

Dhirubhaism essay



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DHIRUBHAISM A Remarkable Work Philosophy OF Dhirubhai Ambani

Authored BY: A G Krishnamurthy A Summary ' WE BET ON PEPOLE'.....

Dhirubhai Ambani Dhirubhaism— the remarkable work philosophy of Dhirubhai Ambani - by A G Krishnamurthy is an attempt to capture the unique insights that Dhirubhai shared with the author during their long association. The 15 Dhirubhaisms put together bring out the work philosophy of Dhirubhai and gives us a glimpse into the remarkable thinking process and practices of one of India's most successful entrepreneurs.

Thus, in true sense, this book is not a biography but the principles which took this great leader to such heights. Dhirubhaism, like most other isms is a philosophy or an attitude. The author, having closely observed Dhirubhai's style of functioning has presented fifteen of them. They are not complicated attitudes either - they are simple viewpoints. But executing them took courage and as a consequence showed spectacular results. The book, like the previous two: Invisible CEO and Desi Dream Merchants by AG Krishnamurthy are simple, crisp to the point and engrossing.

The easy narrative is bound to keep the average Indian reader turning the page without the need to consult a dictionary. It is an effective echo of Dhirubhai's famed ability to communicate his message in short, clear sentences. The author of the book, A G Krishnamurthy, is the founder chairman and managing director of Mudra Communications Pvt Ltd. , India's third and largest Advertising agency, which began with a start up capital of Rs. 35, 000 and one client. Mr.

Krishnamurthy joined Reliance Industries in 1976 as their Advertising Manager. The agency's two major brands, Vimal Fabrics and Rasna Soft Drink Concentrate have been nurtured by him from infancy to their current status as two of India's leading and most recognized brands. In 1991, he set up Mudra Institute of Communications, the only advertising institute of its kind in Asia. Accompanied by a Foreword by Mukesh Ambani, the Chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd. in which he reaffirms his father Dhirubhai's unique ability to bring out the extraordinary in ordinary folk, this book is a handy compendium for all those who have often been curious about the ability of Reliance to build mammoth projects in seemingly impossible environments. More than ambition, challenging adversity provided his father with the adrenalin that spurred him to build a fine business enterprise in less than three decades.

An obstacle, for Dhirubhai, was an opportunity, not an obstruction. It compels you to find ways to duck it, circumvent it and vault over it. A setback is no more than an interlude to prepare for a leap forward. Mukesh Ambani further states that his father had little formal education. The world was his universe and the tumble of life itself served as his tutor. He started from a scratch without access to finance or to the network of the influential and the powerful.

What Dhirubhai was a man who always questioned conventional thinking, accepted thinking and intellectual sloth, armed with only his native intelligence and earthly wisdom. For him, Reliance meant something more than a mere business venture. Its collective capacity had to be harnessed to fulfill loftier ambitions. His son, now draws inspiration from his father's

passionate eagerness to take risks, to raise the level of productivity and execute business plans in less time. The Bhagvad Gita states” The actions of a great man are an inspiration for others. Whatever he does becomes a standard for others to follow.

” Dhirubhai Ambani’s life exemplified this. Born on 28 December, 1932, Dhirubhai was the fifth child of Hirachandbhai and Jamnaben Ambani. He left his hometown Chorwad, Gujrat for Aden, at the age of 17, to work at A. Besse & Co. Nine years later he returned to India and set up Reliance Commercial Cooperation, a trading venture He then began manufacturing up the value chain- textiles, then yarn, polyester and petrochemicals, then ventured into oil and gas refining and subsequently oil exploration building a multi billion dollar cooperation in the process.

Dhirubhai financed his plans by going to the capital market in 1977. He convinced a new breed of investors- the middle class community- to put their faith in what was then a little known Textile Company. His subsequent phenomenal performance and rewarding of their trust created an entirely new investing culture in the country. Dhirubhai Ambani is credited with shaping India’s equity culture, attracting millions of retail investors in a market till then dominated by financial institutions. Dhirubhai revolutionized capital markets. From nothing, he generated billions of rupees in wealth for those who put their trust in his companies.

His efforts helped create an ‘ equity cult’ in the Indian capital market. With innovative instruments like the convertible debenture, Reliance quickly became a favorite of the stock market in the 1980s. In 1992, Reliance

became the first Indian company to raise money in global markets, its high credit-taking in international markets limited only by India's sovereign rating. Reliance also became the first Indian company to feature in Forbes 500 list. The corporate philosophy Dhirubhai followed was simple: Thing big. Think differently.

Think fast. Think ahead. Aim for the best. Krishnamurthy illustrates the 13 principles of Dhirubhai with the help of suitable examples and anecdotes.

He further shows us, how Dhirubhai himself executed these principles in his own life. Thus, giving us a practical methodology to work out these guidelines. Dhirubhaism No 1: Roll up your sleeves and help. You and your team share the same DNA. Krishnamurthy points out that in those days, Dhirubhai was already a name to reckon with and a VIP himself, but that did not stop him from rolling up his sleeves and diving in to rescue a situation that had gone out of control. When things went wrong, he was the first person to sense that the circumstances would have been beyond his team's control, rather than it being a slip on their part, as he trusted their capabilities implicitly.

His first instinct was always to join his men in putting out the fire and not crucifying them for it. Dhirubhaism No 2: Be a safety net for your team. By letting his employees know that he was always aware of the trials they underwent and that he was by their side through it all, Dhirubhai gave his employees the courage they never knew of. Dhirubhaism No 3: The silent benefactor.

This was another of Dhirubhai's remarkable traits. When he helped someone, he never ever breathed a word about it to anyone else. There have been none among his company who hadn't known his kindness, yet he never went around broadcasting it. He never used charity as a platform to gain publicity. Sometimes, he would even go to the extent of not letting the recipient know who the donor was.

