



November 2014



Thinking Aloud

Faculty Excellence in Academics - Vijayan

Podium

Interview with Dr. Jagdish Sheth - Charles H. Kellstadt Chair of Marketing, Goizueta Business School of Emory University

We Recommend

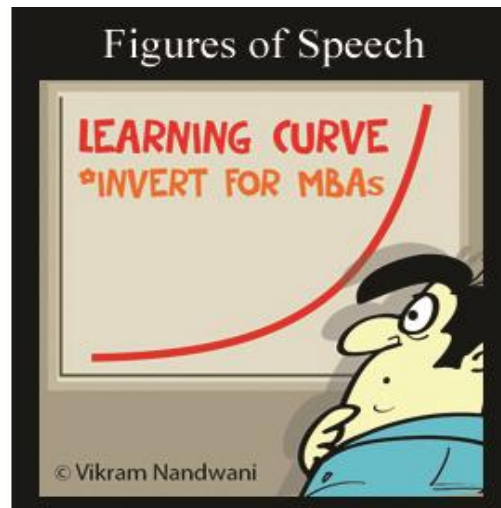
The Accidental Scholar – By Dr. Jagdish Sheth

Standing Ovation

Saath - Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Dear Reader,

Indian history echoes the importance of gurus or teachers who have played a pivotal role in the days gone by and their role seems even more unabated and important in the changing and challenging times that we live in today. To make Indian universities some of the best in the world, faculty members in academia must be equipped to take on the changing attitudes and learning processes of students. Moreover, classrooms today are not confined to the four walls of a room, but have been transformed to digital or smart classrooms which engulf not only a large number of students, but also one which is diverse. Proper selection, training and preparation of academic faculty will help ride over the future challenges that may crop up. It would also help if faculty today could explore and step out of the comfort of traditional methods of teaching and try to establish linkages and centres of excellences to connect industry and academia to advance education, research and outreach in key areas, which are also critical to emerging economies such as India.



On that note, the theme for ET this month is faculty excellence in academia.

In **Thinking Aloud**, Vijayan looks at the various facets of an ideal faculty in today's education system. Although the concept of an 'excellent faculty' is not very customary in the Indian landscape, this view is slowly changing. Likewise, students have also changed with reference to their approach to learning. Therefore, today it is essential that faculty in the academic realm have to constantly re-invent themselves to cope up with students' learning preferences and their expectations. Vijayan has also put forth his views of how faculty can enhance their excellence levels.

On the **Podium**, world renowned educationist, Dr. Jagdish Sheth tells readers why his life story is characterised as an 'Accidental Scholar'. He goes further on to tell us that senior professors in the Indian academic world must get actively involved in academic societies outside India, apart from being a knowledge disseminator, a researcher and a lead fundraiser. Dr. Sheth elucidates three disruptive trends in the field of education and talks about unfulfilled tasks in his life.

In the **We Recommend** section, we present Dr. Jagdish Sheth's book 'The Accidental Scholar'. The book reveres Gurus or Teachers and is an autobiography of Dr. Sheth's fascinating journey and the many interesting encounters and opportunities that came along the way, that shaped his path to success. Dr. Sheth did not confine himself to fate, but his curiosity coupled with his keen sense of exploration to gather local inputs, helped him to break ground and predict trends in academia and geopolitics. In his stints at many universities, the book illustrates his role as an institution maker, while maintaining his chosen role as a scholar & teacher.

In **Standing Ovation**, we feature Saath, an NGO in Gujarat. Saath utilizes market-based strategies to create inclusive societies by empowering India's urban and rural poor. It pioneered the integrated slum development programme in 1989, an approach that seeks to turn slums into vibrant neighbourhoods. Since the poor often have many needs at once, Saath has created one-stop centres enabling a link with Saath's integrated programs in education, job training and placement, medical and legal services and basic infrastructure. Poor communities co-invest with Saath and donors by paying for, deciding and implementing Saath's programmes.

In **Figures of Speech**, Vikram's learning curve has a two way message!

As always, we value your opinion, so do let us know how you liked this issue. To visit our previous issues you can visit the Resources section on the website or simply [Click Here](#). You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Linked In](#) & [Google+](#) - where you can join our community to continue the dialogue with us!



