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Dear Reader,

COVID has threatened to raise its ugly head again, and we have doubled down in lockdown once more, with not just the markets shutting early but movement on the roads also restricted after sunset. Karachi is in ballet mode as it engages in battle, pirouetting and pivoting with ease and grace, floating like a butterfly and ducking and dodging the sting of COVID. May Allah bless us all with health, wealth and happiness, ameen.

This issue our cover story celebrates the life and times of **Zouhair Khaliq**, early mover in the telecom business with Mobilink, who has had a bee in his bonnet that hasn't stopped buzzing all these many years, driving Zouhair from one landmark accomplishment to another; today he is more relevant than ever as Pakistan struggles to go digital.

Our second lead is **Catherine Bentley**, an old friend of Octara and Pakistan, and she has reached out to us from across the seven seas via Zoom on the very vital subject of effective Communication.

Also in this issue we feature "Unleash Your Intentions" a blog by **Rose-marie Fernandez**, Chief Influencing Officer, Coaching Worx from Canada and for Trend Watchers we have a blog by **Henry Coutinho-Mason** "Future Normal: Stealth Learning; What if...learning was truly fun?" and bringing up the back of the book is Octara's offerings for June.

Hang loose, and stay cool is the advice on offer. Chill!

STOP PRESS!!

TCS has announced the achievement of a historical milestone! TCS has piloted Pakistan's first land route for trade with Central Asia under the T.I.R. Customs Transit System, with the TCS Truck operating the route Torkham-Kabul-Hairatan-Termez-Tashkent and back during April-May 2021, making it the first successful operation since Pakistan's entry to the T.I.R. System in 2016. Congratulations! 🙌....For more on this - Page 9.

Editorial Compiled by **Adil Ahmad**, Special Correspondent, octara.com
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INSIDE



Industry Veteran Forging Forward
Zouhair Khaliq's Glorious 2nd Innings Full On!
Interviewed by Adil Ahmad, Special Correspondent, octara.com



TCS Leads the Way



Get it Right!
Catherine Bentley holds forth on
Winning Customers through Effective communication
TCS Octara Zoominar Review



Unleash Your Intentions
A Blog by Rose-marie Fernandez



FOR TREND WATCHERS
Future Normal: Stealth Learning
Blog by Henry Coutinho-Mason

TCS Octara Programs in June 2021

Wednesday, June 16, 2021 | 3:00 pm (PKT)
Complimentary Zoominar - The Gratitude Challenge
Speaker: **Kanwal Akhtar**

Wednesday, June 23, 2021 | 11:00 am (PKT)
Human Resources in the Age of Digital Transformation
Facilitator: **Dr. Frank Peter**

Thursday, June 24, 2021 | 11:00 am (PKT)
Digital Marketing Strategy & Tactics in the "New Normal"
Facilitator: **Dr. Frank Peter**

Octara Programs from (June – September 2021)

Lifelong Learning Lessons
(Contributions by TCS Octara People)



Industry Veteran Forging Forward

ZOUHAIR KHALIQ'S

Glorious 2nd Innings Full On!



Zouhair Khaliq, Founder & Partner at Teamup Group

Most people would have retired to the balmy Bahamas had their first tour of duty yielded the largest private sector organization in Pakistan with revenues in excess of US\$ 1.4 Billion; but not Zouhair Khaliq who took Mobilink from a startup in 1993 to the largest scale up in the history of Pakistan, notching up many firsts in the process. Clearly putting his feet up on a sun drenched beach is not that which makes Zouhair tick. Instead, he is at his best with his boots on and in full battle cry, just the sort of attitude Pakistan and its people need to embrace as the world wobbles its way through a terrain that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

octara.com was privileged to gain what is clearly a fabulous insight into the mind that's impacted the ICT sector in no uncertain terms, blazing trails and breaking ground where no one had ventured before. Driven by the pursuit of excellence, and conscious of the nation's need for a robust economy that works in the 21st century, Zouhair is relishing the challenge of climbing the mountain anew, and we wish him more power in his many enterprises that constitute his second tour of duty on the crease.

octara.com: Your LinkedIn profile packs a heavy duty punch. In quite a literal sense you've been there, and done that where the ICT sector is concerned, and continue to remain fully involved through your Teamup initiative started in August 2015 where you are Co-Founder & Partner, along with being Managing Partner

Teamup Advisory.

TeamUp is an Innovation hub focused on young innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs, and helps startups to create, grow, fund and transform companies that will impact millions of lives every day! Please elaborate with examples of successes achieved.

Partner in Crime!

Zouhair: Teamup was conceived as a "give back" by myself and Parvez Abbasi, my partner in crime! We used to meet in London for coffee where we both lived and worked at the time in 2015 and often discussed what next? The Universe has been kind to us and it was time to do something to give back in a

sustainable and meaningful way.

National Incubation Centre

While a lot of people decide to set up charities we wanted to do something which could “teach people how to fish, rather than giving them fish every day”! The National Incubation Centre was set up in that spirit with our partners, Mobilink - now known as Jazz, the Ministry of IT & Telecom and the Ignite Technology Fund as a first of its kind Public Private Partnership.

With the grace of God we have now completed over 4 years of this journey where at the NIC Pakistan we incubate, train, mentor and guide technology enabled startups to build sustainable and scalable businesses.

10,000 Jobs & Rs. 3 Billion in Revenues

So far we have graduated approximately 300 startups, a 100 of which are women founders. The startups have collectively generated about 10,000 jobs and Rs. 3 billion in revenues and raised investments of nearly Rs. 2 billion.

The Government, recognizing and acknowledging our success, has set up 4 additional NIC's, one each in Karachi, Quetta, Lahore and Peshawar. The eco-system over these 4-5 years has grown enormously where, from zero Venture Capital Funds, we have 15 Venture Capital Funds in Pakistan and in 2020 US\$ 77 million were invested in startups while in 2021 we are already seeing Q1 investments of US\$ 29 million.

Enabling Environment

The NIC Pakistan was awarded an international prize in 2018 for the best design of a work place. This week The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has announced Pakistan's National Incubation Centers as one of the champion projects of the C6 category: Enabling Environment at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2021.

NIC was chosen from a pool of around 1300 projects submitted by the Government and private sector for WSIS Prizes 2021. We see all of this as the beginning of a very exciting and inspiring journey for Pakistan.

octara.com: As a Member of the Prime Minister's Task Force on IT & Telecom where do you see Pakistan in the next five years? What challenges do you foresee that will need to be overcome?

Zouhair: The Prime Ministers Task Force on IT & Telecom acts as an advisory body to the PM's Office and the Ministry of IT & Telecom. The aim of the Task Force is to create an enabling environment to solve urgent issues which can assist in the faster digitization of Pakistan.

