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The Corridor Magazine



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Contributors to this magazine prefer different English variants (e.g., British, American). We maintain their original choices to preserve authenticity.

EDITORIAL

LEADERSHIP

Trust. That works.

What makes leadership truly work, across borders, industries, and generations?

This year, as we bring together voices from India, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Poland, we focus on **leadership in business and the workplace**. Leadership that inspires, not instructs. That listens before leading. That builds trust instead of demanding loyalty.

When I began curating this edition, I asked myself a deceptively simple question: What kind of leadership do I trust? The answer was not a person, a title, or a strategy, but a feeling. A felt sense of **being seen, valued, and enabled**. Real leadership, in my experience, is built not on control, but on connection.

Across cultures, the nuances of leadership shift. In India, hierarchy often brings security. In the Netherlands, flat structures encourage autonomy. Yet wherever we are, we are united by one truth: **People follow people they trust**. And trust isn't built in boardrooms. It's built in conversations, in vulnerability, in how we treat each other, especially when things go wrong.

This issue of The Corridor offers insights from values-driven executives, inclusion champions, and impact-makers steering leadership toward a more human and connected future.

In a world where leaders must navigate the relentless pace of change, align across conflicting time zones, respond to rapidly evolving generational values, and interpret the often, invisible nuances of culture and identity – while balancing purpose with performance, inclusion with efficiency, and resilience with constant reinvention – one question cuts through the noise:

Is your workplace cultivating a kind of leadership that flows not just from the top down, but from the inside out – rooted in trust, shaped by shared ownership, and sustained by cultural intelligence?

As you turn these pages, I hope you'll find not only perspectives but possibilities. A vision of leadership that's as bold as it is kind. As strategic as it is human. As global as it is personal.

Because that's what this issue and this community is really about:

Trust. That works.



Monika Gogna | Vice-President INBCB

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE INBCB

Dear Members of the India Netherlands Business Circle,

It gives us great pleasure to share with you the fourth issue of our magazine, The Corridor. As President of the India Netherlands Business Circle Bangalore (INBCB), I am proud to witness how this platform continues to evolve and reflect the shared values, insights, and ambitions of our vibrant business community.

Much like this magazine, the India Netherlands Business Corridor (and beyond) is shaped by an evolving ecosystem of connections. In this dynamic environment, where professional journeys cross borders and ideas transcend cultures, our day-to-day experiences are increasingly influenced by diverse perspectives. Whether within teams, organizations, or industries, these cross-cultural interactions bring both energy and complexity.

The real challenges of leadership surface easily when a team is a melting pot of nationalities. While individual skills may be unparalleled, approaches to work, communication, and collaboration can be worlds apart, given the variety of cultural backgrounds.

Leading by example remains a strong leadership principle, but navigating different cultures and nationalities can complicate matters. In such cases, awareness is key. As cultural differences among team members may create friction, leaders must understand how to mitigate misunderstandings and prevent clashes. Building an environment where differences are recognized and collaboration is encouraged is essential, not only for business success but also for personal growth and well-being.

I believe that a team's strength lies in its diversity. Each team member brings a unique perspective, and leveraging these differences benefits both the company and its employees.

Encouraging open discussions, appreciating differences instead of condemning them, and stimulating personal growth, while accepting that growth involves learning from mistakes, are crucial. **Clear communication** and well-defined goals help ensure that everyone understands the common direction to follow.

To reinforce this approach and **lead by example**, organizing structured sessions where team members can express concerns and suggestions is an effective method to reduce misunderstandings. It is important to ensure that everyone feels heard, whether by providing a platform for quieter team members or helping more vocal ones channel their energy in ways that align with the team's goals. **Encouraging open dialogue** can lead to innovative solutions that might otherwise be overlooked.

Embracing multicultural challenges and turning them into strengths teaches us that leadership isn't just about managing tasks, it's about understanding people, valuing their differences, and uniting them under a common purpose while celebrating their successes. The bridge of unity isn't just about completing a project; it's about creating a space where people from different cultures can thrive together, shaping a future that is both inclusive and powerful.

I will leave you with a quote by Nelson Mandela:

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."



Rob Tholenaars | President INBCB

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



10

DUTCH BY BIRTH, DESI BY CHANCE

Pieter Elbers

CEO - IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd)

17

FIKA FRIDAY AT THE OFFICE: BUILDING TRUST IN A HYBRID WORLD

Ram Puranam

Head of Partnerships - Mapiq

21

SUSTAINABLE BY DESIGN: TEMPEH PRODUCTION IN INDIA AS A MODEL OF LEADERSHIP

Henk Schouten

Chairman - Schouten: Specialist in Plant-Based Protein

28

LEADING WITH PURPOSE: DRIVING BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITY TO END CHILD EXPLOITATION

Dr. Thangaperumal Ponpandi

Country Manager, India and Nepal - Terre des Hommes Netherlands

31

LEADERSHIP IN INDIA: A PERSONAL AFFAIR

Dr. Annette van der Hoek, PhD

India Expert & Indologist - India Expertise Center - Samvaad



TABLE OF CONTENTS

.....

34

LESSONS FROM THE PITCH: WHAT FOOTBALL COACHING IN INDIA TAUGHT ME ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Jan van Loon

*Owner - Jan van Loon Football Coaching |
Head of Coach Development, Ubuntu | Ex-
Head of Youth & Coach at Arsenal, Ajax, FC
Utrecht, VfL Wolfsburg*

37

FROM MENTORSHIP TO LEADERSHIP: HOW NETWORKS EMPOWER WOMEN TO LEAD

Ada Dyndo

*Advisor Poland-India Business | President of
WICCI's India-EU Business Council |
Director India Desk at Indo-Polish Chamber of
Commerce | Industry Expert at Boym Institute*

41

LEADERSHIP IN DRIVING ESG INITIATIVES: SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGIES

Katja Larsen

Owner & CEO - SilverSpoon Consultancy

45

LEADERSHIP AS STEWARDSHIP: THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ELEVATE OTHERS

Monika Gogna

*Workplace Strategist | Coach & Trainer -
Nyāsa Solutions®*



TABLE OF CONTENTS



49

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE MILITARY: A CORPORATE PERSPECTIVE

Arindam Chaudhuri

Former Indian Army Officer | Security & Risk Professional

53

LEADING BEYOND RETIREMENT: JOURNEY OF PURPOSE AND IMPACT

Dr. Jamuna Ravi

Treasurer & Board Member INCB | Chief Executive Officer Vayah Vikas | Executive Advisor DEI

56

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: VAYAH VIKAS' SENIOR EMPOWERMENT MILESTONES FOR 2024-25

Shanti Rao

Communication Manager - Vayah Vikas

59

QUIZ: WHAT KIND OF LEADER ARE YOU?

61

QUIZ: RESULTS

OUR PROJECTS

IMAGE

Initiatives for Married Adolescent Girls Empowerment

Our action:

Empowering married adolescent girls across five districts in Karnataka in thematic areas of Health, Education, Vocational Training, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Social Protection, Against Gender-Based Violence, Coupled with institution of children's clubs, family clubs and spouse clubs



GOOD

Getting Out of the Devadasi System

Our action:

We take the girls out of their exploitative situations in 5 districts of North Karnataka by facilitating Sensitising Children on child rights and child protection, Child Led Interventions, Life Skills Training, Access to Education, Child Advocacy Training, Community Sensitisation

MICA PROJECT

Our action:

We address child labour in the region through the following activities Income Generation for parents, Children's Clubs. Services aiding education Advocacy with The Government and The Private Sector, Social Security, Strengthening & Child Protection Mechanisms



MISS-COLLECT

Our action:

Sustained removal of children of waste picking community from worst forms of child labour through creating enabling conditions to pursue mainstream formal education and gainful livelihood options for their families.

DOWN TO ZERO

Our action:

We address the online sexual exploitation of children by encouraging children to the responsible use of the internet, promoting positive parenting, enhancing digital literacy in society and collaborating with Government departments and Internet Service Providers to improve child-friendly service.



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Dutch by Birth, **Desi by Chance**

Pieter Elbers

CEO - IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd)

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“Waking up in India, is like waking up to life itself” - Michael Page

Pieter Elbers is a seasoned aviation leader with over 30 years of global aviation industry experience. Pieter landed in Delhi, India in September 2022 as CEO of IndiGo. After a 30-year tenure, of which the last 8 years as President & CEO of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, he is now leading India’s largest and fastest-growing airline IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd), on its way to becoming a global aviation player. His personal and professional journey has been of curiosity, drive, people, leadership, and his philosophy of embracing the unknown, adapting, and seizing opportunities to the full gusto as they come.

Early years and experience at KLM

As a young boy in The Netherlands, Pieter

never anticipated that aviation would become his life's work.

Having pursued a Bachelor’s degree in Logistics and spending time in the military, he joined KLM in 1992 on the ramp as Manager, Aircraft loading, alongside pursuing his Master’s in Business Economics.

Pieter’s foundation and early career were shaped by a very hands-on approach, emphasizing curiosity, learning core airline processes on the job, and working in various roles given by leaders who believed in him, mentored him, and entrusted him with growing responsibilities.

At 32, he was a young General Manager, leading KLM’s operations in different parts of the world; Italy, Greece, and Japan. After returning to The Netherlands he became KLM’s COO (Chief Operating Officer) at 42.

INDIGO (INTERGLOBE AVIATION LTD)



During his tenure as President & CEO (2014-2022), he first led KLM through an intensive transformation, to KLM's centennial in 2019. Thereafter he effectively navigated the company through the unprecedented challenges of the Covid pandemic with resilience and clarity.

"It was definitely the toughest professional period of my career. Aviation almost stagnated during the pandemic. As CEO, many thousands of people looked to me for strength and reassurance during such uncertain times. Nothing before that had prepared me for it. At such times, i) staying focused with ii) clear objectives iii) agility to adapt to change iv) a strong team, and v) keeping communication and being connected with everyone, really helped us to drive through," he says.



Embracing India and IndiGo

From a 100-year-old full-service network carrier, which is the world's oldest airline, fast forward to 2022, Pieter made the bold decision to leave the comfort of his home and longstanding role in KLM and move to India, a country unmatched in its intensity, diversity, and dynamism. He quickly blended in well, proudly embodying India by IndiGo.



"India has been very welcoming and hospitable. That's how I have really felt and experienced it; both in India and in IndiGo. From the warm smile of the street vendor when buying food or tea for myself to the incredible commitment, professionalism, and dedication of my wonderful IndiGo colleagues, I am equally happy and proud to be here and help to further shape IndiGo's inspiring story. I strongly believe that aviation is a people's business, and people here are full of warmth."



