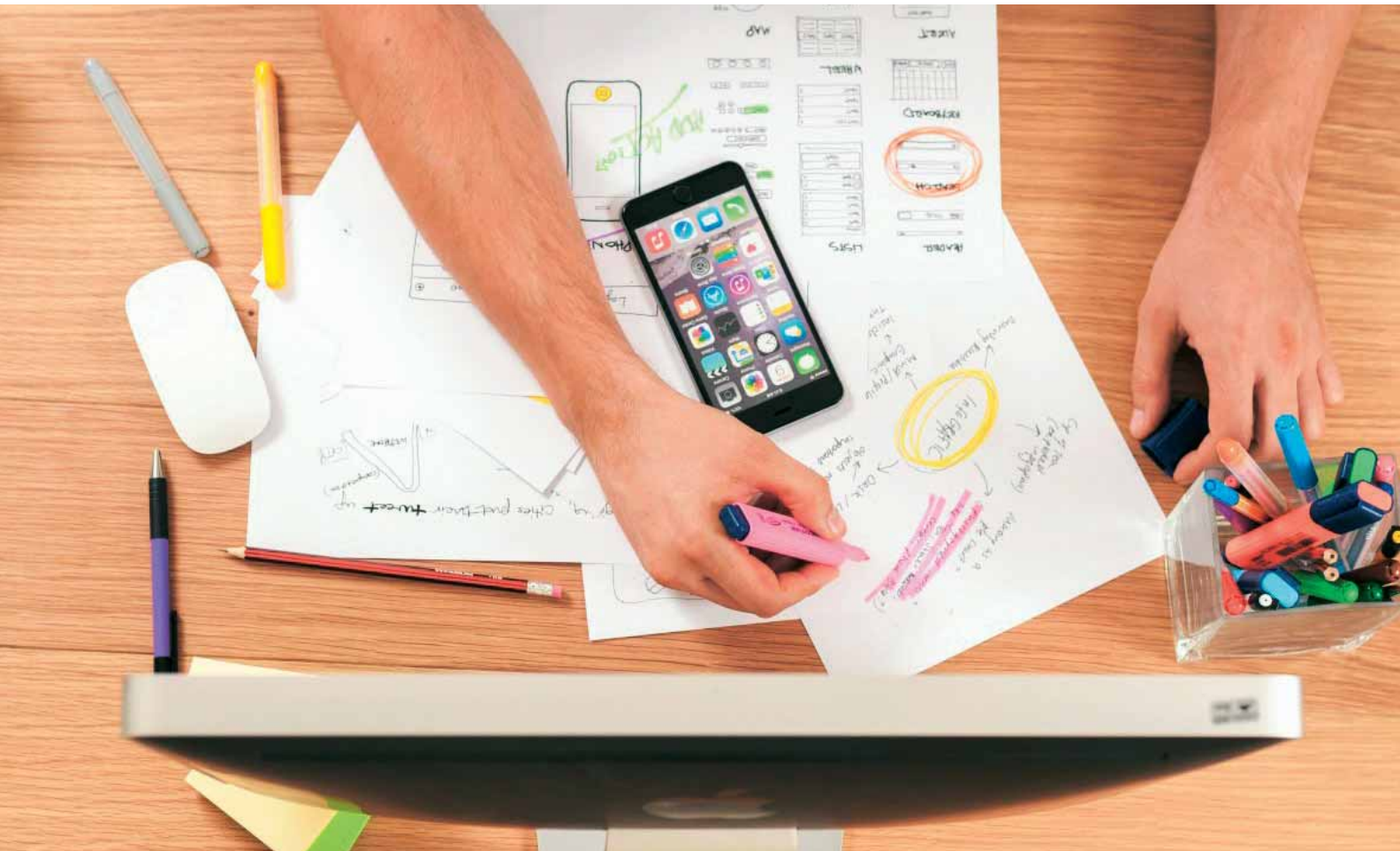
Contrast this to the pedagogy used in a Design School, say the National Institutes of Design or the Industrial Design Centres at various IITs. A prof. comes into a class and asks the students to create something for a specific target group, say a container to carry water for college kids. The natural tendency of the students is to create a blue print of a bottle and submit the assignment. The prof doesn't accept this submission and insists that the students go out,



Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar
(Ph.D-Corporate Innovation & Design Thinking)

spend time with college kids and understand their lives. When the students do that, they realise facts that could have been ignored otherwise, such as:

1. On a typical college day, the kid is out of the house for about 12-14 hours.
2. The kid carries his water in a knapsack.



3. There are other items like a laptop and notebooks in the same knapsack. Etc.

If you look at the above observations carefully, each one indicates an important insight:

1. The capacity of water that the container should hold.
2. Its shape should be slick enough to fit into the knapsack.
3. It should not leak lest it ruin the kid's laptop and notes.

To determine the capacity of the water container, the design student probably consults a nutritionist/physician to understand the requirement of water over a period of 12-14 hours for a college kid. Based on this information, she/he creates a prototype of a typical water container for a college student and submits it to the prof for evaluation expecting acceptance. However, the prof looks at it and says, "Ok, but you should test it out with some college kids".

So the design student tries out the prototype with a few college kids. On using it, the college kids have certain complaints and suggestions. With this feedback, the prototype gets refined and the students

submits it expecting acceptance. The prof. examines it from all sides and responds, "Looks alright, but please test it out with another set of users". The student takes it to another bunch of college kids. They use it and give a few more suggestions. Basis these, the prototype gets refined. The student submits it to the prof., who looks at it discerningly and says, "Better this time. Still needs refinement based on user-feedback". The student goes back to the target group, comes back with a refined prototype, the prof. responds in a similar tone. This process goes on and after about eight to ten iterations before the prof. accepts the assignment.

Here, I have mentioned about one assignment. However, every assignment in a Design School follows a similar pattern. In the three or four years that a student spends at a Design School, she/he goes through forty or fifty such assignments. So, what do you think happens to the student by the time she/he passes out from a Design School? **Extreme user-centric behavior becomes second nature for a Design School graduate.** Hence, a designer's approach to problem-solving always remains 'open-ended, exploratory,

deeply human-centric, imaginative approach'. Plus, you would have noticed that designers necessarily make what people will/might use in the future, based on the present pain points and aspirations of people. Hence, a designer is groomed to think about the future too.

Why Design Thinking? And its Co-relation with Innovation

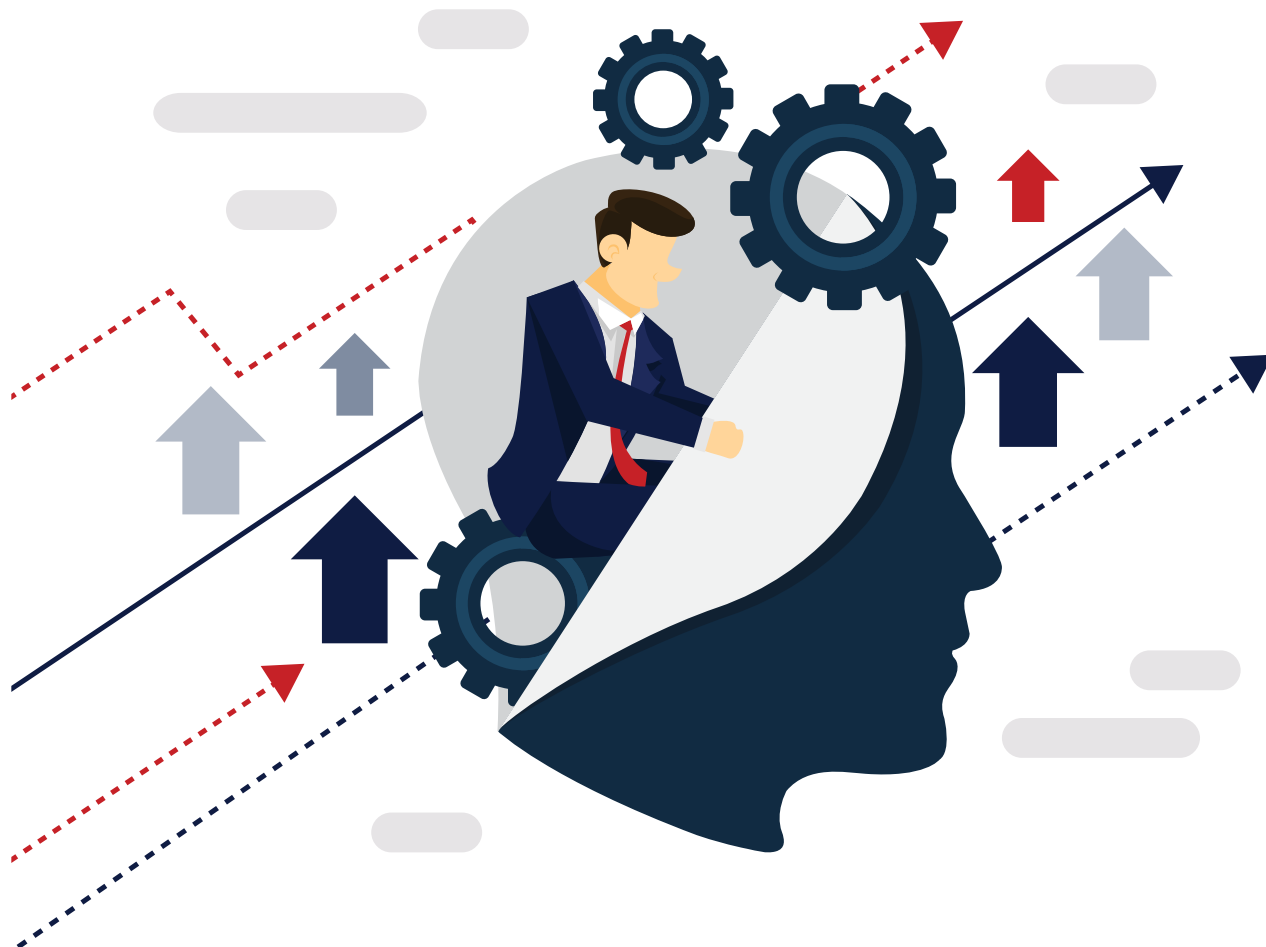
Innovation is user-driven and not technology-driven. Great tech, unless it finds users cannot be termed as an innovation. So, how does one make Innovation happen? Can it be made to happen on a consistent basis? There's no guarantee, but one can definitely adopt a process that is conducive to innovation. In today's VUCA world, organisations will have to constantly innovate, in order to survive.

For the past decade and half, there has been a debate on whether a designer's approach to problem solving is the most conducive to innovation. Many academics and industry practitioners, after using multiple approaches have begun to advocate Design Thinking as the approach with the highest probability of making Innovation happen.

Decoding Design Thinking

Design Thinking encompasses people (by observing them and gaining insights through their behaviour patterns), ideating (brainstorming, looking at a problem from multiple perspectives), prototyping (visually/physically representing the thinking), and story narration (scenario building). Earlier, companies involved designers at the end of the development process—e.g., creating beautiful packaging or selecting nice colors for the product or creating fancy collaterals for the communication strategy. However, now, as per Tim Brown, rather than asking designers to make an already created product attractive, companies are involving designers to create products based on what consumers need and want.

The word 'design' in design thinking, in today's context, does not restrict it to designers alone. It is a skill anyone can master and thereafter apply to innovation successfully. Hence design thinking is a process, where there is a lot of emphasis on trial and error or experimentation. Defining and redefining the problem at hand is an important aspect of design thinking. While creating a solution, it is extremely important to define the problem in the simplest form.



In order to define a problem properly, an individual needs to have a very high 'empathy quotient', i.e., a high ability to put herself in the shoes of the end-user and experience the problem herself. Only then can the problem be understood thoroughly. Design thinking begins with empathy and can be explained by the following 4D process (as per Design Council).

- Step 1. Discover
- Step 2. Define
- Step 3. Develop
- Step 4. Deliver

- **Step 1:** The 'discover' phase involves deep 'user understanding'. Empathy is of paramount importance here.
- **Step 2:** The 'define' phase involves capturing the insights garnered during the previous phase to generate well-defined problem areas and project scoping.
- **Step 3:** The 'develop' phase involves generating multiple options for the defined problems, prototyping, and multiple iterations. At all times, the latent needs of the user are the primary focus of all the solutions generated.
- **Step 4:** The 'deliver' phase involves the execution and rollout phase. In other words, the business planning begins.

The process is equally useful for startups and large corporations. It is relevant across all domains in business as well as non-business settings. My strong view is that if corporations do not embed it in their DNA, they should expect themselves to become obsolete sooner than later.

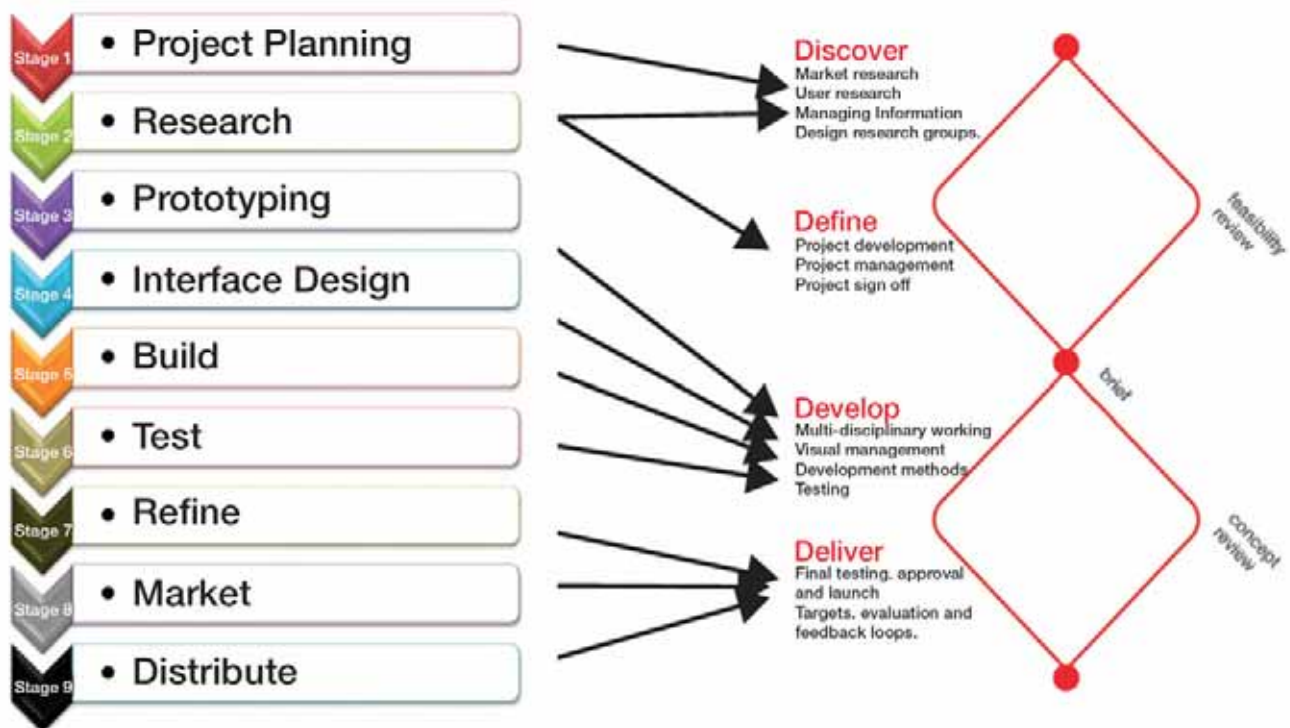
How can Design thinking be adopted in business scenarios?

As business professionals, application of a concept is of paramount importance. The following graphic would help address that anxiety. On the left side, are the steps that a business executive would typically be familiar with. The colored arrows (on the extreme left) denote the sequence of the steps and the black arrows depict the co-relation with the steps involved in the Design Thinking methodology.

What's critical?

To understand and apply Design Thinking, what are the most critical activities and abilities to be done/developed? Let's keep this short.

1. The willingness and ability to empathize with the end-user has the greatest significance, without which one would be creating products and services in vacuum.



How the Design Thinking Methodology pans out in a typical Business Scenario
- Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar



2. The ability to frame problems from the users' perspective keeping our biases out of the ambit.
3. The ability to connect dots across domains by creating multi-disciplinary teams for solving problems.
4. The openness to ideate/experiment and the tenacity to iteratively prototype.
5. The use of visual media to communicate throughout the development process.

Applications of Design Thinking – International and Domestic

Apple Inc. and the iPod come to mind the moment one talks about successful design. But most people talk about the great looks of the iPod. However, I would like to take you to that side of the iPod which isn't spoken about much..... that is the **creation of iTunes**. That is where the genius of Steve Jobs lies and his extremely human-centric approach to service creation. Back in the late 90s, if one were to download music from the internet, one would have resort to websites like Napster and Kazaa. These sites essentially encouraged music piracy, which definitely rubbed the record label companies and artists the wrong way because they took away millions of dollars from them,

in an unethical manner. Music lovers with access to the internet loved Napster and Kazaa because they could rip any music they wanted from these sites free of cost. The option that the music lover had was, to buy CDs from the record label companies. These CDs would be bundled with 10 or 15 songs and would cost \$15 to \$20, all of which were not necessarily needed





by the music lover. So the ordinary music lover felt the record label companies were taking him for a ride by dumping unwanted music onto him and making a bag of money. This feeling made the music lover justify piracy-enabling platforms like Napster and Kazaa.

Steve Jobs understood this pain of the ordinary music lover as well as the predicament of the record label companies and created the iTunes ecosystem which enabled the music lover to buy a single song at as low as \$0.99. The user could create her own playlists using the iPod. The iTunes platform made it easy for the music lover to search for her most-liked music as per genres, albums and artists. In this way, Jobs cracked the sweet spot for the music lover as well as the record label companies. It took Jobs 17 months and various iterations to the iTunes platform to convince record label companies to sign up with him. But ultimately, it proved to be a win-win situation for everyone. He cleverly kept the iTunes platform proprietary to Apple products for the first few years. Once it became popular, he opened it up to other operating systems.

Jobs and his team displayed all the traits of the Design Thinking methodology:- a multi-stakeholder perspective, deep empathy with all the stakeholders, clear problem definition, extremely high focus on simplifying technology, iterative product/service creation



Nokia's poster child, the iconic Nokia-1100 and its Indian connection.

With over 250 million Nokia-1100s sold, it is the world's best-selling handset (single model) till date (despite the then competing handsets having had more modern features such as color screens, internal cameras, etc.). It was targeted toward the user in developing countries. It came with a flashlight embedded. The story about how the flashlight idea came about goes something like this (though not confirmed). Nokia had research teams that would go around the world spending incredible amounts of



time with end-users. One such team was staying in a remote Indian village as a part of their research agenda. They noticed that villagers returning home from work late in the evening/night would invariably carry a torch along, since there was no concept of streetlights due to lack of electrification in a large proportion of rural India back then. Another observation of theirs was that a majority of poor womenfolk would go out for their daily ablutions pre-sunrise in open fields, to avoid roving eyes because there wouldn't be toilets at home. These women would invariably carry a torch along. The Nokia researchers in their quest to make the mobile phone a ubiquitous part of the rural lifestyle thus came up with the insane idea of combining a torch and a mobile phone into one device..... and the rest as one would say is history.

Nokia clearly displayed a relentless spirit of enquiry (discovery) in having such research teams to scour the interiors of India to spot opportunities. The researchers epitomized the spirit of empathy in observing the nuances of rural lifestyles. They transcended the myth that mobile phones were meant only for the technologically savvy. They challenged the then problem definition to create an iconic product.



Kishor Biyani & the Future Group odyssey

The first one to embrace Design Thinking in India has been Kishor Biyani, the retail king of India. Classic examples of Design Thinking at Future Group's various retail outlets are:

1. The layout at Big Bazaar is planned to create chaos (can you beat this?) in order to replicate the hustle and bustle of a typical Indian market.
2. The reason why grain is kept in open bins at Big Bazaar is that the typical Indian buyer likes to touch and feel the grain before buying it. Hence,



Big Bazaar, in its early days, kept away from readymade packs of grains.

3. KB's FairPrice is a chain of neighbourhood convenience stores with a modern self-service ambience. It is positioned to compete with the local kiranawala and the ration shop. In order to convince the shopper of their intention to offer the best possible price, SKUs would be stocked in the original cardboard cartons (the same ones in which they would arrive from the distributor), with their front portion opened up. This definitely communicates the intent of it being a Fair Price shop.

There are just few examples of Kishor Biyani's



design thinking approach at Future Group

Kishor Biyani and his team at Future Retail try multiple variations before arriving at different formats. They follow a typical 90-day cycle which mimicks the Discover-Define-Develop-Deliver cycle. There are teams responsible for mining consumer insights. Certain ideas arising out of these insights are quickly tried out at a select few outlets, consumer response to these is captured and acted upon and the offering modified. Numerous such iterations are carried out within short timeframes. Thus the offering reaches

a refined condition. All this happens with strict deadlines and within 60 days the concept is rolled out on a larger scale. Over the next 30 days, feedback is sought extensively and the offering fine-tuned further and made ready for launch on the 91st day. (Many concepts also die out in this 90 day cycle – there are certain metrics to decide whether the concept should be carried on with or not). Please note how the consumer is kept in the center at all times during the concept development process. This philosophy toward problem solving is followed across the entire group. No wonder, within one generation the Biyanis have been able to become leaders in their spaces of operation.

