



Expanding Horizons

# PROPEL

Issue 3 July 2013



## PURSUIT OF PROFITABLE GROWTH

A RANE GROUP PUBLICATION

# THE WORLD OF RANE

RANE HOLDINGS LIMITED ( RHL )

RANE BRAKE LINING LIMITED ( RBL )

RANE DIECAST LIMITED ( RDL )

RANE ENGINE VALVE LIMITED ( REVL )

RANE (MADRAS) LIMITED ( RML )

RANE NSK STEERING SYSTEMS LIMITED ( RNSSL )

RANE TRW STEERING SYSTEMS LIMITED - OCCUPANT SAFETY DIVISION ( RTSSL-OSD )

RANE TRW STEERING SYSTEMS LIMITED - STEERING GEAR DIVISION ( RTSSL-SGD )

KAR MOBILES LIMITED ( KML )

RANE HOLDINGS AMERICA INC. ( RHAI )

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**Send in your comments / suggestions to [propel@rane.co.in](mailto:propel@rane.co.in)**

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“In line with our vision to become an occupant safety system supplier, we are pleased to have added Airbag into RTSSL product portfolio. Consequent to this addition, the Seat-Belt Division has been re-named as Occupant Safety Division (OSD).”

*L Ganesh, Chairman, Rane Group*



## Rane Group's JV Expanding to Manufacture Airbags



In view of the growing trend towards stronger vehicle safety, Rane TRW Steering Systems Limited has proposed to invest and foray into manufacturing of airbags that will meet TRW's global manufacturing standards.

Rane TRW; a 50:50 joint venture between Rane Holdings and TRW Automotive US, intends to make an investment of 35 crore rupees over the next five years for manufacture of seat belts and airbags.

An airbag is a fabric envelope designed to inflate quickly and protect vehicle occupants during a crash. The company will make 3.2 lakh units of airbags per annum initially, with a ramp up of manufacturing capacity to 8.1 lakh units in three to five years' time. In order to offer the customers with increased vehicle safety, the JV's manufacturing unit would utilize driver and passenger airbag technology, which was developed by TRW in Germany. This expanded joint venture further strengthens the position of Rane TRW Steering Systems Limited in providing state of the art occupant safety solutions to its customers, meeting its objective to help protect people.

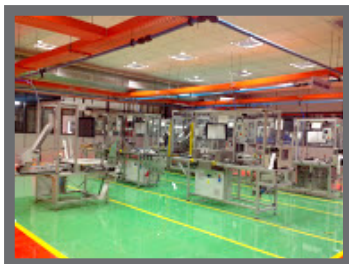
“India is a very important market for TRW and we look forward to our continued partnership with Rane to bring the best of our technologies to help protect drivers and occupants here. As a global leader in safety, we are committed to providing affordable safety for all car drivers.”

*Frank Mueller,  
Vice President & GM,  
Global Occupant Safety  
Systems,  
TRW Automotive GmbH*



“We are excited to bring these new technologies to the Indian market and will work closely with TRW.”

*Harish Lakshman,  
Managing Director,  
Rane TRW*



## Rane Group

At the NHRD Chennai Chapter's monthly meeting, Rane Group was adjudged the best among 10 companies that shared their practices on select aspects of Performance Management System, April 2013



## Rane Brake Lining Limited

RBL features as one of the best-in-class Auto Component companies to work for in the India's Largest Workplace Study by the Great Place to Work Institute, 2013

## Kar Mobiles Limited

KML received the 'Certificate of Appreciation' for Quality PPM < 120 in FY 12 in the John Deere Supplier Meet at Pune, March 2013



## Rane Engine Valve Limited

REVL won the award for 'Best Cost Co-operation' supplier of the year 2012 from VE Power Train during their MDE partnership day, March 2013

## Rane TRW Steering Systems Limited

The QC team - 'Warriors' won Chairman's Excellence Award at the 6th Rane Annual QC Convention, January 2013



We have high hopes from all our learning initiatives. While each of us might articulate these hopes differently, some seem common to many of us:

- Maximize human potential in our organization
- Hone skills, capabilities and attitudes that will help our organization remain prosperous and economically competitive
- Nurture the understanding that people can see things differently - and that these differences merit respect rather than persecution



# Disrupting Classrooms Of Learning

*How disruptive innovation will change the way the world learns?*



## *Motivation as a disruptor*

Motivation is the catalyzing ingredient for innovation and the same is true of learning. Motivation can be extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is that which comes from outside the task. For example - a person might learn something not because he found the task itself stimulating or interesting but because learning it would give access to something else he wanted. Intrinsic motivation is when the work itself stimulates. In this case our learning initiatives become easier to implement and take effect. So when there is extrinsic motivation, we have to create intrinsically engaging methods of learning.