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"India and IndiGo are home now"

"Ten years ago, I would have never imagined that today, I would be leading a team of 40,000+ passionate aviation enthusiasts at IndiGo in such a fast-paced nation. India is the third largest domestic aviation market in the world and yet, one of the most competitive and tough markets. It is both aspirational and cost-conscious. With unprecedented economic growth and a key player in the 4th industrial AI revolution, India is pioneering, and IndiGo is giving wings to the nation," says Pieter.



"Be it the culture, food, history, people, or energy, I consider myself privileged to experience, work, and live here in India. I really enjoy celebrating the festivals, and visiting all the beautiful and exciting cities across the breadth and depth of the country," he says.



Under Pieter's visionary leadership, the airline has embarked on the next stage of the incredible IndiGo journey, from India's leading domestic airline to a global giant.

"This is more than a job, it's a mission. Everybody is excited and proud about building something. Connecting people and aspiration gives everyone a lot of energy."



In line with the growth and development of India as a global aviation powerhouse, IndiGo aims to double in size and scale by the end of the decade.

Pieter describes his hands-on leadership style as being rooted in having a strong belief in providing opportunities to others, just as he was given opportunities in his career by colleagues and mentors who believed in him.

INDIGO (INTERGLOBE AVIATION LTD)



"I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up where I needed to be." - Douglas Adams

At 22 years of age and walking under the shadow of massive 747s to now being settled in 'Bharat', he reflects on his aviation journey, "I feel the song 'Hotel California' is quite apt – you can check in, but never quite checkout."

Pieter's journey is of embracing the unknown, taking risks, having the energy and perseverance to learn, adapt, and apply, and constantly pushing the envelope. "There is no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs," he says.



"India is soaring and so is IndiGo. There is incredible potential and growth. In just the last three years we have achieved some amazing milestones – welcomed over 113 million customers last year alone (up from 75 million in 2019 prior to Covid), the first Indian airline to have a fleet of 400 aircraft, one of the highest number of female pilots, 2,200 daily flights, and much more. IndiGo also holds the world's largest aircraft order book with over 900 aircraft to be delivered in coming years. I am personally very excited and I keep sharing with everyone at IndiGo that the coming years will be the most exciting in their professional lives."

His career demonstrates the value of being open to new opportunities, even when they take you into uncharted territory. For future leaders, he shares:

"Dare to dream, go beyond the known, collaborate, and work hard to do justice to every opportunity that comes your way by continuously being curious to learn and grow. In doing so, be deeply grateful to those who are supporting you, your leaders, mentors, colleagues, and (most importantly) your family!"





Pieter Elbers: A Leader in Flight.

Honored as a **Commander in the Order of Orange-Nassau**, one of the highest royal distinctions in The Netherlands, Pieter Elbers stands as a distinguished figure in global aviation. **As a member of the Board of Governors at IATA and its Chairman since June 2024**, he is playing a pivotal role in shaping the aviation industry through his visionary leadership.

Off the runway, Pieter believes in a healthy balance of mind and body, running regularly to stay fit. He is married and they are blessed with three children. Pieter has a deep appreciation for history and cultures, which fuels his global outlook. With his inspiring leadership, IndiGo is not just flying higher, it is reshaping the future of aviation in India.



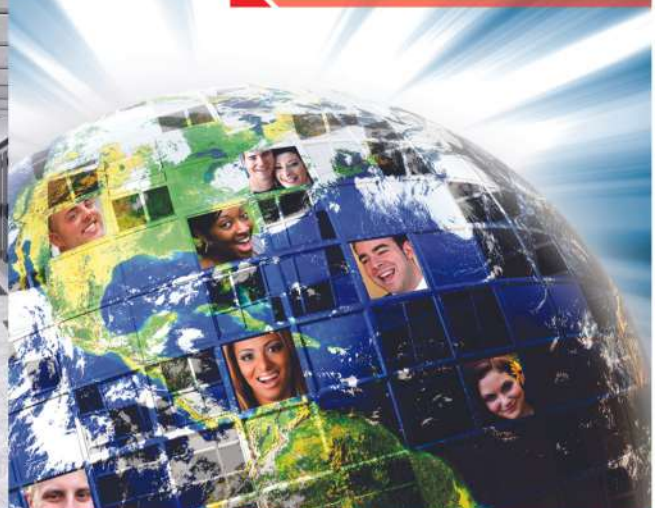
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Fika Friday at the Office: **Building Trust in a Hybrid World**

Ram Puranam
Head of Partnerships - Mapiq

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MAPIQ FOR RANDSTAD INDIA

When we launched our podcast Fika Friday at the Office, our goal was simple: spark honest, human conversations about the future of work — conversations you'd normally have over coffee, but with the power to ripple across boardrooms. In our latest episode, I had the pleasure of sitting down with Anjali Raghuvanshi, Chief People Officer at Randstad India, someone who doesn't just talk about transformation — she leads it.



Anjali brings with her the kind of clarity that only comes from being in the thick of things. As the CHRO of one of India's largest staffing companies, she doesn't just shape internal culture, she has her finger on the pulse of the broader talent market.

Our chat cut through the noise surrounding Return-To-Office (RTO) debates, employee engagement, and the hybrid work conundrum, and got to the heart of what really matters: **trust**.



Why Should I Come to the Office?

This wasn't a rhetorical question — it was one Anjali heard all the time. And let's be honest, we all do. The pandemic didn't just shuffle our work setups; it completely rewired employee expectations.

"Our teams will not follow us today simply because we want them to. Those days are gone," Anjali told me. People want meaning. They want to understand the why behind their work. And if they're coming back to the office, it better be for something they can't get at home —like connection, visibility, and belonging.

Context Over Trends

One of the most refreshing takeaways from our conversation was her advice to block out the media noise. Don't fall for headlines. Don't copy what the big tech firms are doing just because it's trending.

"Look within. Look internally. Do the right things for your people."

That hit home for me. At Mapiq, we've always believed that the best workplaces are built with intention, not imitation. What works for a startup in Berlin might flop for a logistics firm in Bangalore. Hybrid isn't a plug-and-play model — it's a mindset.

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Agility Is No Longer Optional

Change is no longer a phase — it's a constant. Whether it's navigating RTO policies, rethinking employee engagement, or reimagining physical office space, organizations need to stay nimble. Anjali talked about how agility has become an expectation, not just a leadership buzzword.

And that got me thinking about our work at Mapiq. We're not just building smart office tools — we're helping companies flex and adapt in real time, based on how their people actually use their spaces.

Visibility vs. Virtual Fatigue

Anjali described herself as a “hybrid person” — she loves the flexibility of remote work but also values the unplanned hallway conversations that simply can't be replicated in a Zoom meeting.

Those fleeting moments of visibility, where ideas collide and trust builds, still matter. A lot. It reminded me why physical offices aren't going away anytime soon. They're evolving — not disappearing.

Mental Well-being: The Unsung KPI

This was one of my favorite parts of the conversation. Anjali opened up about her own wellness rituals — starting her day with meditation and a warm drink infused with fenugreek, carrom, cinnamon, and fennel seeds. It's these grounded habits, she said, that give her the clarity and presence she needs to lead through uncertainty.

Mental well-being, she stressed, isn't a perk. It's a foundation. And if we're serious about building great cultures, we need to prioritize it — loudly, openly, consistently.

Hosting Fika Friday always leaves me energized, but this episode stayed with me longer than most. Anjali's message was clear: employees aren't just looking for jobs — they're looking for meaning. And if we want them to trust us, show up, and stay engaged, we need to start by listening. Not just in exit interviews or annual surveys, but in real-time, every day.



“Today, an employee wants to know: what's the purpose, why am I here? What am I getting out of it?”

Anjali Raghuvanshi
Chief People Officer
Randstad India

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Fika Friday
at the office →

At Mapiq, we build tools that make hybrid work smoother and smarter. But technology alone isn't enough. It's conversations like this — human, thoughtful, and honest — that remind us why we do what we do.

If you haven't listened yet, grab a coffee and tune in. Because the future of work isn't about where you are. It's about how you feel when you get there.

SCHOUTEN - SPECIALIST IN PLANT-BASED PROTEIN



Sustainable by Design: Tempeh Production in India as a Model of Leadership

Henk Schouten

Chairman - Schouten: Specialist in Plant-Based Protein

<https://tempeh.today/>

SCHOUTEN - SPECIALIST IN PLANT-BASED PROTEIN

Over four years ago, a Dutch startup began producing tempeh in India. This enterprise, affiliated with the family-owned company Schouten (a specialist in plant-based proteins) and the Fair Factory Development Fund (an investment fund classified as an Article 9 fund under the European Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR), indicating the highest level of sustainability), established Community Food Systems and Services India Pvt. Ltd., also known as “Tempeh Today.”

Tempeh Today aims to base its operations on sustainable leadership – a leadership style that focuses on the long-term impact of decisions on people, the organization, and society. This approach combines economic performance with social and environmental responsibility.

What is Tempeh?

Tempeh has a history of over 500 years in Indonesia, where the average consumption per person is around 7 kg per year. It is made from soybeans through a 48-hour fermentation process. During fermentation, oligosaccharides (responsible for bloating) and some of the oils are broken down, enhancing protein digestibility and forming vitamin B12.

Tempeh is prebiotic and positively impacts gut health. It contains as much protein as chicken and has an excellent amino acid profile comparable to meat.

Why Tempeh?

Schouten primarily produces vegetarian and vegan products in the Netherlands that resemble meat. This is a complex process in which proteins are first isolated and then textured to create fibers that mimic the structure of meat. These fibers are then bound in a way that prevents the product from becoming tough, dry, or rubbery, after which aromas, herbs, and spices are added to replicate the taste of meat.

These products, often referred to as “plant-based meat,” are ideal for consumers who eat a lot of meat and want to reduce their consumption without missing the meat-eating experience.

However, these products are not well-suited for the Indian market, particularly for the mass market. The ingredients required for their production need to be imported, making the products expensive. India is a highly price-sensitive market, with many consumers primarily needing affordable sources of protein and unable to afford meat substitutes.

Additionally, unlike the Netherlands, where meat consumption is common, India has a lower meat consumption rate and a significant number of vegetarians who adhere to vegetarian diets for cultural or religious reasons. In India, vegetarianism is the norm and is referred to as “Veg,” while meat-eaters are classified as “Non-Veg” – a stark contrast to the West, where meat consumption is the standard and vegetarianism the exception. This cultural difference, combined with price sensitivity, means that meat-like products have limited appeal in the Indian market.

