

Entrepreneurship: Pains and Pleasures

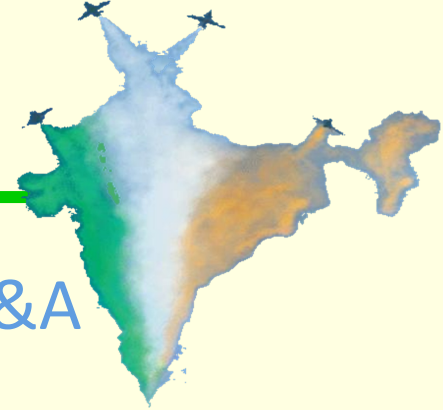
Abhishek Jain

Chief of Marketing, Zeus Numerix

abhishek@zeusnumerix.com

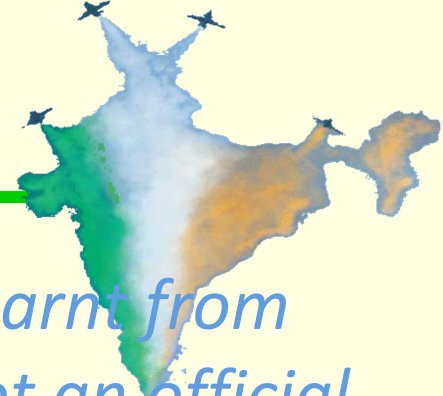
www.abhishekjain.org

How would I say



- ✿ 10 min bore; 70min lecture and 40min Q&A
- ✿ No Cliché
 - ➔ You must have it in you (What)
 - ➔ Concentration is a must (Where)
 - ➔ Keep your focus right (When)
- ✿ Bad, weird Examples
- ✿ Some Anecdotes
- ✿ Gender used is male; but its unintended

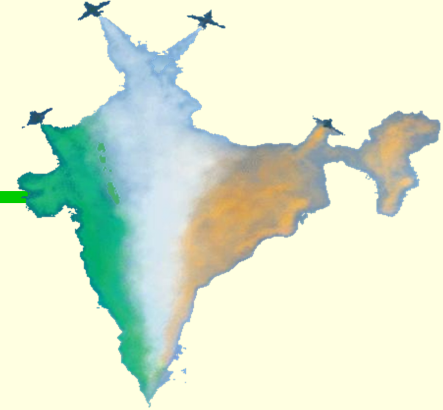
What I Say



- ✿ *Is not a professional advice, just what I learnt from doing something in these years. This is not an official view of my company or IITB. These are purely my views and by no means all correct*
- ✿ *Is general advice in funny unpolished language*
- ✿ *Is true; I met a lot of Donkeys*



What I Wish To say



- 🌻 Why not be an entrepreneur

- 🌻 What you gain

- 🌻 How we did it

- 🌻 Essentials

 - ➔ Idea

 - ➔ Core Team

 - ➔ Initial Money

 - ➔ Marketing

 - ➔ HR

 - ➔ Execution

- 🌻 General Gyan

Why not...



🌻 *Soch lo yeah rasta khatron se bhara hai; Krantikari ke liye uski party sab kuch hai; Uskee jindagi mein na khushi, na sukh na pyaar na parivar*

✈️ Legend of Bhagat Singh

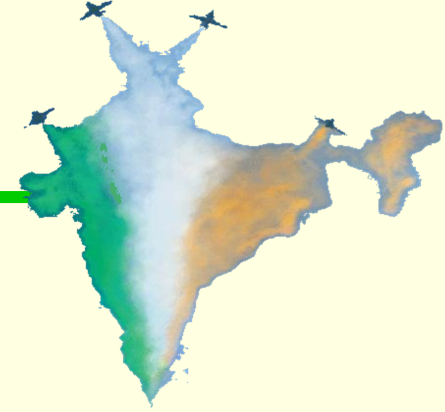
🌻 Your company is like a revolutionary party

🌻 You live it; emotional attachment

🌻 You love it like your child

🌻 You don't have *Khatra* of life (Risk)

Why not...