My own vision - surely the real opportunity here is not just ensuring an enabling environment for the Telecom sector but

“ The biggest challenge is changing the mindsets at the level of the policy makers, regulators and investors ”

about creating and ensuring an enabled society! We as leaders of the telecom revolution whether we are part of the Government, or part of the network operations, or software developers or application providers, we have in our hands the means at our disposal to bring about meaningful and constructive change in our own society. So much more is possible.

The real window that opens up for all of us is about bringing meaningful content and services to the benefit of all, and I would like to mention, by way of example, areas such as mobile Health, mobile Agriculture, mobile Weather, mobile Financial Services, mobile Banking and most of all, the closest to my heart, online education..... for all! Think of how we can enable an entire country and its people with education and information if only we put our minds to it!

The challenges are many in terms of changing legislation, introducing a new digital policy, giving out more spectrum to the mobile telecom companies at affordable prices, focused on the long term rather than the short term. We also need urgent investment from the private sector IT & Telecom companies again focusing on long term gains.

The biggest challenge is changing the mindsets at the level of the policy makers, regulators and investors. We need to see the bigger picture for the future and we need to see it urgently!

octara.com: As a business executive with global experience in telecom & technology with deep experience in Board strategy, operations, startups, turnarounds, M&A, mobile money, micro-finance and real estate, have you envisaged a big, hairy, audacious goal for yourself going forward?

Zouhair: I have been fortunate to have worked and lived in many environments in the UK, the US, Europe, the Middle East and Far East and what I take away from all these wonderful

experiences is that nothing is impossible if we put our minds, hearts and souls in to it. My dream, my ambition and goal is to keep working hard with so many of our talented and inspirational startups to help guide them and fund them to create several billion dollar companies in Pakistan which will bring high technology solutions in e-Health, agri-Tech, e-Commerce, Fintech and e-Learning!

octara.com: In addition to your several concurrent commitments you are the service delivery partner to the National Incubation Centre. What does that entail?

Zouhair: Teamup is the service delivery partner at the National Incubation Centre Pakistan, ably supported by Jazz, Ignite and the Ministry of IT & Telecom. Our team at Teamup, headed by my Partner & Co Founder Parvez Abbasi as Project Director, manages all aspects of the running of the NIC.

Developing Entrepreneurial Skills & Understanding

We have highly skilled team members in community management, human resource management, marketing, technology and business management supported by visiting faculty who ensure that all of the startups incubated at the NIC are provided with support for a specially designed curriculum which develops their entrepreneurial skills and understanding.

We have over the years brought mentors from around the world who work with our startups to ensure they are given the best possible guidance and mentorship to help them grow. Over the last couple of years we have also used this buzzing, inspiring forum at the NIC to host the National Investor Summit each year and the Investor Round Table where we bring together the startups, the investors and regulators like the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, the State Bank of Pakistan and the Federal Board of Revenue to discuss the issues which can be addressed to improve the eco-system and facilitate better, more productive investment to help grow technology enabled businesses.

We have hosted Hackathons on Education, Health, Agri-Tech and FinTech where participants from across the world have pitched new ideas on the respective subjects and we have awarded the winning teams cash prizes to help them build their ideas in to successful business plans.

octara.com: You formed the Teamup Advisory with Technology Industry Veteran Parvez Abbasi with both founders having built billion dollar plus enterprises in Pakistan and possessing extensive knowledge and exposure to markets across the UK, Europe and the Middle East.

You are in the business of transforming businesses to meet tomorrow's challenges, and aim to solve real business

“ Nothing is impossible if we put our minds, hearts and souls into it ”

challenges for clients through innovation and deep industry understanding. The team together brings over a century of operational, marketing, distribution, technology, governance and government relations experience and knowledge. Do you think your vast asset base is being fully optimized in the service of the nation?

Zouhair: Teamup Advisory was born out of the realization that so many businesses and organizations in Pakistan want to move their operations to more technology based, digitally enabled environments. Often with legacy systems and people who have not had the right exposure to technology it is hard to make that transition smoothly.

Analysis, Advice & Guiding Hand Towards Digital Pakistan

Teamup Advisory brings hands on experience to the proceedings where our team which is sourced from many different backgrounds is able to contribute analysis, advice and a guiding hand in restructuring the operations and often retraining the human resources to transform their organizations into a much more digitized and technology enabled environment.

We would love to get more involved to help with these transitions and realize our own vision and dream of a digital Pakistan.

octara.com: Teamup Angels where you are the co-founder is a unique and groundbreaking portal started recently in January 2021 which introduces exciting early stage companies to its Angel members where their expertise and advice can drive extraordinary value. Through your portal you are helping to develop the entrepreneurial start up ecosystem in Pakistan, through a culture of excellence and collaboration. How long, in your estimation, will it take before Pakistan can see the fruits of your effort?

Zouhair: Teamup Angels is the first of its kind, a platform, where as you say, we provide the space for early stage technology startups to meet and talk to Angels who can provide them mentorship, guidance and invest in them if they think there is an interesting opportunity. Pakistan is at a very early stage in



Zouhair Khaliq and Parvez Abbasi
Founders of Teamup and the National Incubation Centre Pakistan



Our Startup DeafTawk explaining their product & Services
to the CEO and team from the Ignite Technology Fund



A Mentoring Session with our Startups
at the NIC Session Hall



Continuing to work hard but keeping
safe in COVID times



Parvez Abbasi Presenting the NIC Strategy to Visitors



The Mobilink Days - Senior Leadership Team with Professors Ken Morse and Bill Aulet from the MIT School of Entrepreneurship

the evolution of this ecosystem and more importantly the mindset.

Investing in Technology

Traditionally people would invest in land and look to multiply their money or for a quicker return play on the stock exchange. It is only in the last couple of years that people are beginning to realize that there are investment opportunities in the startup space as well.

It is important that investors start to develop an understanding of how investing in technology is the most effective way to address the many challenges we face in the country. Everything from addressing the issues in health, education, agriculture, commerce, financial wellbeing can today be solved through technology. Often the people most likely to do this are startups who bring a fresh, out of the box approach to providing the solutions. This is happening all across the world, not only in the developed countries but also increasingly in the emerging markets of which we are a part.

I believe that despite us as a country playing catch up, we will begin to see enormous success and value creation in the next 3 years and beyond.

octara.com: You were a key part of the founding team and employee #1 at Mobilink in 1993-96. Later as CEO, June 2003-08, you led Mobilink to being the largest mobile operator and largest private sector company in the country and amongst the top 5 fastest growing mobile companies in the Asia region. Would you count Mobilink as your career's high point? What else would you have wanted to do with Mobilink which perhaps you were unable to?

Largest Scale Up in the History of Pakistan

Zouhair: I consider myself incredibly blessed and very fortunate to have been part of what was a startup in 1993 and later the largest scale up in the history of Pakistan. It certainly was the most fun I ever had at work!