Nevertheless, there remains a strong need for scalable solutions tailored to the local market to address iron, B12, and protein deficiencies. Compared to animal protein, plant-based protein offers the most sustainable solution, with significant advantages in terms of water and land use, as well as lower CO2 and nitrogen emissions.

Tempeh as a Complete Substitute

Due to low meat consumption, protein, iron, and vitamin B12 deficiencies are significant issues in India. Around 50% of children under 12 suffer from anemia, with even higher rates among adult women. Tempeh provides sufficient protein, vitamin B12, and iron.



Tempeh Today enriches its tempeh with additional vitamin B12 and iron to make it a complete meat substitute.

Tempeh in Indian Cuisine

Tempeh can be used in dishes similarly to paneer. It can be fried, grilled, used in curries, or added to snacks like samosas, spring rolls, puffs, and vadas, making it well-suited for Indian cuisine. Paneer is often the only high-protein option for vegetarians, but it is relatively expensive and raises food safety concerns. The average paneer consumption in India is just 0.385 kg per person per year. Tempeh Today expects tempeh consumption in India to exceed that in Indonesia due to affordability and accessibility.



Local Soybeans

Tempeh Today sources soybeans directly from farmers, mainly a group of 148 small-scale farmers around Pune. By eliminating intermediaries, the company offers farmers a premium price. Farmers deliver dehulled beans using small dehulling machines provided by Tempeh Today, with the hulls repurposed as livestock feed. Training on soybean cultivation and experience-sharing sessions further support farmers.



The Concept

Tempeh is produced through fermentation. Tempeh Today aims to establish production facilities across India, with a target of 20 factories within the next 5 to 10 years. To ensure consistent quality, the company developed a Small Fermentation Unit (SFU) that enables remote monitoring of the fermentation process, even from the Netherlands. Current SFU locations include Bangalore and Pune, with a third opening in Lucknow in late 2025.

Smaller factories allow localized production and distribution, eliminating the need for refrigerated transport, which is scarce in India.

Micro Fermentation Units (MFUs)

Tempeh Today also introduced Micro Fermentation Units (MFUs), enabling an operator to produce 90 kg of tempeh weekly. Launched this year, the MFU project aims to establish 100 units around Bangalore by 2026. Each MFU employs 8 to 12 women who produce tempeh, with the equipment becoming their property after three years.

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These women, often from vulnerable backgrounds, can then run their businesses. While Tempeh Today currently funds the MFUs, the company is exploring alternative financing for further expansion. This is to ensure the continuity and expansion of these activities to increase their impact across India.

Tempeh for Education Project

Supported by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency's Child Labor Fund, the "Tempeh for Education" project provides after-school care and nutritious meals for children of MFU operators, incorporating tempeh three times a week. This initiative, which started with 108 children, is expected to grow to 200. Care is provided at government schools with a focus on sports and social skills development.

Self-Help Groups

With the support of the local NGO "The Freedom Project India" and Tempeh Today, MFU operators form self-help groups where mentors provide training in financial management, hygiene, and utilizing existing government support measures, which is also part of the "Tempeh for Education" project.

MFUs and The Leprosy Mission (TLM)

Tempeh Today collaborates with The Leprosy Mission (TLM), which offers vocational training to former patients, providing technical education to become mechanics, electricians, plumbers, and more. Tempeh Today plans to establish an assembly line for the production of MFUs at one of the TLM vocational schools in Kallakkurichi.

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Midday Meals

Tempeh Today aims to become a key supplier for the Midday Meal initiatives, which provide meals to schoolchildren. Tests are currently being conducted in collaboration with the Akshaya Patra Foundation (ASF) in Bangalore and Pondicherry. ASF serves 2.3 million meals daily across India.



Hello Tempayy

An important partner for Tempeh Today is Vegolution, which sells the marinated and pasteurized tempeh produced by Tempeh Today under the brand name "Hello Tempayy." This brand provides consumers with information about what tempeh is and how it can be incorporated into their daily meals. Hello Tempayy has a strong presence on social media and ensures that Tempeh is available on all major online platforms.

Export

Tempeh Today exports sterilized tempeh products to the US and will soon begin exporting fried tempeh to Europe. This export supports the economic viability of Tempeh Today.

There is also significant interest in the MFU concept outside India, and in collaboration with an NGO, Tempeh Today will establish tempeh production in Ethiopia to provide 300,000 school meals.

Sustainability

The MFU locations are equipped with solar panels and batteries, and over time, the SFU locations will also become energy self-sufficient using solar power. Tempeh Today is exploring the most energy-efficient cooking methods and aims to minimize packaging materials. Additionally, tempeh production is highly sustainable. The process does not require extreme temperatures, high pressure, or chemical treatments to produce the final product. Moreover, the protein conversion rate from soybeans to tempeh is nearly 100%, making it far more efficient than other vegetarian or animal-based alternatives.

Innovation

Tempeh Today dedicates significant time to innovation, focusing on both processes and the use of other legumes, such as chickpeas and fava beans, as well as different crop varieties and combinations, flavors, and starter cultures. The company is also developing new tempeh-based products, including burgers, nuggets, and snacks. It fosters a culture that embraces change and is constantly seeking improvement.

People-Centered Leadership

Tempeh Today places great importance on the well-being of its employees. This is reflected in fair wages, a safe working environment, transparency in business operations, and a culture where the right people are in the right roles, with space for open dialogue. Servant leadership plays a crucial role in the company's success. Employees in Bangalore and Pune consistently describe the company as having a "family-like" atmosphere.



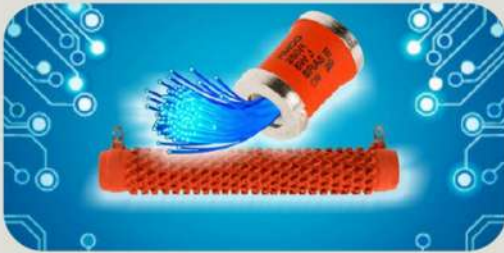
Tempeh Today hopes that in ten years, everyone in India will recognize tempeh as a product that helps address protein, vitamin B12, and iron deficiencies. The goal is to make tempeh accessible across India at an affordable price. Tempeh Today aims to contribute to improving Midday Meals in schools and empower thousands of women to earn sustainable incomes through MFUs. Additionally, the company seeks to positively impact the lives of these women's children by providing them with a quality education and enhancing farmers' incomes by sourcing soybeans. Tempeh Today is committed to the well-being of its employees, customers, and suppliers, striving for a healthy balance between economic performance, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability.

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Leading with Purpose: Driving Business Responsibility to End Child Exploitation

Dr. Thangaperumal Ponpandi
*Country Manager, India, and Nepal - Terre des
Hommes Netherlands*

<https://stdh.in/>

TERRE DES HOMMES NETHERLANDS

In the intricate weave of global trade and industry, ethical leadership is no longer a choice – it is an imperative. At Terre des Hommes Netherlands, we believe businesses are uniquely positioned to influence change beyond the boardroom. Through collaborative initiatives, we are witnessing how corporate responsibility can serve as a powerful lever in the fight against child labour and exploitation.

Take the mica supply chain, for instance – a glittering mineral embedded in our daily lives, found in cosmetics, electrical, electronics, construction, and the automotive industry. India's states of Jharkhand and Bihar contribute roughly a quarter of the world's mica production. Yet, beneath its sparkle lies a grim reality: in 2018, a survey by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights found over 10,000 children in this region out of school, some toiling in the dangerous and informal mica trade.

Our mica-focused project, supported by corporate partners including Mercedes-Benz through their CSR outreach, addresses this issue at its roots. In two highly vulnerable and remote districts of Jharkhand, we work to dismantle the systemic drivers of child labour. Through a holistic framework centred on child participation, we facilitate access to education, healthcare, and protection services.



More than passive beneficiaries, the children themselves become advocates – raising awareness and resolving cases of exploitation within their communities. Equally vital is our work with families. By strengthening parents' economic resilience and knowledge, we help them support their children's education rather than rely on their income.

We apply a similar approach in Bangalore's informal waste economy through the Miss-Collect initiative, a Dutch non-profit organisation committed to fostering a sustainable and child labour-free wastepaper value chain.



Here, a significant number of waste collectors are unskilled migrant families, many living in precarious conditions. Language barriers, poor housing, and lack of basic services compound the risks for their children, many of whom begin collecting waste as early as five years old.



TERRE DES HOMMES NETHERLANDS

Miss-Collect intervenes at multiple levels: by integrating children into formal and alternative learning environments, empowering mothers through livelihood training, and engaging both the private sector and local communities. This ecosystem approach encourages long-term investment in ethical supply chains and creates an environment where children are protected and educated.

What underlies both programmes is the idea that sustainable change cannot occur in silos. Businesses, when guided by ethical leadership, can drive systemic transformation. By aligning profit with purpose, companies can not only fulfil their social responsibility but also actively participate in building safer, more just societies.

Moreover, our work includes developing self-sustaining business models that offer income alternatives to families. These models not only prevent children from entering exploitative labour but also promote responsible production and consumption practices. They reflect a shift in thinking – from temporary relief to long-term, scalable solutions.

As the conversation on ethical sourcing and responsible business gains momentum, we invite more industry leaders to collaborate. True leadership today is not solely measured by market share or margins but by the willingness to drive change where it matters most.

Disclaimer: This article is written in British English, following the author's preference.





Leadership in India: A Personal Affair

Dr. Annette van der Hoek, PhD
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Greek accounts of travel to India, dating back hundreds of years before the Common Era, describe the country's potential and wealth in no uncertain terms. Did you know that, according to these ancient stories, giant ants transported lumps of gold in those olden Indian days?

Today, we have more opportunities to test the truth behind such statements. And indeed, economists predict that India – currently in fifth place – will soon become one of the world's top three economies.

India is increasingly attracting the attention of entrepreneurs – including small and medium-sized enterprises. I've had the pleasure of speaking with many Dutch business leaders about their experiences in India, especially since the country began its rapid growth and since I founded the India Expertise Center in 2011.

What I heard from them reinforced and refined the insights I had already gained from my own time in India. I've been fortunate to share these early findings with others preparing to embark on the exciting journey of doing business with India.

The biggest takeaway is simply this:

Doing business with India is a **personal affair**.
Indian leadership is a personal affair.

Not in the way you'd expect, perhaps. An Indian business owner won't necessarily be more visible in the workplace than leaders elsewhere in the world. But the word of the leader does carry the most weight. It's the person who leads – more than the strategy, more than the board of advisors.