- ✿ Spend a **lot** of time in business
- ✿ Miss out on social life
- ✿ You can see your friends enjoying life
- ✿ Friends are able to spend money; you are not
- ✿ Parents are unable to get that sort of attention
- ✿ Friends have girlfriends; yours, *if by God's grace any*, has run away or warning to do so
- ✿ Hobbies also get a back seat
- ✿ This work-life-balance and all that management gyan does not work (Please read article below)

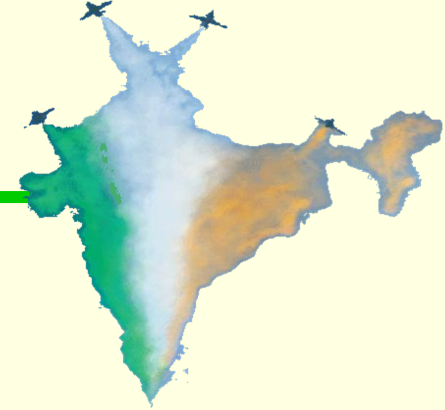
http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Work-life_Imbalance/articleshow/2949519.cms

Why Do It



- 🌻 You can make your country/parents proud
 - ✈️ “What is the penance you did to get a son like that”
Thiruvalluvar, Tamil
- 🌻 You can become Bill Gates or Narayanmurthy
- 🌻 Not all can get jobs; some have to create them
- 🌻 Don't have to say “YES SIR” to a foolish boss
- 🌻 You become famous
- 🌻 You don't suffer for someone else's mistakes
- 🌻 Its so great to have your dreams come true
- 🌻 You don't have to make a resume
- 🌻 You can marry a film actress

After All its not ...



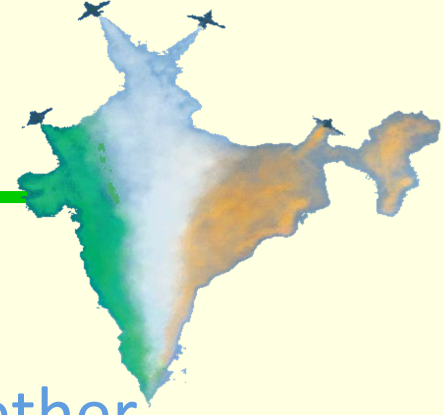
- ✿ After all its not that difficult
- ✿ Mere mortals like us do it
- ✿ Even if you fail it is a great learning experience and that too usually on somebody else's money
- ✿ You become a lot more confident and can look towards life in very different way
- ✿ People rush to recruit you
- ✿ MBA colleges provide a red carpet for you

Law



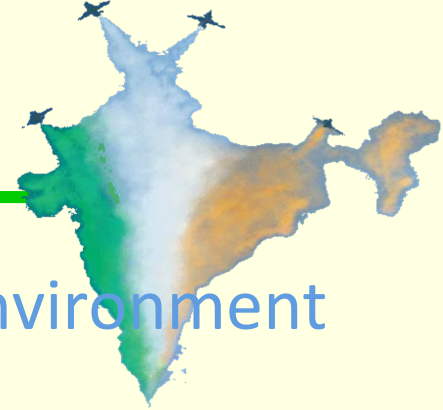
- ✿ Do you know which ministry controls the companies?
- ✿ Who is the minister?
- ✿ Where will you register your company?
- ✿ Ask always
 - ➔ Which side of law you are?
 - ➔ Money; is it accounted for properly?
 - ➔ Are the Directors of the company aware of accounts
- ✿ Necessary registrations
 - ➔ Proprietary or private limited registration
 - ➔ Sales and service tax registration
 - ➔ CA audit

How We Did It



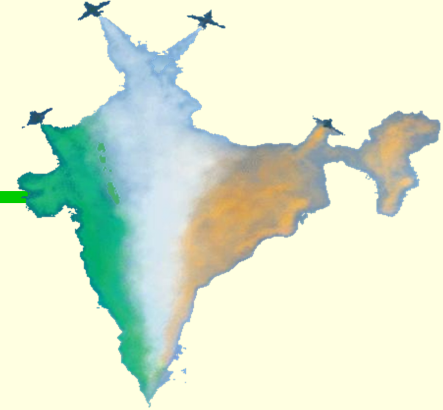
- 🌻 We had an intellectual property
- 🌻 Some Professors and Students came together
- 🌻 Support from SINE for seed loan, registration etc
- 🌻 Better mix of people
- 🌻 Could attract talent because the work we did was unique in India
- 🌻 Got customers due to contacts of our professors
- 🌻 Delivered accurate solutions though sometimes late
- 🌻 Said no to propositions which were lucrative but outside our philosophy