## Rethinking 'Intelligence' and how we learn

In the past intelligence was a number. Today we understand that intelligence is a lot broader.

Howard Gardner is considered a pioneer in this multiple intelligence field. People can have different strengths and learning experience can be tailored to these differences:

- The ability to solve problems that one encounters in real life
- The ability to generate new problems to solve
- The ability to make something or offer a service that is valued within ones culture.

## Gardner came up with 9 distinct intelligences:

- **Linguistic** - Using language to be expressive
- **Logical** - Mathematical - Ability to calculate, quantify and solve complex mathematical operations
- **Spatial** - Decode graphic information
- **Bodily** - Kinesthetic - Fine tune physical skills
- **Musical** - Create melody, pitch and tone
- **Intrapersonal** - Accurate self-perception and direct one's life
- **Interpersonal** - Understand and interact effectively with others
- **Naturalistic** - Observe and understand patterns in nature
- **Existential** - Sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence

### Ramanathan Hariharan

*Head of Centre for Execution Education (CEE)*

*Indian School of Business*

*Ram strongly believes that Executive Education is a key catalyst for delivering superlative performance in the workplace and continues to focus on creating high-impact learning solutions that can influence business results.*



## How does this relate to learning?

If teaching and learning approach is aligned to one's strength, learning can become intrinsically effective. Research shows that although most people have some capacity in each of the nine intelligences most people excel in one or two. It also cautions against pigeonholing people and not developing all their intelligences. It must also be remembered that these differences are only one dimension of cognitive ability. Within each of the intelligence there are different learning styles. Some learn visually, some learn by talking, some by writing, some by playing etc. Finally the third dimension is different people learn at different paces.

## *The learning head's dilemma – Standardization versus customization*

Think about our organizational and learning architecture in simplistic terms. It is dominated by a model of interdependencies.

- **Temporal:** “You cannot study this without an experience of X years” and “you cannot learn this without learning this in level Y”
- **Lateral:** You cannot teach for example English any other manner, as you cannot change English grammar.
- **Physical:** Project based learning is great but each of the employees is located at different places and physical location within the same plant may not encourage collaboration on a project.
- **Hierarchical:** Well intentioned mandates which can be contradictory to corporate policy.

## *Technology – the enabler and the disruptor*

The proper use of technology is perhaps the only way you can modularize the system and customize the learning to different learners.

## *Disruption towards a learner centered learning initiative*

- While the first phase of disruption would be in the area of instructional system the software is complicated and expensive but what would drive disruptions is user generated content.
- Emergence of user network – learner supporting another learner that enable the development of learning products that are built by one learner teaching another learner.

## *The future classroom*

As the monolithic system of instruction shifts to the classroom of the future classroom powered by learner centric technology, the instructor's/trainer's role gradually shift over time, a shift that would not be easy but will be rewarding. From delivering one size fits all lessons year on year, they would be delivering learning customized to each learner, pace set by the learner, they would be learning coaches and they will mentor and motivate them through learning using real time data on how the learner is learning. They would need very different skill to add value.

## *The future of assessment*

The need for evaluation would be obviated. Alternative means of comparison would emerge.

## *Conclusion*

### Key enablers of disruption and innovation in learning in organizations

- Charting the degree of agreement through success and common language
- Diligent use of tools of power, management, leadership and culture
- Organizational structure