And so, all that one might have learned in a European business school doesn't automatically translate to the Indian business environment.

As one of the respondents in my research explained:

"Roughly estimated, up to 80% of Indian businesses are family-run. This has an impact on the management style, where the founder has the final say and gives the final 'blessing' to business deals. Over the years, I have learned that communication is critical for success. The most important cultural balancing act for me was learning how to be humble and decisive at the same time—and in the right ratio.

I need to convey the message that I'm on top of my files and that I am a decisive authority in my field. But I also have to show that I'm modest; that I understand the final decision lies with one person. And that person is not me!"

INDIA EXPERTISE CENTER - SAMVAAD

Another respondent, similarly, pointed out that because of India's hierarchic structure -in society as well as in corporations- one indeed often looks to 'the big boss' for answers:

"Taking individual responsibility is not necessarily appreciated in this setting. I find that decision-making in an Indian company is, therefore, a longer process than I'm used to, as I can't always approach the right person directly – they might be so 'high up.'"

But, as this same respondent warns us, don't assume that the person "high up" is necessarily a man. In their experience, Indian women often hold far more advanced positions than in the Netherlands, for instance. Especially in the South, which has a rich history of matriarchal societies, many (family) businesses are run by women.

I discussed this topic with several women in leadership positions. They explained that, due to the general availability of household help in India, women are able to hold senior roles in both companies and the government. Perhaps for this reason, foreign women – like myself – are also readily accepted and valued as colleagues and business professionals.

So, to sum up: leadership in India appears to be both remote and difficult to access – firmly positioned at the top of a hierarchical structure – and yet very personal at the same time. It is the leader, whether male or female, who personally makes most decisions, including matters that, in a European setup, would typically be handled by other levels of management.

That being the case, how do foreign entrepreneurs build a good rapport with business leaders in India?

Respondents in my research echoed my own experience: it takes highly personal leadership skills to achieve this.

Many – if not most – of the required attributes lie in the area of so-called "soft skills."

The importance of networks and personal relationships cannot be overstated. Knowledge of culture and language helps tremendously.

And when I say "language," I don't necessarily mean that an entrepreneur doing business in India should be fluent in Hindi, Tamil, or Kannada – though, of course, that would go a long way. Rather, as one respondent eloquently put it:

"One thing I found to be very important is what one might call a culture of codes – a kind of language that exists beneath the surface, almost like something under the skin. It involves physical observation: reading body language, which has become something of a lost art in the West. It also relates to the use of intuition – or even astrology – in leadership. These are things that might carry little or no weight for most Western businesspeople, but they can be very important in India."

As it should be for us: we should know how we are being assessed when someone is deciding whether or not to do business with us.

Finally, one needs to be flexible. No hard and fast rules apply. The leadership one encounters in India can fall anywhere on the spectrum – from hard-boiled patriarchy to the sensitivity of soft skills.

Knowing where you find yourself on this spectrum, how to position yourself, and how to behave in that very spot – that is the question.

Then, one can forge strong, often lifelong, relationships – just as my respondents have experienced. Relationships that unlock their inherent wealth – whether in the form of proverbial lumps of gold or modern amenities – serving both parties well.



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Lessons from the Pitch: What Football Coaching in India Taught Me about Leadership

Jan van Loon

Owner - Jan van Loon Football Coaching | Head of Coach Development, Ubuntu | Ex-Head of Youth & Coach at Arsenal, Ajax, FC Utrecht, VfL Wolfsburg



Coaching in Bangalore was more than just a professional challenge; it was a deep dive into cultural differences that shaped my approach on and off the field. The lessons I learned went beyond football and touched on leadership, communication, and trust – elements crucial for any Dutch professional working in India.

Leadership: Giving Space vs. Giving Instructions

In the Netherlands, coaching is about giving players room to think for themselves, make decisions, and learn from mistakes. In India, I noticed that while some players thrived with that freedom, others hesitated, waiting for direct instructions. The challenge was finding the right balance – when to let them figure things out and when to step in with clear guidance.

Football is a player's game. Players must make decisions on the field without constant intervention from coaches. The game is fluid, with few stops and starts, making a 'PlayStation coaching' approach ineffective. That's why players need a structured game plan – a top-down framework that provides a reference for the team's collective intention in both attack and defense. Within this framework, players contribute their individual decisions to support the team's goals.

The first six weeks of the season – the so-called **Golden Weeks** – were crucial for establishing this structure. These weeks set the foundation for the season, allowing us to strike the right balance between player ownership and team cohesion.

Decision-Making: Consensus vs. Authority

Dutch coaching thrives on open discussion and collective input, fostering independent thinking.

JAN VAN LOON FOOTBALL COACHING

In India, I noticed a different expectation – some players wanted clear directives (“Just tell me what to do”), while others hesitated, perhaps out of deference to authority or uncertainty about their role in decision-making. Adapting to these expectations required a shift – not just for me but for the players as well. How much autonomy could I encourage without confusion? When was it better to guide decisively rather than invite debate?

After the initial six weeks, we introduced **individual reflection meetings** with players, starting with their strongest qualities and helping them develop those to a world-class level. This process encouraged players to speak about their development with the coaching staff. The second meeting, six weeks later, was player-led, incorporating video analysis of their improvements. In the third meeting, 12 weeks into the season, the coaching staff provided structured feedback and set the next key development area. This approach gradually empowered players to assert their own choices while maintaining a clear developmental framework.

Task-Oriented vs. Relationship-Oriented Coaching

In the Netherlands, coaching is often performance-driven, focusing on efficiency and results. In India, I learned that success wasn't just about competence – it was about relationships. Players responded better when there was a personal connection, and trust was deeply tied to social expectations.

In Dutch culture, trust is given from the start and remains until broken. In India, trust must be earned, and once established, it tends to last much longer. Understanding this difference changed the way I approached coaching, realizing that building genuine relationships was just as important as training techniques.

Diversity Within India: Language, Status & Background

One of the biggest surprises was the sheer diversity among the players, shaped by their regional backgrounds.

Language, class, and education created noticeable contrasts – some players were confident in English, while others hesitated. Social hierarchies subtly influenced communication, team dynamics, and even leadership on the field. Navigating these unspoken barriers became just as important as technical coaching, requiring a deeper awareness of how background shaped confidence and interactions.



A striking example of this happened at the end of the season. After winning a tough match against a senior team, I took the youth team out for dinner. I expected a celebration together, but within minutes, I noticed something interesting – players instinctively sat in separate groups based on their home states. The team was united on the pitch, yet outside, cultural, and regional divisions still played a role.

Building Trust: Directness vs. Sensitivity

Dutch feedback culture values directness – honest, blunt assessments meant to improve performance. In India, however, I quickly realized that overly direct feedback could shut players down, making them less receptive. Yet over time, trust developed, and players began opening up. They shared underlying tensions – animosities, jealousy, personal dislikes – things that might have otherwise remained hidden.



Creating a **shared goal** was essential. To create an environment of trust, I introduced group work both on and off the pitch. One player would present their group's ideas to the others, with the support of their teammates – creating a safe space. Other groups were only allowed to ask questions to better understand (also safe). Then, instead of critique, they could suggest improvements (safe again). Before introducing this to the players, I first worked through the process with the Indian coaching staff to ensure their understanding and support.

Final Thoughts

Coaching in India taught me that leadership isn't about imposing a single approach but about adapting, listening, and building trust. It's about understanding when to guide and when to step back, when to challenge and when to support. The experience expanded my perspective – not just on coaching but on leadership itself. For anyone working across cultures, these lessons are invaluable. What works in one environment may not work in another, but with the right balance, meaningful growth – both personal and professional – is always possible.

WICCI'S INDIA-EU BUSINESS COUNCIL



From Mentorship to Leadership: **How Networks Empower Women to Lead**

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WICCI'S INDIA-EU BUSINESS COUNCIL

Leadership is not just about holding a title or making decisions – it's about creating impact and bringing others along. For women striving to break barriers in traditionally male-dominated fields such as politics, business, and technology, strong networks are essential. They open doors to opportunities, mentorship, and collaboration, empowering women to step into leadership roles with confidence.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed the transformative impact of women supporting each other. As the President of WICCI's India-EU Business Council, a unique networking platform for women strengthening India-EU relations, I have experienced firsthand how personal connections can lead not only to friendships but also to professional success. Being connected with someone who shares your challenges and aspirations provides invaluable support and inspiration.

That is why one of our core initiatives as the Council is the Mentorship Program. Now entering its third edition this April, this program bridges the gap between ambition and success by connecting young professionals with experienced leaders in their fields.

The Power of Learning from Others

One of the most valuable aspects of leadership development is learning from those who have already navigated similar challenges. Role models and mentors provide not just guidance but also reassurance that struggles and setbacks are part of the journey.

At WICCI's India-EU Business Council, we recognize this need for connection and support. Our Mentorship Program for Young Women in the India-EU Business Corridor has already connected 18 young professionals from India and the EU with experienced mentors, leading to long-lasting relationships, co-authored publications, and successful career advancements.

Beyond mentorship, simply having a network of like-minded professionals makes a difference. The power of these connections goes beyond career growth – having a support system of individuals who understand the unique challenges women face in leadership fosters resilience and confidence. Sometimes, it's not just about guidance but about knowing that others have faced similar struggles and succeeded. The ability to share both the challenges and joys of leadership makes the journey less isolating and more empowering.

Visibility and Representation Matter

Despite progress, women are still underrepresented in leadership discussions. When they are absent from decision-making tables, their perspectives are missing from key conversations. This is where networks play a crucial role – not only in building confidence but also in ensuring that women's voices are heard.

A simple yet effective way to address this issue is through active advocacy. Both men and women in leadership positions can support this by:

- Advocating for greater diversity in leadership panels and events.
- Recommending and sponsoring women for leadership roles.
- Refusing to participate in all-male panels ("manels") and encouraging event organizers to include female experts.

At WICCI's India-EU Business Council and the Boym Institute, we recently co-published Women in Public Debate – A Guide to Organizing Inclusive and Meaningful Discussions. This guide highlights the importance of gender diversity in public discussions and provides practical tools for event organizers, businesses, and institutions to ensure fair representation. We believe that inclusive debates lead to richer conversations and that modern public discussions require diverse voices to provide a fuller picture of reality.