Conclusion

Design thinking is a very powerful problem-solving methodology that has the probability of making innovation happen. The basic tenets of Design Thinking can be summed up as follows:

1. The willingness and ability to empathize with the end-user has the greatest significance, without which one would be creating products and services in vacuum.
2. The ability to frame problems from the users' perspective keeping our biases out of the ambit.
3. The ability to connect dots across domains by creating multi-disciplinary teams for solving problems.
4. The openness to ideate/experiment and the tenacity to iteratively prototype.
5. The use of visual media to communicate throughout the development process.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar is an entrepreneur-turned-academician & Innovation evangelist, a speaker at TEDx platforms, founded three companies from 1990 to 2005 in the domain of Machine tools and automation. Sold his commercial interests in these companies in 2005, took a year off to learn the science of Yoga

He is an acclaimed Design Thinking coach with over 50,000+ hours of training in the space of Design Thinking, Creative Problem Solving, Breakthrough Ideation with corporates such as Mercedes Benz, Daimler India, Citibank, Hewlett Packard, Deloitte, Mahindra Group, etc. He is the founder of **Potentials And Possibilities**, an Innovation & Design Thinking Consultancy that helps organizations 'Enhance their Innovation Quotients'. His views on innovation and strategy are sought by publications such as Knowledge@Wharton, Springer, and E&T-Europe, etc.

A teacher at heart, Kaustubh is a visiting faculty at IIT-Bombay, NMIMS, Weschool, PKSBE, etc. He is a mentor at the Center for innovation, Incubation and Enterprise at IIM-Ahmedabad and has mentored more than 100+ start-ups over the last decade.

Have you felt the need to improve your service?

Have you questioned these underlying assumptions in your current solution? Have you made an effort to cater to the changing motivations of your user?

Have you identified a problem area?

Once you do identify a problem area it is essential to look at the design thinking framework and seek your consumer's input.

Have you observed your users in their real life context?

Approach your observations with an open and curious mind. Stay away from generalizations, judgment, evaluation, assumptions, and prescriptions.

Have you captured the feedback of the extreme users?

Look for things that prompt behaviour, look for adaptations, for what people care about, look for body language, and for patterns.

Have you captured the emotions your users go through?

Understand the underlying motivation of why things matter to people. It is essential to the situation of revision, as the user has to be enthusiastic about the new solution. They only shed further light on how certain ideas and things may influence your target audience differently.

A HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO INNOVATION

One has to ask profound questions in order to recognize a need for change. Here is a 10 question guide to help you recognize this potential for growth for your product or service.

Have you looked at other fields and areas that face a similar problem?

Draw inspiration from parallel situations or even a parallel solution that has not been applied to the field. Have you considered understanding the merits and demerits of their application based on their target audience?

Have you tried to co create your solution along with the users?

Document the experience of engaging with the prototype. Ask your consumer 'how might you change things for them to experience the service better?'

Have you built a low cost prototype to test your proposed idea?

As an idea takes form in a prototype, it brings to light pain points and areas of improvement.

Have you brainstormed some really 'wild' ideas around the problem?

Develop a range of easy, medium and difficult ideas while being offbeat and unconventional. Through collaborative brainstorming, some ideas may even form building blocks to the other.

Have you considered revisions to this prototype based on further insights and reactions?

The end goal is to come up with technologically feasible and viable business strategies that can convert into customer value and in turn convert to a market opportunity.

•• DEFINE

Carefully understand what motivates your consumer. This shall help you to further define his real needs. Reframe your problem areas as an opportunity, weaving in the new insights.

• EMPATHIZE

Empathetic language elicits expressions from the right user. Understand carefully what your customers say, think, feel and do.

••••• PROTOTYPE

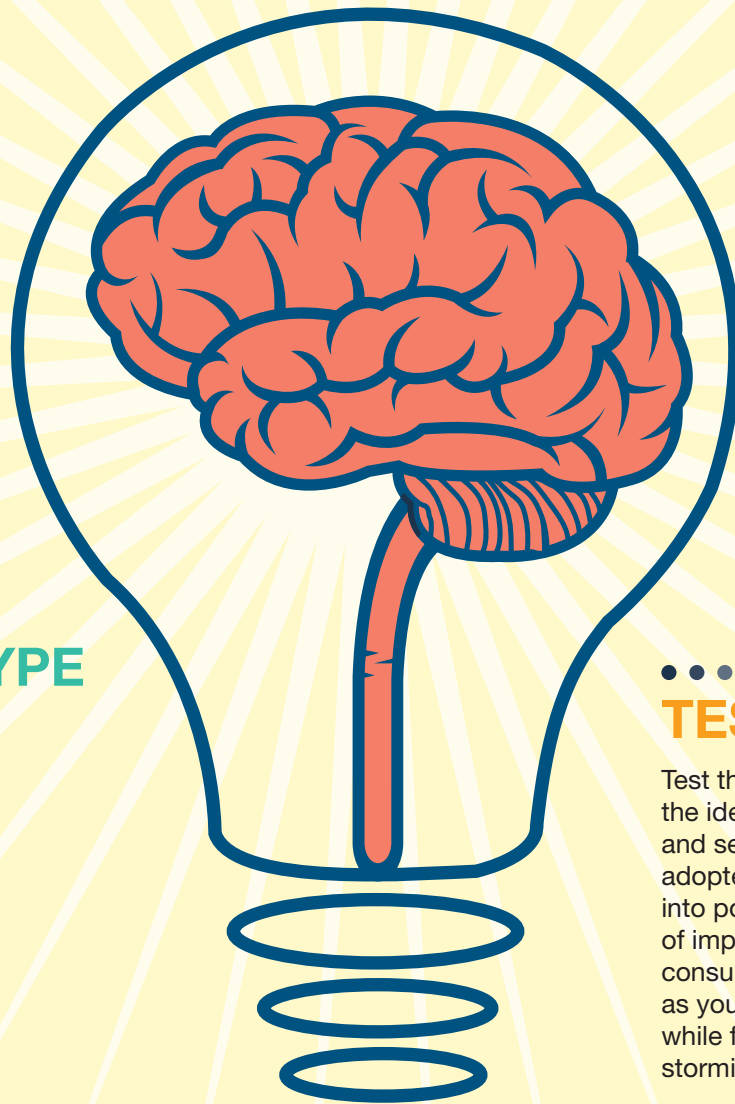
Develop a just-try-it mentality. Develop prototypes rapidly. This *doesn't necessarily have to be expensive affair, be it money or time.*

••• IDEATE

Collaborating is key. Building on the ideas and finding interconnections help build ideas further. Keep the discussion as open and clear as possible.

••••• TEST

Test the feasibility of the idea. How well and seamlessly it is adopted, gives insights into possible areas of improvement. Use consumer experiences as your reference point while further brain storming for solutions.



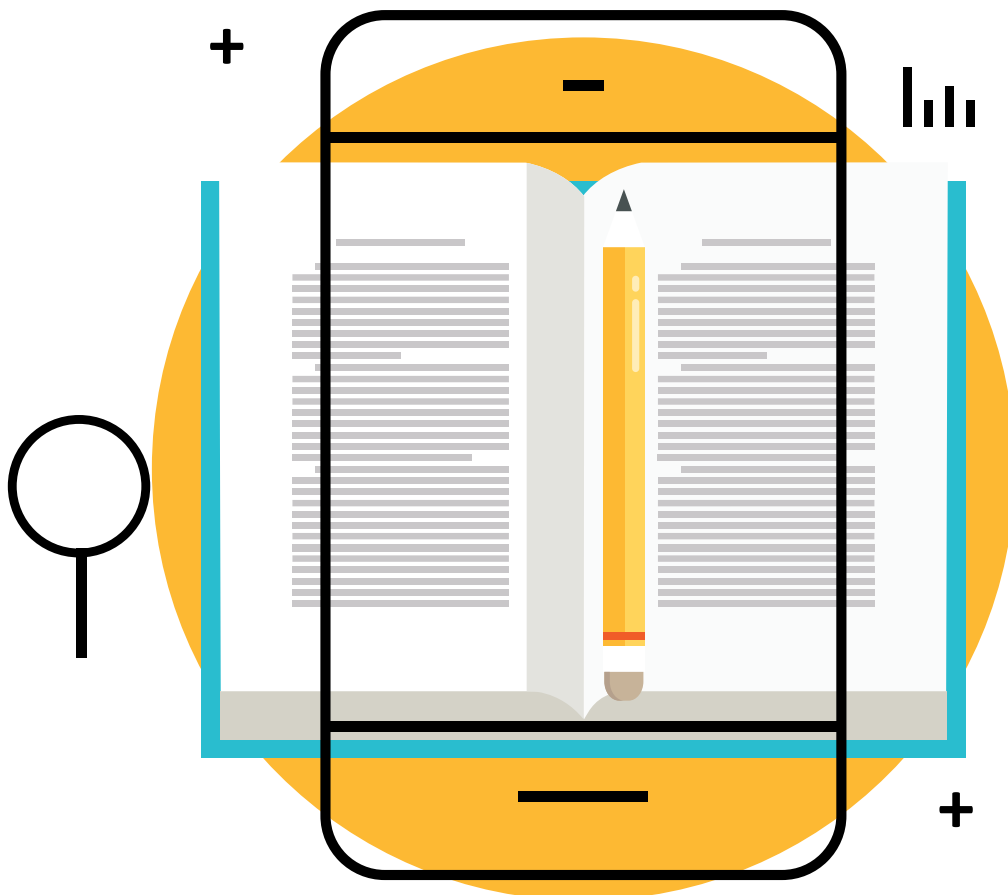
A New Perspective

Tushar Vaidya gives us an insider view on how Mahindra Finance has been engaging its audiences for Learning and Development through the process of Design Thinking.

In the vehicle financing industry as a terminology 'Order fulfiller' typically means that the vehicle dealer is your principal customer who directs the end customer to the finance company and then the finance company 'executes' the order. Looking at the business trends and the growth ambitions, Mahindra Finance articulated the strategy of becoming 'sales generator' which typically meant acquiring customers on their own.

Successful execution of this strategy had many challenges, the most critical being the people capability challenge. The primary learning and development challenge was that to reach 5000 learners scattered in 1200 branches within 4 months and build 'sales capability'.

As the team brainstormed on the possible way ahead, the usual solutions emerged from the team. Classroom training, e-learning and workbook training



E-Learning



were the three proposed focus areas. as we evaluated each alternative against the challenge that we were up to, there was a nagging feeling of something amiss. This is where the team decided to take the Design Thinking Approach towards the problem. The first step was gaining a deeper understanding of our customers which in this case were the learners for who we were designing the training program for.

We wanted the customer learning in their individual context, family context and personal drivers.

The team started 'Ethnography' for two weeks not only shadowing people but also having lunch, tea etc. with them. The team would start and end the day with them. The ethnography study was an eye opener for our team and we had some novel insights which changed our perspective of the design needed to structure this learning module.

When we clustered the insights we realised there were some broad categories. Some of the insights were that 80% of our target group were GENY employees, good quality smart phone with internet data pack was their go to device, watching movies and videos were favourite activities on the smartphone, two wheeler bikes were their mode of travel, regional language was the most dominant language for normal communication even with customers/peers/superiors.

“

**Mahindra Finance
aspires to become 'Sales
Generator' from an 'Order
Fulfiller' to achieve
our ambitious growth
targets.**

”

Mr. Ramesh Iyer

*Vice Chairman & Managing Director,
President – Financial Services Sector &
Member of the Group Executive Board.*



The next step was to connect these dots and integrate them in a meaningful solution. After ample of brainstorming together with the team, we together arrived at some conclusive actions to test. Some of the methods were as follows: soap opera style learning

program - 40 episodes over 3 weeks through mobile phone, byte sized learning-short learning spaced out over time, short - under 3 minutes audio files, info graphics to reinforce learning, dubbed in regional languages for learners convenience and connect.

In the final solution we used every major insight gained from the customers for example their love of bikes was translated into the solution that the learning program had a story line with 'bike' being the central character. The prototype of the solution was iterated with the prospective learners before deploying the final one.

The prototype was a huge success. The results we obtained were that we covered 8000 employees in a period of 6 months which were self-motivated to learn. The reaction and learning engagement scores were 4.49, higher than any previous classroom program. The ROI of the program was 14% which was validated through an external study done using Jack Philips model of training ROI.

Solely by the process of empathising with the needs and motivations of the consumer, our project received a whole new direction. This directly resulted the impact our new solutions created proving to be a massive success.



THE MAKER'S CORNER

Based on visual appeal, ease of use, feasibility, impact, social responsibility, inclusiveness, etc. here is a collection of products that emerged in the best of the best categories worldwide at design events.

WONDER CAR

Audi Cetus is a hydrogen-powered, zero-emission city car. The use of electrochromic glass gives the possibility of dimming by pressing a powered switch in order to control the level of illumination of the interior. On the back, surfaces curve smoothly into one another and embrace the back wheels, creating a wraparound, retractable trunk that opens like a drawer. Additional security features include smart sensors in the vehicle.



Photo credits: Studio Niko Kapa



Photo credits: Metcore Design

THE TABLET'S BFF

Keko is flexible, portable and ultra-light—it weighs just 54 grams. Hidden magnets keep Keko closed, it opens like scissors. It has four positions meticulously designed to provide optimal working angles: reading, writing, portrait, and landscape. The stand's elastomer surfaces provide full-time protection from scratches and give the combined tablet and stand impressive stability. And stability means comfort for the user.

EMBER KNOWS BEST

Ember is a temperature adjustable mug keeping coffee or tea at the perfect temperature.

The mug adds technology to an everyday object in a way that makes drinking coffee and tea more enjoyable without adding complexity. The body of the mug is made of durable double-

walled stainless steel with a ceramically coated exterior that perfectly replicates the look and feels of a traditional mug. The Ember mug successfully puts the experience of eating and drinking first, while keeping the technology in the background.

Photo credits: Annumation



THE IPHONE OF LUGGAGE

The Bluesmart One features global 3G + GPS location tracking to see the bag's location anytime, anywhere, and recover it if lost. The built-in 10000mAh battery charges most devices up to six times. The digital lock secures the bag remotely and sends a notification in case you are separated from it. A digital scale tells you your bag's weight so you can dodge checking your bag and overweight fees.



Photo credits: Bluesmart



Photo credits: Ammunition.

CHILD'S PLAY

By getting active with the UNICEF Kid Power Band, kids go on missions to learn about new cultures and earn points. The points are in turn converted into funding from partners, parents, and fans. Funds are used by UNICEF to deliver lifesaving packets of therapeutic food to severely malnourished children around the world. UNICEF Kid Power has become one of the largest education—technology programs reaching underserved students in the USA.

MASTER TOOL

With its sturdy cast-iron handle, the knife stands on its own, upright. The authentic solid walnut blade is easy to wield, for children as well as adults, as it slices through lettuce and other vegetables with ease. This reinvention of the knife comes courtesy of designer Chifen Cheng, working in collaboration with Maison Milan. The butt of the handle grinds salt, pepper, spices, and nuts effortlessly, like a pestle. The wide wooden blade is also just right for scooping ingredients into a pan. This is the knife reinvented in solid walnut.



Photo credits: MMLHOT



Photo credits: Abidur Chowdhury

MIRACLE MEDICINE

Aer, designed by Abidur Chowdhury for Loughborough University, is an asthma management system that encourages people to better manage their asthma medication.



Photo credits: Willow

FITS RIGHT IN

A treat for young mothers, this breast pump will surprise you how easy and useful technology can get! The Willow Breast Pump, designed in collaboration by Willow, IDEO, and Function Engineering—it is the first all-in-one breast pump that fits inside a bra.

BEAUTY REVOLUTION

The Oil of Olay product by P&G was not doing well in the 1990s. On researching their customer base they realized that most of their users were above 50 years of age. They started testing their product and reinventing it to make it relevant to the younger age groups as well. Olay was relaunched in 1999 as became a leading anti-aging cream over time.



WOMEN TAKE THE LEAD

Pepsico wanted to change the way products for women were designed in the company- with a pink wrapper. They looked closely at how women like to snack. Unlike men, they do not prefer to pour the rest of the packet into their mouth. So, the company came up with a plastic container inside a canister. The chips were also made smaller to introduce bite sized portions that were more pleasurable and hassle-free to snack on.



A GOOD TIME

Children were terrified to use the hospital services especially the scanning machines that required them to lie still while it made terrifying sounds. GE Healthcare not only changed the entire design of the rooms but also made adventure series. In the Coral City Adventure in the emergency room, the children have to sit in a yellow submarine and listen to the sound of harps whilst the procedure takes place. The Cozy Camp scans children in a specialized sleeping bag, under a starry sky – all while being in a camp setting.

NEXT-GEN RENTING

In 2009, Airbnb was almost bankrupt as people weren't booking their properties. After a survey they understood that the images used for the homes were too basic, low quality and in general unappealing. They commissioned photographers to click images of their listed properties. They did not even have a technical problem; this approach alone doubled their sales in the following weeks.



Photo credits: Framery

IT'S OFFICIAL

Framery's 2Q is designed for 4-6 people. It's the best place to co-create, brainstorm and have great meetings. The superior sound insulation system ensures that your meetings won't disturb the office – and the office noise won't disturb you. It works especially well in open plan offices for the millennials to promote an open working culture and allowing them to work as per task.

CRYPTO TECH

Conio is the first app fully mobile to buy, monitor and use Bitcoin. It is safe, user-friendly and fully integrated. The design offers an easy way to represent the idea of Bitcoin and, at the same time, offers a user-friendly mobile app that serves as Bitcoin wallet to buy, sell and use the cryptocurrency.

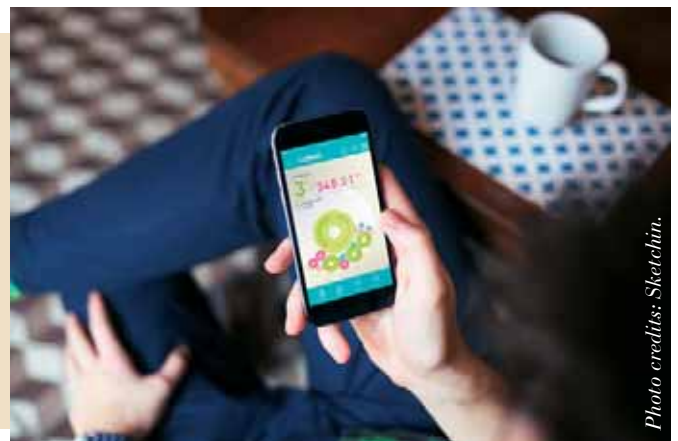


Photo credits: Sketchin.

SUSTAINABLY YOURS!

Mahindra Susten takes a step ahead in developing and prototyping their products using the method of Design Thinking. Dhruv Khosla and Ashwanth Rajeev tell us of the success stories of the journey so far.





Mahindra Susten has been changing lives ever since its inception, in the field of sustainability. Now, it is reinventing its own products to come out a stronger payer, much more than ever before. Along the journey of exploring multiple solutions to diverse problems that have been solved by different teams across Susten there is one emergent property – keeping the customer at the center of our universe.

Asking ourselves pertinent questions:

How do we have a greater impact in making peoples' lives better?
How do we seamlessly integrate renewable energy sources into daily activities?
How do we make generation of renewable energy more efficient?

Questions like these are currently driving us along the design path at Susten. It is through this lens that we will view the development of three products – Solar Water Pump, Solar Tracker and Module Cleaning Robot.



SOLAR WATER PUMP

Feeding a nation of over 1 Billion and providing livelihood to half the workforce, agriculture plays a vital role in the Indian Economy. Despite this, the sector is plagued with power shortages and lack of transmission infrastructure. One of the critical uses of electricity in the agrarian economy is for irrigation purposes. This was the problem we set out to solve – to provide an economical, easy to use and environmentally responsible solution for irrigation needs of farmers.

The next step was to understand what the users need from the pump used for irrigation, and from many interviews with farmers, three clear needs emerged:

- a. Zero maintenance requirement, since farms are remote and lack skilled manpower to carry out maintenance activities.
- b. Zero operating cost – Diesel engine operated pumps are expensive to operate and maintain.
- c. Easy to install and operate

These needs were then merged with our existing



Contribution by
SACHIN SINGH

number of solar panels to be able to pump 90,000 liters of water a day, enough to irrigate two acres.

A dual axis tracker was thus the ideal mounting system – with solar panels mounted on a pole, it minimizes the footprint on ground. However, an automatic dual axis tracking system would not be economically viable for the scale and scope of application. We thus developed a manually operated system that retains the same form factor as a dual axis tracker and can be adjusted during the day to maximize generation.

