

Insights with Mr. Debashis Das



“IMT is much more than Management Education, it is a “Religion” for the rest of your life.....”

Debashis Das, President IMT Alumni Association

Mr. Debashis Das with student managers of IMT, Nagpur

Mr Debashis Das, CEO at Milagrow Business and Knowledge Solutions, was at Institute of Management Technology, Nagpur on the 3rd of December, 2016. With 20 years of impeccable experience in FMCG sector, he is an alumnus of the Ghaziabad campus. Mr Das is among the 10 Distinguished Alumnus Award recipients of IMT in the 36 years history of the institute with more than 15000 alumni from all campuses put together. He is also the Founder - President of the IMT Alumni Association. The session traversed on Brand Management in the FMCG sector and filled with insights on ‘*Evolution of dish wash segment in the Indian market*’. He also spoke on role of Alumni in branding their own institute and creating a mutually beneficial connect of the alumni.

Below are the excerpts from the interview:

Q1. You had successfully rolled out *Pril* dishwash liquid in India. Is there a success formula to take on an established market giant while developing a new product or brand?

Ans. You can read success formulae everywhere and different people come up with different definitions of success – both professional and personal. Professional success can be defined by net sales value of your brand or market penetration, shares, etc. it has achieved. But

personal success comes with only one formula – hard work, passion and the ability to follow your conscience to do the right things. If you work hard, with passion, you will go that extra mile beyond your competitor and drill deep to find the right consumer insight. Then follow your conscience to honestly deliver to the consumer what he is looking for, be true to your customer. Set the highest benchmarks. No one can beat your efforts, your passion and your integrity other than yourself.

Q2.You switched from Henkel India Limited to Mother Dairy. Having worked with home care segment as well with food processing industry, what are the challenges that you faced in these two different FMCG space?

Ans. If there is no challenge, there is no fun. The objectives of the business can be different and you must adapt to it. While Homecare segment was a journey of establishing a brand against well established brands, Mother Dairy was an iconic brand and about being of service to the nation. The satisfaction I have is that I put in my 200% efforts in every job and loved every day of my work.

Q3. There is lot more we can learn in the campus besides the academic curriculum. Having been a B-school student yourself how according to you can we make these two-years in the campus more productive?

Ans. I believe IMT gives you a new “way of life” which you realise later. It is important that you welcome this religion with open arms. It can be the place where you develop skills of handling people or the art of getting work done. It can be something related to business networking especially for people getting into entrepreneurship or something along the lines of understanding your core competencies and polishing those rather than struggling with the weaknesses. It really depends upon the choice you make. Having said that, everybody should adapt three things: ability to look at the bigger picture, develop the knack of putting in extra passion and to be able to do these, one needs to have an industry interface. After graduating, once you transit from a student to a professional you need to deliver results, you might not have the space and time to experiment – so do it now.

Q4. It is a phenomenal feat to have been quoted in the bible of marketing- Marketing Management by Philip Kotler. How was that moment?

Ans. There have been many such awards from Best Debutant, Best Social Media campaign award or being ranked among the Front runners of the industry for Marketing. Successes and failures will always come your way. While I have done few campaigns, and succeeded, I have had failures as well. So, I don't even look at that success with so much hype, I rather focus on my failures because all my failures give me learnings. My biggest achievements, as per me, was the painting with quote from a customer who compared my product to a blessing of God and not the quote in Philip Kotler. The customer painted the picture of Lord Vishnu with his Sudarshan Chakra in the form of Pril and wrote (as a narrative from Lord Vishnu) – “*If there is evil, I will destroy it. If there is dirt, my chakra – Pril will destroy it.*” This is my biggest award, if a customer has evaluated my work and written this “certificate”, there can be no greater joy for me.

Q5. You are our illustrious alumnus. How did the two years of your experience in IMT help in your career?

Ans. IMT gave me the passion and made me believe that if I am doing the right thing, I should go all out for it. If you look at the alumni operations as well, I have been involved for almost 15 years because I believe that keeping in touch with the institute is very important. I like to keep control of my CV and that has IMT brand on it forever. I can never let IMT's image as a brand get hampered. Wherever we, the students or alumni of IMT, send our resume it will go with the brand name IMT on and which is why I want every IMT-ian to be conscious of this and work hard for it. Be responsible for your own brand and see the bigger picture of strength of IMT-ians together. I said this before – IMT gives you far beyond just a degree, it gives you a “religion of life”. So go for the kill and set your own benchmarks every time. That's what IMT has given me and will give you too.