Thinking Aloud

Faculty Excellence in Academics - Vijayan

In India, it is not customary to automatically associate the terms 'excellence' with 'faculty'. This is not because there is no excellence in the academic eco-system. However, the islands of excellence seem to surface very slowly.

The role of faculty in Business School academics is to be the focus of this piece, as I have a closer, longer duration and appreciation of the same.

The student in the Business School has significantly changed. Their expectations have always been on the rise, as an MBA continues to be seen as an accelerator in climbing the economic and social ladders. This shift is happening at a time when the world has gone through cataclysmic changes. The collapse of the global economic system, fuelled by ambition and greed of a few has led to a loss of trust between various players of the business and social eco-systems i.e. between business and regulators, between management and employees, business and customers etc. The collateral damage that has accompanied is the brand dilution of the MBA and the perceived value of B-

School graduates in the eyes of their stakeholders.

As a consequence of the above, the faculty member has to substantially re-invent themselves - in how they teach, what they teach, how they learn etc. The student's learning preferences have also undergone significant changes. Information overload through their personal devices, low attention span, obsession with social media engagement being some of the challenges.

The first shift for faculty to enhance their excellence levels is **TO STOP TEACHING and ENABLE LEARNING**. This is easier said than done. In order to enable a student to learn, the faculty needs to understand student learning styles, in order to customise the teaching-learning process. Faculty also have to contend with student learners having expectations of wanting to 'learn when they want, where they want, at the speed they want, how they want'. Hence, in a major sense, the faculty has to learn to 'cede control' from 'class management' towards 'distributed points of learning and influence'.

The second shift towards building excellence revolves around the relationship of the faculty member with his/her students. The generational shifts in the student community have left many a faculty – of the earlier two generations- fairly challenged to be relevant and effective, while engaging with the Gen Y/Gen Z cohorts. The shift in generational values has impinged faculty (Gen X & prior) to 'psychologically accept' that is no more the 'know all - provider of knowledge'. The expectations of the students from faculty, include that the former should be given space to add to a shared pool of knowledge and the latter should be able to stitch it together and create new meaning. It also means that the faculty may have to say, 'I do not know'. Intellectual mastery alone is not sufficient to earn respect and admiration of students. The faculty has to hence adopt different personas to effectively engage with student(s), i.e. partner in learning, co-creator of knowledge, facilitator, friend, coach, reflector etc.

Last but not the least, faculty roles and leadership are coming closer to each other. The faculty is, and will be expected to demonstrate thought leadership, networking capability and be able to generate transformational results at the institutional, program, subject and individual student levels. The faculty would have to play an increasingly central role to the development & maintenance of the architecture and its eco-system (of the Business School). This would entail adding new facets of competence in sustainable and differentiated strategies, holistic metrics led student development and multi-criteria led institution building development, besides expanding the personal footprint of influence - beyond physical boundaries and towards digital boundlessness.

One can definitely say that very interesting days are ahead in the unfolding of the faculty member of tomorrow.

[back to top ^](#)



Podium

Dr. Jagdish Sheth - Charles H. Kellstadt Chair of Marketing, Goizueta Business School of Emory University



Dr. Jagdish Sheth, a world renowned authority in the field of Strategy, is the Charles H. Kellstadt Chair of Marketing in the Goizueta Business School at Emory University, Atlanta, USA. Prior to this, he was a distinguished faculty member at the University of Southern California, the University of Illinois, Columbia University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His insights on global competition, strategic thinking and customer relationship management are considered revolutionary.

A prolific author, Professor Sheth has published more than 400 research papers and 40 books in different areas of marketing and business strategy. Many of these are considered classic references. As a thought leader, Professor Sheth has made hundreds of presentations to business leaders, academic scholars and public policy makers globally and is also regularly quoted and interviewed by Fortune, Financial Times, The Economic Times, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. He is also a regular guest and frequent commenter for major news networks: BBC, CNBC India and CNN.

ET: You have led a rich life and have received accolades galore for your academic excellence as a student, professor and for significant public service. Please tell us why you characterise your life story as 'An Accidental Scholar'?

JS: I characterize my life story as an "Accidental Scholar" because I was supposed to be a shopkeeper in a family business and due to coincidences in life, I ended up as a scholar. Of course, according to the Hindu philosophy, nothing is accidental: everything is pre-destined based on your Karma and Dharma. It is just that you don't know where your life will end up at a point in time. In any case, it is the best thing that ever happened. There is no other profession as noble as an educator.