Idea



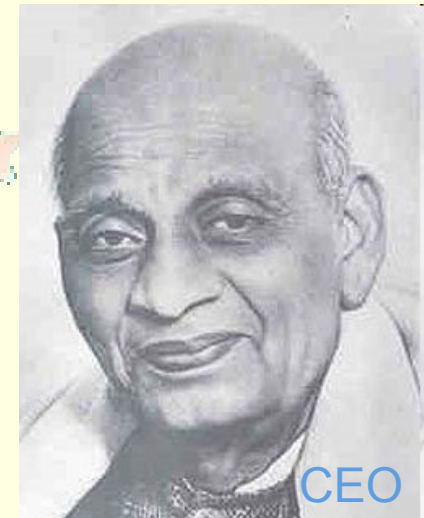
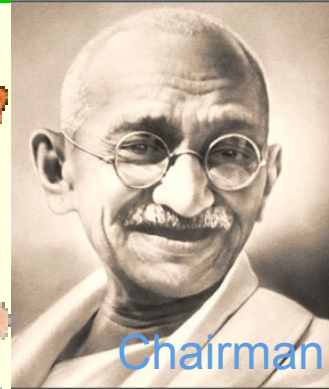
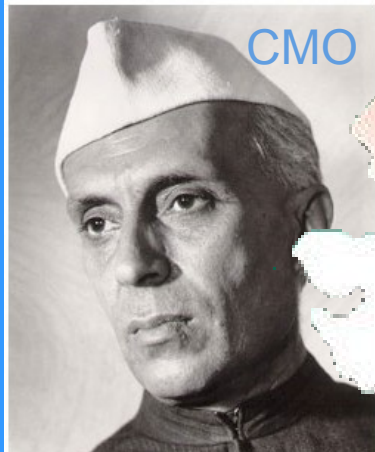
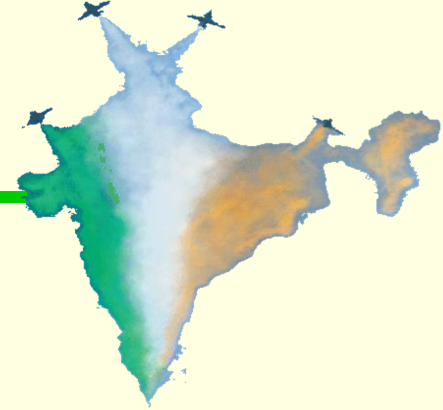
- ✿ Start with an idea and change it as per environment
- ✿ All great ideas don't mean great success
- ✿ Average idea doesn't mean you can't be successful
- ✿ Getting married to idea can be fatal (*not always*)
- ✿ Each company has its own DNA; make your own
 - ✈ Apple, SONY, Google – We Innovate
 - ✈ Microsoft, IBM – Customer is King
 - ✈ McDonalds – Time is Money
 - ✈ Go Air, Air Deccan – Economy
 - ✈ Kingfisher, Taj Hotel – You are a Maharaja

Core Team



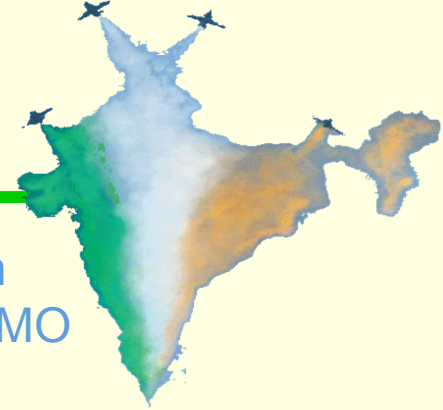
- 🌻 Most important part of the company
- 🌻 Should have complimentary characteristics
- 🌻 **“If two partners agree on all the things then one of them is not needed”**
- 🌻 Business partner must not be friend or relative or father-in-law (unless he gives money) just for the sake of it
- 🌻 There can be business in friendship but no friendship in business
- 🌻 Stockdale Paradox; Every great company faces adversity*; Core team must be psychologically strong
- 🌻 Charismatic* people do not matter. How many state toppers have companies? Domain knowledge is a must