Safety Features

Ensuring smooth running of the pump is of prime importance. Thus, a smartphone application was developed that communicates with the solar pump, shows warnings and faults in the system to enable preventive maintenance along with remote monitoring and control options.

Continuous Improvement

To create a product is the beginning, not the end of the journey. Even as the first units are being commissioned, we are exploring avenues for improving what we have built, and the first such opportunity arises from fundamental economics of asset utilization. There are typically 300 days of sun available in India and pumping is required for only 100 of these days. Thus, asset utilization through single functionality is capped at 33%. We are thus working on means to use the set-up to power other associated activities such as threshing, drying, etc. which can take utilization up to 65%. In addition, there are options of feeding power back into the grid, once net metering is available in the region which can further increase utilization up to 80%.

proficiency in harnessing solar energy, and the idea of developing a solar powered water pump started to take shape.

The Module Mounting problem

Since land is used for agricultural purposes, mounting the solar panels on the ground was not an option. Since PV modules are the most expensive part of the system, it was imperative to minimize the number of modules used. This makes it imperative to capture as much sunlight as possible on the optimized



SOLAR TRACKER

We launched our first tracker, MSAT 100, two years ago and since roll-out, we have been actively listening to customers. Through all the conversations with stakeholders, across installation, operation and maintenance and purchase teams, two needs were the most commonly expressed – reliability and ease of installation.

Contribution by



SANDEEP BHOSALE



APURAV JAIN

What is a tracker?

There are two broad categories of ground mounted racking systems for solar power plants – Fixed tilt (including seasonal tilt) and Tracker systems.

Fixed tilt systems are static structures that keep the solar panels facing in a pre-defined direction throughout the year. Tracker systems are designed to move the PV panels along with the movement of the sun across the sky from East to West. Since the generation from a solar panel is maximum when the sun's rays are incident perpendicular to it, trackers typically deliver more than 15% generation gain over fixed tilt systems.

Rapid Prototyping

We thus started working on creating a tracker that would be as easy to install and maintain as a fixed tilt system and the MSAT 200 project was born. Since installation is a real-world activity, the best way to test it was through fast prototyping. It was important for the design team to be able to test the prototypes themselves, so a set-up was created on the outskirts of Mumbai where full scale prototypes were used to conduct time-motion studies and test critical components. This allowed us to iteratively improve the product over 6 variations in a span of 4 months, accelerating our ideation to testing and back to ideation loop, and allowing us to quickly test new ideas.

Reducing the count of activities required on site

A simple way to make the system easier to install is to reduce the number of activities that need to be completed on site. A typical solar module is a rectangular panel with aspect ratio of 1:2, and MSAT 100 deployed one module in portrait orientation. By installing modules in landscape orientation and deploying three modules in the same width as two could fit in MSAT 100, we realized a 50% reduction in number of foundations, cable terminations, controllers, batteries and sensors, thus reducing the time and cost of installation for MSAT 200. With fewer components delivering the same output, there are fewer things that can go wrong with a system, thus improving system reliability.



MODULE CLEANING ROBOT

Contribution by



ASHWAJIT WAHANE



NINAD WATWE

One of the easiest ways to increase generation from an installed solar plant is to keep the panels clean. Soiling loss, accounts for up to 3% of losses in generation, with manual cleaning of panels done at regular intervals. This, however, poses significant issues:

- Safety of manpower during cleaning – cleaning of PV modules typically happens at night. Since areas are remote and lighting is low, snake bites, tripping, falls, etc. are real threats.
- Cost of manpower – Local contracts typically provide manpower for cleaning at a premium, driving up Operation and maintenance costs.
- Reliability / efficacy of cleaning – It is difficult to track the actual number of panels cleaned by the team and whether the cleaning is consistent across the plant.

There are alternate tractor mounted solutions that drive between rows to clean the modules. These, however, required higher clear distance between two rows and become difficult to accommodate in certain tracker based installations.

We challenged ourselves to create a fully automated cleaning system that works seamlessly with our tracker, shares hardware and electronics components and delivers guaranteed cleaning of solar panels, keeping soiling loss less than 1% and thus eliminates the exposure of workforce to possible safety issues during routine cleaning. We are at an advanced prototyping stage for the cleaning robot and have deployed a test unit at one of our sites to gather data on its performance parameters.

Solar water pump, Solar tracker and Module cleaning robot are three of our success stories, while there are a couple of more in the making. A resounding vision, a passionate team empathetic to the customers' needs, and a relentless approach to keep learning have been the key ingredients to these product development success stories. ■■■

WRITERS:



DHRUV KHOSLA



ASWANTH RAJEEV

Changing the Design Story

Mehr Arneja gives us an insider view of FirstCry.com and how they overcame the challenge of redesigning their stores.

After the consolidation with FirstCry, cutting costs to the bare minimum became a critical imperative for Mahindra Retail Limited. At the store level, the reduced margins for the stores meant that the high rental cost became even more difficult to cover than before. We also believed that most MRPL stores were much larger than they should be and 'right-sizing' them was the way to move forward. We looked at basic approaches – making the stores smaller in their existing locations was not possible because of physical constraints or the unwillingness of the landlords. So instead, we moved to smaller stores in a new location in the same catchment areas.

The "Mantri" Challenge

Following these principles, around 20 stores were relocated or resized across the country. In most cases,

the resized stores were (20%-30%) smaller than their earlier versions. However, one of our oldest stores in Bangalore in Mantri Mall posed a huge challenge. This store was spread over 5000 sq. ft. and one of the largest in the MRPL network. Unfortunately, it was also one of the largest loss-making stores because of the exorbitant rent. The losses increased even more after the consolidation with FirstCry due to the reduced margins. We were exploring an alternate store location in the same mall that was around 1500 - 2000 sq. ft, but there were no such alternatives available. The Mall was and continues to do very well and therefore we did not want to exit the mall. The only alternative available was a 750 sq. ft. store.

The proposed move to a 750 sq. ft. store from a 5000 sq. ft. store seemed impossible. There was skepticism and resistance from both within the company and our principals i.e. FirstCry. It was





believed that a 750 sq. ft. store would be too small and the inventory on display would be a fraction of what would be required to run the store, thus compromising the sale to such a large extent that the reduction of rent would become meaningless. Besides the practical concerns about the space, this view was also being driven by the conventional wisdom that larger stores = more inventory = more sales. 'Bigger is better' was the entrenched belief in our own teams. Our average store size had been around 3000 sq. ft.

We decided to challenge the naysayers, firm in the belief that customers, especially those coming to a specialty store like ours and in a category like a mother and a child where needs are very specific, don't really care about the store size as the primary factor in making their decision to visit. What matters most to them is the overall experience which of course includes the right products to fulfill their needs. We believed that with a design thinking approach and a creative imagination we would be able to fulfill our customers' needs in a small store as well.

We approached our creative and design agency Ether who understood our brief and went about redesigning the entire store, but with a completely different approach towards store design than what was the standard Mahindra Retail model. Three main elements summarize the end result:

1. The obvious one was optimizing the available space. This covered redesigning many fixtures to make them very efficient in terms of their size and storage along with display capacity. Using the height instead of just the floor space – Suddenly the store size was not just being seen in "square feet" but "cubic feet".
2. A mindset changed in the way the store would have to operate. The norm in our stores has been (as

with most retail) is to display all the merchandise in the store. There would be small storerooms but meant only to hold very large items and as a holding area for other products that would have just arrived from the warehouse and were to be unpacked and put on display. And yet for a lot of our categories like bath and skin care, diapers, creams and lotions we were used to displaying stock representing 60 days (sometimes even more) sales on the shelves. This made no sense. Even if we were to hold the stock in the store, there was no need to display all the merchandise on the shelves at a time. If we changed this we could save precious display space. So, the new design created storage bins and drawers at the ground level and on the walls over the display shelves. These were spaces that were outside of the normal display zone that customers can normally access but were aesthetically blended with the rest of the display shelves, gondolas, slat walls etc. The idea was to display just enough to ensure the day's sales requirements were met and the balance was kept in these storage spaces. But to do this the store operating system and the mindset would have to change – The moment one of these products was bought and went off the shelf they were to be replaced from the stock housed in these specialized storage spaces. This may seem like a small change, but it isn't that simple because it meant changing years of established practice.

3. The design agency was also mandated to use our existing fixtures designed for larger stores and reused them in this store albeit with some modifications so that we could minimize the capital expenditure cost of the resizing and avoid ordering new fixtures.



The “Reborn Mantri”

Let us walk through some of the creative space saving elements of the new store:

The first change was made to the size of the gondolas. Instead of making them smaller and reducing the strength, we decided to take advantage of its strength and make it taller. The lower part of the gondola is now converted to store extra stock which does not need to be on display always. Also, instead of using peg hooks (hooks used to hang and display apparel in a retail outlet) at the sides of the gondola's (gondola end caps), we converted them into shelves which could display baby care (lotions, creams, shampoos etc.).

The second challenge was the display of large products like cots, cradles, and strollers etc. that take up a lot of display space. Let us see what we did some of these:

STROLLERS:

Strollers were folded and kept vertically upright one next to the other. When a customer would visit, a CRE (Customer Relationship Executive) could open them up as it was very easy to do so, give and demo and then fold them back into their display space. This also served another purpose which is to demonstrate to the customer the ease with which these products could be folded and stored in smaller spaces when not in use.

CAR SEATS:

Here we used the height of the store instead of the length to display and kept selected pieces right above the stroller racks. For boxes of toys as well, we used the height instead of horizontal space and made stacking shelves for the same.

COTS & CRADLES:

These are the biggest space guzzlers. While we provided space for up to two completely assembled pieces to be displayed, for the rest of the designs only the headboards were displayed in a custom-built stand. This allows customers to touch and feel the material, see the colour and texture but without us having to display the fully assembled product.

APPAREL:

This is the largest category for us in terms of sales and margins. Apparel as a category also accounts for the largest display space in our stores. We worked on the same principle of displaying fully the minimum range required and keeping other options folded neatly in an alternating arrangement of hanger display and stacking shelves.

Epilogue

It has been about 9 months since the new and compact Mantri Mall store has been operating. Earlier the high rental costs made this store one of the highest loss makers despite a strong top line, incurring a loss of around 5 lakhs a month. Post the right-sizing this store has begun to break even. The area has reduced by 85%, Sales have also come down but by 38% while costs have reduced by 63%. The sales productivity (Sales Per Sq Ft) a key metric in retail has increased by 358%. From Rs. 4,944 to Rs. 20,480. This store should become a profitable store with a little push and moderate increase in sales. The summary below tells a story of how design brought a store back from the brink of closure.



“

Hi everyone!

I am Sherpa. Yes that's right, just Sherpa. I suppose I could tell you what my name is, but I think it doesn't really matter. You see, sometimes you love something so much in life, it just becomes who you are. I was born in the Himalayas, and the mountains helped my parents raise me. My whole life I spent on the kangri (mountains), going through difficult paths in difficult weather. It taught me more than masterji could ever teach me at school.

The mountains have guided me in life, so now it is the joy of my life to guide people to the mountains. And so, Sherpa is who I am.

I was told that there are people in the city who are also setting off on a new journey, so here I am to get you started – on a journey of transforming yourself. In my experience of journeys, the greatest challenge is to begin. I admit that is difficult. But that is why you have me!

I do not have lessons. Lessons are found in schools, from masterjis and in the beautiful kangri. All I have are stories, life's experiences and the little bits of wisdom from my humble life. With that, I will try to help you find your way.

So let's get started!

Yours truly,
Sherpa

”

Breaking New Ground

Aligning with its new brand identity and stepping into uncharted territory, Mahindra Accelo enters the B2C segment for the first time since its inception.

It was mid-2017 when Mahindra Intertrade re-branded itself to Mahindra Accelo, an exercise necessary for the company to expand its vision and align it with its growth plans. From basic steel production trading, that laid the foundations of the Mahindra Group at large, the entity has recognized further potential to develop and reach businesses. The company, hitherto restricted to the B2B model, in a daring venture, now opens itself to the B2C segment. With an agile business strategy in place, this venture effortlessly fits in with the brand's vision to expand.

The idea seen saw the light of day at an annual conference in Delhi, where Sumit Issar, MD, Mahindra Accelo, said that going ahead, Intertrade should have a plethora of products and brands. From this seed germ of an idea, the concept of 'de-commoditization' germinated. De-commoditization simply means qualities that starkly differentiate a product from its competitors. It necessarily focuses on the value-add to the target audience. In an economy with a copycat mindset, a differentiating factor holds the key a company's performance.

From plain-jane steel trading, the seeds of which were sown pre-independence, for the first time was there an initiative to produce a branded steel commodity - Purlins. Purlins are horizontal beams



placed along the length of a roof that in turn support the roof. A core team, constituting of Anshuman Ghosh, Anupam Tewary and Omkar Gawde among a few others was constituted to understand what it would take to meet this demand in-house, and the feasibility of producing this item. The team did the market research, identified and registered a brand (PURTEC) and laid out the legal/semi legal framework like a brand manual, dealer agreements etc.

Sumit Issar, MD, Mahindra Accelo talks about what the process and work that went in by the teams for the project. "We perceived a huge demand from the solar and energy suppliers market. We are already in the steel production business and hence in it would be great if we could meet the Susten demand for purlins

“

Rising beyond the ordinary with additional support from higher management, a whole spectrum of research and loads of trial and error later, the team has achieved a very significant milestone for the organization.

”

in-house. We recognized people with the right aptitude to work on this project. The chosen team showed a lot of enthusiasm. As a brand, we support people who want to take the lead and so we did. When we started the project nobody knew much about purlins. We had two teams the manufacturing team and the sales team. The manufacturing team was mainly doing blanking for the past 10 years. So when they got into this project they had no idea about roll forming and other procedures.

The manufacturing team really pulled together



Anshuman Ghosh, Omkar Gawde, Anupam Tewary

their capabilities, they learnt, went abroad, got trained, they kept reading and visiting areas to learn more. They have now been able to set up one of the finest plants in the country. The way I see it, the team had the hunger in them to do something new and innovative and most importantly to learn. The young team was always ready and enthusiastic to take leadership roles to implement this project. They've done a fabulous job. On the sales side the team had not too much prior experience of the engineering, construction and solar industries. They visited sites and understood the whole industry first. In the last couple of months, the knowledge they have gathered on both the solar and construction industry is phenomenal. They have a lot of market and customer insights and we have built our product based on that. Both the teams have actually, without much handholding, learned on their own. We stand for empowering people, here at Accelo. We give them the training, but if they have the hungry to do things on their own we will always be there to support them."

With no real budget or bandwidth to take up the researching stage of a project like this, the team put together their resources and expertise. Truly, they accepted no limits. Talking about the team's work in the past year Anshuman Ghosh says, "We were fortunate to receive external support and assistance of Gaurav Gupta, who was a distributor for Rebars when I worked with Tata Steel. He looks after the Madhya Pradesh area. After taking permission from



our MD for scoping (to identify a demand and a gap in which we could sell our product), the team, headed to Indore, Jabalpur, Katni, etc. On regular visits and travels we realized that pre-engineered buildings are forming a major part of new developments. Purlins form a part of these pre-engineered structures and that is where we identified a bigger opportunity to enter the construction segment”.

Commenting on the same, Anupam Tewary says, “Purlin making is a very low-tech operation and there are no entry barriers. It is an oligopoly. However, we were very clear from Day 1 that we would not compete with the generic purlins being sold in the market, and would, in fact create a niche in what was basically a very generic product, and branding it was the first step”. There are a very few differences between a good or bad purlin. Good steel is definitely the key, the rest is all in the customization. Talking about how the offering is going to be unique to the market Ghosh says, “We wanted to create an excellent production line and use exceptional quality of steel. We already have excellent relations with the industry and a healthy

business relation with steel mills. For this production line we will be using steel from suppliers like POSCO, JSW, Nisshin Steel, etc. Our product line will be the first branded purlin, the first to have a sticker on it. We will be introducing it in the niche premium segment”.

Tewary adds, “After meeting influential architects and consultants extensively in Pune, Nasik, Mumbai, etc., we understood that while this was a generic item, there was a latent demand for high quality purlins, and this would grow in the future once the new Building Code came in force”.

A whole new section has been introduced at the existing Nashik plant. Putting up this line didn’t require too much additional space. Soon these lines will be up and running. After testing the end product, the data will be published in brochures. The trial phase has been successful so far. The high speed automatic line will be fed with the basic cassettes to achieve the conventional C and Z purlins.

Another important part was branding the product. Quality-wise it has definitely set the bar high, but the right visibility and branding too is required. “Initially



we wanted to name the product 'Prabal' that stood for strength and durability. Something that even the construction workers could relate with as it was in Hindi. But apparently a vendor in the North had already registered the name. We came up with 20-50 names and finally settled on 'PURTEC', 'PUR' that came from purlins and 'TEC' from technology. The name and logo went through a rigorous feedback process. It was sent to all our factories and plants for feedback. We wanted to understand what motivates the first level and second level user and arrived at a conclusion about 'PURTEC' being the one that resonated the most with the audience. We worked closely with brand legal and followed the guidelines to have our name and logo registered. This entire syndication process of the logo happened alongside the scoping process and took around 6 months in all. The logo was sketched by our very own Anshuman Ghosh", said Omkar Gawde.

Other than price and features, the availability and service experience also needs to be looked into. Ghosh says, "The aim is to distribute Purtec like an FMCG product by focusing on the consumer's buying

experience. Unlike a traditional 'loha mandi', this is a fair priced offering. The sales strategy is two pronged—direct sales and sales through distributors. The reason for this approach is to maintain a direct touch with niche customers as they will have the added assurance of dealing with Mahindra. While for regular sales, distributors will be used. We are right now only targeting the western region. We will be working closely with trusted distributors of Tata Steel like Laxmi Steels for Mumbai and Pune, Maheswari Steel Mart for Nashik and Aurangabad and, Global Enterprises for Vidharbha and Madhya Pradesh". The trust that these channels place in the Mahindra Accelo as a brand, has been a key factor in the developing stages of this product for receiving cross sectional support and assistance.

The sheer audacity of the team to think of entering a new market is commendable. Rising beyond the ordinary with additional support from higher management, a whole spectrum of research and loads of trial and error later, the team has achieved a very significant milestone for the organization. ■■■

Golden Times

Bakul Sheth, is retiring after serving Mahindra and Mahindra for over 40 years. We capture his journey so far.

Bakul Sheth joined Mahindra and Mahindra in February 1977. He is also a qualified company secretary and holds an Associate membership of the Institute of the Company Secretaries of India (ACS). He has worked in the Corporate Taxation department of M&M from February 1977 to March 1985. On obtaining the ACS degree he was transferred to the Corporate Secretaries department of M&M where he handled secretarial and corporate laws related functions in the areas of compliance, etc. In October 1996, he was transferred to the Office of the Executive Director and Group CFO of M&M. His responsibilities included fulfilling secretarial and corporate laws related statutory formalities on behalf of the ED for the directorships held by him. In April 1999, he was given additional responsibility as the Company Secretary (CS) of Mahindra Steel Service Centre Limited (MSSCL). He

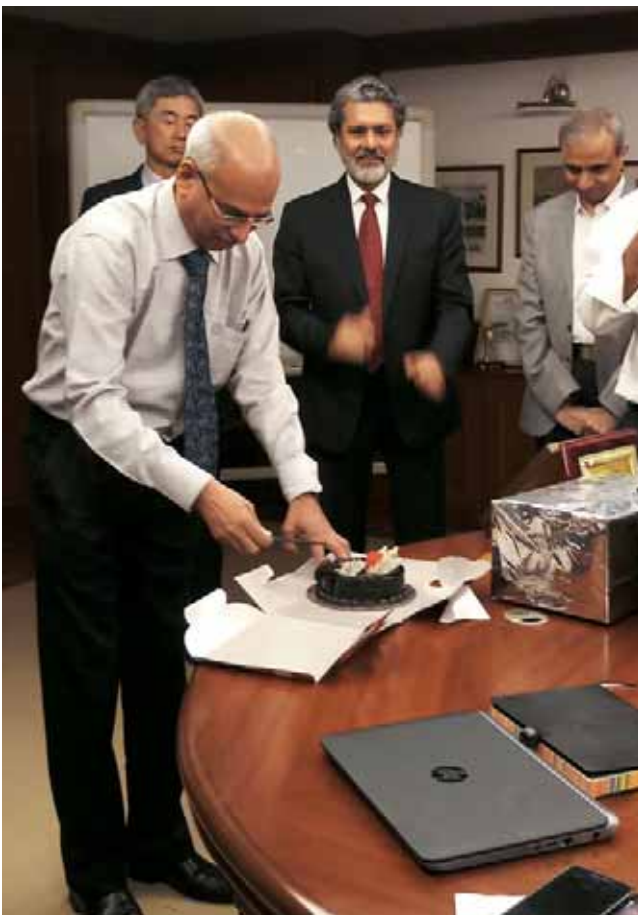
resigned from this post on 1st April 2018. With this he has been the longest serving Company Secretary in a company, within the Mahindra ecosystem by serving MSSCL for 19 years. He was given a heart-warming farewell party from the company. Bakul Sheth is currently serving his extension of being a part of M&M till the 30th of September 2018.

