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THE HUMAN FACTOR

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THE FIRST EVER CROSS-ETHNIC STUDY IN INDIA

WHAT EMPLOYEES EXPECT FROM THEIR LEADERS

By ARINDAM CHAUDHURI



EXPERTISE

APPROACHABLE

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

WALK THE TALK

CAREER GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

FLEXIBILITY

RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

CLEAR COMMUNICATION

TRUST

JOB SATISFACTION

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ROLE CLARITY

UNBIASED TREATMENT

FAVOURABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

EMPOWERMENT

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

HONESTY/INTEGRITY

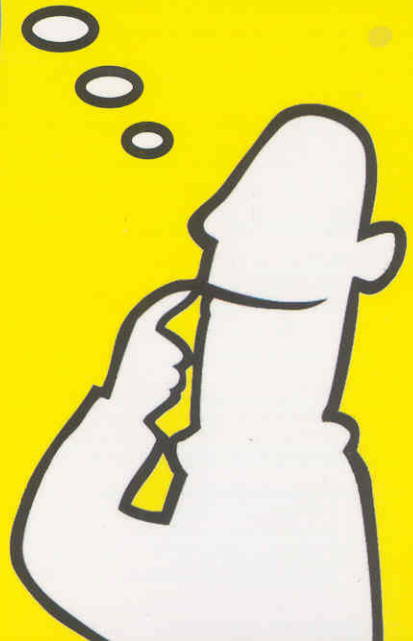
TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS

FEEDBACK

MOTIVATION

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

ENCOURAGEMENT



GREAT STUDENTS MAKE A GREAT INSTITUTION

DR. PRAMOD KUMAR

(PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & MEDIA) TELLS SUSHMITA YADAV ABOUT HIS BELIEF IN GIVING THE STUDENTS AT ISB&M AN OPEN, FRIENDLY, AND NON-REGIMENTED ENVIRONMENT FOR THEIR OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

International School of Business & Media (ISB&M) has grown rapidly in the last few years. Dr. Pramod Kumar, the founder and President of ISB&M, is a Ph.D. (Organizational Behaviour) from IIT Bombay and during the course of his career journey, has had a successful stint at IIM Ahmedabad. He was also the former Chairperson - Placement at XLRI Jamshedpur and Ex-Director at Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (Pune). Dr. Kumar also works as a consultant for over 80 companies worldwide. He has authored over 100 research papers, cases and management games.

Q. You have had fruitful associations with IIT Bombay, IIM-A and XLRI. Tell us about your journey in the field of education.

A. Each of these institutions taught me some great lessons in my growth as a professional. IIT Bombay and XLRI were my best learning experiences. At IIT, I learned that superior professional standards cannot be achieved by making compromises even if that makes your journey tough. You need to pace your progress at a level that drives you towards your objectives. Impediments and pot holes are your natural friends in your journey. All will never agree with you, only some will: you need to learn to win over those who don't agree with you. You give people their space if you want to make friends; differences are more real and logical. A "No" to your request can be disappointing but can never mean disrespect. I have truly grown as a person and a professional at IIT Bombay. XLRI brought out in me a great teacher, trainer and consultant. Professional rivalry with colleagues helped me raise standards at all initiatives and responsibilities that I undertook. It was a great experience in learning



PHOTOS: SANJAY SOLANKI

BUILDING CAREERS AT ISB&M

International School of Business & Media (ISB&M), a constituent of Peoples Empowerment Group, offers PG courses in Management in Marketing, Finance, HR and Operations and Supply Chain Management. Now they also have BBA and BE in Mechanical, Electronics & Telecom, Computer Science and IT. The programmes are state-of-the-art and contemporary. These are supported by highly-qualified faculty and academic infrastructure. The programme structure is developed to balance conceptual and practical skills and abilities, and helps develop business analysis aptitude, problem solving and decision making skills and leadership ability of the students. The programme coverage includes key functional area of management. ISB&M subscribes to over 10,000 journals and periodicals. At ISB&M, the faculty is encouraged to interact with the industry and research community, and supports them to travel for highly research-oriented conferences globally. The faculty have travelled to the US, Europe, and Asian countries for seminars and conferences.



to exercise peer leadership and decision making as I went about handling my responsibilities as chairperson placements, research and OB area.