Such was the extent of his generosity. "Expect the unexpected" just might have been coined for him. Dhirubhaism No 4: Dream big but dream with your eyes open. Dhirubhai's phenomenal achievement showed India that limitations were only in the mind. And that nothing was truly unattainable for those who dreamed big. Whenever Krishnamurty tried to point out to him that a task seemed too big to be accomplished, he would reply "No is no answer! Not only did he dream big, he taught the entire world to do so too.

He wanted Vimal's advertising to be the benchmark for fashion advertising in the country. But though he dreamed big, he was able to clearly distinguish between perception and reality and his favorite phrase "dream with your eyes open" underlined this. He never let preset norms govern his vision, yet he worked night and day familiarizing himself with every little nitty-gritty that constituted his dreams constantly sifting the wheat from the chaff. This is how, as he put it, even though he dreamed, none of his dreams turned into nightmares. And this is what gave him the courage to move from one orbit to the next despite tremendous odds.

Dhirubhaism No 5: The arm-around-the-shoulder leader. Neither other empire builder nor CEO of any big organization ever did this. It was

Dhirubhai's very own signature style. Whenever anyone went to meet him, he would instantly put his arm around him and proceed to discuss the issues at hand as they walked.

With that one simple gesture, he managed to achieve many things. The person in concern was put at ease instantaneously. He was made to feel like an equal who was loved and important enough to be considered close to him. This tendency he had, to draw people towards him, manifested itself in countless ways. This was just one of them. He would never ever exude an air of aloofness or exclusivity.

He was always inviting people to share their thoughts and ideas, rather than shutting them out. On hindsight, I think, it must have required a phenomenal generosity of spirit to be that inclusive. Yes, this was one of the things that were uniquely Dhirubhai. Dhirubhaism No 6: The Dhirubhai theory of supply creating demand. He was neither an MBA nor an economist.

But yet he took traditional market theory and stood it on its head succeeding as well. Yes, at a time when everyone in India would build capacities only after a careful study of market expectations, he went full steam ahead and created gigantic manufacturing plants with unbelievable capacities. The initial capacity of Reliance Patalganga was 10, 000 tonnes of PFY way back in 1980, while the market in India for it was only about 6, 000 tonnes. No doubt, his instinct was backed by years and years of reading, studying market trends, careful listening and his own well-honed capacity to forecast scenarios. But yet, despite all this preparation, it required undeniable guts to pioneer such a revolutionary move. The consequence was that the market

blossomed to absorb supply, the consumer gained with prices crashing down, the players increased and our economic landscape changed for the better.

Dhirubhaism No 7: Money is not a product by itself, it is a byproduct, so don't chase it. This was a belief by which Dhirubhai lived all his life. He did not breathe a word about profits, nor about becoming the richest in the country. The quality mattered. A byproduct is something that you don't set out to produce.

It is the spin off when you create something larger. When you turn logs into lumber, sawdust is your byproduct, and pretty lucrative it can be too. So work toward a goal beyond your bank balance. Success in attaining that goal will eventually ring in the cash.

For instance, if you work towards creating a name for yourself and earning a good reputation, then money is a logical outcome. People will pay for your product or service if it is good. But if you get your priorities slightly mixed up, not only will the money you make remain just a quick buck, it would in all likelihood blacklists you for good. Dhirubhaism No 8: Leave the Professional alone. Despite all the fervent protestations owners, managers, clients don't leave the professional alone.

They are quick to hire their services and in fact even go to pains to select the best in the industry and compensate them handsomely. But the professional who has been hired for his reputation becomes an extension, a mere tool whose job is to execute his boss's bidding. Dhirubhai gave his employee's

complete freedom, no supervision and no policing. Dhirubhaism No 9:
Change your orbit, constantly.

For Dhirubhai, everyone was born into a previously decided orbit. It is up to the person to push his way out and progress into the next. People who do this are the prime movers. He considered true growth to be in risk and experimentation.

However changing orbit can also create a lot of friction. Dhirubhai considered his success to be his greatest enemy. Dhirubhaism No 10: Optimism
Dhirubhai is credited with making the Indian middle class to dream. He took their money and their trust, performed phenomenally well and in turn rewarded his shareholders. This was perhaps when the first seeds of the Optimistic India were sown.

Thinking Big and hope are the most powerful weapons. Dhirubhaism No 11:
You can find a friend a friend in every human being. Dhirubhai could strike up a conversation with almost anybody regardless of their class, caste or creed and he would do the listening most of the time. He was every man's friend because he was genuinely interested in people.

Dhirubhaism No 12: Think Big. Dhirubhai believed in doing things on a large scale whether it was a launch of a product or a fashion show. It was his steady and consistent focus on the spectacular that contributed to the brand image of Reliance. Dhirubhaism No 13: Hold on to your dreams.... Dhirubhai wanted to achieve the impossible and that nudged him forward. Dhirubhaism No 14: Bet on your people.

At the root of it, it entreats the reader to trust the employee to execute a job, after a judicious assessment of his caliber. But the trust that it advocates is that of complete faith and not half measures. Complete faith in the person's ability to execute a project accommodating his weaknesses, not being ignorant of it. This is the uniqueness of a Dhirubhaism.

Stretching the limits of simple truths. Or rather, living it completely.

Dhirubhaism No 15: Be Positive Dhirubhai never complained in spite of knowing about the endless licenses, the red tapes and the bureaucracy that he had to wade through to get one project. He considered himself to be a path finder.

He was first in everything. Dhirubhai's story is a classic illustration of the power of a positive attitude. Reliance today stands as its towering proof.