# Rane Group at the 8<sup>th</sup> Dhaka Motor Show

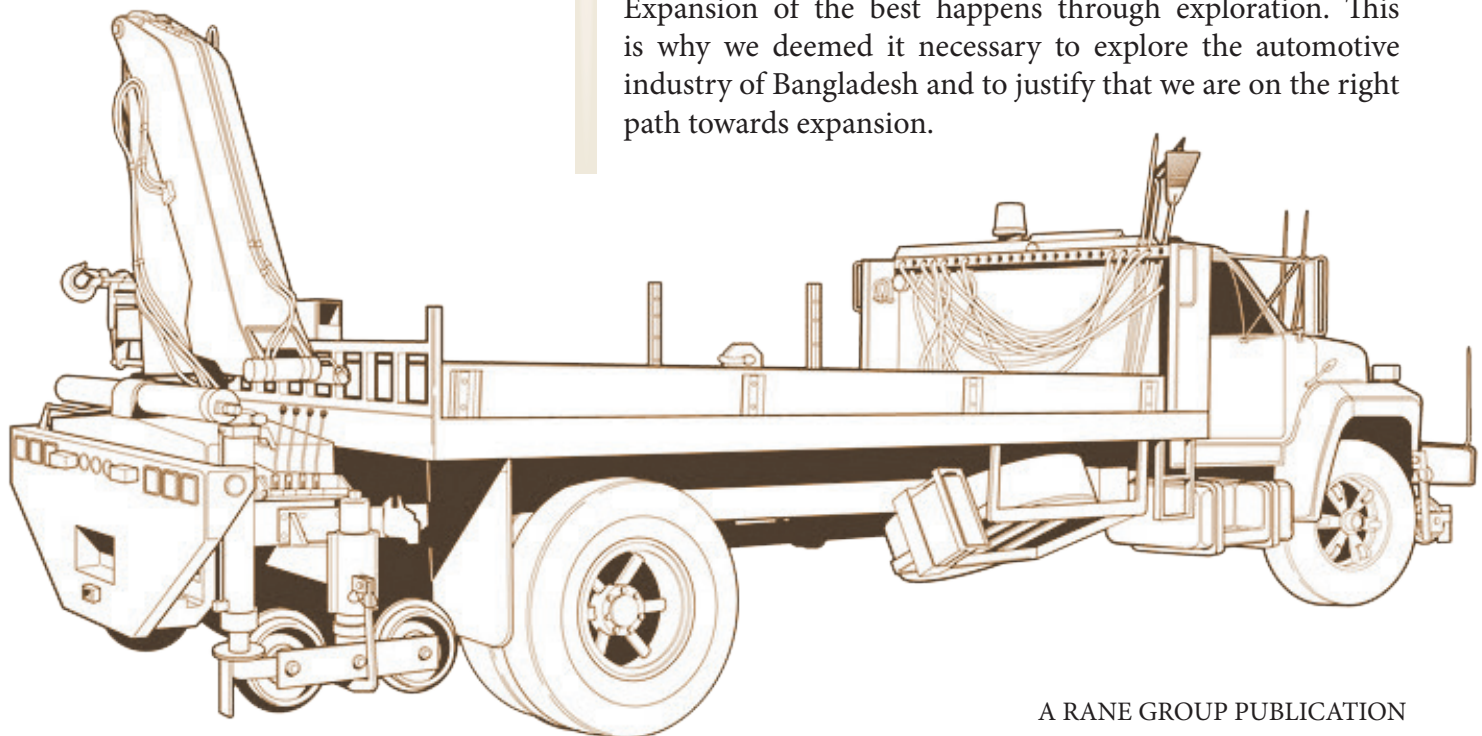


An international Automotive Exhibition of Bangladesh organised by Conference and Exhibition Management Services Ltd (CEMS), the Dhaka Motor Show is specifically designed for new vehicles and aftermarket components of the rapidly expanding automotive market of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh being a strong South-Asian nation with its growing economy, we at Rane used this as a perfect B2B platform for the Auto Industry of Bangladesh. Several of Rane Group's companies such as Rane (Madras) Ltd, Rane Engine Valve Ltd, Rane Brake Lining Ltd participated and showcased their products and solutions to the Bangladesh market in this event that took place during March 2013 at Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The exhibition provided a platform for Rane to expose its capability towards the targeted visitors that includes Vehicle Distributors/Importers, Auto Component Distributors and Dealers, Auto Spare Parts Dealers, Garage Owners, Lubricant Dealers, Service Centres, Truck Parts Dealers, Mechanics, Spare Parts retailers, Distributors and Associations.

Expansion of the best happens through exploration. This is why we deemed it necessary to explore the automotive industry of Bangladesh and to justify that we are on the right path towards expansion.