WICCI'S INDIA-EU BUSINESS COUNCIL

The Role of Male Allies in Promoting Diversity

While women's leadership is growing, true diversity cannot be achieved without the support of male colleagues. Men in leadership positions have the ability—and responsibility—to advocate for gender balance in professional settings. This includes pointing out the lack of diversity in conferences, debates, and panels, recommending female experts, and encouraging event organizers to ensure gender diversity.

One simple yet impactful action male leaders can take is to refuse to participate in all-male panels and instead suggest women experts who can bring valuable perspectives to the conversation. By actively ensuring gender diversity in leadership forums, male colleagues play a direct role in creating more inclusive discussions that reflect the real-world workforce.

Beyond conferences, male allies can also champion women in their organizations by mentoring, advocating for promotions, and ensuring that leadership opportunities are accessible to all. Diversity is not just a women's issue—it is a business issue that benefits everyone.

Systemic Change for Inclusive Leadership

Networking and mentorship are powerful tools, but to create long-term systemic change, organizations, institutions, and governments must implement structural reforms that:

- Ensure fair promotion opportunities and equal pay.
- Support flexible work policies that help women balance leadership and personal responsibilities.
- Invest in leadership training programs that equip women with the skills and confidence to advance in their careers.

Our work at WICCI's India-EU Business Council is just one step toward creating a business

landscape where women have equal access to opportunities, influence, and leadership positions.

Moving Forward: Building a Collaborative Future

The responsibility of building the next generation of leaders doesn't rest solely on institutions—it's something each of us can contribute to. Whether by mentoring a young professional, advocating for equal opportunities, or simply sharing stories of successful women leaders, we all have a role to play in creating a more inclusive leadership landscape.

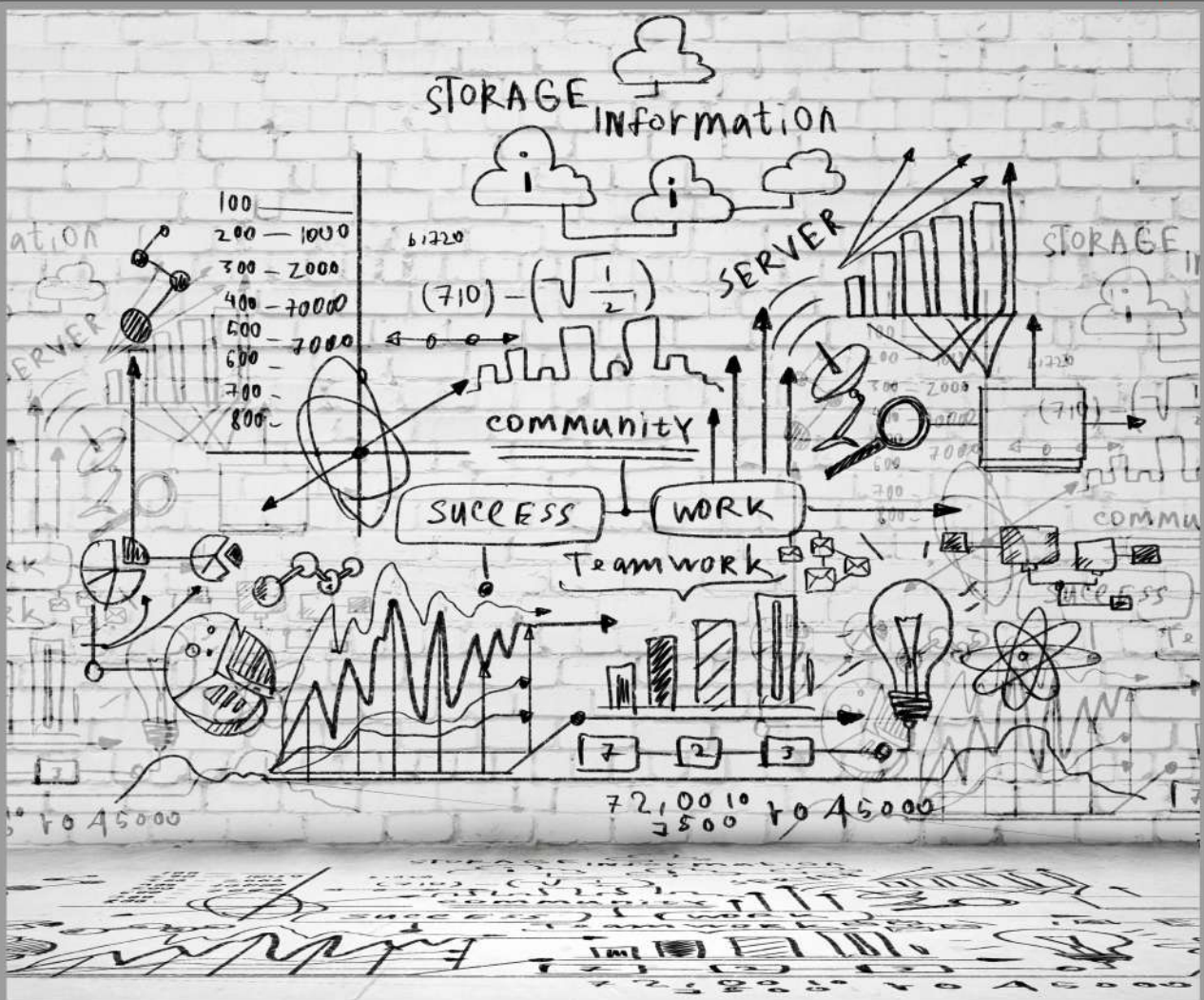
If we want to see more women in leadership, we need to amplify their voices, celebrate their successes, and ensure they are not just included in conversations as tokens but are leading them.

Leadership is not just about individual success—it's about community. By surrounding ourselves with strong, inspiring women—those who lead, those who mentor, and those who are just beginning their journey—we create a cycle of empowerment that strengthens not just individuals but entire industries and economies.

I believe that leadership is not about competition but about collaboration. A strong network of women leaders creates an ecosystem where success is shared, challenges are overcome together, and the next generation of women feels empowered to lead.

By fostering connections, mentorship, and visibility, we can reshape leadership to be truly diverse, inclusive, and impactful. By working together—women supporting women, men advocating for diversity, and organizations implementing change—we can build a future where leadership truly reflects the diverse and inclusive world we strive for.

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Leadership in Driving ESG Initiatives: Shaping Organizational Sustainability and Social Impact Strategies

Katja Larsen

Owner & CEO SilverSpoon Consultancy

www.silverspoonconsultancy.com

SILVERSPOON CONSULTANCY

In India, a country with a growing focus on sustainable development, the role of leadership in driving ESG initiatives has never been more pivotal. As businesses navigate the complex landscape of climate change, social inequality, and governance concerns, effective leaders are needed to integrate ESG principles into organizational strategies. With my extensive experience working with multinational and local companies in my consultancy Silverspoon in the ESG sector in India and across the Asia Pacific, I have seen that leadership is not just about directing teams; it's about shaping the vision and values of the entire organization in a way that aligns with sustainability and social responsibility.

Shaping Organizational Sustainability Strategies

Leadership in ESG is about making sustainability a core part of the business model and integrating it into the mindset of the company as well as the people. This goes beyond compliance and regulations; it is about transforming an organization's approach to long-term value creation. Leaders must prioritize sustainability by embedding it into the strategic framework of the organization. It has to be implemented and reinforced repeatedly into the mindset of leaders, managers, and junior employees alike. In the context of India, a rapidly growing economy with substantial environmental challenges, sustainability is not optional – it is essential for survival. Leaders must understand that environmental responsibility and business growth are not mutually exclusive.

For several years, many states in India have actively incorporated sustainable development by addressing local challenges such as resource management, waste reduction, and the equitable distribution of growth.

The Southern city of Bengaluru is home to several innovative small businesses that seamlessly integrate environmental responsibility with business growth, tackling local challenges such as resource management, waste reduction, and equitable development.

One such company is Bare Necessities, which promotes a zero-waste lifestyle by offering eco-friendly products like bamboo toothbrushes and reusable straws, helping to minimize environmental impact.

Another standout is Bluecat Paper, founded by a dynamic Coorg female entrepreneur who also owns a sustainable resort. The company produces paper from agricultural byproducts such as coffee husk and lemongrass, reducing reliance on traditional wood-based paper and championing sustainability.

Equally impactful is Hasiru Dala, an organization that provides waste management solutions while integrating waste pickers into the formal economy. By ensuring fair wages and dignified working conditions, Hasiru Dala contributes to both social equity and efficient waste management.

These enterprises exemplify how SMEs can drive meaningful change by blending sustainability with innovation, setting a precedent for responsible growth in Bengaluru and beyond.

In the state of Kerala, The Integrated Rural Technology Centre (IRTC) focuses on sustainable rural development by promoting waste minimization strategies, cleaner technologies, and sustainable resource management techniques. One notable initiative is the Zero Effect, Zero Defect (ZED) plan, which encourages companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to adopt sustainable practices that improve product quality while reducing environmental impact.

SILVERSPOON CONSULTANCY

These examples show how environmental stewardship can align with business objectives, fostering sustainable development in the state of Karnataka as well as in the state of Kerala.

Most leaders with foresight will recognize that investments in renewable energy, efficient resource use, and waste management not only benefit the environment but also offer competitive advantages. Leaders know that integrating sustainability into the business model ensures that future generations inherit a cleaner, more equitable world while businesses remain relevant and resilient in the face of evolving global standards.

I do believe that even the ancient Vedas contain profound insights into environmental awareness and sustainable living, emphasizing the interconnectedness of nature and the importance of maintaining balance for the well-being of all beings. The profound insight of awareness has been implemented into the Indian mindset for thousands of years but is being taken over by a quick-fix mindset for more consumption and less consideration for the environment.

More and more ESG leaders advocate for innovative solutions to address the issues of water scarcity, pollution, and climate resilience that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable communities in India. This is where leadership plays a role not only in decision-making but in fostering a culture that embraces sustainability at all levels. Leaders today have started championing green innovation, advocating for sustainable practices to leading by example.

The Role of Leaders in Social Impact Strategies

ESG is not only about the environment but also about the social fabric of the organization and the broader society.

Leaders have the unique opportunity to drive social impact by ensuring that their companies contribute positively to the communities they operate in. This includes focusing on education, health, poverty alleviation, gender equity, and labor rights.

In the Indian context, leadership in ESG has been reflecting the diversity and socio-economic challenges faced by the nation. Indian leaders in ESG are tasked with addressing issues such as gender inequality and access to healthcare, all of which have deep roots in the country's socio-economic structure.

Effective leaders champion diversity and inclusion at the core of their organization's ethos. They recognize that diverse teams, including those from marginalized communities, contribute to innovation and creativity.