For the best part of nearly 6 years, starting in 2003, I barely ever slept for more than 4-5 hours, but I would do it all over again if offered the chance. There was so much that we achieved at the time in terms of leading the change in the entire landscape of the telecom and technology world in the country but also in terms of developing and demonstrating corporate values that helped to reshape communication and reshape lives.

Many Firsts

We were so very fortunate to have had so many firsts at the time. We were the first operator to introduce GSM technology to Pakistan; the first to reach the remotest locations in the country

“ Everything from addressing the issues in health, education, agriculture, commerce, financial wellbeing can today be solved through technology ”

with the largest sales and distribution network and the largest coverage footprint in the industry.

We were the first to introduce the franchise concept to Pakistan which still remains the biggest distribution network by far; the first to introduce a prepaid product which still leads the market today; the first operator with separate, established postpaid and prepaid brands at the time; the first to reach over US\$ 2.5 billion in investment; the first at the time to adopt Next Generation Network (“NGN”) technology for deployment of switching sites and capacity and the first to introduce BlackBerry services in Pakistan.

We led the largest and most successful International EuroBond which was 16 times oversubscribed. Mobilink became the largest private sector organization in Pakistan with revenues in excess of US\$ 1.4 Billion.

We won the World Communications Awards (WCA) in the category of “Best Operator in Developing Markets” and our BlackBerry launch won the “Best Marketing Campaign” award at the time while the Marketing Association of Pakistan gave us the Excellence Award for three years running. And so much more!

Unfinished Business

What we had started to do in 2007 and 2008 in addition was to embark on a strategy to acquire an optic fibre company and a media and content company which together would provide fibre to the home and media content so Mobilink could then become the total telecommunications solution provider with one bill for your mobile, broadband internet and media content; something along the lines of Sky in the UK.

In addition we had embarked on acquiring a commercial bank which would then give Mobilink complete mobile money and banking solution from your mobile. In hindsight these were things that were way ahead of their time.

Unfortunately with the start of the lawyers' movement in 2007 and then the ultimate change in Government in 2008, all of this was put on hold as our then shareholders decided to exit in the light of the changed political environment, as did I. Those opportunities were not subsequently pursued and frankly still remain to be realized.

octara.com: As Non Exec Director at Pakistan Television Corporation and the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation what more do you think can be done to carry our narrative and soft image to the world?

Bane of Vested Interests

Zouhair: As we speak I have stepped down from these Boards as there was a huge tussle within these organizations and the governing Ministry against the private sector Board Members, who they saw as a great threat to their vested interests. They did their best every day to undermine our efforts. It is unfortunate that the Government's initial vision was thwarted with great effort from the inside.

I believe that we have so much to show the world, in terms of our culture, our heritage, our delicious food, our music and art, our young people and their enormous talent, our beautiful, lush untouched mountain areas which make such ideal tourist destinations.

We should be showcasing this side of Pakistan, reconnecting with our rich Mughal and Muslim history which goes back several centuries, and stop trying to draw our history from the deserts of Arabia. There is so much to draw from our history and to inspire not only the young of our country but also to show the rest of the world what we have to offer. This really should be on top of the list of priorities for any government. It is at the moment a huge missed opportunity.

octara.com: You serve on the Board of Regents, Harris Manchester College, Oxford University, and are a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales and an alumni of INSEAD, France. How do you view the disarray in the Pakistani education system?

National Education Emergency & Radical Reforms

Zouhair: There is no doubt that our current educational system is indeed in disarray. We are still teaching curriculum from 15-20 years ago. In technology terms we are simply not imparting the education required for the 21st century and we are definitely not teaching our children and young ones the aspects of culture

“ We were the first operator to introduce GSM technology to Pakistan; the first to reach the remotest locations in the country ”

and history that will make them realize what an amazing civilization we come from.

We need to also separate out religion from education, standardize the curriculum in the so called madrassas and ensure that we are preparing our young for what is happening in the rest of the world.

I have repeatedly said on several forums where I have had the opportunity to talk about this that Pakistan needs to declare a “National Emergency” on education and embark on radical reforms.

octara.com: How well have you coped with the COVID-19 pandemic, and how do you view the altered landscape going forward?

Zouhair: Given the fact that we are a technology hub and we work mostly with technology based entrepreneurs I would say we have had an unfair advantage over others.

Pivoting with Speed

We shut down the National Incubation Centre for the first time on 11th March 2020 and were live 2 days later after the weekend, online for the next 6 months as we ensured that all our teams and cohorts remained safe and isolated. We did not miss a single day's work and in fact upped the game as we conducted 4 online hackathons over the last 14 months in addition to the daily curriculum sessions, the pitching sessions, and our mentor and gurus sessions.

We also successfully conducted our scheduled Investor Round Tables and the National Investor Summit online with participants

from across the world. We reopened the NIC on a partial basis in October 2020 and continue today to run a hybrid system where we combine work from home with limited physical presence at the NIC, adjusting to the escalating or decreasing pandemic situation in the country. Our primary focus is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our teams and our cohorts.

New Normal

Looking ahead I would suggest that this hybrid model of flexible work from home and physical presence will become the new standard. People have realized that while it gives them a better control over their work-life balance, in most cases it makes them more productive.

On a personal level I have been working from remote offices since 2010 in the various assignments I was involved in and so have not really found the situation at all disturbing. I am equally comfortable on a Zoom conference call and emails as I would be in face to face meetings.

octara.com: What co-curricular activities did you pursue going through school and college?

Avid Film Buff

At school I was part of the cricket team, I played tennis and squash as well. I was, and remain an avid film buff and was part of the movie club at my school in the UK where we were treated to movies from across the world often dubbed or with sub-titles and it was a great way of learning about other cultures and their histories as well.

I am also an enthusiastic photographer and in the old days used to develop my own prints in what was then called the dark room. Today I still find photography a very relaxing and therapeutic pass time.

I am also very fond of reading and have over the years built a pretty vast library. I cannot walk past a book shop without ending up purchasing a few books!

octara.com: How do you de-stress and unwind?

Zouhair: I listen to music! Jazz music is my favourite but I love music in general and listen to classical, deep rock, pop, ghazal, qawalli, and various languages including english, urdu, arabic, persian, spanish and french. I find that going for a long walk in a green, tree filled environment is very relaxing.

One of the things I most look forward to after a long and hard weeks work is to sit back on a Friday evening with a good cigar and some soothing music in the background.

octara.com: What books occupy your reading list?