## Faculty development

RHL provided training support to Ganapathy Iyer Girls High School in the areas of IT utilization in teaching, Student Psychology Management and How to be an effective teacher.

## Digitization of KSRI library

RHL provided financial and technical support to Kuppusamy Sastri Research Institute (KSRI) in digitizing their collection of rare manuscripts to preserve our rich literature and cultural heritage.



Intranet



## Career guidance

RBL P4 organized a career guidance program for the class X students of Government Higher Secondary School, Trichy, providing awareness on various career opportunities they could pursue.

## Hygiene

RTSSL P1 supported in setting up hygienic restroom facility for the Kalkudi Government Higher Secondary School accommodating over 300 girl children.





## **RANE POLYTECHNIC TECHNICAL CAMPUS (RPTC) EMBARKS UPON NEW AVENUES FOR PURSUING IT'S AGENDA OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

*SKILL DEVELOPMENT IS GOING TO BE THE DEFINING ELEMENT IN INDIA'S GROWTH STORY.*

The last two decades has seen the world of business growing across verticals. Globalisation has become an all-pervasive force with far-reaching consequences for economic growth, technological advancements and innovations. The entire business community waits with anticipation for the next big spurt in economic development. In this scenario, a developing economy like India has its work cut out - to translate the growth theory into reality.

It has been envisaged that by 2022, India will need about 500 million skilled workforce across industries. For this purpose, the Indian Government is gearing to balance labour demand and supply by revamping the skill development strategy with a focus on industry needs.

The question is, where can one find the talent pool the industries eagerly await? The undisputed answer to this – educational institutions combined with the concerted efforts of the government, private players, NGOs and others.

In this backdrop, the Canada India Institutional Cooperation Project (CIICP) established under the Directorate of Technical Education becomes very relevant. RPTC takes pride in associating with this initiative as it serves the larger purpose of contributing towards building our nation for tomorrow.

Under the CIICP umbrella, RPTC will explore offering a wide range of programs that meet the specific needs of the industries and community. The focus would be on designing programs that will help people gain skill, knowledge and improve attitude. The key thrust areas for this initiative are:

- Continuing Education
- Industry Institute Interaction
- Vocational Training
- Women in Development
- Total Quality Management
- Environment Development

With the aspiration to contribute to the national agenda of skill development, RPTC will certainly evolve as a model institution.



# Pursuit of Profitable Growth

Mr. Harish Lakshman  
pens down his perspectives



The financial year gone by has not been a very memorable one. We started the year with a healthy growth plan of about 25% but ended at about 8%. The entire industry had a slowdown that none of us predicted. What is worrying is the fact that the outlook for the next 12 months also does not look too exciting. High interest rates, poor governance in the country, several scandals, infrastructure projects (mining, roads etc.) coming to a standstill have all clearly affected our business.

General view seems to be that the market revival is going to take longer rather than sooner. Despite the current difficulties, we as a group should continue to work towards our theme - "a decade of profitable growth". Personally, I don't see how the current scenario will impact our aspirations. In fact, the determination has only grown stronger.

The group has recently completed the rolling 3-year Strategic Business Plan process in all the companies and the aspirations can clearly be seen in the strategies and initiatives. The plan envisages a 72% growth over the next 3 years with good improvements in profitability levels. Of course, this does not include any totally new businesses that we might enter through greenfield or acquisitions.

Over the next several years, the Automotive Industry in India is forecasted to grow significantly. Many estimates suggest that India will grow even faster than the Chinese Auto industry. This obviously is good news for auto component manufacturers like us. ACMA (Automotive Component Manufacturers Association) estimates the Indian auto component industry to grow from a turnover of about \$43 Billion in 2012 to about \$113 Billion by 2020. Out of this, the exports is currently at about \$7 Billion and forecasted to grow to about \$35 Billion. These are exciting numbers.

We are already number 1 or 2 in most of our businesses. If we manage our businesses well and defend our market positions in our products, a mere extrapolation should take our group to about \$1.4 Billion by 2020. Obviously, this does not include any new initiatives or businesses that we might add to our portfolio.

Of course, extrapolation is easy. Managing customer expectations and fighting competition is not. With the increasing global attractiveness of the Indian market, I see competition intensifying significantly in the coming years. In each of our product lines, we are seeing global companies setting up plants in India. Defending our position is easier said than done. Our competitiveness (especially Quality and Price) is definitely going to be challenged. This is going to call for focussed management, proactiveness and superior customer offerings from us.