ET: You have mentioned that senior professors in the academic world have three aspects in their job: knowledge disseminator as a Teacher, generating new knowledge as a Researcher, and raising funds for their institution as a Lead Fundraiser. In which aspect do Indian educators lack most and why?

JS: Indian educators are excellent knowledge disseminators. They teach with passion mostly from textbooks (mostly from localized editions of foreign textbooks).

Indian educators, however, do generate new knowledge by writing Indian cases or conducting surveys of companies operating in India. What is needed, however, is generating scientific knowledge and publishing in top tier academic, peer reviewed journals, especially in foreign countries.

Finally, Indian educators do significant public service but it is limited to their own academic institutions. These include recruiting students, organizing student clubs and acting as faculty advisors to student competitions across management institutes on a regional or national level. It also includes hosting conferences in different disciplines of management at their own institutions. For example, IIM Ahmedabad hosts an international conference on marketing for emerging markets every two years. Similarly, legendary Professor Anil Gupta leads grass root innovations on a national level.

Fund raising for their own research or for the institution is at a nascent stage. It is presumed to be the responsibility of the office of the Director and not individual faculty members. This is the reality at management institutes. However, in engineering, science and medicine institutions, the faculty competes for external research grants and

therefore, is actively engaged in funded research.

I think Indian educators must get actively involved in academic societies outside India.

ET: What are the disruptive trends you see in the field of Education? How can the corporate world prepare for and accommodate these disruptions?

JS: There are three biggest disruptive trends in education in general and management education in particular. First, how digital technology will make education more affordable and accessible. The recent growth of MOOCS (Massive Online Open Courses) such as Coursera is changing the paradigm of traditional classroom teaching which are location and time centric. Furthermore, it is not scalable. It is amazing to see how an excellent professor in music can reach from 15 to 20 students per semester in the classroom to thousands of students on a worldwide basis on Coursera.

The second major disruptor is the regulatory policy with respect to education. The traditional bodies such as University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) are increasingly replaced by accreditation bodies, such as AACSB International and Equis for management education.

The third major disruptor is non-traditional competition and specifically from corporate universities. For example, Manipal ICICI Institute has already trained more than 40,000 managers in one decade and are likely to scale up to 10,000 new manager students per year. Their curriculum is more skill based (how to) and context based (financial services and risk management) as compared to theory based (why) across all industries.

I think academic institutions have not fully realized the scale with which corporate universities are likely to grow.

The employability gap of graduate students is a critical issue and it will be more likely filled by industry and not the academic institutions. For example, WIPRO trains 10,000 college teachers every year in IT skills so that they can train their students and make them more employable. Similarly, Infosys has the world's largest learning center in Mysore which is far better equipped than most universities and colleges in the areas of technical and leadership training.

ET: As a futurist and commentator one of your submissions is that China and India should collaborate better both for mutual gain and also for international stability. However, China's militaristic ambitions have unnerved its neighbouring states. What makes you confident that the Chinese Dragon and the Indian Elephant can coexist?

JS: I think the Chinese Dragon and the Indian Elephant have no choice but to cooperate and mutually engage with each other in economic, diplomatic and security areas. It is unthinkable for China to go to war with India and vice versa. At the same time, it is in the self-interest of Chinese enterprises, most of which are State owned, to trade and/or invest in India, to become truly global enterprises and compete with Japanese, Korean, German or American multinationals.

India is too big a market to ignore especially in cell phones, appliances, motorcycles, automobiles, steel, cement, airlines or anything else.

The same is true for Indian multinationals. They need to participate in the Chinese economy. This includes Mahindra & Mahindra in the tractor business or Aditya Birla Group in the carbon black or aluminium business and the Tata

Group in tea, steel, telecom to IT services businesses.

Mutual interdependence between China and India is also the reality in global issues such as climate, health care and economic development. I am also of the opinion that India and China must learn to co-exist militarily. While there are border disputes and unresolved boundaries, it does not negate the need to cooperate with each other militarily. This is today's reality of NATO nations with Russia.

Trade and investment between China and India is a more realistic antidote to military confrontation. In fact, today's diplomats have to increasingly become trade ambassadors between the two nations.