Here are glimpses of our candid chat with Bakul Sheth.

Q. What was your motivation for staying so long with the company?

There were always better prospects offered by M&M for professional growth. As soon as I got an ACS degree I was transferred to the right department. Another very important thing that has kept me going through the years that the company follows ethical business practices to the core.





Q. What is your favourite part of working here?

My supportive seniors, co-operative colleagues and bringing it all together favorable working atmosphere.

(Q. What kept you going through the tough times at Mahindra?

Oh, there were some really tough times to get through in all these years. I have always received unconditional support and guidance from seniors that have helped me get past them.

Q. What is your most memorable moment(s) here?

Handling responsibilities as Company Secretary of Mahindra Steel Service Centre Limited (MSSCL) for 19 years.

Q. A message you would like to give the employees of Mahindra?

Trust the Company to recognize your hard work and talent.

As the long relationship of Bakul Sheth with Mahindra and Mahindra comes to an end, our leadership bids farewell with some kind words. ■■■



BAKUL SHETH

"Bakul has been with the Mahindra Group for so long that it will be difficult to imagine the company without him. But our loss will be probably be his family's gain. Thank you Bakul for your long service and for your contribution. We will miss you".

Anand Mahindra

"I have the privilege of knowing Bakul for over four decades. The most important quality I admired in him was 'Always willing to help and that too with a smile'. I wish him many years of good health and happiness. God bless."

Arun Nanda

"Bakul, has been an amazing 'lifer' in the true Mahindra tradition, and has participated in a journey which traces a large part of Mahindra history. He has contributed in many diverse ways, and with a smile –we wish him a happy peaceful next phase after retirement".

Zhooben Bhiwandiwalla

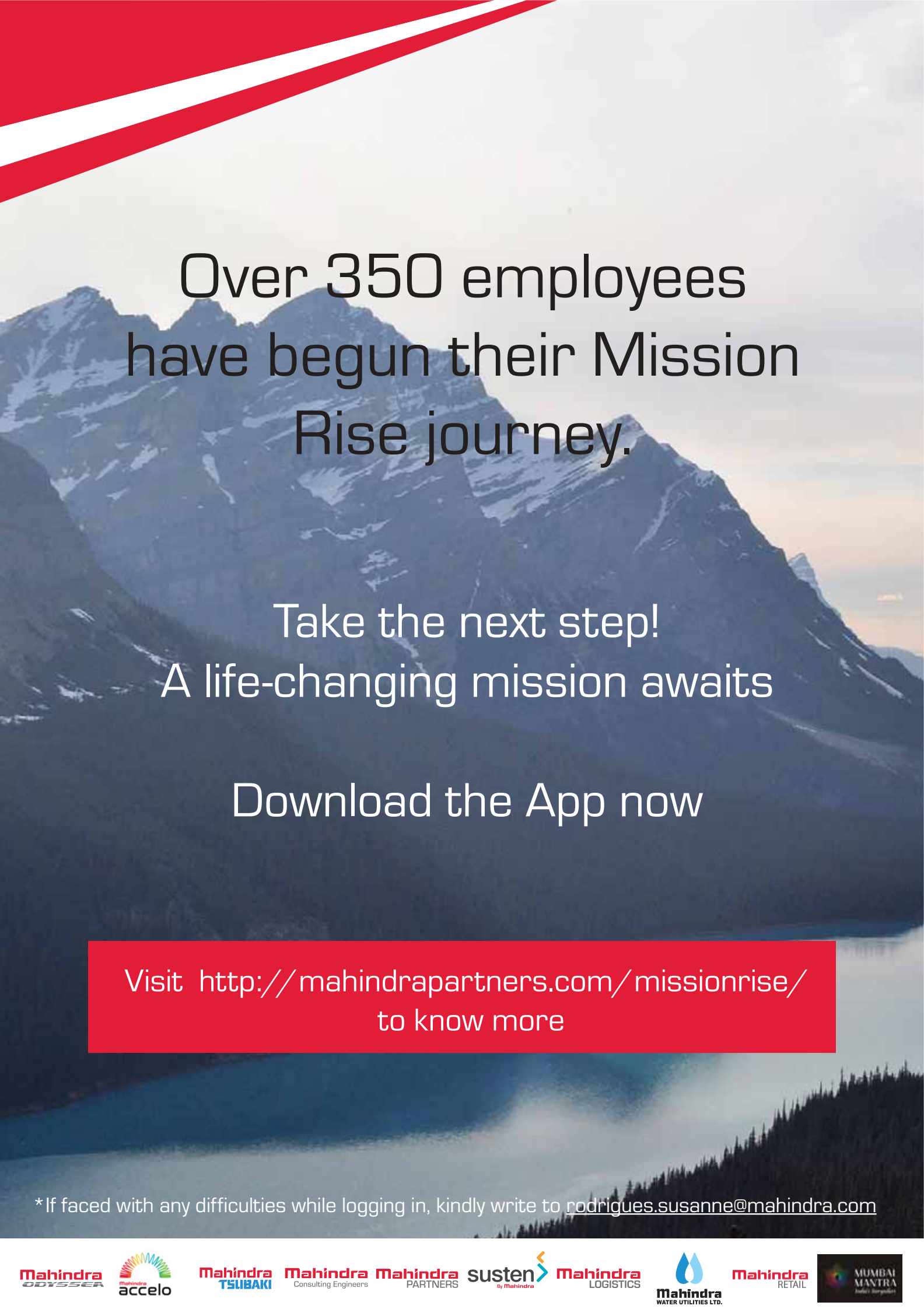
"More than 40 years ago when I was in Corporate Taxation, I had to strengthen the tax team in a period of crisis. It was then that I selected Bakul Sheth, a commerce graduate amongst many applicants at that time. He not only worked hard with dedication and sincerity on the assignments given to him but, simultaneously, worked on his self-development and became a *qualified Company Secretary in a few years'* time. Over the years, he worked with Secretarial Department and, later, was Company Secretary for Mahindra Steel Service Centre Limited (MSSCL). During the period when we worked together, what *always impressed me was his efficiency, passion for perfection and, above all, his unflinching loyalty. On his retirement I will say "Bakul, you will be missed"*.

Bharat Doshi

"I have had the privilege of knowing Bakul for many years now, and I am delighted to share a few words about him because he has been a delight to work with. Bakul combines qualities of head, heart and soul *which are rare to find. Add to that the commitment and passion which he brings to bear on everything that he does and you have a truly exceptional person. It is people like him who make Mahindra what it is, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and salute him for all that he has done for Mahindra, and for all that he is as a human being and an outstanding colleague.*

Bakul, please accept my best wishes as you move into the next Chapter of Life. Do keep in touch. Warmest regards and very best wishes from a friend and admirer".

Rajeev Dubey



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A Learning Journey Like no other...

Eighteen months of projects later, the first batch of the Signature Learning Program (SLP) culminates.





Mahindra Partners' Signature Learning Program began its journey in June 2016 and after 7 intensive phases, the first batch convoked in April 2018. In the course of the program, our participants have rubbed shoulders with a Secretary in the Government of India, an Admiral and a Supreme Court advocate. They've visited some of India's most iconic sites and institutions- Auroville, the Golconda Fort and the NCPA. And walked 55 kilometers in one endless, sand-swept day on the beaches of Goa.

And yes, they spent time in the classroom as well.

The SLP was structured around 3 pillars – Knowing Yourself, Knowing your People and Knowing your Environment. Knowing Yourself is the first step in any developmental journey and a set of sessions like Gallup's Strength finder, Finding Self through Stories and 1-1 Coaching sessions with a certified coach helped participants understand their strengths and vulnerabilities.

As most of the batch had already assumed or was shortly to assume managerial responsibilities, knowing your people was an essential dimension. The Relationship Management Program, based on Blake and Mouton's task vs people- orientation managerial grid, was a key component here. Personal Effectiveness was another session which helped participants examine and improve the way they represented themselves to the people around them – in meetings, in conversations or in writing. The Coaching for Leadership program trained participants to take on the mantle of coaches in relation to their teams and stakeholders.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of the SLP, however, was Knowing Your Environment. This section was premised on the fact that successful leaders



are whole brained - they exhibit a mix of left and right brain capabilities. The SLP consciously avoided the common error of focusing exclusively on left brain capabilities by laying emphasis on the liberal arts.

Four entire days were devoted to understanding India, to deepening the debates of the day - reservations, liberalization, and nationalism- by drawing threads from the noise of the present back to a firm foundation of context. The other interesting sessions included Geopolitics, Music and Wine Appreciation and Psychology.

The batch had the opportunity to interact with some extraordinary leaders from the Mahindra group - Mr Anand Mahindra, Mr Bharat Doshi, Mr Ramesh Iyer and the entire leadership of Mahindra Partners. And, of course, some inspiring stories from the beyond of business. A Kargil veteran, the founder of a women-only MBA college and an organization that raises funds for autistic children. To round it off, participants worked on 3-month projects with NGOs and deployed their professional skills to help these organizations.

While the SLP was filled with out-of-the-box experiences, functional training and skill building was by no means neglected. Workshops on Business Finance, Design Thinking, Strategy and Digitization ensured a strong focus on fundamentals. Faculty from XLRI, Jamshedpur, IIM - Ahmedabad, SP Jain, St Xavier's and TISS ensured that learning quality was always top-notch. Batch 2 of the SLP has now been announced, and a heartening 100 applications received for the seats available. The SLP team is certain that the program will once again select the best and make them better.



Text: PRANAV PRIMLANI



GAMES OF THE MIND

Bringing together passionate young minds, tough case studies and gripping presentations, Mind Games Season 4 was no short of adventure at each stage.

Mind Games is a Talent Development initiative held every year wherein managers from Mahindra Partners Portfolio companies take up business cases of other portfolio companies and recommend solutions. Participants are judged over 3 successive rounds based on the criteria of **Research and Analysis, Innovativeness & Depth of solution and Quality of presentation**. Over the past four years, Mind Games has grown from an idea to an integral part of Mahindra Partners' talent development ecosystem.

This year, we had 35 teams who participated in Round 1 of which 16 teams made it to the Round 2, where a Jury comprising our portfolio company CEOs selected the 7 top teams for the Grand Finale. In the last leg of the Mind Games: Season 4 – the Grand Finale, the teams presented to an audience comprising the senior leadership of Mahindra Partners and the Mahindra group. A jury selected the final winning team and runner-up from the top 7 teams. The top two teams then got an opportunity to make a presentation to Anand Mahindra on their ideas.



What it takes to win

Mind Games Season 4 winners, Team VioMA tell us about what it takes to win.

Mahindra Marine was started with Mahindra group's vision to become a 'Full line mobility solution provider' spanning across Land, Water & Air. Under Blue Economy, there is an immense business potential for boat manufacturers as Indian market is poised for growth with the government taking

responsibility of setting up the infrastructure under its Sagarmala initiative. These initiatives will give a boost to the personal and commercial boating market. This inspired us to work on the Mahindra Marine case study of – 'Product-strategy alignment opportunities in the wake of the changing policy scenario'.



Finland is one of the largest utilizers of inland waterways for commercial and passenger transport. Our case was based on utilizing waterways (power of water). In the Finnish language, voima means energy. Interestingly, the initials of all 3 team members 'V' Vaibhav, 'M' Mitesh and 'A' Anshuman were also gelling with the Finnish word voima. Hence the team was named VoiMA. All three members were based out of same plant from Pune location. So, coordination was smooth. We used to have meetings during lunch and mostly had to sit post office to focus on the case study.

The team evaluated various initiatives and announcements of the Center and State level to understand the market demand and to understand emerging product segments which are likely to witness an increase in demand. The team identified

the likely impact of policy changes and infrastructure development on High Networth Individuals (HNI) demand. We identified standard product platforms and new areas of the marine ecosystem where Mahindra Marine can enter. Multiple group synergy opportunities were identified as we proceeded in each stage.

Our research mainly consisted of studying developed markets across the globe. The team touched upon 100+ stakeholders during primary and secondary research. We spoke to fishermen in Ferry wharf Dadar and Princess Dock - Mumbai Port Trust, Railway passengers at Harbour, Central and Western railway stations, competitors at Gateway of India and Allahabad near National Waterway I (NW I), employees of Mahindra Marine, etc.

We visited Mahindra Marine's manufacturing facility in Ambarnath to understand the process of boat making, right from design to production stage and gathered insights on the marine supply chain. We

“
The team had intense discussions with the Marine team on the execution of our ideas. It took over 122 calls and many meetings to put this project together.
 ”

visited on weekdays by coordinating the availability of our buddy and other team members for conducting interviews, group brainstorming sessions, feasibility studies of our ideas, etc. We gained insights on the production process of yachts, existing company projects, economics of marine supply chain, ROI (return on investment) studies / calculations etc.

The team had intense discussions with the Marine team on the execution of our ideas. Since we belong to Mahindra Accelo which recently achieved Japan Institute of Plant Maintenance's Total Productive Maintenance (JIPM TPM) Excellence 'A' category award, we had opportunity to share all our lean practices to reduce cycle time of their boat manufacturing processes and improve quality. Our buddy supported us right from verifying the data, the



approach and patiently listened to all our ideas. As we were based in Pune, it took over 122 calls and many meetings to put this project together.

We utilized learnings from Harvard Manage Mentor (HMM). Kudos to the organizing team for selecting and imparting excellent trainings to improve the skills of the participants. The training program conducted on 'Design Thinking' supplemented in improving our execution strategy while the training on 'Presentation Skills' by Purple Path boosted our presentation skills.

This journey made us meet the best people from the Mahindra Group and we are definitely thankful for their time and effort in being a part of this program. We were introduced to various new ideas which we learned and utilized too while preparing our business improvement/development strategy as we went ahead, each stage.

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it". We are thankful to the Mind Games Season 4 team and the Mahindra Partners team for providing such a unique platform to work on real time business problems which helps improve our competency and challenge conventional thinking.

Heartfelt Gratitude! #AlternativeThinking
#AcceptingNoLimits #Rise
Team VoiMA- Mitesh Jadav, Anshuman Reza and
Vaibhav Gore.

Team Eklavya, The Runner's Up, speak of their journey.

"We are Team "Eklavya" (symbolic of the thirst of acquiring skills as portrayed in the mythological fable Mahabharata) we took the case study- Should Mace

reposition Mahindra Namaste as a capacity building and skill development hub..

MACE has a fairly extensive area of influence although it is one of the smaller companies of the Mahindra group. This case study challenged us at each step and at every round we felt that our expertise on the case was multiplying, sky was the limit in pioneering these solutions.

The case study became like an obsession to us and in a matter of 5 months, it became all we thought, spoke and worked on. Whilst living this journey we came so much closer as a team. Parking out time from our busy schedules, beyond working hours, 7 days a week, round the clock the mind games magic had totally smitten us. After the Mind Games fever has subsided, we feel that the experience has acted like a catalyst in both our personal and professional lives bracing new challenges head on with a new vigour and passion.

This Mind Games Journey of 5 months was full of learning, satisfaction, fun and triumph. I have enjoyed every bit of working with my wonderful team and grateful to mentors and my seniors for their support. This has given a different dimension to my personality and has left a memorable mark in my career". Team Eklavya, Nandhini Ganesan, Surmai Kaushik, Mamta Shetty.

The business challenge that is posed here is a fairly complex one, and it excited us to dissect the case to understand the granularities of the problem at hand. We wanted to work on a case which provided us a sector which we could relate to - capacity building, CSR, skill development, consulting and provide a solution which really brings about a positive socio-economic change in the society.





A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Leadership Lessons through the Camera's Lens

This year's Mahindra Partners Senior Leadership Conclave saw some very interesting presentations, and perhaps the most absorbing one was made by a seventy-five-year-old man with the energy of a twenty-one-year-old; called Raghu Rai. For those of you who don't know Raghu Rai, he is one of India's greatest photographers; a Padma Shree with a remarkable career spanning over five decades. What makes Raghu Rai stand out is the sheer volume and quality of his work. He has shot some of India's most iconic people; been at the scene of many historic moments over the past five decades, and his photographs reveal the story of contemporary India with great sensitivity, love, and honesty. While viewing Raghu Rai's photographs, you realize that there are some interesting parallels one can draw between what goes into creating great photographs and the leadership skills required in leading organizations. At first glance, they seem like completely different worlds. But look a little closer, and the picture that emerges is an interesting one; where the photographer and the business leader share the same artistic skills even though the landscapes that they work on belong to different worlds. Let's take a look at these parallels:

Being in the right place

It all starts with being in the right place. Often the difference between a good photograph and a truly memorable one is a matter of a few feet to the left

or the right. Great photographers have this instinctive ability to know exactly where they need to be to take that memorable picture. They think ahead; for example, where the sun will be in the sky twenty minutes from now; or if you are doing street photography what's the most interesting background to shoot against. Here is a very poignant picture of Mother Theresa taken by Raghu Rai; the expression on her face revealing the compassion and love she was known for all through her life. It requires great skill for a photographer to be well positioned to take a photograph such as this one. Notice how the light on The Mother's face brings in that strong emotion that transforms the entire picture.

For the business leader "being in the right place" takes on a different meaning. It's not about the physical location but the "right place" is more about "the right state of mind". Unlike the photographer who expresses his views through pictures, the business leader uses words, language, and actions to paint a picture of what's important. In large, geographically spread out organizations, most people will rarely meet senior leaders face to face, the opportunities to do so are quite limited. But with technology, the language of the leader can reach everyone. And it's this language that communicates, what the leader values and stands for; the picture that a leader paints of the past, the present, and the future say a lot of where he stands, and it's this picture that often decides whether an organization will prosper or stagnate.



Seizing the moment

Serendipity is often the hallmark of great photographs. Sometimes opportunities are visible for very short periods of time, and if you are not ready to grab them they are lost. Many of the best photographs taken over the last 100 years have been so memorable because the photographer seized the moment. Raghu Rai's mentor during his initial years, Henri Cartier Bresson had a phrase for this; he called it a "Defining Moment". We've all heard the phrase: "Here today gone tomorrow". In photography, it is probably a lot shorter "here for a second and gone before you can blink your eye". The photographer has to be very fast because what you see through the lens at this moment will never be repeated again. Here's an image that Raghu Rai took very early in his career. When he first focused on the picture of sparrows, the large black bird was not there. He sensed something incomplete about the image and waited. And then suddenly, this black bird swoops in and lands right in the center of the frame; and is barely on the ground for a couple of seconds before it flies off again. This picture was taken in a matter of a couple of seconds. You have to be fast and



ready and if you are not, that magic moment is lost.

This is so true in our organizations as well and it plays out in so many different ways. It could be a business opportunity that will be lost if you don't move very fast; it could be paying close attention to what is being said in a meeting that could then lead to a path-breaking new idea. Complete attention to what is in front of you at any point in time is key to seizing the moment. Raghu Rai never goes anywhere without his camera; he knows that some of the great opportunities are often a matter of chance, and to convert chance into good luck you need to be in the



right place and prepared. While the photographer has to literally keep his eyes open all the time looking out for fleeting opportunities; in organizations, the best leaders do that too.

Many pictures all in one

Many great photographs taken by Raghu Rai and other photographers have multiple elements layered into them that somehow draw the viewer in. As a viewer, the picture has tremendous appeal but it's difficult to explain why, because intuitively while

looking at photographs, we rarely deconstruct them. This is an award-winning photograph taken by Raghu Rai, of a woman praying in Delhi. There is something very special about this image. It's not one or two elements but many elements all coming together to create an image that draws you in. To understand this better, use your hand and cover just the woman praying in the foreground. What you are left with is an interesting skyline of Delhi but nothing more. Now cover the image of the mosque in the background and you lose the context of where you are and the connection between the mosque and the subject.

Now cover the entire sky with your hand, and what is now lost is the beauty of the place and the time of day. Look at the number of stories and layers that this photograph possesses in order to evoke a certain feeling in the viewer. This ability of simultaneously juxtapositioning multiple elements in photographs is what distinguishes great photographers like Raghu Rai. There are so many subplots that all come together to convey a memorable story.

The best leaders in organizations follow the same approach. They have this ability to understand a situation from multiple perspectives, look at all the elements present before them and then make decisions that are reflective of the current situation and holistic enough to preempt all the implications that arise out of that decision. In photography, there is

nothing like the perfect picture, while in organizations there is nothing like the perfect decision. But when the photographer and the leader can acknowledge and balance all the elements, what is then created is something meaningful and valuable.