TQM has revolutionized the group over the last decade. With continued emphasis, it will serve as a launch pad for our future aspirations. We have to offer superior customer experience in all our companies. I cannot re-emphasise this point more. TQM should be used as our defensive as well as one of our offensive strategies.

**I recollect a 2005 magazine interview of Mr. Ratan Tata where he said - “Our businesses have become global. It is inevitable that global companies will come to India and compete against us. It is therefore inevitable that we go outside India to compete against them.”**

We also need to start looking more outside India. I recollect a 2005 magazine interview of Mr. Ratan Tata where he said - “Our businesses have become global. It is inevitable that global companies will come to India and compete against us. It is therefore inevitable that we go outside India to compete against them.” We are now in 2013 and can already feel the pressure in many of our businesses. Some of our businesses have just started looking at - what can we do outside India beyond just exporting? This question, I believe, will lead us to new avenues in the not too distant future.

Profitable Growth at a growth rate far higher than what we have seen in the past several decades is a clear imperative and the entire senior leadership of the group has embraced this. As we embark on one of our most ambitious journey, there are few critical success factors that I would like to highlight:-

- **People** - We are propelled by the aspirations of a young talent pool that is willing to explore new horizons of challenges and opportunities. Ultimately, it is the entire workforce, their performance, ability to work in teams and networks that will take us to where we want to go. While the companies’ expectations on people are going to be higher, all the companies also commit themselves to offer a unique experience to its employees, a great place to work. Employer Brand Promise is getting a never before attention. An array of growth and development initiatives enables smooth transition for our people to the next level.

- **Innovation Journey** - Lofty goals have been set. ‘Orbit Shifting’ ideas have been identified. Teams are working on select projects with the objective of taking quantum leaps in business through product development, business processes re-engineering, tapping new markets etc. and are confident of delivering. We are hoping to see many of our companies accelerate growth through these Innovation initiatives.

- **Customer Focus** - We are who we are because of our customers and we should never ever underestimate them. In fact, going forward, there is a stronger need to understand their expectations and try to be ahead of competition in meeting them.

- **Taking Calculated Risks** - Accelerated growth will come with risks. There have been numerous examples of companies having tried to grow too fast and ended up in problems. At the same time, not taking any risk can also lead to problems that are equally big or even bigger. The secret of success will lie in our ability to balance risk and reward and of course, a lot of good luck.

# ouR NETworks!

*Innovation happens  
at intersections of  
boundaries...*

Horizons have truly expanded since the advent of intranet. In several organizations intranet has become an indispensable medium for employees to establish their virtual social network to discuss fresh concepts and designs. Such collaboration has resulted in increased speed, cutting costs and most importantly put the power of information availability in the hands of people, which gives a genuine sense of control, comfort and satisfaction.

At Rane, we understand that deeper organisation wide collaboration is key to address the business challenges of Profitable Growth. Due to sheer scale, numerous challenges arise stifling the performance of activities. Looking at this with an opportunistic lens, we launched R Net, our intranet portal that will break the barriers, promote seamless communication and help people progress.

On a continual basis, new features and workflows will be introduced to make R Net as the activity hub – a world of knowledge and fun.

This platform will enable leaders to connect and communicate frequently with their people. These internal communications will help in aligning people with the vision and goals of the organization, which are crucial in current business context and our agenda for the decade – Profitable Growth.

While we are late in catching up with the web buzz, our belief is that we have put in place a user friendly tool, which is robust, scalable and futuristic. R Net will go on to empower every Raneite – the roots of our innovation, in mobilizing extraordinary energy to propel Innovation led Profitable Growth.