Though my stint at IIM-A was very short, it provided me some great role models such as Prof. Pradip Khandwala and Prof. Ramadhar Singh. IIM-A, IIT Bombay and the Psychology Department of Allahabad University taught me the meaning of scholarship as the greatest asset of a professor which has been a source of self-esteem to me.

Q. How did you get yourself associated with ISB&M?

A. I founded ISB&M in the year 2000. My great turnaround experience was at the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management: it taught me a great deal about institution building, resource planning and impacting lives and careers of students. This was what led me to set up ISB&M.

Q. What was the vision and mission of ISB&M when you started the institute?

A. My vision was to provide world-class education to change the lives and careers of India's youth through business and enterprise driven education. I also wanted to maintain the spirit of responsible egalitarianism and demonstrate superior professional competence. My mission was to develop well-rounded professionals who could work in a global environment with comfort. I also wanted to develop superior quality networks with quality educationists and professionals in the corporate and social arenas.

Q. What were the challenges that you faced during the journey? How did you encounter them?

A. The initial challenge that I faced was that of resource mobilisation; I did not have the required financial resources. I financed it with my consulting income and also took a loan. Then there was the problem of how to build self-esteem and culture of a high-profile institution among our students. This was my greatest challenge because only great students make a great institution. I wanted to see



them embark on journeys to successful careers at a fast pace. I was personally involved in training them on behavioural issues. We also positioned them into some great companies for internships that provided them with the quality of benchmark they needed.

In January 2001, I met with a serious accident that put me out of office for 5-6 months. But I had a great team of faculty who, in my absence, took upon themselves the task of carrying forward the job with a high degree of commitment. Prof. YG Choukse took upon himself the mandate to perform the required duties with great attention to detail. Also, our students in the first batch demonstrated a great deal of courage, confidence and conviction: No wonder they are in great careers today globally. They cannot fail and truly deserved to succeed. The worst of all impediments came when the first batch was passing out in 2002. It was the time when the economic recession happened, and was compounded by 9/11 attacks in the US. With perseverance, we focused on the non-IT sector and we did succeed.

WE HAVE CREATED A VERY ACTIVE STUDENT COUNCIL THAT TRIGGERS A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES TOWARDS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Q. For any institute to be successful the onus lies with the faculty. What kind of faculty members do you look for ISB&M?

A. Faculty, library and technology are the key drivers for any institute. We look for faculty members who have had exposure to good educational institutes such as IITs, IIMs and good US and UK universities. We do not look for teaching machines. We want faculty who have interest in knowledge and scholarship: Those who have an interest in students and are themselves open to learning.

Q. ISB&M is known for its student-driven functioning. How does that work at the institute?

A. We treat our students as partners in our success. Our relationship with them is open, friendly, and non-regimented. We believe that they are capable of a responsible approach; ISB&M is as much their institution and they will be interested in seeing the institute grow and feel proud about it.

We raise their expectation and aspiration in life and see that they work towards achieving it. We have created a very active student council that triggers a series of events and activities towards growth and development of students and ISB&M. We empower them and engage them. ISB&M student council handles as high a budget of INR one crore annually.

Q. B-Schools are mushrooming in India. How does ISB&M stand out among them?

A. It is not the number; very few will be competitive. We have a clear understanding of the meaning of a good institution. We act with sense of responsibility towards our students and make continuous efforts to understand what constitutes executive competence. We

are highly committed to our students and do not make false promises to them. Our students are our best brand ambassadors: If ISB&M has to be great, we have to get our students into big careers. We cannot be great without a certain percentage of them evolving as vice presidents and function heads in a short time frame. We work with them.

Q. ISB&M has a 100 per cent placement record. How does the placement cell function here?

A. At ISB&M, placement is considered as one of the core functions in the entire process. We have a full-fledged cell which handles campus placement. The placement cell is a student body which works under the guidance of the Director. At the beginning of the academic year, they work out their plans keeping in view students' career interest, which includes job profile and industry/sector. Students also go through systematic preparation for the placement process, which they themselves organise through their professional development (PD) cell. The PD cell looks into any special learning needs that any of the students may have.

Q. An advice you would like to give to the students.

A. I want students to clearly identify what they want before they enter a college, and select the college accordingly. It is an important decision of life, and you need to do your homework well; Brokers are not your best friends. Once you enter a college, seek your opportunity actively. thf

This interview is the first in a two-part series. Look out for the conclusion in the subsequent edition of The Human Factor.