“ In technology terms we are simply not imparting the education required for the 21st century ”

Zouhair: This last year I have finished reading In the Line of Fire by President Parvez Musharraf; My Life by President Bill Clinton; Footprints on the Sands of Time by my dear friend Menin Rodrigues; A Journey to Disillusionment by Sardar Sherbaz Mazari; From Exxon to Engro by Shaukat Mirza; Inside the Kingdom by Carmen bin Laden; The Arab Uprisings by Jeremy Bowen; Cradle of Islam by Mai Yamani and The Invention of the Jewish People by Shlomo Sand. The last two are especially fascinating as they help one understand what is currently happening in that part of the world.

octara.com: What's your message to Pakistan's demographic dividend, its youth bulge?

Make a Difference

Zouhair: Pakistan today has approximately 222 million people more than 65% of whom are young people below the age of 30. These are people the telecom industry has connected over the last decade.

What we give them today in terms of content over wireless and fixed broadband is a window to the rest of the world. We have the ability to empower these young people. We can give them; indeed we can give all of us, a window of opportunity.

The real opportunity here is not just connecting people with Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. There is a golden opportunity to do so much more. The big opportunity here is imparting real knowledge, real information, meaningful and constructive education and real skills, creating and ensuring an enabled society.

For the young my message is, think how we can enable an entire country and its people with education and information if only we put our minds to it. Let us come together and make a pact, seize this time, this amazing opportunity and make a difference ■

Thank you Mr. Zouhair Khaliq

Interview conducted by **Adil Ahmad**, Special Correspondent, OCTARA.COM

Congratulations

**TCS Truck on the land route from
Torkham-Kabul-Hairatan-Termez-Tashkent and back, in April/May 2021**

Historic Milestone **TCS pilots Pakistan's first land route** **for trade with Central Asia.**



TCS Officials accompanied by senior representatives from Pakistan Customs and Pakistan National Commission of International Chambers of Commerce (PNC-ICC), welcome the return of the first successful Pilot carrying commercial goods from Tashkent in Uzbekistan to the importer's warehouse in Karachi. Photo shows (from left to right) Rizwan Haider, (BOML), Salman Ahmed, (BOML), Yonus Ali Siddiqui, (TCS), Aslam Ebrahim, (BOML), Ahmed Zafar, (TCS), Muneza Kassim, (TCS), Usman Afridi, (TCS), Tanveer Abbasi, (TCS), Tanveer Alam, (TCS), Harris Jamali, (TCS), Ahmed Raza Khan, DG, (Transit Trade Pakistan Customs), Qasim Awan, (TCS), Vally Tariq Rangoonwala, (BOML), Salim Ghani, (PNC-ICC), Javaid Basini, (PNC-ICC) and Rana Asif, (PNC-ICC).

This Pilot under the T.I.R. Customs Transit System was operated by a TCS truck on the route Torkham-Kabul-Hairatan-Termez-Tashkent and back, in April/May 2021.

This was the first successful operation since Pakistan's entry to the T.I.R. System in 2016.

TCS is Pakistan's first and till now the only commercial operator accredited under this system administered globally by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) in 77 member states, under a multi-lateral treaty.

We thankfully acknowledge the support and cooperation in this endeavour by the Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan, the Pakistan National Commission of the International Chambers of Commerce (PNC-ICC), and Pakistan Regional Economic Initiative Activity, Islamabad. TCS plans four more Regional Pilots this summer.

TCS -Trust a leader to deliver

Source: Extracted from DAWN Newspaper on 27-May 2021 | https://epaper.dawn.com/?page=27_05_2021_012

What is TIR?

TIR, which stands for Transports Internationaux Routiers OR International Road Transports, is now one of the United Nations' most successful public-private partnerships. TIR helps facilitate trade and freight transport of container with security, fast and cost-effectiveness.

Pakistan is a country ideally suited for the TIR System because of its strategic geographic location which can provide access to Central Asian regions, Western China, West Asia and beyond from Far Eastern origins, Middle Eastern origins and conversely West European origins including Russia, Turkey, Iran etc.

The TIR Convention is perfectly suited to intermodal transportation and any apprehensions in terms of controls are addressed by the TIR's six essential principles:

1. Secure vehicles or containers
2. International chain of guarantee
3. TIR Carnet
4. Mutual recognition of Customs controls
5. Controlled access
6. IT TIR Risk Management tools (Safe TIR and TIR Electronic PreDeclaration)

To know more about TIR Rules for Pakistan: [CLICK HERE](#)

Get it Right!

CATHERINE BENTLEY holds forth on **Winning Customers Through Effective Communication**



She's no stranger to Pakistan and has been here with husband John on several occasions to engage the corporate set in physical classrooms courtesy OCTARA of whom she remains a very valuable international associate from the UK now based in Dubai.

This time around she engaged over the intimacy of Zoom, as has become the new norm thanks to COVID, on a subject that lies at the very center of being a social animal, and makes the difference between being social or antisocial. Anything less than effective communication will yield a less than desirable outcome.

Give learning a chance

Catherine Bentley hails from the financial services world, and since 2005 she has been based in Dubai doing training, coaching and consulting along the communication skills thread. She specializes in training and coaching high value contributors through her firm Powerbase Consulting. Her top of mind advice is to be present and give learning a chance; listen and discuss before discarding; and manage the 'Mobile Menace'.

Catherine's zoominar took us through the importance of communication with a self-appraisal of communication skills and what gets in the way. She shared the Influence Formula and Heart Model that can help win customers; and finally the personal action plan.