A Sharp focus and blurring out the unnecessary

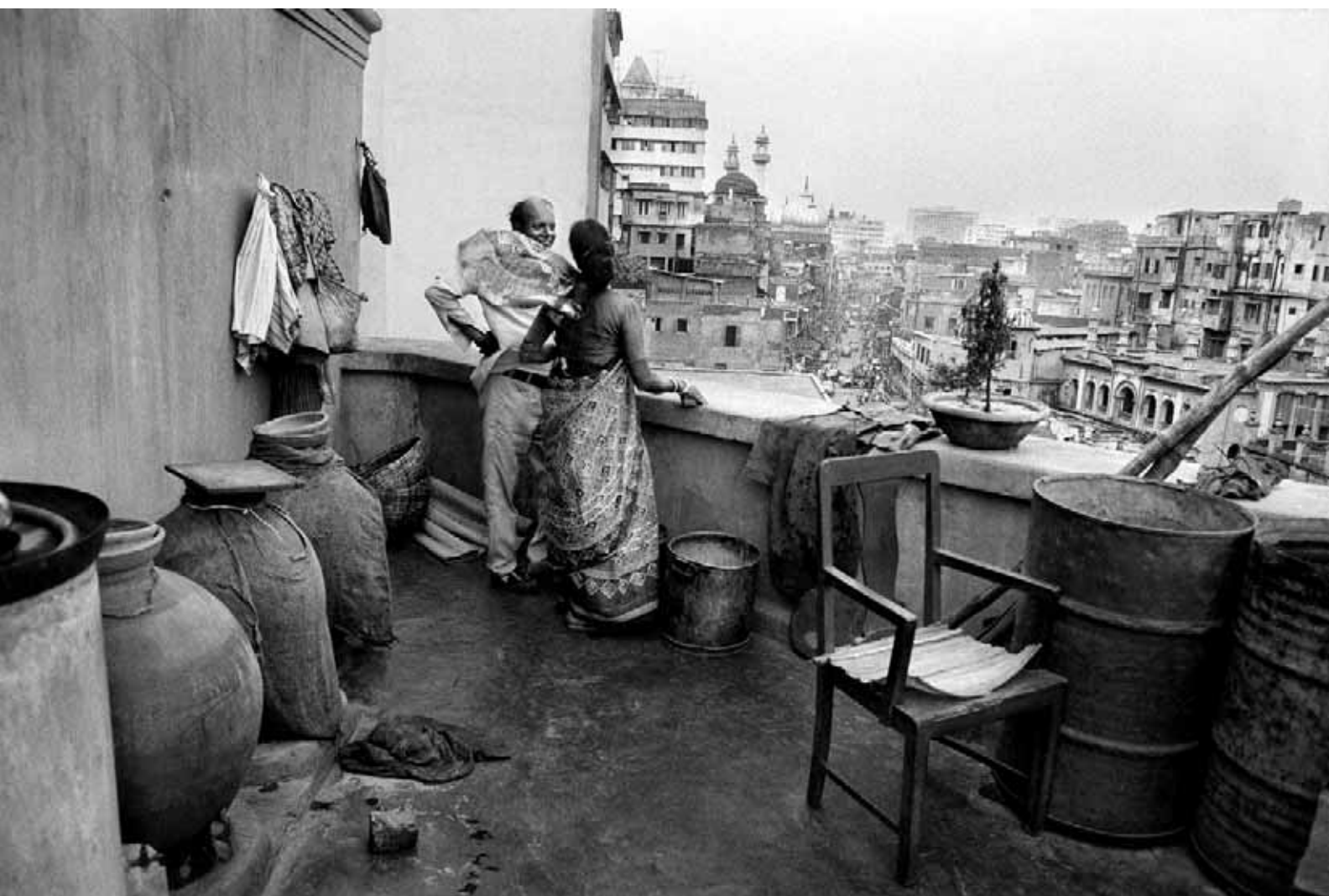
This requires a little understanding of how a camera works, as most of us use a phone camera to shoot millions of selfies! The two main components of a camera are the shutter and aperture. Various permutations of using the shutter and aperture provide the serious photographer tremendous control over the creative process. Both the shutter and aperture control the amount of light that falls on the sensor. A very fast shutter speed, where the shutter stays open for a very short time, leads to very little light falling on the sensor. A slow shutter speed where the shutter is open longer leads to more light falling on film. The aperture is a circular opening that lets in light. The smaller the aperture (or opening) the less the amount of light on the film and the larger the aperture the more the amount of light on the film. What the shutter speed and aperture do together is what the human eye does on its own. When it's very dark outside our pupils dilate to let in more light and when it's very bright we tend to squint and close our eyes partially.

Look at this picture taken by Raghu Rai of our previous Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Notice how the background looks blurred. That is achieved by opening up the aperture on a camera lens. Unlike the human eye that can simultaneously focus on multiple objects at different distances (you can look at a tree that is 20 feet away and a hill that is 2 miles away and both of them will be in focus); a camera lens can only focus at just one point in the distance. By using different apertures the photographer controls how much is in focus in front of and behind a particular point.

What makes this an engaging picture is the depiction of solitude, perhaps a reflection of his political life. And this solitude has been exaggerated by blurring out the group in the background so that the viewer is so completely focused on the main subject. It doesn't matter that you can't recognize the people in the background. It's a picture that tells the story of one man against a system that left him isolated.

What the aperture on a camera lens does for a photograph, great leaders do in the workplace — a sharp focus on the most important issues relevant for success, while all the other non-essential aspects are





blurred and kept out of focus. They have an uncanny knack of zeroing down on what is critical and valuable in different situations. It could be paying attention to a particular number on an excel sheet, or listening very carefully to something said during a conversation, or identifying the most important feature a product needs have to be successful in the market. All of these are examples of how a leader consciously keeps what is critical in sharp focus while blurring out everything else.

Being there but not being there

In fashion photography the model is very conscious of the photographer; in fact, the image that the model portrays in the picture is based on very strong cues from the photographer. In the kind of documentary photography that Raghu Rai does, the photographer wants to make sure that he captures a slice of life without influencing the outcome and the image in any way. It takes great skill to be present at a scene and be invisible at the same time, and often, that's based on the ability of the photographer to build a relationship of trust so that the subject is comfortable enough to forget the presence of the photographer. Look at this

picture taken on a terrace in old Delhi. There are 3 people on the terrace, the couple and Raghu Rai. What makes this an amazing photograph, is that Raghu Rai's presence is just not felt in the picture. It feels like there are just two people completely lost in each other's company.

In organizations, the best leaders are like great photographers. They are present but they don't make their mark felt in an obvious sense. The moment people in an organization start saying "we have to do this only because Mr. XYZ wants it" you've become part of the picture. It takes tremendous patience, confidence, and trust for both, the photographer and the leader to be present at the scene and not overpower it with their presence.

The next time you glance upon a great photograph, remember there is more than what meets the eye, and keep in mind that there is much that we can learn in organizations from great photographers, their craft and the pictures they take. ■■■

Photographs: RAGHU RAI

Text: RUSTOM VESAVEVALA

The Generation of Chatbots

Piyush Soonee from the Private Equity team gives us insights into the latest investment of Mahindra Partners, USA, Avaamo.

Rewind 250 years and we land in a time period prior to the industrial revolution. Manufacturing was manually powered, employed a large portion of the workforce and over the coming 50 years faced a dramatic shift in the way goods were produced. The repercussions were profound:

- In the short duration, there was skepticism about the loss of jobs, reskilling required and how the populace would adjust.
- The longer term impact, with the benefit of hindsight, was a dramatic increase in productivity, income levels, quality of life and overall acceleration of pace of innovation.

We are at a similar cusp of change with the introduction of natural language processing (NLP), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). The ability of these three to change how millions of people perform their tasks is going to have disruptive ramifications down the line.

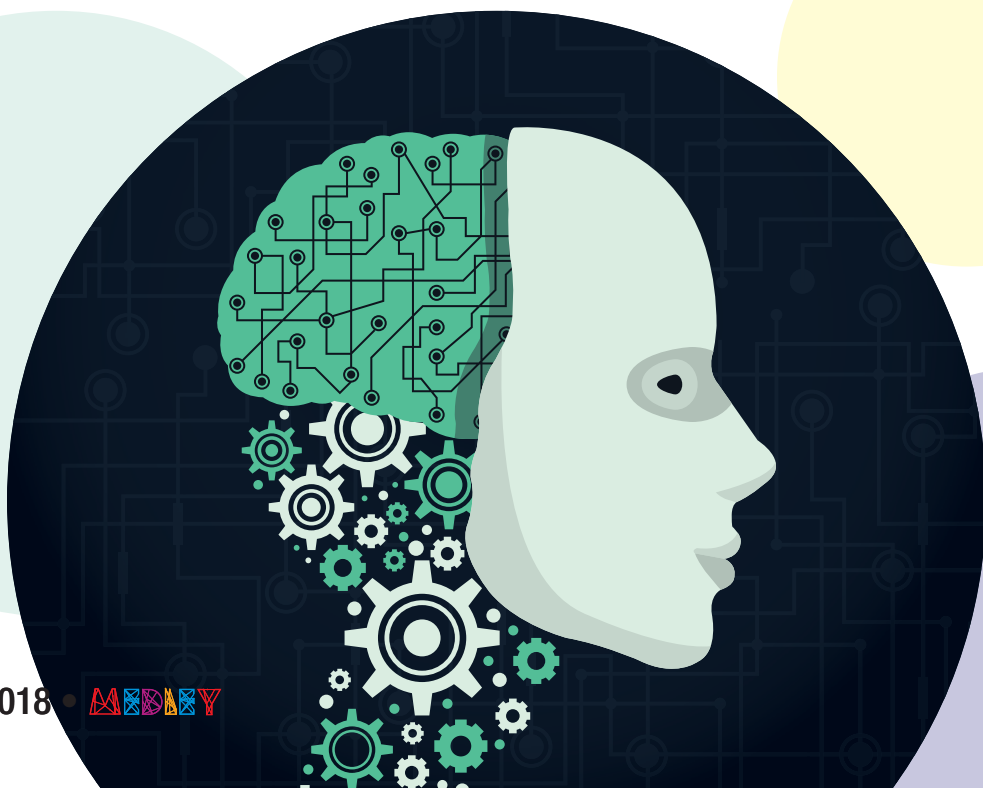
We are already seeing some very visible applications in consumer electronics (Amazon Echo, Google Home

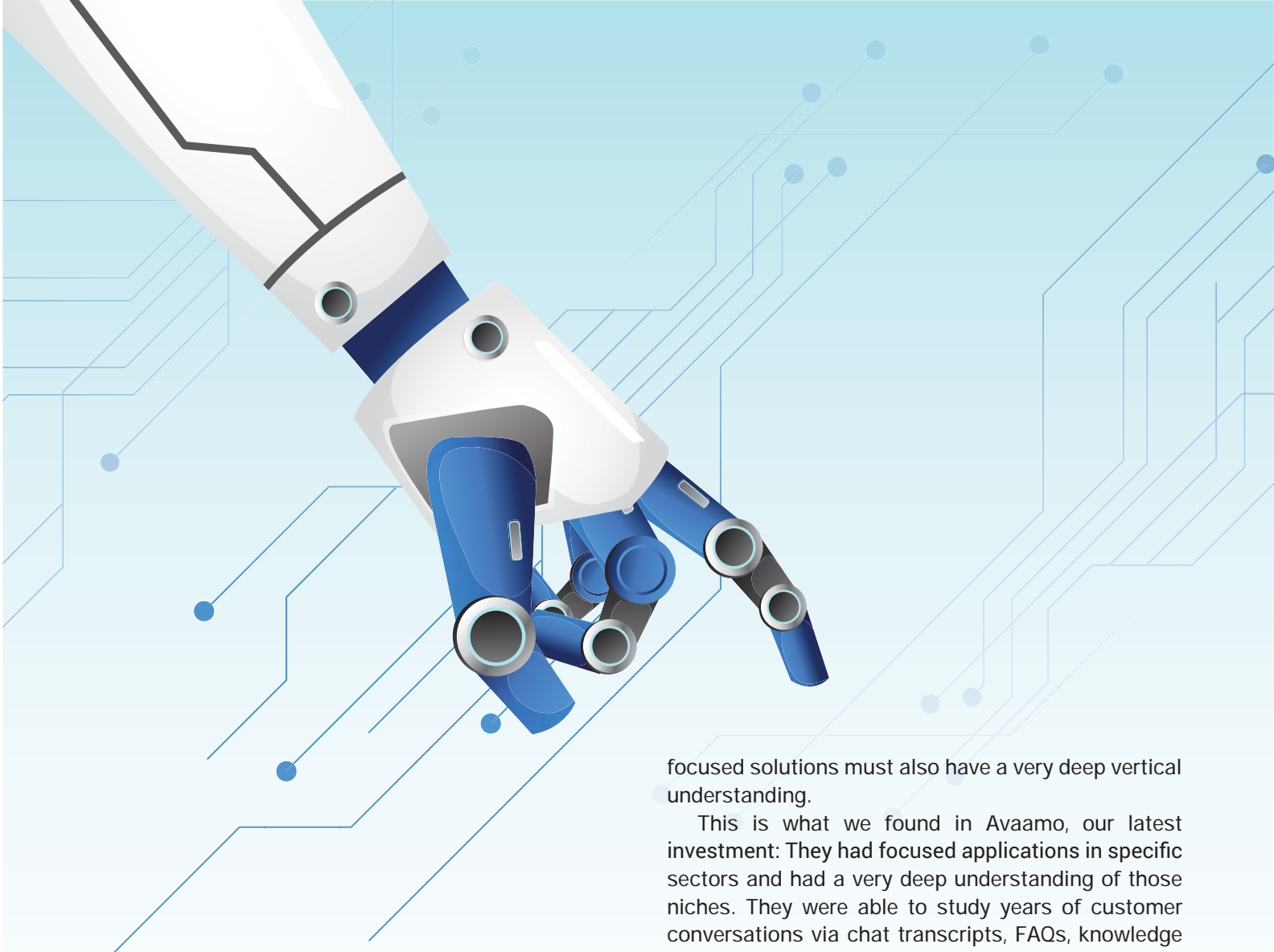
and rudimentary application in Apple's Siri). These applications are generalist in nature and have their limitations. Focusing on more specific domains can have a more meaningful and visible outcome.

Let's look at the contact center market: employing more than 10 million people globally, it is the first point of contact between businesses and its customers. It is a \$200 BN+ industry and growing at a very rapid clip (estimated to be ~400 BN by 2022). Customers today want a near real time answer to their questions and needs, without having to go through deep menus or FAQs. We prefer talking to a person who can take ownership and solve our issue rather than write an email and wait for a response.

Initially phone calls were the preferred mode and as discrete communication medium has risen, chat has started gaining preference too. Chat can be chatbots, social media interactions and even emails.

However there is an attributable cost to this interaction, which can be substantial, depending on the value of the product, the margins and where in the funnel- the customer interacts.





From a customer's perspective, access to direct query resolution should be as broad, frequent and unfettered as possible. Companies on the other hand limit the interactions, the duration for which they extend the service, hide it behind layered menus or remove it all together.

With the advent of artificial intelligence there is a possibility of automating this interaction and the result is "chatbots" seen on some webpages. They may be fully automated, or may be partially manned and each type has trade-offs of cost, scalability and customer experience. However, these chatbots or conversational AI engines are the industrial revolution equivalent change to the contact center industry. It will change the way people in the industry operate and how easily and cheaply customers get access to query resolution.

The challenge in launching a fully automated chatbot is that each company works in a domain which is specialized with its own terminology and semantics and more importantly pragmatics. There is an intent behind a statement which can vary wildly depending on the topic of conversation. This has made it imperative that any successful enterprise

focused solutions must also have a very deep vertical understanding.

This is what we found in Avaamo, our latest investment: They had focused applications in specific sectors and had a very deep understanding of those niches. They were able to study years of customer conversations via chat transcripts, FAQs, knowledge which the customer service reps have and digest that into a knowledge bank which can then answer customer questions. This, coupled with some fail-safes which allow a human to step in when the bot fails, results in a high degree of deflection (calls handled at the bot level) as well as customer satisfaction (by avoiding frustrating bot like conversations).

The net impact of these advancements in technology and processes is a very humanlike ability to converse which is bringing real time support at a nominal cost. It helps avoids issues which plague support centers such as churn and adding new languages while guaranteeing a consistent and continuously improving experience.

They are already present across industries such as insurance, banking, telecommunications etc. engaging with clients globally as well as in India and are adding more domains to their repertoire. In the long run, this technology can herald an era of improved productivity, reduced cost as well as improved customer experience. It should free people from mundane roles such as answering repetitive questions to focusing on more fulfilling roles where employees are able to exercise their creativity and problem solving skills. ■■■

THE OTHER SIDE

In conversation with **Shibu Warriar** of Mahindra Susten.

Shibu Warriar started his career as a commissioned officer in the Indian Army, which included two field tenures in J&K. On completion of his short service commission, he did an MBA in HR from XLRI. With over 20 years of varied experiences, he looks forward to play an active role in taking Mahindra Susten to the next level.



Q. What was your proudest moment in the army?

No casualties in my field tenures. For an officer, to come back from a field tenure with all your troops safe and in one piece, is the biggest satisfaction.

Q. What was your scariest moment in the army?

Oh, there were many such moments. One that stands out was during an encounter when a bullet whizzed past my ear when we were in a 'search and destroy' operation. Another one was when a rifle grenade landed barely a few feet from me and miraculously did not explode! 'Luck' was my middle name back then...

Q. What makes 'you', minus your job?

An individual with integrity, whose actions speak much louder than words.

Q. You are hosting a dinner party and must invite 3 famous people. Who would you invite and why?

Nigella Lawson (Gourmet Chef for food for a demo of some of her most popular dishes), Zakir Khan (Stand up comedian for entertainment) and Will Smith (Hollywood icon for all his inspiring stories). All I would need to do is sit back, relax, sip my choice of poison, and enjoy the conversation.

Q. What's your favourite song?

My favourite song dates back to the '60s. 'Bekarar karke hume...' by Hemant Kumar, from the movie 'Bees Saal Baad'

Q. One thing you were unable to understand about the world when you were a kid

How does a plane fly...? I still don't get it

Q. What was the last series you binge watched?

Game of Thrones

Q. If you won 10 crores, what would you do with the money?

Allocate 6 crores in equity funds (33% each in large, mid and micro cap) and balance 4 crores in debt. Boring? I know.

Q. If you could trade places with any other person for a week, famous or not, living or dead, real or fictional, with whom would it be?

Mukesh Ambani. To see if all the money and power actually helps in living a happier and more meaningful life. Maybe, I know the answer to that already...

Q. If someone wrote a biography about you, what would the title be?

Ice-man

Q. If you met your high school girlfriend(s) now, what would she say about you?

Well, my high school girlfriend is my wife, and she has a lot to say about me, since she knows me for 32 years!! Best to not talk about it.

Q. You're a new addition to the crayon box. What color would you be and why?

Blue - it is the colour of Sky and Sea. It symbolizes calmness, depth, stability, confidence and loyalty. Things I believe in and stand for.

Q. What inspires you?

Passion and honesty is an inspiring combination.

Q. If you were a tree (or animal) what kind of tree (or animal) would you be?

I would love to be a Labrador. Happy and living in the moment.



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CERO TO HUNDRED!

In May, 2018, Cero - Mahindra Accelo's auto recycling incubation - achieved its first milestone: Recycling 100 vehicles. Cero is India's first organized auto shredder and vehicle recycler. Cero, Spanish for 'zero', stands for zero pollution, zero hassles, zero wastage and zero dependence on the import of scrap while sustainably reusing auto parts.



Cero sources end of life vehicles and industrial scrap through a number of channels and conducts the entire processing of depollution and dismantling. This young incubation achieved the milestone of recycling its first 100 vehicles in May 2018. Cero holds strong at its motto to keep the customers happy and content. The customer testimonials speak for themselves as they reflect upon its services.

Everyone loves being a business partner with Mahindra Logistics

Business Partner Life Cycle Management Program has been launched with an aim to manage MLL's Business Partners, their development needs and engagement initiatives. The engagement will start right from the beginning with face to face onboarding sessions where in the partners will be made aware of the MLL systems and processes. During their association with MLL, the business partners will undergo performance management and monthly reviews to help them improve their service. Select partners will undergo a developmental journey and will get the opportunity to be

a part of the prestigious Business Partner Council. The aim is to ultimately create an ecosystem for the business partners by providing services like fuel cards, vehicle procurement, insurances, tyres etc at lesser rates than the market.

MLL IT team has released BillHub (A web based platform) which will act as a one-stop access point to all payments. The application will provide end to end visibility of the approval/rejection of all invoices and payment for both the business partner and commercial team. It will reduce the on-site and multiple team follow-ups for all involved.

Culture Complex

The Cultural Affairs Department of Government of Kerala has decided to construct cultural complex in all its 14 districts, which comprises of opera house, film theatre, music theatre, art gallery, book shops, hall for seminars & workshops, space for artist to do artistic work, drama rehearsal rooms, short-stay accommodation for artists an author's etc., MACE has been awarded this prestigious project through open bidding system. MACE will provide its consultancy services on the development and construction of cultural complexes, expansion of Chitranjali film studio, and development of multi-purpose film festival complex in Kerala.