ET: Your career has covered not just geographies (US, Europe, Singapore, India, etc.) but also multiple fields (Strategy, Marketing, Consumer behaviour, Accounting, etc.), apart from philanthropy (Sheth Foundation, etc.). What are the unfulfilled tasks in your rich life?

JS: Learning is a lifelong, never ending journey. There is no destination in learning which says I have arrived at that place. And the Indian tradition even advocates that learning transcends mortality; and that it takes multiple avatars (birth and rebirth) to attain external truth. Therefore, all you can do is to have milestones of life's journey in creating new knowledge to attain wisdom and understanding.

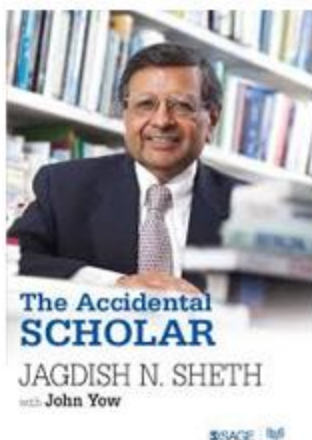
In all honesty, I have not thought of any specific unfulfilled tasks both in my personal and professional life. To that extent, my life will continue to be an Accidental Development.

[back to top ^](#)



We Recommend

The Accidental Scholar - Dr. Jagdish Sheth



'If you take a grain of wheat and make it a loaf of bread, the value add is about three times. If a diamond cutter takes a rough diamond and polishes it, the value add is probably 15 to 20 times. However, if you take a human being and educate and mentor him/her, the value add is infinite'. (From 'The Accidental Scholar')

In ancient India, the Guru or Teacher was a noble soul. In a society where knowledge is supreme, a teacher is the revered one, for he showed you the path of learning and walking this elevated path was considered the righteous road to glory. It is said that in every regal court in days past, while the Prime Minister would be the head of the executive machinery carrying out the decisions of the King, the one who truly had the King's ear was his Guru. Not just a counselor or a Trusted Advisor, the Guru also was a conscience keeper to whom the King turned to when any vexed question of State, or even a personal dilemma, arose. However, over time, with the rise of the material world, the role of such wise Gurus has abated. Or, perhaps it is that such wise men are difficult to

find!

Dr. Jagdish Sheth is, in a sense, part of this diminishing tribe of wise men. His autobiography, 'The Accidental Scholar' is a candid narration of how his life was shaped & enriched by events, people and opportunities that happened to him not so much by design but by being open to the flow of life.

However, to attribute all the good fortune in his life as being a quirk of fate does not do justice to someone who worked his way up in life fighting many adversities, not just by dint of his natural talent but also by pushing himself to taking risks by questioning the obvious.

Whether it is the events leading up to the collaborative work with his mentor, Prof. John Howard (leading to the seminal Howard Sheth Model in Consumer Behavior) or exploring new opportunities by returning to India in the 1960s to teach at IIM, Kolkata, or teaching stints at Singapore (at the NUS) and in Denmark (at the Copenhagen School of Business), Dr. Sheth has not hesitated to break new ground in transferring knowledge to new geographies & also by staying curious, used his keen sense of exploration to gather local inputs, and then connected the dots to predict trends in academia and geopolitics.

This makes him a rare individual who is able to straddle multiple fields of knowledge and see the linkages & thereafter interpret it in simple terms to his audience, be it students & academics, business managers or policy makers. An example of this is the work that he initiated at the India, China & America Institute (ICA Institute), which he founded at Atlanta as early as 2003. Drawing on talent from these nations, he is able to see common ground, where others see diversity, as witnessed in his work in 'Chindia Rising'.

Dr. Sheth's book also illustrates his role as an Institution maker. In his long stints at multiple American Universities (Pittsburgh, Columbia, MIT, Southern California, and now at Emory University), he has played the leadership role in attracting & choosing some of the best minds in their field to come & create research-based inputs and teach them to students from across the world.

Dr. Sheth maintains that his chosen role is to be a scholar & teacher, and in his words, 'making ordinary people extraordinary is probably the greatest purpose of life'. Apart from having guided numerous Ph.D. students, and being a prolific author (scores of ground-breaking books and academic articles), Dr. Sheth has created many world-class research institutions. Besides, with the active support of his wife, Madhu (who Dr. Sheth calls the 'love of my life'), the Sheths have lived by their philosophy of 'the more you accumulate, the more you must give back' and have created the Sheth Foundation, and other bodies, to fund many ventures that have helped students, academic organizations and other resident scholars to pursue the path of academic excellence.