Working miracles

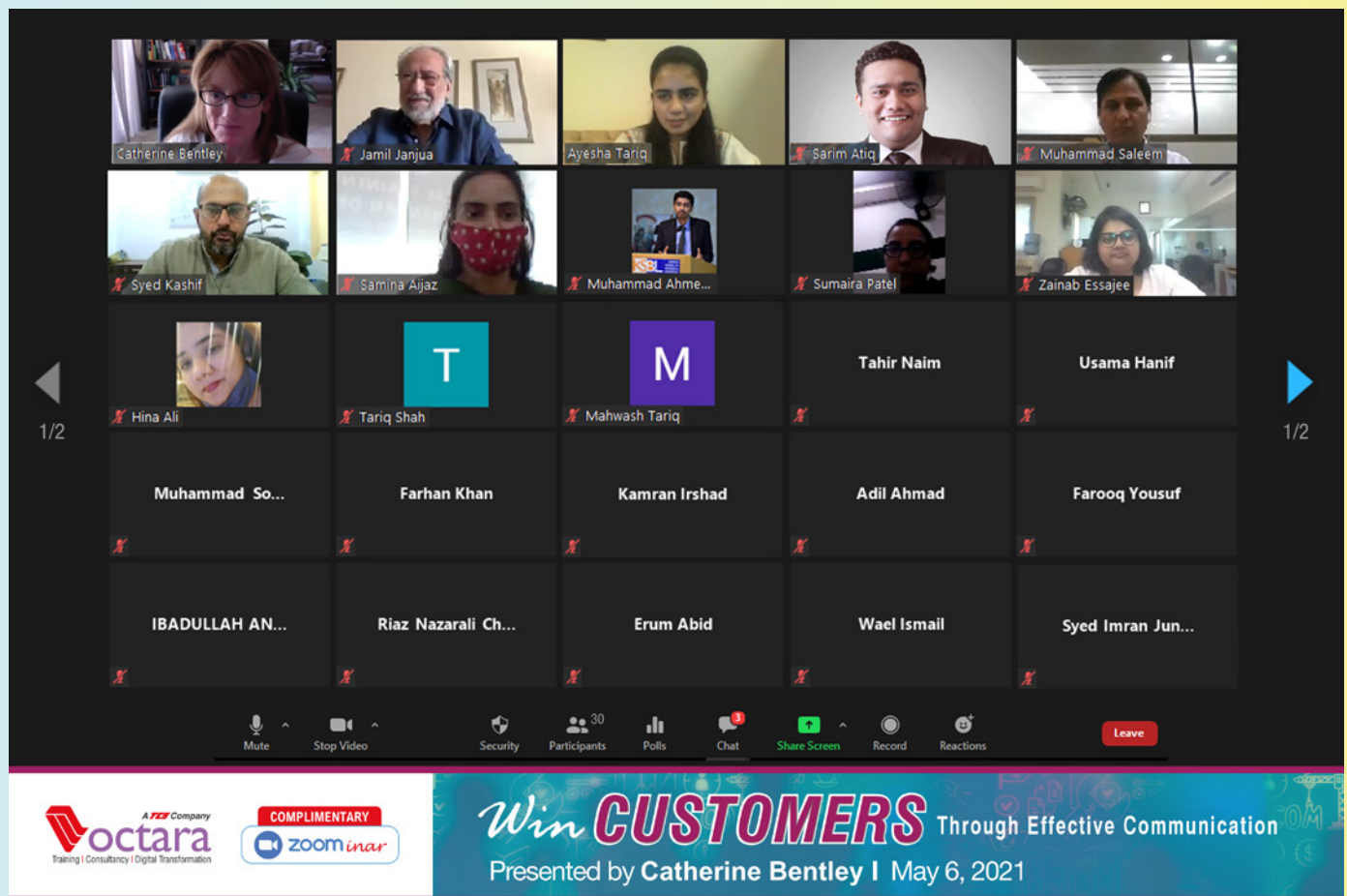
"85% of our success is directly linked to our skills in communication," said Catherine, categorizing them into 'maddening', 'mediocre' and 'magnificent'. She quoted John Rohn who said "if you just communicate you can get by, but if you communicate skillfully you can work miracles."

She mentioned the simple view of communication as taking the message from the source, encoding, transmitting through the channel, decoding and receiving with the receiver putting the message in context and providing feedback. So what is stopping us was the question Catherine posed, listing language issues, cultural differences, time pressure, and lack of empathy as barriers that resulted in failed communication yielding inefficiency, wrong outcome, conflict, and loss of credibility.

"If you just communicate you can get by, but if you communicate skillfully you can work miracles"

Catherine described the purpose of all communication as being the influencing of behavior or thinking; getting action; ensuring understanding, persuading, and the giving or getting of information.

Connection + Trust = Influence she said comprised the Influence Formula. The H.E.A.R.T Model was all about – Honoring people; Empathizing with individuals; Authentic persona based on being true to your own brand; Responding to your people; Transparency.



“Honoring people in communication and all dealings is central as is displaying respect for opinions and feelings even if we don’t share them,” said Catherine, emphasizing never to treat people in anyway less than we would want to be treated. She quoted Epictetus, the Greek philosopher who said ‘we have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.’”

Catherine introduced the participants to Covey’s 5 levels of listening that went from Ignore to Pretend, Selective, Attentive and Empathic. Listening barriers included bias, distraction, language, mood, insufficient interest, lack of understanding and cultural differences.

Being present

To acquire better listening skills required acknowledging the speaker; being present with full attention; being aware of the emotions being expressed and of one’s own emotions; being aware of non-verbal messages; using questions to clarify; and summarizing and reflecting back to confirm understanding.

Questioning techniques included open and closed questioning; probing questioning; and asking the right question at the right time.

Measuring an abstract notion like Trust would be a tall order

heavily reliant on instinct, one would assume, but Catherine offered a formula where Trust = (Credibility + Reliability + Intimacy) / Self Orientation; words, actions and emotions together divided by self-interest.

“85% of our success is directly linked to our skills in communication”

She quoted Zig Ziglar as saying “if people like you then they will listen to you, but if they trust you then they will do business with you.” To communicate effectively connect and build trust, said Catherine. “Be a whole human, and not just a brain with a keyboard.” Truer words were not spoken ■

Thank you Catherine Bentley.

Webinar Reviewed by **Adil Ahmad**, Special Correspondent, OCTARA.COM

Unleash Your Intentions

A Blog by Rose-marie Fernandez

Published on May 28, 2021



For many years I have been intrigued by the power of the human mind and how its functioning can be commanded by our personal choosing. To that end, I have spent many an hour in the quest of acquiring knowledge on how to best equip myself to help others take charge of their minds, their will and eventually their lives. My forays led me to read great past works of philosophers like J. Krishnamurti (May 1895 to February 1986), psychologists like Victor Frankl (March 1905 to September 1997) the works of whom convinced me that mind set change was possible without medication, hypnosis or invasive surgery.

As we fast forward to the 21st century much publicized works of myriads of psychologists, neuroscientists, sociologists, researchers and other related fields have proven that mind set change is possible with a simple yet powerful tool known today as "Coaching". These gurus have been an influential factor in quenching my thirst for knowledge about the said issue. Today I live my dream and passion using the power of Coaching to release the mind from the bondage of negative programming and thoughts to create a mindset of living a fulfilling life of inner freedom and abundance.

Intention setting is a proven mind tool that works with our thoughts and emotions to bring about actions and positive results. If you think negative, you will receive negative. And, if you think positive it is no surprise that you gather positive. Intentions are positive statements that reinforce commitments made to the self in the now, that leads to achievement in the future. Goals setting is different in that the attention is given to achieve that which we perceive we do not have in the now and we hope to attain in the future. The power of setting an intention, is that intentions combine our unique resources within us to give us that which we need the most.

One of my clients chose to embark on the journey of "intention

setting" in bite sizes, instead of setting traditional annual goals. Jane D. had a clear vision and purpose of what she intended to see happening in her life, so she created a daily program where achievement and success were part of her daily practice.

She began the daily habits of practicing rituals, using resources such as: journaling, reflection and expression of gratitude that facilitated her to focus on her life's intention. This practice kept her on track with her purpose. Soon all roads were in alignment and began to lead her mindset in the direction of fulfillment because in intention setting the thoughts (thinking) and emotions (feeling) are in alignment to be in complete harmony with our inner desires.