AS HIGH AS THE ROOF



One of India's leading solar EPC Company, Mahindra Susten, a unit of the well-known Indian Multinational company Mahindra and Mahindra, has commissioned a 2.2MWp (one of the largest single rooftop projects) rooftop solar plant for Sutlej Textiles and Industries Ltd. (STIL) in Bhawanimandi, Rajasthan. The plant is spread over 2 lakh square feet of rooftop and is the largest single rooftop solar plant commissioned in Rajasthan, and one of the largest in India. The

project has been executed in accordance with the highest quality standards and will generate 32 lakh units of green power for STIL's spinning unit at Bhawanimandi per year. As the largest producer of Melange yarn in India, and one of the companies promoted by the KK Birla Group, Sutlej Textiles felt a trustworthy, quality-driven, innovation focus organisation like Mahindra Susten was the obvious choice when they decided to take this step into solar.

Driving Away the Blues

As a part of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) Mahindra Logistics to train 10,000 drivers to sensitise and empower drivers across India about safety and security. MLL aims to train 10,000 drivers across India under PMKVY by the end of F'19. PMKVY is a skill certification scheme of the central government which aims to enable a large number of Indian Youth to take up industry-relevant skill training which will help them in securing a better livelihood. Under this program, a special focus

is given to 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) wherein the prior competencies of candidates are assessed. On successful completion of assessment, candidates will receive a monetary reward, mark sheet and government certification. So far, MLL has trained 461 driver partners across 6 major cities - Pune, Chennai, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata & Trivendrum. The overall passing percentage of their driver partners has been 94%! MLL's PTS vertical has observed 50% reduction in accidents post the trainings!

Bulk Feeders

An innovative product of Belt and Chain feeder combination, MBF – Mahindra Bulk Feeder was introduced by Mahindra-Tsubaki. The Bulk Feeder is used for receiving the material from tuck tippler and feeding to on stream conveyor. The feeder is surface mounted and avoids expensive civil work in pit construction etc. After proving performance with initial supplies, MTC bagged order for 4 Nos. Bulk Feeders from FL Smidth India Ltd. and JK Cements. MTC has been able to penetrate the market with new products against stiff completion from established players.

Achievers Corner

Mahindra Logistics revenues up 28%, crosses Rs. 3400 Cr, PBT up 51%, crosses Rs. 100 Cr milestone in FY 18. The Company continues to report robust performance on the back of healthy revenue growth in SCM business: Non-Mahindra business growth of 32% and Mahindra business growth of 28%. Non-Mahindra SCM business growth led by revenues from freight forwarding, Consumer & Pharma and Auto & Engineering clients. EBITDA higher due to lower Fixed Term Strategic Consulting Service Fees compared to earlier periods. Post GST warehousing strategy: 2nd multi-product, multi-user warehouse getting ready. Commenting on the performance, Phil said, "We have achieved a major milestone in the company's journey, crossing USD 0.5 bn in revenues. Our Mahindra as well as non-Mahindra business continued the growth momentum delivering a PBT of over Rs. 100 Cr. MLL has managed the major transitions like GST and E-Way bill effectively. It is heartening to see the attention the sector is getting from government in terms of favorable policies and ease of doing business.

NO TALKING, ONLY RACING



Mahindra and Mahindra races into the coveted Rs. 1 Trillion Market Cap Club, after its share price closed at a record high on Monday, 16 th April 2018. Our company has now become the second

most valued automaker in India, in terms of market capitalization. Our company has consistently delivered handsome returns to its shareholders and its share price has doubled in the last 5 years, implying a 15% annual return to investors. This significant milestone is a result of sustained efforts by each and every member of our Mahindra family. Heartiest congratulations to everyone for being a part of this remarkable journey. Truly a RISE moment!

Making a Mark

The last few quarters have been an exciting time for Mahindra Marine with the completion of its first order from Indian navy and new orders bagged. The last four 17 m workboats were dispatched to Vishakhapatnam in May end and well before the contractual delivery date thereby completing the project. Further, two fresh orders adding up to 28 boats for 6.5 m Rigid Inflatable boats (RIB) and 9.2 m Survey motor (SMB) boats were received from Indian navy. Of this, the first boat is expected to be delivered to Indian navy by end June. As we make inroads into the North East market, the first boat from the MO 33 stable order for NHPCL, Assam is ready for trials and will be delivered to customer by end June too.

Sustainable Crusaders



The USD 19 billion Mahindra Group announced its further commitment to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) as eleven more Mahindra companies commit to meeting SBTi, bringing the total to thirteen. The companies must ensure that their targets are approved by the initiative's experts within two years to enable them to develop a roadmap to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in alignment with Paris Agreement goals.

The eleven (of the thirteen) Mahindra companies include Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services

Limited, Mahindra Logistics Limited, Mahindra Susten Private Limited, Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Limited, Mahindra Accelo, Mahindra Lifespace Developers Limited, Bristlecone INC, Mahindra World City Jaipur Limited, Mahindra World City Developers Limited and Mahindra First Choice Services Limited. Tech Mahindra and Mahindra Sanyo Special Steel Private Limited (MSSSPL) – had already committed to SBTi earlier this year and MSSSPL has since become the first metals company in the world to have approved science based emissions targets.

Africa Calling

Joining the league of South African vehicle manufacturers, Mahindra South Africa has opened a state-of-the-art vehicle assembly facility with a state-of-the-art vehicle assembly facility in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Here the company will assemble the complete range of Mahindra Pik Up single- and double cab pick-ups. The facility was constructed in partnership with AIH Logistics. According to Mr Rajesh Gupta, the CEO of Mahindra South Africa, "The assembly of the Pik Up is a very important step, but it remains only the first step in our long-term plan that will see us increase employment, local sourcing and content as well as the complexity of our assembly facility in KwaZulu-Natal." Mahindra has set its aim on sourcing 40% of the components, measured by value, of its Pik Up range from local component suppliers. It has already started with this project and hopes to announce more details soon.

CAUGHT IN ACTION



Puneri Night – A splendid looking group!

Envisioning The Future was the theme for this year's Mahindra Partners Senior Leadership Conclave that was attended by 75 of the senior leaders from across all the eight Mahindra Partner companies. To mark this occasion, a Warli painting that was specially commissioned for the conclave was unveiled by a cross section of managers across all companies. The painting tells the story of what each company stands for and how all eight companies share common values.

The sessions at the conclave were an eclectic mix of the past and the future; the logical and the abstract; serious deliberations and many moments of fun. Some of the sessions that made a very deep impact on the participants were; Living Creatively – By Raghu Rai, one of India's most accomplished photographers; The Role of Culture in Organizational Transformation – By Vivek Talwar, Chief Culture Officer, Tata Power; Singularity – By Ranjan Pant, Advisor M&M. And to top it all, the participants learnt how to create a symphony of music by learning the harmonica in less than an hour!



Unveiling the Warli painting commissioned on the occasion of the conclave



Managers from each Partner company who joined most recently inaugurating the conclave



Two icons of Pune - Kayani Bakery and Badshah Falooda – proud owners and their stories



A new look with some impressive head gear



Music brings everyone together in the Harmonica Circle



An invitation to "Open your Mind"



White man- All white and some serious questions



Leadership lessons at an early morning walk in Koregaon Park, Pune

CYCLE AWAY TO A GREEN FUTURE



Becoming India's first integrated city to introduce eco-friendly, Mahindra World City, Chennai launched an intra-city cycle sharing service for residents and visitors within and around the integrated city. MWC Chennai has partnered with PEDL by Zoomcar to facilitate convenient and healthy rides within MWC Chennai.

As part of this initiative to promote environment-friendly and healthy commutes, 200 GPS-tracked PEDL bicycles have been deployed for an initial trial phase at MWC Chennai. A user can book these bicycles with inbuilt smart locks via a mobile app.



Dreams of Electric vehicles soon to become a reality

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., a part of the US \$19 billion Mahindra Group signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Government of Maharashtra (GoM), to further its next phase of expansion in electric vehicles (EVs) and achieve its vision of becoming completely electric ready. This is in line with the Government's pursuit for rapid adoption of EVs for private use as well as public (shared mobility). The joint declarations have been signed to further the Government's

vision to make Maharashtra a globally competitive state for EVs and component manufacture and to maximize the adoption of EVs in the state. Under the aegis of the first MoU the company will make efforts to become fully electric ready by further investing in its Chakan plant for manufacture of EVs, e-motor, controller, battery pack and other electric vehicle components for multiple mobility applications related to battery pack assembly of EVs. As part of this expansion plan, the company will

invest an additional Rs. 500 crore. The second MoU underlines the intent to explore a strategic alliance to enable Mahindra to deploy EVs across key cities in Maharashtra. Towards this, both the company and the Government will work closely with various fleet partners, taxi aggregators, logistics companies, amongst others to deploy 1,000 electric cars over the next 1 year. The Government of Maharashtra has conferred the status of 'Pioneer Mega Project' to this proposed expansion.

ACE OF THE PACK



In Sep 2017, MLL launched its flagship Functional Excellence Program branded as ACE with an objective to develop supply chain professionals across various operations & service lines. The program focusses on improving the skills sets in Behavioral, Quality & functional

domain at the same time providing a career progression for employees at MLL.

ACE, an application oriented program comprising of 20 days covered in 5 phases spread across 7 to 8 months following a field & forum approach. It is one of its kind program

in the Indian Logistics Industry as the modules of the program covers all the aspects of operations and focusses on enhancing the people management aspect of business. Total 32 participants from across businesses and locations were selected by following a rigorous selection process and 2 batches were rolled out. The ACE Felicitation Ceremony for batch 1 & 2 was administered with high energy and enthusiasm on 20th April 2018.

Another high roller

Mahindra-Tsubaki once again demonstrated superiority in technology for High Capacity chain elevators by bagging prestigious order for 1900 Tonnes Per Hour Bucket Elevator from Holcim Ambuja Cement. MTC received this order as confirmation of performance at other plants for Roller Press Application.



Fast track to success

Expanding Unit Material Handling Business: Mahindra-Tsubaki received repeat order from Suzuki Motors Gujarat for supply of Overhead Conveyor System for Door Handling for Line B. The order has been received in

recognition of satisfactory service for similar system supplied for Line A. With addition of several new customers such as Kawaski India Motors, Tata-Toyo, etc., MTC has widened the customer base for Unit Handling Conveyor systems.

Newbies Welcome

In January 2018, Mahindra Retail Limited launched the New Customer Program which is specially designed to recognize every new customer that enters the Mahindra-FirstCry stores. As a part of which, a customer once in a store,

is welcomed, greeted and taken on a specially curated store tour which gives him/her an idea of what they will need across various life stages. At the end of the store tour, they are handed over a Mahindra Retail Goodie Bag with gifts from the store.

A Noble Cause

As part of Transgender Development Program, Government Railway Police invited MACE's participation as a Corporate for its initiatives to curb begging and other anti-social activities which transgenders are easily susceptible too. This program is to initiate

steps to curb Transgender involved in begging and other anti-social activities. Through this initiative, Railway Police along with few leading Corporates and a Chennai based NGO - SEESHA plan to work on building a transgender inclusive society.



MLL wins the Best Indian 3PL Company of the Year at the Global Logistics Excellence Awards. Their commitment to delivering excellence has won them this award for the 2nd consecutive year in 2018.



Mr. Zhooben Bhiwandiwalla participated in a sapling plantation drive at the Sewage water Treatment Plant of MWUL in Tiruppur, Tamil Nadu.



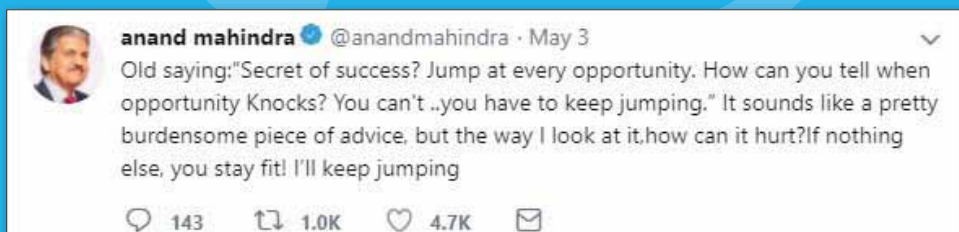
Mahindra Partners inaugurated their new pantry design. The newly refurbished space features an eclectic photo wall which displays photographs clicked by the team and is changed every month.



On April 27, 2018, MWUL conducted a First Aid Training Program in their Bhavani plant in Tamil Nadu. In this training program around 60, both direct and contract employees participated. Professionals from St. John Ambulance provided a live demo in the plant.



Mr. Srinath R, Director of MWUL, participated in a sapling plantation drive at River Water Intake Plant in Bhavani, Tamil Nadu on 23rd May 2018.



Polar EXPEDITION

A daring step away from the mundane, Surmai Kaushik from Mahindra Susten becomes a part of a handful of Indians who have travelled to Antarctica.



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My sponsorship approval really gave me a sense that I was in the right organization. One that supported my dreams and I am nothing but just like any other regular employee.

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You could say that Surmai Kaushik is no ordinary girl, for travelling to Antarctica is no ordinary feat. This 24-year-old young Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) executive from Mahindra Susten attended the renowned 'Leadership on the Edge' program organised by '2041 Foundation'. This program conducted by Robert Swan (the first man to have walked to both the poles) has been going on for the past 14 years on 22 separate Antarctic expeditions.

Robert Swan and his journey that sparked off this entire expedition series is quite an interesting one. Twenty-six years ago, French ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau gave Robert Swan a 50-year mission to save Antarctica from the realities of climate change. Jacques urged Robert to engage young people and promote the use of renewable energy.

Incidentally when Robert was 27 years old he went to the South Pole. His eyes got discoloured after being exposed to areas under which the ozone layer had

depleted. Eventually this became big news and they realized that the ozone layer depletion is because of CFCs. The Montreal Protocol was signed and a lot of effort was taken to stop this depletion. He was the man behind it all. His biggest mission in life became to save the Antarctic. As a result of this and experiencing it first-hand himself on his missions to the poles, Robert founded the 2041 Foundation, and dedicated his life to the preservation of Antarctica through the promotion of sustainability and renewable energy. 2041 Foundation is named after the year in which the Antarctic Treaty can be renegotiated. Signed in 1959, the Antarctic Treaty puts in basic regulations on the territory of Antarctica. Such as, Antarctica doesn't have any inhabitants, there are no governing laws, mining for oil isn't allowed, and the treaty prohibits military activity except in support of science, prohibits nuclear explosions and the disposal of nuclear waste, promotes scientific research and the exchange of data, and holds all territorial claims in abeyance, etc.



These basic regulations have made a lasting impact on sustaining the fragile ecosystem of Antarctica. The vision of 2041 is to preserve Antarctica, while developing committed leaders from every corner of society who work together to create a sustainable world: Enlightened, Empowered, Engaged.

Although Surmai's journey to the South Pole began in February, her journey towards sustainability started much before. Applying to a program like this and being selected for it speaks a lot about the things that go into the making of the person first.

Being a 'fauji' kid, she was already well-exposed to



the various parts of the country. Those were the roots of her love for adventure and travel. Throughout her schooling days, she was surrounded by great men, adorned in uniforms. This along with her education in the navy public schools, taught her a lot about integrity and purpose from the very beginning. A graduate of Physics from Miranda House, Delhi University, she always wanted to be a fighter pilot. During time in college, she took a liking to theatre. "I was studious but I spent a lot of my time travelling and pursuing other extra-curricular activities. I somehow took a liking to theatre, I woke up every morning with a sense of purpose. I got to speak to someone new about social issues, or perform in slums, or generally educate the underprivileged with information that they would otherwise, not have access to. And all this through theatre. It is really touching when you can connect with someone at an emotional level, someone you would otherwise not connect with. It was a boost to my confidence, that I could empower people and

impact them profoundly in such a simple way". Coming from a 'regular Indian family' in her words, she did not get the go-ahead on taking up theatre. Eventually she stumbled across a Masters course on Climate Science being offered by TERI University. The course offered her a lot of field exposure, very unlike a normal master's degree.

During her masters she took up some really substantial internships. Working on the Nanda Devi Biosphere reserve, working in rain forests and buffer zones, staying on a glacier in Kashmir for a couple of weeks to study its energy balance and other really challenging projects. Although she did not study much about CSR as a field she was quite interested in it and chose to do an internship project with CSR at Susten. A turning point in her life she explains her journey with the company, "My work with Susten took me back to my college days when I was working in the rural space, speaking to people and trying to help them change their lives. I felt like it was like a long



forgotten dream that I wanted to live but I could not. After graduation, I decided CSR was what I wanted to work with and eventually joined Mahindra Susten. My journey with the group has been stupendous. From the very beginning I dove right into the action of things. The job gave me the opportunity of being to places that would never be in my bucket list. It was not like the typical desk job, it was all out in the field, taking decisions and figuring things out spontaneously. The act of visiting these villages further gave me a sense of purpose. The feeling of doing something for people I don't even know taught me a lot, made me better. So, there's this thing called going back home and sleeping well at night. That whole feeling of contentment,

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It is something that you come back from and you know you cannot be your previous self. Because something has changed. In my case, it just happened in the simplest ways on the seventh continent.

”



because you've had that kind of sense of belief and that sense of clarity of what you're doing. My job gave me just that”.

Taking off from Surmai's personal story, what drove her to Antarctica? Was she just at the right place at the right time? It sounds almost too good to be true! A lot goes into putting together the pieces of this puzzle. A lifetime's worth you could say! Narrating her story, the beginning of a rather novel one, she says, “I am a very ordinary person like everybody else. I stumbled upon this thing that happens every year which is- to take global leader from all across the world to the Antarctica. Led by Robert Swan who has immersed his life on one mission, which is saving the Antarctic. And, to support this he takes people every year- to make them understand the state of the impending physical effects of climate change on the Antarctic. The Antarctic provides such a good story for Climate



Change because it's really the most uninhabited place. Also, the bottom of the earth holds ninety percent of the ice and seventy percent of fresh water so. And it's one of the biggest carbon sinks, making it one of the largest ecosystems effected by climate change. Going to Antarctic is a dream for everybody. But being in the field and an enthusiast of sustainable practices, you already know it means so much more. I guess I was just lucky to have already worked in the field extensively. So, yeah my whole background kind of fit in well. So, I was quiet lucky in that way. I heard about the program from a mutual friend. I emailed them my application for next year but incidentally, they called me up and informed me that they want me to attend the program this year, as this is most likely their last trip to the Antartic. From the next year, they want to start missions to the north instead.

And they wanted to be associated with somebody as big as Mahindra because, their footprint in this is very huge. After I got the call I knew I had to figure out the funding. It was all too fast and too overwhelming. When I got this call, that I had been invited, as much as I couldn't believe that it was really happening, I pulled together my thoughts to keep the goal of actually reaching there in focus.

Being busy with the Mind Games (which our team finally came in second place), I was doing a

full marathon run daily because I had to train for the Antarctic and many other duties- I was really trying to pull my thoughts together to keep myself focused on the goal of actually getting there. Somehow I was super energized to work through the struggles of every day to complete all my tasks efficiently. I was super excited but I did not have the funding to go on the trip. Among all these other activities, as nervous as I was, I approached some of the senior leaders I work with for funding. I spoke to a lot of people from the group. I worked closely with the CSR team and sustainability team. Anirban, and Sushant Singh, they really helped champion my cause. They spoke to more people. Before I knew it Mr. Rajeev Dubey was aligned and Mr. Rusbey was aligned and Vivek Sir from Marketing was aligned, everybody was aligned. And, they spoke in the CSR council and as things panned out, they sponsored my trip to Antartica. Although that usually doesn't happen, you know, because, I don't know, it just doesn't! Sponsorships don't usually go so well, generally. And, these people said yes so whole-heartedly. This really gave me a sense that I was in the right organization. One that supported my dreams and I am just like any other regular employee. Before I knew it I had my sponsorship money, my visa and my tickets, I was going".

"During this process, between work and figuring





out funding, I had not internalized the magnitude of what I was going to do. I was going to step foot on the seventh continent. I was going to be making history, in a way. After 36 hours of flying time and 4 layovers, later when I reached the tip of South Africa to step foot on the ship, that is really when it all sunk in. I was really doing it. It was happening. The boat ride to the south pole lasted two and a half days.”

“I considered being on the trip my sheer good luck. Of the 87 people on the trip, I was the only one from the CSR sector, one of the two from India and the only one completely sponsored by their work organization, Mahindra and Mahindra. From Feb 27 until March 12, 2018 under Mission 2041, I knew not what to expect. The people there came from all walks of life. Consultants from corporates like KPMG and Deloitte, officers from Google and IRS, RJs, entrepreneurs, people from communications, marketing, it was a very diverse group. The bandwidth of information being exchanged, the experiences and conversations that went around for those two weeks were intense.

We were divided into groups to break the ice and as a part of that we were sharing what our journey has been so far. A story that really stayed back with me was that of Inch Chua from Singapore.