India Inc: Core Team



- 🌻 We had a Chairman, CEO, CMO
- 🌻 One had vision; other translated it on ground and one maintained that it was actually being done

India: Core Team 2

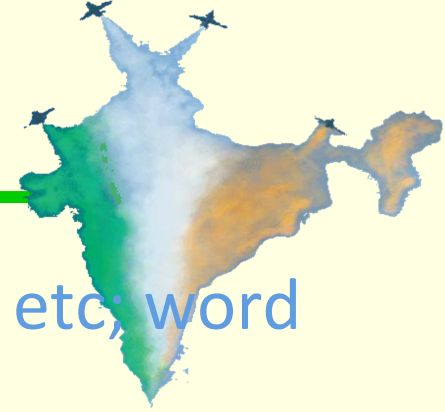


Chairman
+CEO+CMO



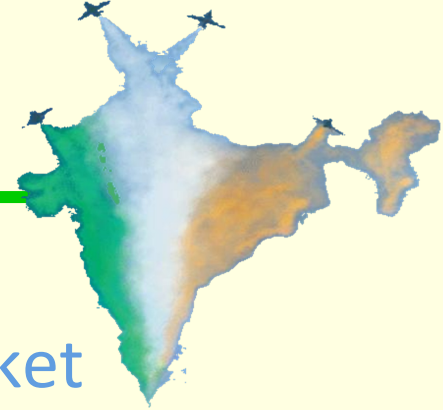
- 🌻 One man was great; others followed him
- 🌻 Could not guard secrets; attrition was high
- 🌻 Did help in getting India Inc team win

Initial Money



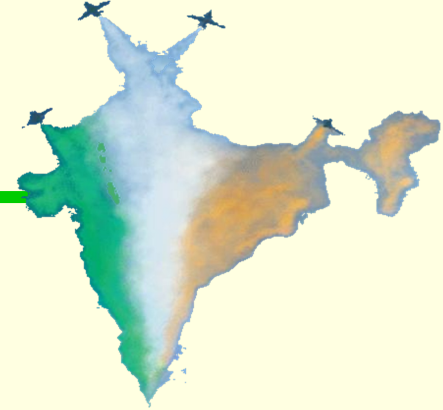
- 🌻 Call it bootstrapping, begging, borrowing etc; word does not matter; get it
- 🌻 Don't get money from illegal sources or *tough* men
- 🌻 Use the resources judiciously; try to do many of your works yourselves (even if you have to make tea, clean the place occasionally)
- 🌻 Get an angel investor or soft loan like SINE IITB gives
- 🌻 Core members usually get very low to zero salaries in the starting

Marketing



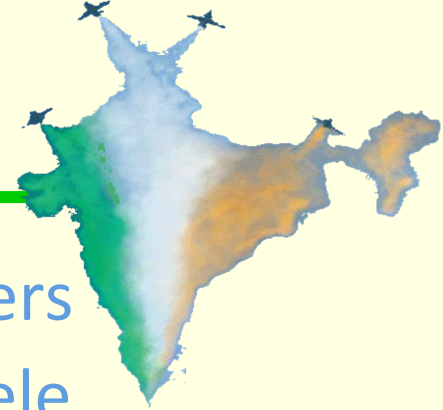
- 🌻 Most important job that engineers hate
- 🌻 You don't get your meal if you don't market
- 🌻 Everybody in the company should have some sense of marketing
- 🌻 “Coherent speech” by all members is a problem
- 🌻 DOES NOT mean speak more, but LISTEN more
- 🌻 What is clients need?
- 🌻 Within how much (time/money/efforts) he needs to fulfill his need?
- 🌻 Why am I a better match for Customer?
- 🌻 Cost is not always a factor? Don't harp it too much
- 🌻 Take the projects; you have nothing to lose