In Karnataka for instance, Sangama, a human rights organization dedicated to supporting LGBTQ+ individuals, sex workers, and people living with HIV, particularly from non-English-speaking and working-class backgrounds, provides counseling, legal aid, and advocacy. Sangama promotes inclusivity and addresses discrimination, ensuring that marginalized voices are heard and valued.

Another example is the Sangham Radio, established in 2008 in Machnoor, Telangana. It is India's first all-female community radio station, run by Dalit women. The station addresses local issues, shares health tips, and discusses women's rights, empowering listeners across 40 villages. By giving a platform to marginalized voices, Sangham Radio fosters social inclusion and community engagement.

These examples show how leaders can create programs that encourage social mobility and equal opportunities for all, from the factory floor to the boardroom.

A leader's personal commitment to social responsibility can ripple throughout the organization, shaping the values of employees and creating a work environment rooted in empathy and fairness.

Karnataka's former Social Welfare Minister, Priyank Kharge Ji, who is now the Minister of Tech, Biotech, and Rural Development has launched several initiatives aimed at empowering marginalized communities such as the Prabuddha initiative which is offering financial assistance to meritorious students from marginalized backgrounds to pursue postgraduate and PhD programs at renowned global institutions.

Ethical Leadership: Creating Inclusive and Responsible Work Environments

A critical component of effective ESG leadership is the ability to integrate ethical principles into leadership decisions. Ethical leadership goes beyond the basics of corporate governance to include a moral compass that guides business decisions. Leaders must foster a corporate culture that is inclusive, transparent, and responsible.

In India, ethical leadership is particularly significant in the face of corruption, political interference, and income inequality. Ethical leaders must ensure that their organizations uphold the highest standards of integrity, focusing on the long-term value of ethical practices rather than short-term profits. They need to commit to fair wages, respect for workers' rights, and creating a workplace that is free from discrimination.

Moreover, an ethical leader will ensure that all actions taken by the organization adhere to a clear set of principles. From choosing suppliers and partners that align with ESG standards to taking a stand on social justice issues, ethical leadership in ESG is about ensuring that decisions at every level of the organization are aligned with values such as fairness, accountability, and transparency.



Leaders must also recognize the power of mentorship in developing future champions within the organization. By fostering an environment of ethical decision-making and inclusion, leaders create a sustainable pipeline of talent who are equally committed to upholding the values of corporate social responsibility.

Conclusion

Even amid global uncertainties, India's economic ascent remains undeniable. Surpassing the UK as the world's fifth-largest economy in 2023 and projected to overtake Japan and Germany to claim the third position by 2027, the demand for sustainable leadership has never been more urgent. Indian leaders must lead by example, showcasing how sustainability is not just an emerging priority but an intrinsic part of economic growth.

By fostering innovation and embedding sustainable practices across industries, they already are driving progress that benefits segments of society while safeguarding resources for future generations – an ethos deeply rooted in the wisdom of the Vedas.

Through visionary leadership, businesses can not only thrive but also contribute to a healthier planet and a more just society. True leadership in ESG is about empowering others to drive meaningful, lasting change – proving that profitability and sustainability are not opposing forces but essential partners in shaping India's future.

Leadership as Stewardship: The Responsibility to Elevate Others

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Leadership is often mistaken for rank, authority, or a title. But true leadership isn't about power – it's about impact. It's the ability to uplift, empower, and enable those around us to rise. One of my favorite definitions of leadership is this: the profound responsibility to help others grow.

Yet, in many workplaces, leadership is preached more than it is practiced. Instead of fostering growth, we see micromanagement, competition with one's own team members, gender bias, and emotional immaturity. Poor leaders fail to give or receive feedback effectively, struggle with conflict and change management, and overlook the complexities of collaboration across cultures and backgrounds. They lack awareness of neurodiversity and fail to create inclusive spaces, often reinforcing biases rather than breaking them.

Take, for example, a narcissistic leader. He/She demands respect without earning it, dismisses ideas unless they come from him/her, and thrives on favoritism, especially toward those who flatter him/her. He/She withholds information to maintain control, takes credit for others' work, and punishes dissent with subtle exclusion or outright retaliation. Their fragile ego makes them resistant to feedback, interpreting constructive criticism as a personal attack. They enforce outdated gender norms, undermining capable colleagues by questioning their authority or excluding them from key decisions. Instead of fostering teamwork, he pits colleagues against each other to create competition, ensuring that no one challenges his dominance.

Ultimately, these leaders are not leaders at all, they are individuals focused solely on their own success, rather than the success of those they are meant to support.

So, what does true leadership look like? It's simple: it's about the people, not the position. A title may grant authority, but leadership is defined by action. If you are the person who helps others grow, and who cultivates an environment where people thrive, then you are the leader, regardless of the role you hold.

The Human Skills That Make Great Leaders

The ability to be a great leader, and truly embody the definition of leadership as the responsibility to help others rise, rests on a crucial yet often overlooked foundation: human skills. These are not just "soft skills" or nice-to-haves; they are the very essence of effective leadership. Yet, they remain underappreciated, under-taught, and frequently dismissed in favor of technical expertise or authority-based leadership models.

Too often, organizations prioritize hard skills: strategic planning, financial acumen, and industry knowledge, while neglecting the very competencies that define exceptional leadership. But ask yourself: who has had the most profound impact on your career? Was it the person with the most technical knowledge, or was it the leader who listened, guided, and helped you grow?

True leadership demands mastery of essential human skills:

- **Active listening:** The ability to truly hear and understand others, not just respond. Great leaders listen with intent, seeking to understand perspectives rather than waiting for their turn to speak. They create psychological safety, where people feel heard and valued.
- **Conflict resolution:** Navigating difficult situations with diplomacy and fairness, ensuring that disagreements become opportunities for growth rather than sources of division.

Weak leaders avoid or escalate conflict; strong leaders resolve it constructively.

- **Effective confrontation:** Addressing issues directly and productively, rather than allowing resentment to fester or conflicts to become personal. This means having the courage to challenge behaviors that harm the team while maintaining respect and professionalism.
- **Giving and receiving feedback:** The art of delivering feedback that fosters growth instead of defensiveness, and the humility to accept feedback as an opportunity to improve rather than a personal attack. Leaders who cannot take criticism or who weaponize feedback create toxic work environments.
- **Empathy & Emotional Intelligence:** Understanding what drives people, recognizing unspoken struggles, and adapting leadership approaches to different personalities and working styles. This includes being aware of neurodiversity, cultural backgrounds, and personal challenges that may impact team dynamics.

Despite their importance, these skills are rarely emphasized in workplace training. Companies invest heavily in onboarding employees with extensive education on products, services, and operational protocols. Yet, how often are employees trained on building relationships, fostering collaboration, or handling difficult conversations with empathy and assertiveness?

The absence of these skills leads to disengaged employees, dysfunctional teams, and toxic workplaces where leaders manage tasks but fail to lead people.

The Promotion Trap: From Expert to Leader

One of the greatest corporate misconceptions is that excelling in a job automatically makes someone a good leader. In reality, being a high performer in a technical role, whether it's finance, engineering, or sales, does not mean one is equipped to guide a team. Yet, time and time again, employees are promoted based on expertise rather than leadership ability.

This is why so many leaders struggle. They find themselves in management positions without the necessary human skills to lead effectively. Some react by micromanaging, others by avoiding difficult conversations, and some by competing with their own team members, undermining trust and cohesion.

Leadership is not about being the smartest person in the room. It's about being the person who elevates others, who brings out the best in their team, rather than needing to be the best themselves. And that requires a fundamental shift from being the expert to being the enabler.

Leadership Is a Lifelong Education

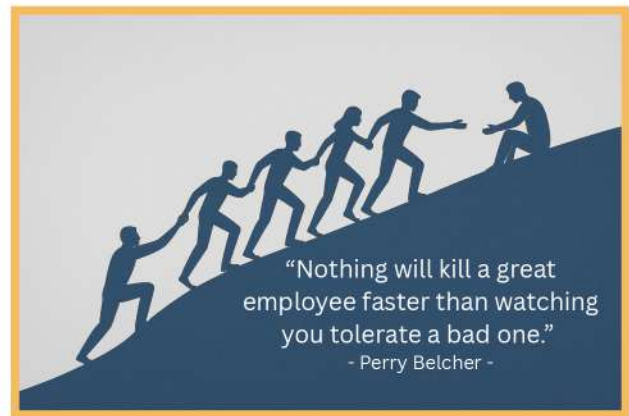
The best leaders I have encountered, across industries, cultures, and organizations, share one defining trait: they see leadership as an ongoing journey, not a destination. They don't consider themselves "experts." Instead, they remain students of leadership, constantly reading, engaging in discussions, watching talks, and actively seeking feedback to refine their approach.

This mindset is not just a sign of humility; it is the key to sustained leadership excellence. Think of it this way: would you trust a doctor who hasn't read a medical article or attended a conference since earning their degree? Of course not.

You'd want a doctor who stays updated, continuously improving their knowledge and skills. Leadership is no different. It demands continuous learning, self-awareness, and adaptation.

Unfortunately, many so-called leaders plateau. They assume that once they reach a certain level, they no longer need to grow. They resist feedback, refuse to adapt, and rely on outdated leadership models that prioritize control over collaboration.

These leaders eventually become the bottlenecks in their organizations, stifling innovation, driving away top talent, and creating workplaces where fear replaces trust.



Support doesn't mean silence in the face of dysfunction

Leadership is about helping others rise — but it's also about knowing when to draw the line. Creating a thriving team culture requires more than just support and encouragement. It also requires the courage to confront what undermines that growth.

Too often, toxic behavior is tolerated in the name of empathy, seniority, or fear of confrontation. But leaders who avoid addressing poor performance, emotional immaturity, or divisive attitudes end up creating an environment where the wrong people are protected, and the right people quietly disengage.

Empathy doesn't mean accepting behavior that harms others. Inclusion doesn't mean allowing toxicity to persist. Leadership requires discernment: knowing who needs support, who needs a challenge, and who may no longer have a place on the team.

When bad behavior goes unchecked — whether it's gossip, manipulation, passive aggression, or blatant disrespect — it sends a loud message to the rest of the team: This is acceptable here. Over time, even your most committed employees will lose motivation when they see that fairness and accountability are missing.

Helping people rise means protecting the environment where growth is possible. And sometimes, that means having the strength to let go of those who refuse to grow. Because leadership isn't just about lifting people up — it's also about clearing the path for those who are ready to rise.