The fundamental laws of nature govern the process of achieving our life's intentions. How long does it take for a chicken to hatch? The answer is 14 days. How long does it take for a human being to be born? Now, you know the answer to that question, and how long does it take for an elephant to be enter the world? It takes 24 months.

The process cannot be shortened or lengthened. It simply is a process of natural growth. So, my question is do you want chickens or do you want elephants?

Lessons learned from these simple laws of nature are that in order to achieve what we desire most from our lives we need to adhere to a similar process. This process requires consistency, discipline and daily nurturing of our mindset that purposefully drives us to achieve that which we most desire ■

<https://coachingworx.ca/>



Rose-marie Fernandez is a Human Resources expert, worked with several fortune 500 companies in the South Asian sub-continent, USA and Canada. She has been recognized Professional Certified Coach (PCC) and credentialed by the International Coaching Federation (ICF). Rose is also Founder & Transformational Coach at Coaching Worx, Canada. She is exclusively working with Octara for her online trainings.

For Inquiries, info@octara.com

Future Normal: Stealth Learning

What if...learning was truly fun?

A Blog by Henry Coutinho-Mason

Published on May 18, 2021

Every generation has its moral panic, and Tiktok has certainly triggered plenty of handwringing. But what if Tiktok was a force for good? A place where you wanted your kids to hang out, because it was a place of self-improvement. Where they learned things, at the same time as enjoying themselves.

That's the provocative thought at the heart of this week's journey into The Future Normal: Stealth Learning.

The Normal

You go to school for a set number of years when you're young. There's a teacher. You follow a curriculum, designed to get you to pass a bunch of tests. You work on homework assignments largely independently. Grades are awarded by the teacher.

The Future Normal

Learning will become embedded in the platforms where people spend their time. It will be social. It will be visual. It will encourage participation. Chris Anderson defined the online learning environment as a giant global laboratory of 'crowd accelerated innovation'.

That was back in 2010, before influencer culture, social media and the metaverse were omnipresent in people's lives.

Now, learning is on the cusp of a new era: fun, immersive, rewarding. The boundaries between entertainment and education will blur. Did someone say 'edutainment'? ;)

Instigators & innovators

Roblox: the metaverse meets the school of life skills

The Economist reports that Roblox has 37 million daily players, including 3/4 of US children aged 9-12. Parents aren't freaking out as the game platform is largely positive. Players can even learn about digital civility. Users can also create games themselves, learning everything from coding to community management. Some also make millions of dollars.

#LearnOnTikTok: infinite scrolling through 60-second 'teachers'

You can learn a lot on TikTok, from cooking to beauty to languages to science. John Mayer shares guitar tips. No wonder the company leaned into this with its \$50 million Creative Learning Fund.

Assassin's Creed - Discovery Tours

The main game sees players fight their way through quests. The

Discovery Tours remove all the combat, allowing players to explore the historical environments and cultures of ancient Greece and Egypt. The producers have even included audio guides, similar to those found in museums.

Masterclass: the Netflix of celebrity online classes

If you're going to learn, you might as well learn from the best. That's the core idea behind the beautifully-shot, celebrity courses that Masterclass sells access to, for \$180/year. Masters (aka 'teachers') include Gordon Ramsey, Serena Williams, Steph Curry and FBI negotiator Chris Voss.

Labster: science learning, without the mess

Labster creates virtual STEM lab simulations. Students can run a variety of high-tech experiments, from studies of bacterial growth to the biodiversity of an exoplanet. Science becomes risk-free, affordable and accessible.

J&J x Oculus: training surgeons in VR?

VR training is currently expensive, so is confined to specialist, high-value skills. But the results are promising: Johnson & Johnson found that 83% of VR-trained surgeons were able to perform surgery in a lab setting with minimal guidance, whereas none of the traditionally trained surgeons were able to do the same. What happens when Flight Simulators get even more realistic?

What if...?

You challenged yourself to create content that was entertaining first, educational second?

You went to where people already willingly spend their time? Can you learn from those who know how to grab (and hold) people's attention?

You empowered people to learn from each other, rather than from a formal 'teacher'?

The virtual learning experience was faster, cheaper, safer and more effective than a physical equivalent? ■

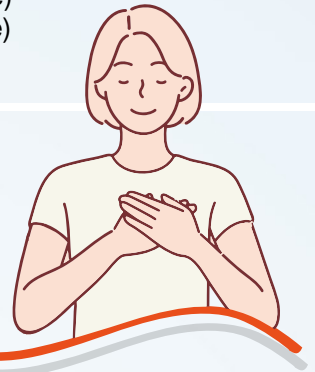
Source:

<https://thefuturenormal.substack.com/p/-future-normal-stealth-learning>



Author The Future Normal / ex-MD @

TrendWatching / cofounder 3Space & Redo



The Gratitude Challenge

Cultivating Gratitude for Self-care and Success

Overview:

Let's face it: the times are tough. Being grateful and expressing gratitude on a daily basis seems like a daunting task. However, it is actually the need of the hour and something which is a great strategy for moving ahead in such turbulent times.

Gratitude, when practiced and expressed as a habit for a longer time period, leaves positive, long lasting effects on one's perspective on life, mental health and thinking process. It also plays a significant role in organizational success, enabling it to become stronger, and allows employees to develop healthier coping mechanisms.

This one hour webinar will focus on how to cultivate gratitude and self-compassion on an individual and organizational level.

Key Takeaways:

- Understanding gratitude and its importance in today's world
- How gratitude changes you and your brain
- Gratitude and its numerous benefits
- How to practice gratitude – for yourself and for others
- Nurturing a grateful organizational culture – key strategies

Who Should Attend?

- Managers who want to bring a shift in organizational attitudes and thinking patterns
- Professionals working in high pressure jobs and roles
- Anyone who wishes to develop a positive mindset

Speaker: **Kanwal Akhtar**

- Senior Consultant, Learning Facilitator and Educationist for over 9 years
- Faculty Member at IBA, Karachi
- Creator and Conductor of the Annual "The Gratitude Challenge"
- Mental and Physical Well-Being Believer

Zoom Registration, click here:

<https://bit.ly/33U2yXZ>

Spots are limited to 100 Only, register now so you won't miss out !



HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE POST-PANDEMIC AGE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



June 23, 2021 | 11:00am to 4:00pm PKT - Via Zoom

Overview

The current pandemic has forced companies to adapt to the 'new normal' at break-neck speed. Many HR departments feel ill-prepared and overwhelmed, but there is no way of going back to the old ways of doing business. Digital technology is the way forward as it has the potential to transform the role of HR as we know it. The path to success with HR digital transformation is complex and not straightforward, but that should not hold you back.