Marketing



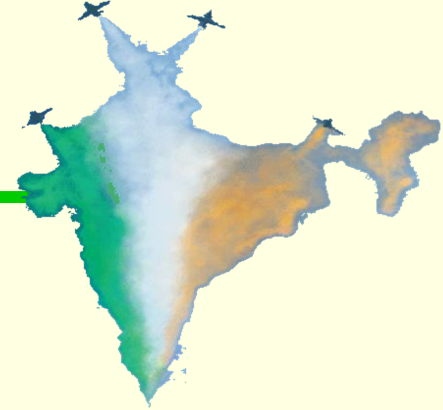
- ✿ Know your audience
 - ➔ Shri Mithun Chakraborty movies
 - ➔ Jumbo king vada pav center
 - ➔ Micro-credit – ICICI, Grameen Bank
 - ➔ Modern Babas/Sadhus or fortune teller parrot
- ✿ Is need hurting the customer; if it does not, there is no urgency to buy
- ✿ How many promises we are making to the customer
- ✿ Treat your marketing people with respect; they are anyway cursed a lot by customers
- ✿ Coca Cola advertisement in Saudi Arabia

Human Resource



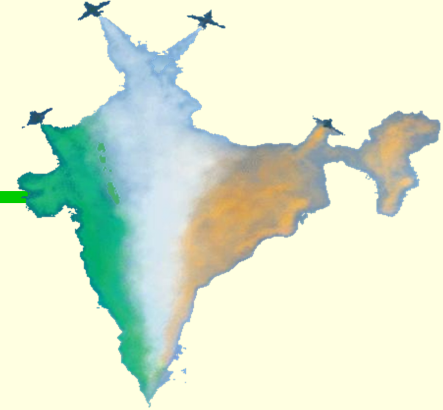
- 🌻 You don't win a game without good players
- 🌻 10 Mohan Bagan strikers don't make a Pele
- 🌻 What is the incentive for him to play for you?
- 🌻 Remember you are not giving them good salary
- 🌻 Doesn't mean you throw away the stock
- 🌻 Motivation and fear of losing can be a big problem
- 🌻 Do they feel part of the company
- 🌻 Do they feel they do a favor by remaining in company
- 🌻 Retention strategies can be a challenge
- 🌻 Communicate to them properly
- 🌻 Freedom within limits is essential

Execution



- 🌻 Ready, Fire, Aim (In search of Excellence)
- 🌻 Thinking is such a waste of time
- 🌻 There is no auspicious time to start work
- 🌻 Too much discussion is not necessary
- 🌻 Employees must have freedom to make mistakes and so should you
- 🌻 Impatience is good
- 🌻 Some targets need to be set
- 🌻 Engineers can manage but Managers can't engineer
- 🌻 Take the technological challenge

Competition



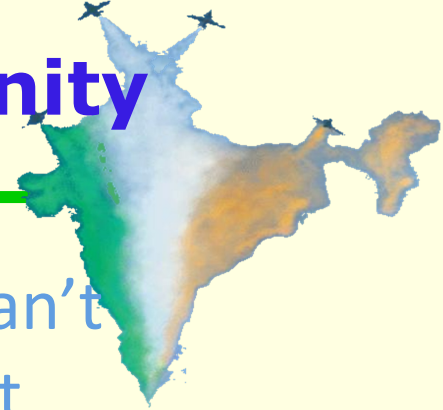
- 🌻 Know who is your competitor
 - ✈️ Who was the competitor of RASNA – TEA
- 🌻 Track their movements
- 🌻 Learn from them
- 🌻 Compare time and price
- 🌻 Be ethical and non-manipulative
- 🌻 Don't be negligent of small players in your field; remember as a startup you are killing a giant
- 🌻 Be open to ideas of competition