Embracing Human-Centered Leadership

To build truly great teams, organizations must prioritize the development of human skills alongside technical expertise. This means:



Investing in leadership training

that focuses on emotional intelligence, communication, and cultural competence



Holding leaders accountable

for how they support and develop their teams, not just for hitting performance



Encouraging a culture

where learning, feedback, and self-awareness

are valued at every level—from junior employees to top executives



Leadership is not a one-time achievement. It is an evolving process that demands commitment, introspection, and a willingness to grow.

The strongest leaders are not those with the most power, but those who empower others.

How am I helping the people around me rise?

Leadership Lessons from the Military: A Corporate Perspective

Arindam Chaudhuri

Former Indian Army Officer | Security & Risk Professional

Military leadership has been forged on the battlefields of history, shaping the fate of nations and societies. Since ancient times, warfare has been an intrinsic part of human civilization, influencing cultures, philosophies, and even modern governance. The principles that guided military leaders in ancient conflicts remain relevant today, extending beyond the battlefield into boardrooms and corporate environments. These leadership lessons, honed through high-stakes decision-making and intense operational challenges, offer valuable insights for business leaders navigating the complexities of the modern corporate world.

One of the earliest sources of leadership wisdom is the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata. Within this grand narrative, the Bhagavad Gita, delivered by Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, encapsulates strategic thinking, ethical leadership, and resilience in adversity.

These lessons continue to guide military and corporate leaders alike, emphasizing vision, duty, and adaptability. Similarly, military treatises like Sun Tzu's The Art of War and Clausewitz's On War have influenced strategic leadership across diverse domains, including commerce and governance.



Military Leadership in Corporate Success

The transition of military leadership principles into the corporate world is not a recent phenomenon. The Industrial Revolution and the rise of multinational corporations saw businesses adopting structured hierarchies and disciplined leadership models, often influenced by military strategies. One of the most striking historical examples is the British East India Company, which leveraged military expertise to establish and maintain a vast economic empire for over two centuries.

Today, top business schools, including Harvard, Stanford, MIT, and London Business School, incorporate military leadership studies into their curriculum, drawing lessons from historical figures like Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Bismarck, Shivaji, and Guru Gobind Singh.

While corporate environments differ significantly from battlefields, the core leadership attributes necessary for success remain largely the same. Military leaders operate in high-risk, high-pressure environments where clarity of vision, adaptability, and decisive action are paramount. These qualities have direct applications in corporate governance, operations, and strategic decision-making.

Key Military Leadership Traits for Corporate Success

Vision and Mission Clarity

A strong leader provides a clear vision that aligns with organizational goals. In the military, commanders set strategic objectives that guide all levels of command. Similarly, corporate leaders must articulate a compelling vision that resonates with employees, ensuring alignment with long-term business objectives. Establishing a mission-driven culture ensures focused efforts and fosters a sense of purpose within an organization.

Organizational Culture and Regimentation

Military units operate as cohesive teams, bound by a shared ethos and disciplined structure. A strong corporate culture – fostered through top-down leadership – can drive efficiency, morale, and long-term success. Military regimentation instills accountability and teamwork, which can be emulated in corporate settings to enhance productivity and commitment. A well-established organizational culture provides stability, even in turbulent times.

Team Building and Leadership Development

The military emphasizes leadership development through structured training and mentorship.

High-performance teams are cultivated through continuous learning, effective communication, delegation, and conflict resolution. Corporate leaders can adopt similar models to build resilient teams capable of navigating dynamic business challenges. Investing in leadership development ensures the sustainability of an organization and creates a strong succession pipeline.

Mentorship and Succession Planning

Military leadership follows a structured mentoring process where senior officers actively groom future leaders while maintaining accountability for overall team performance. This approach not only ensures continuity but also fosters a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

By proactively addressing underperformance with constructive measures, the military strengthens both individual and team capabilities. In contrast, corporate succession planning is often inconsistent, with limited efforts to develop underperformers, resulting in leadership gaps at critical levels and loss of trained resources. By embracing a military-style mentorship framework, businesses can cultivate a strong talent pipeline, nurture emerging leaders, ensure seamless leadership transitions, and retain a motivated workforce.

Transparency and Trust Building

Contrary to the perception of secrecy, effective military leadership thrives on internal transparency within teams. Transparent communication builds trust, boosts morale, and improves operational efficiency. In corporate settings, leaders who foster open dialogue and encourage feedback create an environment of psychological safety, leading to enhanced collaboration and innovation.

Leading by Example

Military leaders are expected to lead from the front, setting an example through their actions. This principle is equally relevant in the corporate world, where leaders who

demonstrate integrity, commitment, and resilience inspire their teams to excel. Leadership by example fosters credibility and instills a sense of ownership among employees.

Continuous Improvement and Adaptability

To maintain a strategic edge, military organizations invest in research, development, and continuous training. This commitment to improvement ensures readiness for evolving threats and challenges. Corporations can adopt similar practices by fostering a culture of innovation, upskilling employees, and embracing change to stay competitive in an evolving business landscape.

Calculated Risk-Taking

Military operations involve high-stakes decision-making, where leaders assess risks and act decisively. Business leaders must develop the ability to take calculated risks, balancing opportunities with potential downsides. An organization that cultivates a risk-aware culture enables its leaders to make bold yet informed decisions, driving growth and innovation.

Embracing Failure as a Learning Tool

In the military, failure is not merely an end but a stepping stone for future success. Leaders analyze setbacks, extract valuable lessons, and adapt strategies to avoid repeating mistakes. Similarly, in the corporate world, fostering a culture that embraces failure as a learning opportunity can drive innovation and resilience. Organizations that avoid a 'zero-error syndrome' encourage employees to experiment, innovate, and improve continuously.

The Military Leadership Advantage in Business

The corporate world operates in an environment of fierce competition, market volatility, and technological disruptions. Military leadership principles offer time-tested strategies to navigate these challenges effectively. Organizations that embrace military-inspired leadership can achieve the following benefits:

- **Enhanced Decision-Making Under Pressure:** Military leaders are trained to make quick yet informed decisions in high-stakes and fast-paced scenarios.

- **Business leaders who adopt this approach** can better navigate crises and dynamic market conditions.
- **Stronger Team Cohesion and Loyalty:** The emphasis on camaraderie and shared purpose in the military fosters deep trust and commitment. Corporations that cultivate a strong team culture experience higher employee engagement and retention.
- **Resilience and Crisis Management:** Military leaders thrive in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environments. Businesses that adopt resilience-focused leadership can effectively manage disruptions and sustain long-term growth.
- **Disciplined Execution and Accountability:** Military leadership instills discipline, ensuring meticulous planning, execution, and accountability. Corporate leaders who prioritize structured goal-setting and performance tracking drive operational excellence.

Conclusion

The adaptation of military leadership principles in the corporate world is not just a theoretical concept — it is a practical necessity. The ability to lead with vision, build cohesive teams, embrace adaptability, and take decisive action defines successful leaders, whether in the military or the business world.

By integrating military leadership lessons into corporate strategies, organizations can cultivate leaders who are resilient, ethical, and capable of steering their companies toward sustained success.

As the business landscape continues to evolve, the timeless principles of military leadership will remain relevant, offering invaluable guidance for navigating complexity, driving innovation, and achieving strategic goals.

Ultimately, the corporate world has much to gain from the discipline, strategic foresight, and unwavering commitment that define military leadership.



A Key Milestone.

Arindam Chaudhuri is a seasoned security and risk management professional with over two decades of leadership experience in the Indian Army, followed by three years in the corporate sector. A graduate of the prestigious Indian Military Academy, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in 1999 and later pursued further education at XLRI Jamshedpur and King's College London.

During his 20-year military tenure, he held diverse command and operational roles, rising to the position of Second-in-Command of a Battalion. His service in Jammu & Kashmir provided him with firsthand exposure to the complexities of conflict, shaping his deep understanding of its underlying causes. Over time, he transitioned from a purely operational approach to one that emphasized conflict resolution, reconciliation, and sustainable peacebuilding.

A key milestone in his career was his role in Operation Trident, launched in response to the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. Leading a team of highly trained soldiers, he played a pivotal role in neutralizing threats and saving lives. This experience reinforced his conviction that violence is a futile instrument and strengthened his resolve to contribute meaningfully to security, stability, and peace.

In the corporate world, he has successfully leveraged his expertise in crisis management, security operations, and risk mitigation, earning recognition for his strategic insights and leadership. His ability to navigate high-stakes environments, combined with a nuanced understanding of conflict dynamics, has enabled him to drive impactful solutions in the private sector.

An avid reader with a keen interest in history, geopolitics, and international relations, he remains committed to fostering a society built on inclusivity, mutual respect, and deeper cross-cultural understanding.

LEADING BEYOND RETIREMENT



Leading Beyond Retirement: Journey of Purpose and Impact

Dr. Jamuna Ravi

*Treasurer & Board Member INBCB | Chief Executive Officer
Vayah Vikas | Executive Advisor DEI*

LEADING BEYOND RETIREMENT

Retirement from a successful corporate career is often perceived to be the end of one's professional identity, but it just ended up being a milestone that heralded a new beginning and more interesting challenges to look forward to!

A Leadership Odyssey (1984 – Present)

Embarking on a leadership journey that spans over 35 years, I have navigated the evolving landscapes of the global IT industry, social development, and corporate governance. My professional trajectory has been shaped by a commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and transformative leadership, ensuring a sustainable impact in both the corporate and social sectors. I retired from HSBC Technology in June 2022, when I turned 60, according to the government guidelines in India.

I am currently the CEO of Vayah Vikas, a not-for-profit organization founded by Kris Gopalakrishnan for empowering senior citizens in India, and also an Independent Director on the board of Bank of India, the 6th largest public sector bank in India. In addition, I am holding a voluntary position as a board member of the India Netherlands Business Circle, Bangalore, as well as a committee member of Soroptimist International Bangalore. My family and close friends are constantly amazed at how I have ended up being so busy that retirement is not a phrase that describes me in any way!

I must confess that I did not plan to end up like this – I often looked forward to the period beyond my retirement as one where I would spend a few hours pursuing professional pursuits like advisory as well as board positions, and some involvement in voluntary activities and hobbies. I am reproducing my career graph briefly below with some illustrations of what helped me to build such an interesting portfolio of work, even after retiring from senior leadership positions in the corporate world.

In 1984, I began my career with a passion for technology and a vision for global impact. Equipped with an M.Sc. (Tech) in Computer Science from BITS Pilani, I entered the IT industry at a time when digital transformation was in its infancy. My initial years were spent mastering the nuances of IT governance, cybersecurity, and global delivery models.