In this one-day class we dive into the principles and basics of HR digital transformation from an HR point-of-view: the 'what', the 'why' and the 'how'. Learn how you as an HR practitioner can play a more proactive role in the transformation of HR processes in order to create a stronger company.

Highlights of the workshop

- **Emphasizing** HR Executives with firm grasp of their roles and functions in energizing the organizations' growth as a strategic and change agent
- **Re-inforcing** the competencies of HR Executives and the comprehensions that are expected out of them
- **Aligning** HR Executives with the contemporary landscape of Human Resource, its trends and challenges as well as the effective techniques in countering such impediments

To register, please click here: <https://bit.ly/2RTIdjP>

Facilitator

Dr. Frank Peter, Ph.D

International Expert & Speaker on Digital Marketing & Digital Transformation

Click here to view complete profile of Frank

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/drfrankpeter/>

Who Should Attend?

Executives, Senior Executives & Managers of:

- Human Capital Development
- Human Capital Management
- Human Resources
- Learning & Development
- People Development
- Talent Management
- Training & Professional Development

From across various industries for instance:

- Airline & Aviation
- Banking, Finance & Insurance
- Conglomerate
- Energy & Utilities
- Government Administration
- Healthcare
- Insurance & Investment
- IT & Communications
- Logistics & Transportation
- Manufacturing
- Oil & Gas
- Retail
- Telecommunication

Workshop Investment

PKR 6,500/-

+PST/SST
Per Participant

Avail fantastic Discount Offer by registering in another program by Dr. Frank Peter

Register a min. of 5 DELEGATES in any combination of two programs
& SAVE 30% ON REGULAR FEE of

Digital Marketing Strategy & Tactics in the 'New Normal' on June 24, 2021

Fee Includes:

- e-Learning Material • Digital Certificate of Attendance • Virtual Business Networking • Post-Workshop Advisory Services
- Post-Workshop Advisory Services • Membership for TCS Octara WebMall+ (WhatsApp Group) • Octara Loyalty Card**

** Entitles card holder to 15% discount on all future Octara Trainings (online & classroom)

For Details & Registration contact

Sarim Atique at: sarim.atique@octara.com, Mobile 0345-8949470

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Helping You Succeed!

Digital Marketing Strategy & Tactics in the 'New Normal'

June 24, 2021 | 11:00 am to 4:00pm PKT - Via Zoom

Overview

As consumer focus has massively shifted online during the current pandemic, Digital (= online) Marketing of your Company's Products and Services has to form an integral part of your overall corporate marketing strategy. 'Digital' encompasses everything from online advertising via i.e. Google Search Ads and Google Display Ads, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, etc. all the way to being able to effectively measure the outcome of all online marketing initiatives for their impact on ROI.

In this one-day session, we will look at how to develop a Digital Marketing Strategy to cater to the 'new normal' consumer, and how to deploy various online platforms in a tactical way.

Highlights of the workshop

- **Understand** how Digital Marketing works and how it can be implemented into company's overall marketing strategy
- **Understand** relevant technical terms and principles to engage strategic stakeholders
- **Understand** the use of metrics that drive higher marketing ROI
- **Understand** to better leverage your digital marketing by being analytically informed
- **Leave** with a road map on "How To's" and "Can Do's"

Workshop Investment

PKR 6,500/-

+PST/SST
Per Participant

Fee Includes:

- e-Learning Material • Digital Certificate of Attendance • Virtual Business Networking • Post-Workshop Advisory Services
- **Post-Workshop Advisory Services** • **Membership for TCS Octara WebMall+ (WhatsApp Group)** • **Octara Loyalty Card****

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Facilitator

Dr. Frank Peter, Ph.D

International Expert & Speaker on Digital Marketing & Digital Transformation

Click here to view complete profile of Frank

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/drfrankpeter/>



Who Should Attend?

- Head of Marketing
- Senior Marketing Managers
- Marketing Communication Manager
- Marketing Research Analyst
- Communications Specialists
- PR Executives
- Anyone who would like to pursue a career in digital marketing

To register, please click here:

<https://bit.ly/3bx55eS>

Avail fantastic Discount Offer by registering in another program by Dr. Frank Peter

Register a min. of 5 DELEGATES in any combination of 2 programs
& SAVE 30% ON REGULAR FEE of

Human Resources in the Post-pandemic Age of Digital Transformation on June 23, 2021

For Details & Registration contact

Sarim Atique at: sarim.atique@octara.com, Mobile 0345-8949470

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Helping You Succeed!

Topic	Duration	Trainer	Date	Loc.
Building Organisational Change Capability	5-hours	Uzma Aitqad	02-Jun-21	Zoom
Free Webinar: The Gratitude Challenge - Cultivating Gratitude for Self-care and Success	60 min	Kanwal Akhtar	16-Jun-21	Zoom
Human Resources in the Age of Digital Transformation	5-hours	Dr. Frank Peter	23-Jun-21	Zoom
Digital Marketing Strategy & Tactics in the "New Normal"	5-hours	Dr. Frank Peter	24-Jun-21	Zoom
Grow Your Personal Brand on LinkedIn (4-Day Modular Program)	60 min	Hammad Siddiqui	25-Jun-21	Zoom
Leadership in Crisis and Pandemic Situations	5-hours	John Bentley	01-Jul-21	Zoom
Innovation and Design Thinking	5-hour	Mark Stuart	07-Jul-21	Zoom
Win Customers through Effective Communication	5-hours	Catherine Bentley	08-Jul-21	Zoom
Aligning Budgeting and Strategy	5-hours	Amer Qureshi	TBC	Zoom
HR Leadership Using HR Metrics & HR Analytics	5-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
Servant Leadership	5-hours	Junaid Akhtar	TBC	Zoom
Competency Based Interviewing Skills	5-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
Communication Skills for Finance Professionals	3-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
Retail Merchandising	5-hours	Atif Farooqui	TBC	Zoom
Visually Effective Excel Dashboard	5-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
MS Power BI Including DAX & Queries	5-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
Enterprise Risk Management	5-hours	Christopher Whittle	TBC	Zoom
Team Building	5-hours	TBC	TBC	Zoom
Key Account Management	5-hours	David Vachal	TBC	Zoom



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Lifelong Learning Lessons

Contributions from TCS Octara People!!!

The 'Lifelong Learning Lessons' is a self-learning process for promoting continuous learning among Octara people and shared with readers. Octara people are provided with business publications and then asked to choose and reflect their thoughts, perspectives and opinions based on their selected article in the Fortnightly octara.com e-Newsletter.

Each contributor further discusses and shares their learnings in the weekly 'Glue Meeting' held every Friday among the team mates. Basically, it's a 360 Degree Personal Development Drive from reading to selecting to understanding to explaining the thoughts perceived.