She said that as a kid she was bitten by a dog on the face. This left a nasty scar. As a kid growing up, she was constantly picked on and ostracised by children her age. So she naturally grew up to be an introvert. She had a hard time getting along with people. Her story turned around when she started her journey with music. She changed the way music was made, which in turn made her style very unique. This brought her a lot of fame too. She doesn't make music with beats

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 going back home and
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 My job with Mahindra
 Susten gave me just that.**
 ”

and tempo. She wanted to create music that was tranquilising. Something that makes you understand music from a different light altogether. Increases your absorbency. She shared how she wanted to make music from the sounds of the Antarctic continent. Fragile and magical sounds she wanted to put together. She came prepared with a load of recording apparatus. On the boat, on the continent, we would all just quiet down and hear things. She would record it, we would come back and listen to it. There is



something very inspiring about getting back to nature to find peace and solace in its sounds”.

“This realization deepened as I saw my first ice-berg. You know how we always imagine it to be white? It was just nothing like that. The glassy ice created prisms with colours trapped in every spectrum. I was shrieking like a hungry toddler would, out of joy. It was too good to be true. But I could hear the waves splash across it, I could see the water moving in it, I could see so many marvelous colours just shining through its crystalline form. It was real and right in front of me. And yet what I see, the marvelous tall structure is just 20 percent of the whole. Our ship had to very carefully steer clear off the edge of the ice bergs. One hit and it could be a painful death. So chilly, you could die faster than you can imagine. It was kind of amazing, the novelty and fear, amazement, excitement and thrill every step of this trip has brought me all at a time”.

“

The polar plunge was like hugging Antarctica to the chest. Jumping in and falling into the waters, with my arms wide open. Vulnerable to the unknown. Humbled.

”

“Then we reached Antarctic the first sign of penguins and the first sight of seals or of a bed of ice with small crystals of snow or sea ice or glaciers! Gosh too much to capture with my eyes. It was beaming with colours. Deep blues captured in ice. Black even! Penguins are adorable. They are super mischievous and innocent. It's literally like playing with a child. They're so adventurous, just flocking around electrifying the whole place with their energy and their dumbness to some extent. And when we went there I thought it'll be all white and pristine and completely untouched and pretty. But, penguins make a mess out of it, they poo around and it stinks. You can smell a penguin colony from afar.

And you're not supposed to go to the penguins. We had a 'five metres rule' where we were not supposed to get in the way of a penguin or any kind of wildlife which is crossing. Because we're not supposed to be

there and not supposed to disturb them, but they were so inquisitive and they were the ones who wanted to take selfies. They would come and peek at you or pull your jacket. When I thought of Antarctica I thought it'll be cold and devastating and hostile. There'll be man eaters and walruses and things out to kill you but it was you know just love everywhere, with the penguins just wanted to peek at me and play with me. The seals were not really bothered. They barely move. But, the funny part is if you see a seal and it doesn't like you too much- the seal will like get up and start blaring at you. At that point you just have to spread out your arms wide and yell — showing that you are big and strong and the seal will be like okay cool, let her pass by, she isn't joking with that growl. Seriously, that's what used to happen!

If you find animal videos funny, you need to capture the ones in Antarctica, they are funnier than funny. Penguins just swing out of water, creep onto an ice berg and just look around and perch around, fight and just go back into the water. And the water is so cold yet they're so agile in the water. A seal on its four feet can be heavy and look different but it's faster than a human being. So, there are no polar bears or walruses in Antarctica, both are found only in the north. Black hued ice was a process that happens over hundreds of years where the water compresses and the oxygen goes away. Algae takes four years or more to form with some patches of grass too. We were thoroughly conscious about every step we took. Every time that we stepped out, we had bio checks. We were scanned through and through, that we are not carrying anything that is not supposed to go there or we're not taking back anything that's not supposed to come back. So, we're not essentially going there to take anything and nor leave anything. Even pollen grains and seeds that are attached to our clothes were checked thoroughly. I am glad that the organizers put in the effort to do these checks. It made us more aware of our responsibility towards the place. All these things about Antarctica, I learned on the trip”.

“Our boat was continuously sailing. We were constantly moving to see different islands, penguin colonies, passes and channels. A typical day on the ship constituted two main parts. We would reach a place in the morning and anchor. We would go out to see the place on these boats called zodiacs. So it was either a continental landing where we would actually step foot on the icy islands or these cruises around them. This was mainly dependant on the weather, as the weather is not very stable there. We also had expedition leaders who were specialists in birds, whales, penguins or marine biology or ancient



history of the Antarctic or oceanography or signals and many other such unique areas of knowledge. When we were outdoors with them, they would narrate various experiences and situations from a scientific perspective. This all sounds very easy but at the end of the day we were completely unarmed at open sea. While looking at a flock of whales is a breathtaking experience, it is equally scary. These whales, the world's largest mammals, could easily topple our zodiac. And it is a painful cold death from there.

The other part of the trip was lectures. We had lectures on what is happening on the climate change scenario. The latest technologies available, the energy production and consumption levels, etc. David Hone who is the Climate Change Advisor for Shell, took us through some really up to date information on climate change and negotiations, Concepts from the UN and what the world is doing. A lot of such things. Everyone in the group was engaged in doing some amazing work in their field in conjunction with campaigning the cause of sustainability. We were privileged to hear the story of Robert Swan and his son Barney Swan. We had the privilege of knowing their entire life story. They are the first people in history to take a trip to the South Pole completely on renewable energy. They proved that if renewable energy can work in such a hostile climate, it can work anywhere in the world! For we cannot stop the development and producing but we can definitely switch to a more sustainable source of energy.

In the beginning of the trip we were told that if we were to fall in the water- we would not live for more than two minutes because it's too cold. You can't really swim and would mostly die of a panic attack. At the end of a random day towards the end of our journey, we were told that we were supposed to do a Polar plunge. It essentially meant that we were going to jump into the icy cold waters of the Antarctic, willingly.

The announcer asked us to prepare ourselves to jump into the water- mentally, physically and spiritually, the next morning. It is an experience you cannot really fathom or prepare for before actually doing it. It's something where you have to convince yourself that you're going to do it. The toughest part is awaiting your turn in the line up to the gangway and then standing at the end, waiting for your moment to be ready. I was harnessed so, I stayed in the water for two minutes and was pulled back up. Even after the jump, it is almost unbelievable I don't think I can be prepared for that intense an experience even if I had to do it again. It is a bit of madness, but the kind that you have to experience. The core of the idea is to embrace the ecosystem. Like a big hug to the chest. I think that was the one thing which truly, really binds me to Antarctica. Jumping in and falling into the waters, with my arms wide open. Vulnerable to the unknown. Humbled.

I discovered a lot about myself on this trip. The journey to the end of the world is a very rocking



journey. Literally, we were rocking all day long as we sailed into open waters. There's this area called the Drake Passage, and it's a very very wobbly place to be in. The sheer experience of being on that ship for two weeks humbled me tremendously being swiveled from end to another, not being able to sleep or eat right, the challenging waters definitely have a way of conveying our significance against their might and will".

It made me feel shallow. Such big experiences make you feel like you're nobody. A shallow soul floating through it all. Especially when you're on the ship and its rocking left-right, you feel like the most vulnerable person and you feel like you are nothing to the forces of nature. Then, anyway, when you're in that kind of an atmosphere, the forces of nature are such that they condemn your mind by belittling you. It makes you feel so little, so minute. That is one experience that any kind of a trip will give you, when you subject yourself to nature. The other part was this whole experience of being there, among amazing people, Robert Swan and the most exquisite, exotic parts of nature.

In twelve days every single minute with every moment being extraordinary is overwhelming to a state that I cannot define. Soon after, we came back home, faster than we knew it. Here, back, we are trying to create our own ripples of change in our spheres of influence. So, towards the end I was just blank, I just wasn't happy or sad. I was just in shock. A good overwhelming shock. Because when you come back you realize all that you had been waiting for is over. And your life is not that, your life is something else, and it's so different. You were in a place where there was no currency, no known people, there was no money, presentations, there was nothing. That place is so special, you have to go there, to know what I am talking about. And the burden of doing something,

once you come back from the Antarctic, it's a huge burden. I am constantly under that pressure of, what am I doing with my life...

I realized that Antarctica is a place which is about peace, love and gratitude, it's about all of those things you know. The untouched land, the ice, the environment, everything about the place is magical. Everything was living very harmoniously, everything was so perfect. On my return I stopped eating non-veg. Previously, I was a keen meat eater. But on my trip I found this deep love for these funny, adorable creatures with a mind of their own. I came back and realized, I just can't do this anymore. I can't do anything that would harm them! Sometimes realisations hits you, and it hits you hard.

So it was an internal thing for me, of coming back and realizing that I need to be so much of a better person. I start leading by example, I start showing the world that yeah; this can be done, this is possible and no is not the answer. So, I think everything starts with you. I don't want to say that I want to change the world, all of that will take time, I don't know how long. And it's not me who will do it. Everybody needs to feel the way I'm feeling and then only it'll happen. At work, I've already worked with Mahindra Susten to donate smokeless Chullahs to village women, I am keenly propagating a solar lighting project in schools where Susten has an area of work and I have become even more determined to spread the word on Climate Change and how one can combat it. An experience like this is definitely overwhelming, but most of all – a corner stone. It is something that you come back from and you know you cannot be your previous self. Because something has changed and it is an uphill task to uncover this new identity but it has definitely started. In my case, it just happened in the simplest ways on the seventh continent". ■■■

A BOLD NEW AVATAR

Mahindra Susten gets listed as one of the 100 Best Company for Women in 2017 BCWI Study

In an effort to recognize the contributions of Mahindra Susten towards building sustainable careers for women, AVTAR Group & Working Mother Media has listed Mahindra Susten as part of the 2017- 100 Best Companies for Women in India (BCWI). Currently in its second edition, BCWI Study aims to recognize and bring into foray the sustained initiatives undertaken by companies to increase women's workforce participation.

The 2017 edition witnessed an overwhelming participation of 360 companies from across industries. Among which, Mahindra Susten emerged as one of 100 Best winners of the study.

Commenting on the initiative, **Dr. Saundarya Rajesh, Founder – President, AVTAR Group**, said "Corporate India's focus on recruiting and expanding their women employee base is laudable. Going by the data (a 5% increase in women's representation in one year), the Best Companies for Women in India may get to their goal of gender balance in another 5-6 years' time! Whilst it is encouraging to note that many companies have introduced new policies to retain valuable women talent, this trend still remains nascent in traditional services industry and there is a need for industries such as manufacturing and infrastructure to leverage the opportunity of an increase in employable women talent. In the years to come, BCWI will further strengthen the ecosystem for women professionals in India Inc., raising the bar each year and catalyzing its journey to gender balance"

Adding to this, **Ms. Subha Barry, Senior**





Vice President & Managing Director, **Working Mother Media**, said “We are delighted that BCWI has set a benchmark among companies to initiate more women inclusive policies. The impact that BCWI has created in the Indian market, where companies have recognized the need for having women in the workforce and have diligently worked towards introducing best practices is truly remarkable. We have noticed that this is not just at an entry level but across all levels, which is very encouraging for women employees in the Mahindra Susten. I congratulate all the winning companies and hope to see a continued expansion of inclusive and women-friendly policies.”

Mahindra Susten is renowned for pioneering initiatives that help women build a successful career and offer them a well chalked out growth path. Some of the key initiatives introduced by **Mahindra Susten** are:

- The maternity policy at Mahindra Susten ensures a paid maternity leave of 7 months, reduced working hours for the duration of pregnancy to avoid rush hour traffic, additional paid leave for women who have been with the organization for more than 2 years and a host of post-delivery benefits with options to choose from unpaid leave, flexi working hours and work from home.
- In order to ensure safe mobility while at work, Mahindra Susten has waived off hotel entitlement limits and tied up with Cab services to provide pickup and drop facility for women employees from airport if travelling at odd hours.
- Regular self-defense workshops to build lifelong skills for empowerment.
- At the same time, Mahindra Susten also offers sabbatical & short term loans to take care of any personal priorities.
- Nutritionist consultation and EAP services to take care of physical and mental health.

In the last annual year, **Mahindra Susten** has introduced several key initiatives that help build a women inclusive workplace. More than 17% new hires are women and 10% women are employed at top-level positions.



MEDDLE IN



Meddle in Medley, a writing competition was announced for this, the 22nd edition of the Medley. We received a good amount of entries and were quite taken aback by the quality of writing produced by people across our partner companies. It was indeed a tough choice to select our winners.

Renfred Dsouza from Mahindra Susten and Pravina Murkutey from Mahindra Logistics take home the first two prizes, by winning Rs 5000 and Rs 3000 in Amazon coupons respectively. In keeping with the spirit of the competition it was later decided that each participant shall also receive a token of Rs 500 in amazon coupons for their sheer audacity to share their precious stories. Here are the full entries of the winners and excerpts from some of our other participants.

****Kindly note:** The stories were arranged at random. The order does not suggest any ranking whatsoever. The full stories of the excerpts are open and available to read. To access the same, kindly send a request to hr.partners@mahindra.com

'POWER' IN A SIGNATURE: REALY?!!

(A true story) By **Nora Bhatia, Mahindra Accelo**

One day, we went together to help her open a Savings Bank Account. The bank application form was duly filled in English by Florence. I accompanied her to the Bank representative to submit the form. The Banker studied the form and looked at Florence "Madam, the form does not have your signature – or rather your thumb impression". He placed the stamp pad ahead informing her to take her thumb impression. The Banker obviously assumed that Florence was illiterate. Florence politely shifted the stamp pad away and requested for his pen. And then with great pride she 'signed' the application form. I have seldom seen this kind of pride in a person's eyes. I was as much her teacher as she was mine – her grace and the way she conducted herself there was a feeling of immense joy.

HSSH HH

By **Monika Rathi, Mahindra Susten**

Hsshhh, hsshhhh, hsshhhh.....this is the third time that I am trying to make a phone call and still not able to hear anything. Waiting in a queue at Hyderabad airport, returning back from work, I was trying to reach out to my husband and daughter, but thanks to all the technology updates, bad network not letting me do the same. As calls are dirt cheap these days, I decided to give it one final shot. I made the call, but again heard hsshhh. This was while I was also trying to show my boarding pass at security gate. Juggling between the two activities, I switched my phone from right to left ear, and wow suddenly I can hear everything. Looks like change of ear is what the network was waiting for. Surprised I tried putting my phone back on right ear, and the same hsshhhh. So it wasn't the network, it was something in my right ear that I couldn't hear. I made a mental note to meet up ENT specialist in the evening once I land.

UP, AND DOWN THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL

By **Shernaz Kapadia, Mahindra Partners**

What my travels taught me

1. Conquer your fear. 'Darr ke aage jeet hai'. Hamesha!
2. Take a leap of faith. Either the ground will appear below to support you, or you will learn to fly. And the elation and joy you feel is worth it.
3. Start small. Every journey begins with one small step. One, one, one ... and the journey is done. So take one, small, bold, purposeful step at a time ... it will lead you to your destination.
4. Do not give up. Do not allow yourself to get bogged down by failures, or pitfalls.
5. Enjoy the journey Don't just wait for the destination to arrive, else, you will lose the thrill of the journey... which is just as important.
6. Connect with nature, embrace it, and align with it. Go with the flow. You will connect with your own nature, your own abundance. For the boundary between nature 'outside' and nature 'inside' is an illusion.

CHAPTER 2: DEATH OF THE CHOSEN ONE

By Harshit Sharma, Mahindra Susten

He closed his eyes and gathered all his strength. A deep breath and his hands now waves up in the air to form a circle. He fills the light in the circle and it looks like a new moon blazing its shine with full glory and valor, seeking attention in the darkness to show its strength. Ray then pulled it back and throws it away like a bullet in space and the sound was more clamorous than thunder itself. He looked back at Master Red with a smile, a smile of victory. "Master I did it. A complete full moonCannon", said Ray.

"Yes, finally your training is complete, and now with this strength I can say, you are ready"-Master Red replied. Ray was ready. He can fire a moonCannon, a leadBolt and a blazeArrow which usually few of legions were able to do. He was indeed, the most powerful legion to be alive at his age. He mastered his training, his fighting skills and few weapons too. Along with that he hasn't forgotten the values and the promises he made. (On confronting Xen...)

Xen smiled again and said, "There is no chosen one you fool. It's not a fairy tale where you actually know the end. They just have trusted you and manipulated your mind to make you more powerful. **But that's not how power works kid**". Ray started waving his hands in the air again to fire a moonCannon towards Xen. Master Red said "stop" but Ray was filled with rage and he denied.

"It's time to test, what I have just taught you and decide for the sake of this planet and people". "The boy won't stop", Xen said to Master Red. And then a flashing lightning Bolt fired from the arm of Master Red goes straight towards the heart of Ray from the sky, **splitting the cannon, and his heart too**. The blood started pouring out from Ray's mouth as he fell down. "Thank You Red, it will surely pay, and you have gained your full trust towards your inner power", said Xen.

WATER, THE LIFE

By Pushpanathan AS, MWUL

Water makes life as we know it possible. Every drop cycles continuously through air, land, and sea, to be used by someone (or something) else "downstream". Water covers 70% of Earth's surface, but only 3% is fresh, and only a fraction of one percent supports all life on land. Climate change and growing populations are increasing the pressures on that reserve. Failing to conserve water can eventually lead to a lack of an adequate, healthy water supply, which can have drastic consequences in rising costs. Much of our freshwater resources are also used for beautifying our surroundings – watering lawns, trees, flower, and vegetable gardens, as well as washing cars and filling public fountains at parks. Failing to conserve water now can mean losing out on such fun and beautiful uses later on. Reducing our usage of water now means that these services can continue to be provided.

LIFE AT MAHINDRA TOWERS

By Zaheer Dharwar, Mahindra Partners

There is so much happening every day in the premises. Celebrating of birthdays to farewells and celebrating of annual days to festive and national occasions, then host of other frequent activities ranging from rangoli, stage performances, mela, box cricket, food festivals, in-house shopping to online shopping. the compassion, love, help for each-other and towards the fellow citizens is never short either, people here come forward generously donating blood, raising funds for colleagues, donating material for Nanhi Kali, planting trees, cleaning surroundings, feeding hungry animals and offering voluntary services to remain ever committed.

Mahindra Towers is a premise fully vibrant, full of life and colour, a place always happening, always lively, full of energy, safe as home, and a place that always would be valued by all of us to, a place that has taught us many important aspects of Life.

AND THEY SAY....

By Surbhi Singh, Mahindra Susten

So they say... Girls should not get inside a temple when they are bleeding naturally every month....

But yes.. they can definitely be "MADE" to bleed inside a Temple....

So they say... Temples are the most safe place to be at...because God resides there...

But yes... Do think twice before you go inside there....

So they say... Wearing short dresses creates such problems and crimes...

But yes... Asifa's full sleeved Kurti and Salwar with a dupatta indeed was insufficient to hide her body....

So they say... Women's safety will be taken care of...

But yes.. when their own people are involved in such heinous crimes they can let them go off...

LOVE STORY OF AN ALLURING SOCIETY AND A REPULSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD SLUM

By Preeti Das, Mahindra Susten

Here was the lavish look, the gratifying amenities, the classy residents and there, the disorientated sheds, the unpleasant clumsiness, the crude occupants...This was our state or rather the state that appeared at the surface level. Then what is it that created a love story between us? Could it lead to a happy ending?

It was late in the afternoon. Like any other week day, there was silence around. People had gone to their workplace. And this was the case at both the ends irrespective of the difference of our "state". I have always wondered what their work would be like! Would it be similar to people here? Or may be better?

MANALI AND LEH

By Bharadwaj Ryaka, Mahindra Susten

I had the opportunity to experience my first High Altitude Himalayan Trek to Hampta Pass (14000 ft.) in August 2015. After successfully completing the trek we were having a camp fire and my fellow trekkers were having a discussion as to what's the next big challenge to complete. There were many ideas bouncing off from each one of us like Everest Base Camp Trek, Rupkund Trek, Valley of Flowers trek, Royal Enfield Bike ride from Delhi to Leh to Srinagar and back to Delhi, etc.

As the discussion went on a fellow trekker from USA who had taken 6 months' sabbatical leave and was touring India had told in the discussion that he had completed Mountain Bicycle Expedition from Manali to Leh Ladakh crossing 5 high altitude mountain passes over a period of 12 Days and covering approximately 500KM on the so called "Everest of Cycling" route. He was telling that this route is considered as the most dangerous and hazardous roads ever and the weather conditions change so drastically and one should be ready mentally and physically to complete this kind of difficult ride. This discussion made a deep impact within me and I felt that this challenging bicycle ride would be a once in a life time experience for me to complete it. At that moment, I had decided to take up the challenge in the coming year.

RESPECT TO SOCIETY WILL POSITIVELY TURN TO RESPECT TOWARDS THE NATION

By Pritish Patel, Mahindra Susten

We all just keep on praising other countries like America, London. It is so clean, so disciplined, the rules and regulations are adhered to, the penalties are strict, etc. Now, let's have a look at how we think of rules and regulations in our own country.