As I advanced through roles in a large organization like TCS, I honed my expertise in managing complex global operations, pioneering new methodologies, and fostering high-performing teams. By the turn of the millennium, I had established myself as a seasoned leader, prepared to take on larger responsibilities.

The next phase of my career saw me taking on key leadership roles at Infosys while working with Fortune 100 customers, especially in the Banking, Capital Markets, Energy, Utilities, Communications, and Services industries. These roles expanded my horizon, allowing me to lead multi-billion-dollar portfolios, oversee P&L responsibilities exceeding \$300 million, and manage diverse teams across continents.

Living and working in the US, UK, the Netherlands, Singapore, and other regions, I developed a deep understanding of cross-cultural leadership. This global exposure allowed me to drive large-scale digital transformation projects and establish best practices in IT governance.

In 2015, fueled by a desire to create niche, impactful solutions, I founded Pinovus Consulting. The firm specializes in compliance and regulatory solutions for global markets, bridging critical gaps in governance and risk management. This entrepreneurial venture further enhanced my strategic thinking and problem-solving capabilities.

LEADING BEYOND RETIREMENT

While my entrepreneurial stint provided valuable lessons in business and financial management in the startup world, it also taught me how to manage risks and exit prudently from a difficult market at the right time. I was fortunate enough to receive a wonderful opportunity to return to the corporate world in leadership roles at Shell and HSBC while cutting my losses in the entrepreneurial space.

The global experience I had gained earlier at TCS and Infosys was highly relevant to my ability to contribute effectively in the multinational environment of the global capability centers of Shell and HSBC.

The twists and turns in my career taught me a few valuable lessons as follows:

- Resilience and adaptability are key to staying engaged, and continuous lifelong curiosity and learning are essential for constantly being able to reinvent one's identity.
- Engaging with younger professionals, as well as underprivileged sections of society, helps to keep one relevant, energized, and grounded.
- Being well-networked in your industry, workplace, and communities, and maintaining personal as well as professional relationships well, are key enablers for finding new ways of staying engaged.

All these lessons have been instrumental in my finding a very rewarding second inning after retirement. The positions that I hold to date are because of my professional network, and my investment in continuous learning has equipped me well for taking on these new engagements and responsibilities.

Social Impact Leadership in the Development Sector, Participation in Boards, and Advisory Consulting (2022-Present)

As the CEO of Vayah Vikas, I embarked on a mission to empower senior citizens across India. I took on this role after retiring from HSBC as a Managing Director in June 2022. This opportunity has allowed me to create and strengthen support for an ecosystem for seniors, similar to organizations like AARP in the US and ANBO in the Netherlands. I am truly humbled as well as excited about this endeavor.

Parallely, my role as an Independent Director on the Board of the Bank of India and as a board member of the India Netherlands Business Circle has provided me with deep insights into corporate governance and international business collaboration. These experiences reinforced my ability to drive policy-level change and foster cross-border partnerships.

Key Takeaways for Other Retirees and Those Who Are on the Verge of Retirement

Looking back at my life, I think I was subconsciously planning for my second innings since I turned 40!

- I started engaging with NGOs and other social impact initiatives when I turned 40.
- When I turned 50, I started taking up new hobbies, such as learning music, traveling more, and joining more communities of like-minded people.

The networks I formed and maintained were the ones instrumental in finding my new roles and making new friends.

Retirement doesn't mean retreat. It's a chance to lead in new ways, contribute with wisdom, and shape the future while embracing the joy of lifelong learning."

VAYAH VIKAS



Leadership in Action: Vayah Vikas' **Senior Empowerment** Milestones for 2024-25

Shanti Rao

Communication Manager - Vayah Vikas

<https://vayah-vikas.org/>

VAYAH VIKAS

Vayah Vikas, a Bengaluru-based non-profit, continues to redefine aging in India by championing the well-being of senior citizens. Guided by our philosophy, "Never Stop Growing," we have made significant strides in 2024-25, expanding our reach, fostering impactful collaborations, and driving large-scale community engagement.

Expanding Reach and Impact

With an ambitious goal of supporting one million older adults over the next two years, Vayah Vikas has successfully expanded its presence to Mangaluru, Mysuru, Chennai, and Chengalpattu. These new chapters empower seniors by providing access to vital resources, strong social networks, and essential services. Our membership-based model continues to strengthen senior communities, fostering engagement and support systems. Having surpassed 100,000 members, we remain committed to rapid growth and meaningful impact.

Key Collaborations and Government Partnerships

Our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (DOSJE), Government of India, has been instrumental in promoting financial literacy, digital empowerment, and welfare scheme awareness among senior citizens. Through this partnership, we conduct weekly webinars and in-person workshops on crucial topics such as Health & Wellness, Digital Literacy, Emotional Well-being, Physical Fitness, Will Writing, Legal Awareness, and Government Welfare Schemes.



As thought leaders, we hosted a high-impact conclave in Chennai, bringing together industry experts and philanthropists for discussions on two crucial panels.

Vayah Vikas has also played a pivotal role in improving senior healthcare access, enrolling 3,000+ seniors (70+) in the Ayushman Vay Vandana program, providing health insurance coverage of up to ₹5 lakhs. In partnership with Dementia India Alliance, we have screened over 1,000 seniors for dementia.

Strengthening Senior Welfare Through Global Partnerships

We are actively benchmarking ourselves against esteemed international organizations such as HelpAge International, AARP, and ANBO in the Netherlands to elevate our impact. Through global collaborations, we are enhancing senior welfare by leveraging expertise in advocacy, healthcare, financial security, and anti-age discrimination, while also exchanging insights on longevity planning and innovative elder care strategies.

Our engagements with these organizations enable us to drive international discussions on aging and sustainable long-term care solutions.

Expanding the Success of Ekta Hub: A Model for Senior Engagement

Enthused by the success of our pilot project, Ekta Hub, launched in 2024 at Residency Road, Bengaluru, Vayah Vikas is now working towards establishing similar experience centers across India.

Ekta (Experience & Knowledge Together in Action) has quickly become a cornerstone for senior engagement, offering a holistic environment that fosters:

- Health & Wellness programs.
- Engaging in activities for fun and social interaction.
- Lifelong learning opportunities.



Vayah Vikas is a not-for-profit organisation based in Bengaluru that is driven by the philosophy of "by the seniors, for the seniors, of the seniors".

Our Services

1 HEALTH & WELLNESS
Avail of the best concessions at health care facilities near you

3 SOCIAL INCLUSION
Create meaningful bonds with other like-minded individuals.

2 LEGAL CONSULTATION
Discuss legal issues affecting you with the best legal experts

4 ADVOCACY & RESEARCH
Being the voice and increasing research/development targeted towards older persons.

NEVER STOP GROWING

Our vision is to create a society where every senior citizen leads a purposeful life, is embraced by a supportive community, and is empowered to live actively and with dignity.

+91 95133 00821
www.vayah-vikas.org

Scan this QR code to learn more!



Recognizing its impact in enhancing the quality of life for seniors, we are committed to expanding this model to new locations, ensuring that more older adults across the country have access to meaningful experiences, strong social networks, and essential resources.

Celebrating Seniors in 2024

Our flagship event, Hiriya Habba 2024, witnessed a record-breaking 4,000 seniors coming together for a day of celebration, meaningful discussions, interactive sessions, and engaging activities – a true testament to the vibrant spirit of our community.

Vayah Vikas actively provides engagement opportunities for senior citizens through events like Hiriya Habba, Silver Stars Talent Show, and the TCS Senior Citizens Run, while also ensuring our voice is heard in key policy discussions at forums such as the Chennai Conclave and RISE Longevity India Alliance, reinforcing our commitment to senior welfare and advocacy.

Looking Ahead: Strengthening Our Mission

As we move forward, Vayah Vikas remains committed to:

- ✓ Expanding community outreach and engagement initiatives.
- ✓ Strengthening policy advocacy to improve senior welfare.
- ✓ Enhancing partnerships with global and local organizations.
- ✓ Scaling successful projects like Ekta Hub to more cities.

We invite individuals, organizations, philanthropists, and Corporate CSR foundations to join us in creating a society where seniors truly never stop growing.



WHAT KIND OF LEADER ARE YOU?

QUIZ

Choose the answer that best describes how you typically handle workplace situations. Keep track of your choices (A, B, C, D), and check your results on the next page.

1. How do you handle decision-making?

- A) I make quick decisions based on my instincts.
- B) I consult my team before deciding.
- C) I rely on data and analysis before making a move.
- D) I encourage team members to make their own decisions.

2. How do you motivate your team?

- A) By setting ambitious goals and pushing them to achieve more.
- B) By creating a supportive and collaborative environment.
- C) By offering logical reasoning and clear direction.
- D) By empowering them with autonomy and trust.

3. When dealing with conflict, you...

- A) Address it head-on and assertively.
- B) Seek to understand all perspectives before resolving it.
- C) Use facts and policies to guide the resolution.
- D) Encourage the team to solve the issue collectively.

4. What's your approach to innovation?

- A) Encourage bold risks and rapid experimentation.
- B) Focus on team brainstorming and shared ideas.
- C) Implement well-researched, practical improvements.
- D) Let employees take the lead in finding creative solutions.

5. How do you measure success?

- A) By achieving ambitious targets and outperforming competitors.
- B) By maintaining high employee engagement and teamwork.
- C) By ensuring efficiency, accuracy, and well-executed plans.
- D) By seeing my team grow and become independent leaders.

AD



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LEADERSHIP
is not a role, it's a ripple.

RESULTS

QUIZ



◆ **Mostly A's – The Visionary Leader**

You are ambitious, bold, and results-driven. You inspire your team with big ideas and push them toward excellence. While your high expectations drive success, make sure to balance ambition with employee well-being.



◆ **Mostly B's – The People-Oriented Leader**

You value collaboration, emotional intelligence, and teamwork. You create a positive culture where employees feel heard and supported. Your leadership style builds loyalty, but ensure you're also making firm decisions when needed.



◆ **Mostly C's – The Analytical Leader**

You lead with logic, structure, and data. You make well-informed decisions and focus on precision and efficiency. Your approach brings stability, though adding a personal touch can enhance team morale.



◆ **Mostly D's – The Empowering Leader**

You believe in autonomy and trust your team to take ownership of their work. You nurture leadership in others and encourage creativity. While this builds innovation, make sure you provide enough direction when needed.

April 2025