Unsolicited Advice: Manage Time



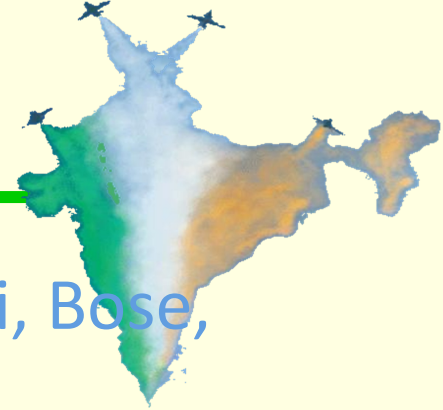
- ✿ *Aapne hamko 5 minute diya aur hamne 4.30 min mein khatam kar diya. ½ minute ka profit. Yeah hai business*
 - ✈ Guru; Abhishek Bacchan's dialogue in Court Scene
- ✿ Make a list of activities you will **not** do
 - ✈ Watch Saas Bahu serials; cricket!
 - ✈ Work that can be delegated like maintaining files
 - ✈ Going to disco
- ✿ Devote some time for others; Do some social work
- ✿ Regularly call your family and friends

Unsolicited Advice: Maintain Sanity



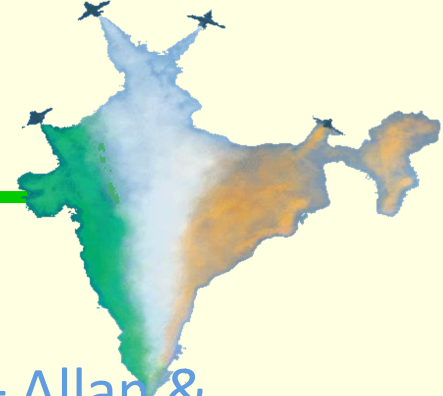
- ✿ Attend parties and ask friends that you can't contribute; eat as if you contributed most
- ✿ Go to Temple/Mosque/Church/Gurudwara/Jinalaya if you are a theist or do some Yoga
- ✿ Sleep properly; don't bring tension at home, it anyways doesn't solve the problem
- ✿ Beware of intoxications like drinking/smoking
- ✿ If you are short tempered or with high BP then do a job, entrepreneurship is not for you
- ✿ Exercise is a must

Read, Read, Read



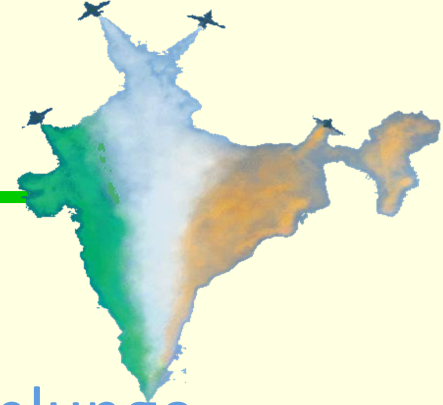
- ✿ All great men were great readers; Gandhi, Bose, Dhirubhai, Narayanmurthy
- ✿ Just reading business does not help; diversify
- ✿ Most important ideas come from very different subject – Genetic Algorithms
- ✿ Know your surroundings – Newspapers are a good medium for the same
- ✿ Reading removes a lot of tension – (Auto)biographies are very good

Read Some Books



- 🌻 Mahanayak – Viswas Patil
- 🌻 Why men don't listen women can't read maps – Allan & Barbara Pease
- 🌻 Foods that fight pain – Dr Neal Barnard
- 🌻 I Dare – Kiran Bedi
- 🌻 Wings of fire – HE Dr APJ Abdul Kalam
- 🌻 Straight from the Gut – Jack Welch
- 🌻 Crossing the Chasm – Geoffrey Moore
- 🌻 In search of excellence – Thomas Peterson
- 🌻 Built to last – Jim Collins
- 🌻 Good to Great – Jim Collins
- 🌻 Scientific American Magazine

I Wish



- 🌻 Open your company; its now or never
- 🌻 You have no responsibilities, so take the plunge
- 🌻 Don't worry about future job; they are plenty for brilliant people like you
- 🌻 Request your college to open an entity like SINE
- 🌻 Narayanmurthy has 2 ears, 2 legs, one nose; do you feel deficient; Steve Jobs had cancer you don't
- 🌻 Companies are like babies; they die if parents divorce or don't care about environment
- 🌻 When India becomes developed country in 2020 you be part of development than an impediment

Thank You



*Dream
is not what you see in sleep,
is the thing that doesn't let you sleep*

HE Dr APJ Abdul Kalam