We don't have any kind of interest in supporting the social growth of our country. There is no sense of following the rules and regulations laid down for us. The reality is rather bitter, strange even and fairly simple. We don't want to change, no matter how simple it gets.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

By Mitesh Jadav, MSSCL

Embracing the circular economy is the biggest opportunity of our lifetime. Our shared journey towards a more sustainable future requires new perspectives on consumption and responsibility. Achieving long-term balanced growth can only happen through partnership. No single company can solve the entire problem. Collaboration with suppliers, retailers, start-ups, governments, cities and civil society will enable business to develop products, services and models that have a net positive contribution to our world. Mahindra Group Chairman Anand Mahindra made the call-in advance of the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS), which will convene from 12-14 September 2018 in San Francisco, California, US. Mr. Mahindra said that, businesses can "future-proof growth" and boost their competitive advantage in the transition to a low-carbon economy by setting science-based targets, which also shows governments that businesses are serious about aligning their strategies with the Paris Agreement. Together, we can create innovative scalable solutions and shape consumer behaviour.

THE OTHER SIDE!

By Devang Salva, Mahindra Susten

It's that day where everything seems to go wrong. Chances are that you will miss a train or get stuck in traffic. Murphy's Law after all. Your blue skies will turn to grey. You will be loaded with work which according to you is "not making any sense or value". But hold on buddy! Let's not blow this out of proportion. Well actually, let's just blow this into proportion. We tend to undermine the pride and responsibility on our shoulders. Trying to solve one of the world's most pressing problems. Sustainable Energy! We all are contributing directly or indirectly towards making the future a better place. From every industry that is powered by clean energy to every light bulb that brightens the life of a young student in a remote village. We all have at least a very tiny contribution to that. Even if it's not powered by us, we have pushed our competitors to provide a better solution.

So the next time when you meet your gang at the end of a bad day, just pull out your business card and tell them why you are doing what you are doing. The truth is, the grass will always be greener on the other side. And I am no one to tell you what you should do in life. But maybe, just maybe. You are already on the other side. Cheers!

THE YOUTHOLISTICS- HISTORY UNREVEALED

By Kamaldeep Singh, MIL

(Youth V/s Politics – Inspired by Shaheed Bhagat Singh)

As Living in a nation who praises the great sacrifices of our National Heroes Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev , Rajguru, Uddham Singh and many unsung heroes. It is still sad to hear that our youth don't want to opt into politics as a career. Many of us yet don't even know the fact that after being our 3 national heroes they were hung at Lahore jail, yet they have not been declared as shaheed by our democratic government as per RTI received from the government. The government claims there are no such evidence and documents available with them to declare them as shaheed, (although the nation call them as shaheed) and the fact is that still they have been tagged as terrorist as per British records.

CHANGING OUR THINKING...

By Sachin Lokhande, MSSCL

A car ahead was moving like a turtle and not giving me way inspite of my continuous honking! I was on brink of losing my cool when I noticed the small sticker on the car's rear!

Physically challenged; Please be patient.

And that changed everything..! I immediately went calm and slowed down! In fact I got a little protective of the car and the driver..! I reached work a few minutes late, but it was ok!

And then it struck me. Would I have been patient if there was no sticker? Why do we need stickers to be patient with people!?

Will we be more patient and kind with others if people had labels pasted on their foreheads?

Labels like "Lost my job", "Fighting cancer", "Going through a bad divorce", "Suffering Emotional abuse ", "Lost a loved one", "Feeling worthless", "Financially broke"..... And more like these!!!!

Everyone is fighting a battle we know nothing about. The least we can do is be patient and kind!!!

Let us respect the invisible labels...

The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking...

RUNNING AND LIVING

By Surmai Kaushik, Mahindra Susten

Running is easily one of the most excruciating activities as it takes all the mental and physical rigour out of you. And it most definitely is also an addiction in it's own self. When your legs hit the floor and you can only see an unending road, and a limitless horizon you know you're on the right path. Sweat gripping every part of you, you start to take cognizance of the muscles and tissues in your body that you dint know existed, and you can feel them all pain a little. But once the engine of the body is hot and running, running almost feels effortless.

Let me also present to you the subtle dichotomy of running. When you think of running, you think of speed, inertia and acceleration. And well, in the start I did relate to it that way myself.

Now having embraced running, I feel running is more about stopping the time. Running is about a standstill, more than it's about the pace. Because when you're running the time virtually stops, and you can hear and feel pretty much nothing but your own breath. It's like your life is playing in slow motion and it breaks the pace of life, making you numb. Running is like meditation. Running is re energising yourself so you can be more lucid, focused and productive. I'd make an earnest request to all of you, it starts with 1 mile and then you can hit a 10, if you aim for it. .

THE BIG FAT WEDDING SPECTACLE

Animals, trapezes and clowns are so passé. Human societal obligations provide more entertainment than even traditional circuses

By Renfred Dsouza

Love the circus? You must check out the circus streets in London. Before you let your imagination run loose, these events don't feature circus regulars. For starters, you won't find red nosed clowns or tightrope performances serenading the public. In fact, you won't find anything you associate with a circus here at all, because it is not one after all. Gotcha, didn't I? Oxford Street, Piccadilly Circus, Arnold Circus – the many circuses in London happen to be the names of famous streets there. The word circus is derived from the Latin root 'circ', which means circle. These streets have many junctions that have formed circles and hence their eventual names. I know, that was a boring point but let's celebrate the fact that we have all learned something new now, shall we?

But watching animals and humans perform tricks is not the only way to enjoy a circus. Weddings give ample scope to feel like you are watching a circus as well. I thought that the circus delight surrounding a wedding was a phenomenon unique to Indian weddings but the recently held royal wedding in London proved me wrong and how! The planet was obsessed with Prince Harry and his bride, American actor Meghan Markle.

Which begs the question, what is it about a wedding that makes people go absolutely bananas? Friends – old and new, family members – near and distant, acquaintances, colleagues, neighbours, the cat sitter, the junior make-up artist's



assistant on set – everyone seemed to want to be in on the details and more importantly – everyone had an opinion on the union. Do they look good together? Will the marriage last? Will the wife blend in with her new family? Will she make them proud? Is the groom capable of commitment? How will their babies look? So on and so forth... Don't scoff, you know you are guilty of asking yourselves at least some of these questions, not just for Harry and Meghan Markle, but each time you hear of an upcoming wedding in your friends/family circle too.

The supporting cast of the circus comprised of the likes of celebrities like Priyanka Chopra, George Clooney, David Beckham, Idris Elba, Oprah Winfrey, Serena Williams and Sir Elton John among others. Almost all the cast was dressed in formal finery and hats. Big, feathery, opulent hats, most of which were worn sideways, as if only side of the face deserved to be protected from the sun. Fashion, obviously, is not my strong suit so I'll nod in agreement when fashion critics hail the oversized, undone ties behind Amal Clooney's mustard-yellow frock a fashionable marvel.

The royal family has been the centre stage of the circus for the past few months now. Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and his wife, Kate Middleton, Duchess of Cambridge set the paparazzi ball rolling when they walked into the hospital to deliver their third baby over a month back. Bets were being placed worldwide on the sex of the baby. Then came the photographs of the perfectly poised, stiletto sporting Duchess walking out of the hospital, new-born in her arms. The planet

barely recovered from the Duchess channelling her inner Lady Diana (she wore a dress similar to her late mother-in-law as she was discharged from the hospital) and it was time for all the gossip surrounding the royal wedding. During the wedding, the world went into a tizzy at the sight of black people singing at a choir and a black priest at a traditional English royal wedding.

For me, personally, the coverage leading up to the circus... erm... wedding, was an anti-climax of sorts. Given Harry's 'wild boy' reputation, I always thought that the press would shred him to pieces, with detailed accounts, warning Markle of what she's marrying into. Imagine my surprise at seeing the tables turn on their heads. Not only did Markle's one time friends and close and distant family members portray her as an opportunist, Harry somehow came out looking as the innocent lamb under the spell of a social climber. Then the Internet was flooded with click bait articles that claimed to have unmasked the 'real Meghan'. Before I knew it, social media went into an over drive, screaming from virtual rooftops about Markle's divorcee status, listing the bold scenes she performed on screen, her sour equations with many family members and even questioning her intention to get married to Harry.

Harry's resume reads like this so far: he has a history of showing indifference towards following royal protocol; has been photographed playing strip poker at a hotel in Vegas; drank out of a prosthetic leg and even got drunk and fell into a pool. But sure, feel free to go ahead and think that HE'S a catch! ■■■



LETTER OF A WORKING MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER

By Pravina Murkutey

Dearest Daughter,

It's been a year since you've been going to the daycare. Exactly 4 months and 8 days old you were at that time!

My heart still bleeds, when every day I leave you with someone else and rush to office.

For some thinking minds, a working woman may represent an image of a cruel, selfish being who has high career aspirations and can't really "sacrifice" them for her child. For few others, the moment a child is born, a mother's "duty" is to stay home and take care of the baby's needs. For another section of the world, new moms work ONLY if the family is finding it tough to make both ends meet.

In my own eyes, my decision to work again after your birth stemmed up from three major beliefs:

1. The upbringing of a child and running the family – both man and wife are responsible for it.
2. Inculcating a sense of responsibility and, at the same time, virtues of freedom, in my baby girl to make her understand that human life is all about "enjoying the responsibilities" and making the best use of whatsoever opportunities present themselves
3. And, earning sufficient to be able to give a decent life to my daughter.

Many other approaches were possible, many alternate choices could have been made – let's discuss them once you are old enough to understand – but I chose this path ONLY because I had colossal faith in you and you alone!

Hats off to the way you started adjusting to a 10-hour long routine of staying with complete unknowns away from your ONLY known ones!

Not to undermine your father's precious help in the household routine and in all your chores—he's a precious gem and I know that you already know it! He's phenomenal too...

Back to you...

I had numerous doubts in my mind; whether or not your nanny will be able

to take care of you, whether or not you'll stay happy there, and whether or not you'll adjust at your daycare. After all, you were the tiniest one to seek admission in all the daycares that we visited.

But now, daily, when I come to pick you up in the evening, and you meet me with a giant smile and open arms, your eyes communicate it all: "Chill mom, you need not worry. I'm a good girl!" When the three of us—your father, you, and I—return home from our respective half-a-day-abodes...all that your parents yearn for is, more and more wonderful moments with you! You never fail to surprise us, never fail to bring a smile to our tired faces, never let us sit gloomily and think of why, what, and how—because you ALWAYS have a plan in mind—PLAY, FOOD or POOP! And we adore that about you!

Anyways—in our mother-daughter relationship—it's your sacrifice of staying away from your mom that has helped me resume my work. I'm back in work mode ONLY because you are helping me out. For this, I'll always be thankful to you.

And regarding what people think—working mothers are selfish, work-oriented, et al—all I have to say is that I'm proud of the fact that I'm being able to balance both work and home. My daughter, I love you to death and can say with full confidence that I'll never make you my CHOICE#2. Whenever, wherever you need me, I'll be there for you...ALWAYS!!! You are my life's top-most priority and will always remain so. You are my heartbeat...in fact...a part of me. No one else can understand my heart matters better than you because you're the only one who's seen it from the inside!

I'm not selfish, I'm not promotion-hungry, and I'm not a money-hugger. All that I am is a mom who loves her daughter the most and wants to inculcate the best of values in her, and to be able to give a worthy life to her! I'll always be there for you for daily bathing, massaging, and dressing up, feeding, etc. until the time you grow up and take the charge. That's the reason why I never hired help at home to do all this stuff. Your father and I wanted to do it all by ourselves.

And even beyond that, once you join school, I'll be there to attend all your parent-teacher meets, help you with your homework, play with you, go shopping with you, be an audience to your storytelling, be there to resolve your heart matters, be there to guide you in your career choices, be there for you...in short...always...as your guide, your confidante, and your best friend.

And in return, all that I want is...STAY BLESSED AND HAPPY!!! Truly, your smile and your happiness mean the world to me! I'll never give you an account

of "what all I did for you" and "what all you owe to me"...our relation is above this petty barter exchange system...because I feel that being your mom is my greatest privilege! Being your mom isn't my duty, rather an honour.

When you grow up and, one fine day, read this long letter, along with few more that I'm planning to pen down, I hope you understand why I had to make certain choices in life. I hope you understand my point of view. I hope you understand that love isn't measured by quantity but by quality. I hope that you understand

“

When you grow up and, one fine day, read this long letter, I hope you understand why I had to make certain choices in life. I hope you understand my point of view that love isn't measured by quantity but by quality.

”

the reasons—said and unsaid—behind my decisions. I hope...ah no...I KNOW you'll understand the spoken and unspoken words...which somehow, miraculously, only daughters can!

Love you, my sweetheart
You're Working Mother

P.S: And to the world—who judge working moms insensitively. Working fathers aren't "selfish" and same holds true for the working mothers too! A stay-at-home parent or a working parent—what matters is the quality of time you give to your child. I've left my TV, social gatherings, etc. WITHOUT REGRETS to be able to dedicate all the available time to my child. To work or not to work is a personal choice. I chose to be a dedicated working professional, and at the same time, a dedicated and loving mom, and that's my choice, completely!



Talent@Partners

Amudha from the BD team of MACE has extraordinary skill in designing cloth through embroidery. She enjoys spending her free time in knitting, thereby creating wonderful pieces of art.



S Bavani from the BD team of MACE has a good understanding of vegetables, millets, and fruits. She loves to spend her time to understand the special health benefits of our traditional edibles like various millets, red corn, country corn, ragi, sprouts, spinach, etc. She puts together these super foods suitable for the Indian palette to make healthy and delicious food items.



Shreyas Parkar from Mahindra Susten, won a massive tally of 7 medals at the 22nd National Games of the Deaf (2017) held at Ranchi, Jharkhand. Shreyas won 4 Gold, 2 Silver and 1 Bronze across 7 swimming events which were both individual and team races. These included: 50M Freestyle – 1st (Gold Medal), 50M Backstroke – 1st (Gold Medal), 100M Backstroke – 2nd (Silver Medal), 50M Butterfly – 2nd (Silver Medal), 100M Butterfly – 3rd (Bronze Medal), 4 x 50M Medley relay – 1st (Gold Medal), 4 x 50M Freestyle relay – 1st (Gold Medal). We applaud Shreyas' talent and hard work at achieving such honours across the country and wish him the very best for future events!



Sumeet Joshi – Engineer from MTC's Production Planning and Control (PPC) Team, never fails to connect with his hobby of sketching and painting. Featured in an earlier edition of Medley, Sumeet continues to live his passion by experimenting with colours on blank canvases. The vibrancy of colours inspires him to paint, which in turn reflects in his personality. Turning a blank canvas into a colourful piece of art makes his day fulfilling. Awed by the beauty of colours, Sumeet spends his leisure time creating something new!



Panneerselvam K, Engineer – Maintenance, MWUL made a beautiful flower vase for the reception area in our Bhavani plant, Tamil Nadu using the best out of waste. The flower vase was made of Scrapped PVC pipes and adding some new materials of cotton threads, ribbon and synthetic flowers for decoration.

Parth S. Kanchan, 11 year old son of Sadashiv Kanchan, Manager – Commercial & Administration, Mahindra Accelo won a Silver Medal in Martial Art Orange Belt category at 7th Chitah Jeet Kune Do National Championship, 2017, at Sports Club Lokhandwala, Andheri, Mumbai.



Major Minors

 <p>“Bara aahe tumcha”</p> <p>Deepak Jawalkote, MTC</p>	 <p>“If these RM’s wrote a book, 1001 creative excuses. It would be a bestseller!”</p> <p>AI Majumdar, CEO, Mahindra Retail</p>	 <p>“Attempts May Fail but Fail not to Attempt”</p> <p>Sathishkumar R, MWUL</p>	 <p>“AI, stock nahi hai!”</p> <p>All Operations, Mahindra Retail</p>
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CINESPHERE



What is Design Thinking

In under four minutes, this video takes you through the basic building blocks of design thinking

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V5BwTrQOCs>



The Era of Open Innovation

Incentive for innovation lies deeper than corporates can

'see' https://www.ted.com/talks/charles_leadbeater_on_innovation



Designers, Think Big!

How thinking small, limits your possibilities.

https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_brown_urges_designers_to_think_big

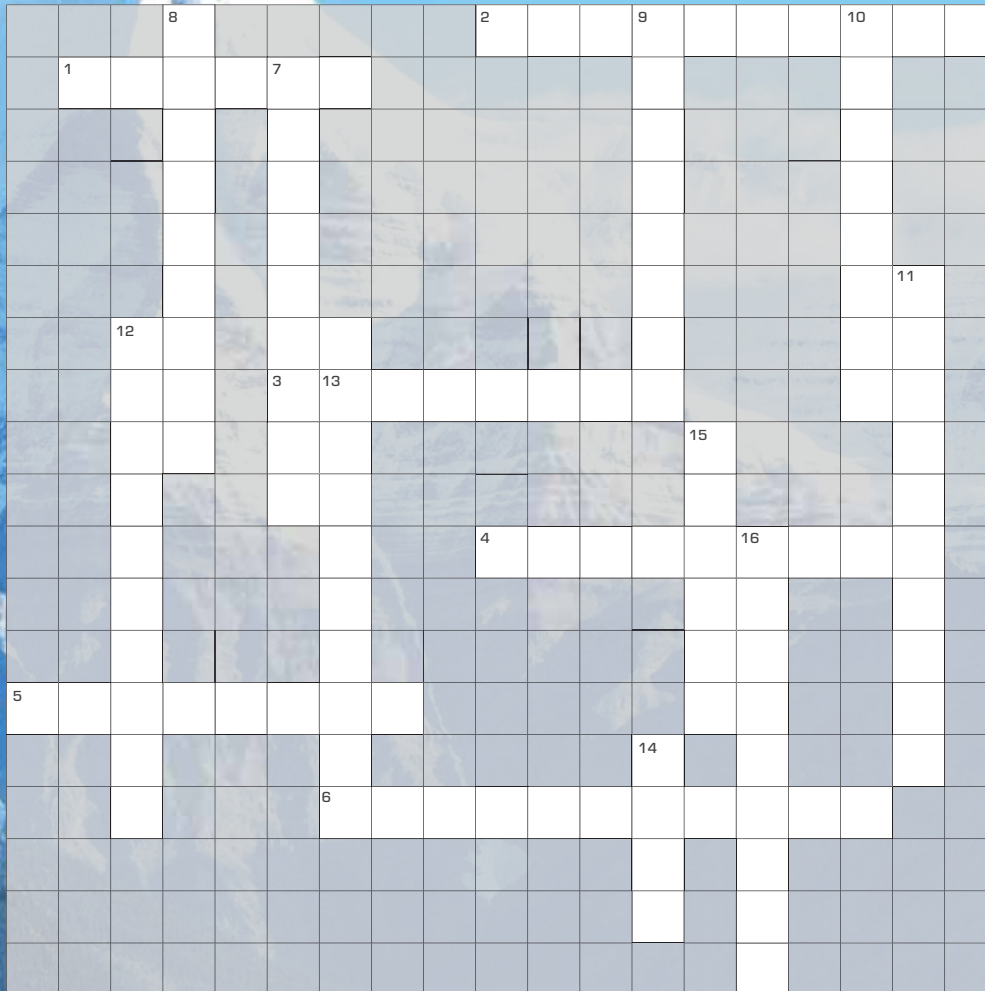


When we design for disability, we all benefit

How sensitive and inclusive design can solve more problems.

https://www.ted.com/talks/elise_roy_when_we_design_for_disability_we_all_benefit

The Rise Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 - Being an initiator and taking charge to complete; see things to fruition (6)
 2 - Using a logical approach to solve problems and everyday work issues (10)
 3 - Having faith in the potential and reliability of others (8)
 4 - Respecting the views and perspectives of different people (9)
 5 - The ability to remain objective and concentrate on the matter at hand (8)
 6 - Characterised by fairness, honesty and credibility; that makes people rely on for opinions (11)

DOWN

- 7 - Thriving on physical and mental activity to take on different roles and expectations in life (9)
 8 - The ability to ask the right questions and be receptive towards the body language, expressions and responses of people (9)
 9 - Making measured changes in behaviour by examining various sources or experiences (8)
 10 - Trusting your intuition and being open to new experiences and ideas
 11 - Becoming an inspiration to people, encouraging them to take ownership of their work (10)
 12 - Working with a consistent and systematic approach to complete tasks on time (10)
 13 - A great sense of self-worth that helps you to quickly recover from failures (9)
 14 - Avoiding conformity and championing new ideas, while confidently voicing opinions (4)
 15 - Knowing how to optimally utilise resources to the greatest benefit (6)
 16 - Being empathetic and considerate of others' needs and feelings (9)

Click a picture of your filled crossword and post it on the Rise App to get a chance to win some exciting goodies.