Hope readers find it as interesting and useful as the TCS Octara Team does !!

Keep It Simple

The excerpt I selected is an "Advice from Jack Welch". These three words are from then CEO of General Electric Jack Welch, described as the blue print for transforming your organization's performance.

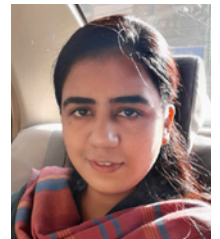
According to Jack Welch simplicity is a top down imperative that starts with leaders. He mentioned three (3) key benefits which have implications across industries/functions:

1. Simple Messages Travel Faster
2. Simpler Designs Reach The Market Faster
3. Elimination Of Clutter Allows Faster Decision Making

In the last, I would like to share my view on simplicity. The

irony of this very idea to "keep it simple" seems to appeal many of us but I feel it requires a lot of observation, reading, experiences, emotional intelligence and a great deal more to **"keep it simple"**.

Blog Contributed by **Ayesha Tariq**
Product Specialist Training
Octara Pvt. Ltd. - A TCS Company



Career Development

Play to your strengths. But also, know how to sidestep your shortcomings. The key to career advancement may well be the advice offered by sitcom character Alf: **"Find out what you don't do well, and then don't do it."**

Persistence is important. So is commitment. But nothing really takes the place of talent. Business is a lot like golf, which pro player Tommy Bolt said **"Is a game where guts, stick-to-it-iveness, and blind devotion will get you nothing but an ulcer."**

Madeleine L'Engle said: **"The great thing about getting older is that you don't lose all the other ages you've been."** Middle-aged managers and their bosses both should remember that lessons learned from experience often pay

the biggest dividends but only if all the experienced employees haven't been downsized out of existence.

If success comes early in your career, take it in stride. Don't overreact and try to lord it over your elders. But don't act like you don't deserve it, either. Harry Banks advised: **"If at first you do succeed try to hide your astonishment."**

Contribution by **Sarim Atique**
Assistant Manager Business Development
Octara Private Limited - A TCS Company
Source - Funny Business



A Furniture Dealer With A Big Idea

Savvy leaders know they must institutionalize their strategy to build remarkable companies. A keen commitment to one big objective-if communicated to every member of your organization-can mean the difference between mediocre Performance and spectacular success.

Ingvar Kamprad, the founder of Swedish furniture retailer, IKEA, had a single-minded business proposition to bring affordable, well-designed furniture to the masses. And he did it with stunning success.

Today, the World, s only global furniture brand achieves sales per employee that is 50% higher than the industry average.

Kamprad maintains that expensive solutions to any kind of problem are usually the work of mediocrity. **“Any architect can design a desk that will cost \$5,000”** he says. **“But only the most highly skilled craftsman can design good, functional desk that will cost \$ 100.”**



Contribution by **M. Shahzad**
Office Support
Octara Pvt. Ltd. - A TCS Company
Source – Leadership Strategies

Motivation

The article explains how employees derive motivation at workplace by elaborating 3 simple approaches:

Optimism

Appreciation

Compensation

On **‘Optimism’**, it is suggested to always look things from the brighter side by cautioning not to overlook the factors such as lack of effort, talent or commitment from your team.

On **‘Appreciation’** it is revealed how praise can effect employees intrinsically and motivate them to do even better in their next project to get appreciation boss and team members.

On **‘Compensation’**, it is termed as the most consistent and reliable motivator because it is the fundamental mean to meet basic needs life.



Contribution by **Zurk A. Hussain**
Senior CG & Motion Graphic Artist
Octara Private Limited - A TCS Company
Source – Funny Business

Learning By Degrees

For all those who celebrate their graduation, here’s a sobering thought, your education’s just abeginning.

“The future of work consists of learning a living.”

- Marshall McLuhan

“The illiterate of the future are not those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”

- Alvin Toffler

“The man who has ceased to learn ought not to be allowed to wander around loose in these dangerous days.”

- M.M. Coady

“There are three ingredients in the good life: learning, earning and yearning”

- Christopher Morley



Contribution by **M. Umair Tariq**
Admin & Accounts Executive,
Octara Private Limited - A TCS Company
Source – Funny Business

Change Can Be A Prescription For Success

Strong leaders don't shy away from change; they embrace it. Pamela Coyle-Toerner, CEO of Queen City Physicians, knew there would be some resistance when the 30-physician pediatric practice adopted an electronic medical records system. The new system would require change, and change can be a challenge in a business that has operated in basically the same way for decades.

Rather than following standard paperwork practice, the staff was required to learn new procedures for processing data. There was some grumbling at first, but Coyle-Toerner knew that the new system was just the prescription the practice needed to increase efficiency.

Employees quickly came to understand that the new tools would allow them to be more responsive to patients and insurance companies, ultimately benefiting the practice's bottom line. After seeing positive results from the first successful systems change, the company followed up with a workflow automation program to shorten the billing cycle. The new

system cut 17 days out of the billing cycle and resulted in substantial administrative savings.

When implementing change in your organization, remember that resistance is inevitable. How do you overcome that resistance? By generating buy-in, explaining how the change will make your team's job easier, and sharing how it fits in with your corporate vision.

Contribution by **M. Nazim Ansari**
Creative Manager
Octara Private Limited - A TCS Company
Source - Leadership Strategies



It's What You Do That Counts

I found the article 'Great Team' as a meaningful source for personal development and I would like to share my perspectives on some of the qualities highlighted in it.

It starts with emphasizing on building competencies, which are more like qualities than intellectual or managerial traits. This includes - **Character, Passion and Influencing Skills**. I would refer them as "**secret sauce**" of some frontrunner with whom I have worked over the years.

Character: Doing the Right Thing

Character has been described as ethical behavior, intellectual integrity, openness and honesty. **For me Character as what you do, not what you say?** With experience, it became clearer that the common element for success was the substance of the character in your team. This consistency of character is hard to describe but easy to recognize.

Passion: The Organizational Energy Level

Passion for the job is hard to manufacture, but when present, it is contagious. **I think it's hard to be great at something**

you don't enjoy, and very few great things are accomplished without great passion as seen in sports, businesses and individuals.

Influence and Persuasion: Better' than Power'

The successful top management executives always have inherent positional power. Part of leadership, however, lies in spending time to explain a directive, in giving employees perspective. **Over the time, I have experienced that leading the team to understand the "why" behind the direction can be achieved more by influence than positional power.**

Blog Contributed by **Zainab Essajee**
Senior Conference Producer & Marketing Lead
Octara Pvt. Ltd. - A TCS Company



Readers are encouraged to share their learnings for others with us at **zainab@octara.com** for inclusion in our upcoming issues.

Don't forget to send your recent picture and complete contact details.