His academic peers have admired Dr. Sheth's life journey more than anyone else. Philip Kotler calls him an inveterate learner, a peripatetic scholar and a Renaissance Man, considering Dr. Sheth's breadth: 'from accounting to manufacturing to consumer behavior, to social psychology, then moving to strategic marketing to multivariate statistics, then into international marketing, and business policy.' All this and more, given that Dr. Sheth has played an active role as Board Member to various global corporations and Think Tanks.

What does it take to be a genuine world class Thought Leader? To the curious, I would highly recommend this book, and especially for all who wish to think unfettered and want to achieve more in their life. Dr. Sheth's story is an inspirational tale of what can be achieved when one dreams big and works towards these goals. And, with humility, Dr. Sheth states that 'without education and mentorship, I would not have reached my full potential and, neither would have those whose lives that I have had the privilege to touch.'

At 75, Dr. Sheth continues to travel intensely and gives his time generously to others. Given his restless and fertile mind, one suspects that there is a sequel in the works to continue the story of this unique 'deep generalist'.

[back to top ^](#)



Standing Ovation

Saath - Ahmedabad, Gujarat



SAATH
Creating Inclusive
Societies

Founded in 1989, Saath is actively involved in activities related to health, education, savings and credit. In the same year, Saath pioneered the Integrated Community Development Programme, an approach that sought to turn slums into vibrant neighbourhoods. The organisation also caters to the multiple needs of the underprivileged by providing them with one-stop centres, through which slum residents have access to services such as health, education, employment, micro finance and affordable housing. Saath believes in capacity and institution building for sustainable development.

Mission: To make human settlements an equitable living environment, where all residents and vulnerable people have access to basic needs for development like health, education, essential infrastructure services and livelihood options, irrespective of their economic and social status.

Objectives

- To facilitate access to government or private services, facilities and information to the urban and rural poor.
- To build the capacity for women and youth and link them with markets and jobs.
- To provide market based solutions to each member of a vulnerable family.

Since 2007, Saath's focus has been to strengthen the community, to build up leadership skills and for the overall development of the community. The new approach of Saath for the coming years is to work for vulnerable youth and women of the society. The organisation will also work for the betterment of vulnerable people by reaching out to the people at the grass root level.

Main Programs along with other initiatives include

- **Saath Urban:** The new economic order has led to a rapid growth in the urban sector. Based mainly on economic needs, the rural population is forced to risk migration. Saath's key focus has been in the areas of health, education, livelihood, infrastructure development and microfinance with the aim of making these basic services affordable and accessible to the urban poor. Empowering local people to ensure that they are able to carry on the process of sustainable development, is the chief motto of Saath.
- **Saath Rural:** Although urban slum areas have been Saath's main focus, the organisation also works in rural areas. They believe that urban development is interrelated with development of the rural vicinity.

While Saath invests in human capacity of persons to manage its programmes in their communities, these communities co-invest with Saath in turn. Saath engages institutions, corporates and individuals throughout the world as partners and supporters of its integrated development in India. During the financial year 2013-14, Saath created an impactful change especially in the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan, reaching out to 4,60,576 individuals and their respective families.

For more information, about Saath, one can visit <http://www.saath.org>

For its efforts, Saath deserves a standing ovation!

[back to top ^](#)



Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd.

101, Lords Manor, 49, Sahaney Sujan Park, Lullanagar, Pune – 411040, Maharashtra, India

©The ELS Lotus logo is trademark of Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd.

©2014 Copyright Empowered Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. (ELS). For private circulation to clients and well wishers of ELS. While ELS endeavors to ensure accuracy of information, we do not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage to any person resulting from it.

To know more about Empowered Learning Systems - visit <http://www.empoweredindia.com>

To look up past issues of Empowering Times - [Click Here](#).

To email your comments - please write to editor_empoweringtimes@empoweredindia.com with "Feedback" in the subject line.

To subscribe - please write to subscribe_empoweringtimes@empoweredindia.com with "Subscribe - ELS Newsletter" in the subject line.

To unsubscribe - please write to unsubscribe_empoweringtimes@empoweredindia.com with "Unsubscribe - ELS Newsletter" in the subject line.