## OFF THE TRACK

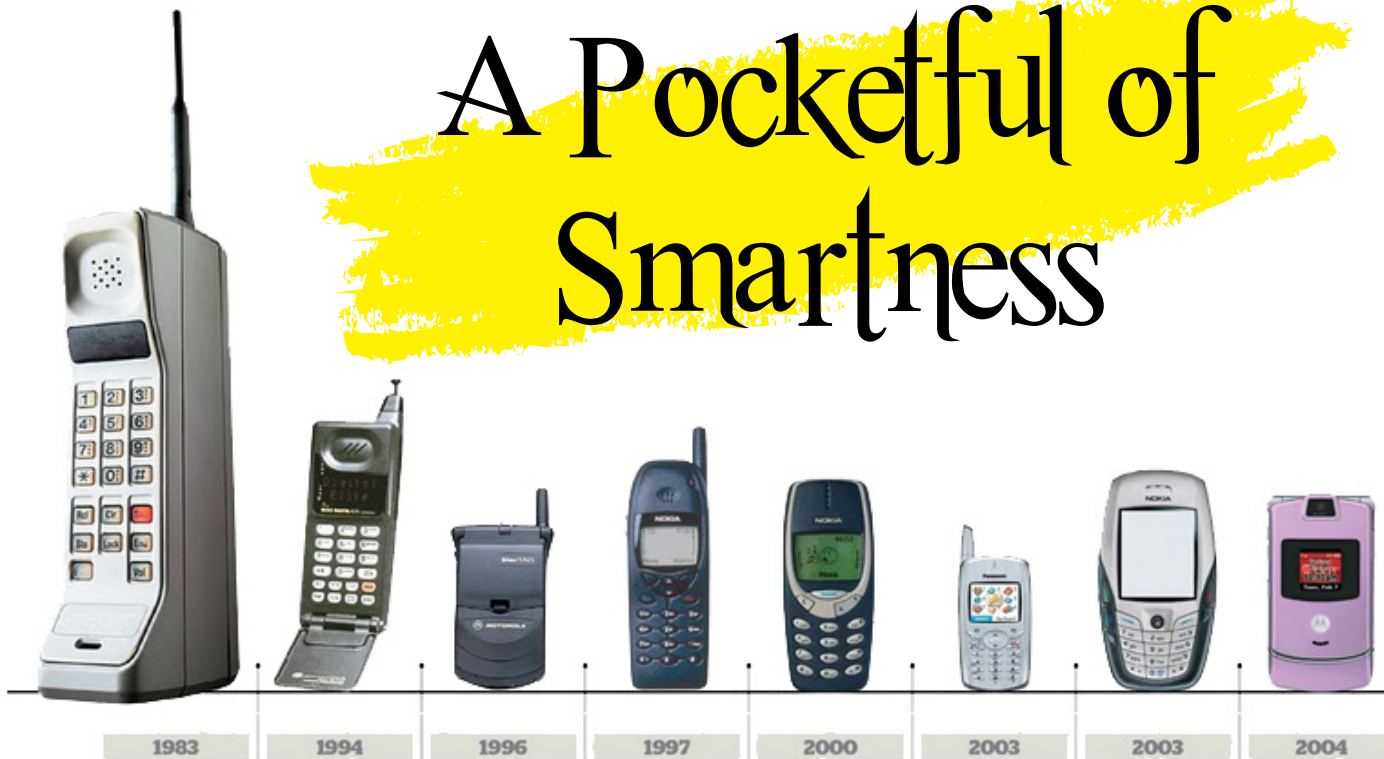
A wise man once said that, "I'm happy with my new phone, my computer works brilliantly and my calculator is perfect, but lord, do I miss my mind!" While this might not be true in some cases, the world is advancing at such a pace that no one is able to keep up. Who is to blame when technological progression is made in the name of humanity and their development? With teenagers demanding for an iPhone for their 13th birthday, no one can say whether the growth of technology has made life easier or not.

Over the past few years, the world has slowly witnessed the rise of an innovative mobile device called the 'smartphone'. A lightweight phone that promises emailing and chatting on-the-move, its unique and advanced computing abilities have made a huge impact on the mobile market. Slim, slender and sleek, people love being the owner of a Smart phone that is believed to make life so much simpler.

Though the first smartphone was released by Apple into the market around five years back, they have been around for more than two decades. Phones such as Simon and Pilot were an all-in-one super package that could be used as a personal digital assistant, mobile phone as well as a fax machine. Imagine what it would be like to have a fax machine with you at all times! Anyhow, these phones were considered to be modern even though they operated on a greyscale and did not have superior web browsing capabilities.

“After the creation of ‘App World’, the fad of owning a smartphone just grew bigger and wider. With a million different applications available for download on the app world, people started buying smartphones solely for the purpose of entertainment.”

## A Pocketful of Smartness





As the 90's came to an end, Nokia and Research in Motion (RIM), came out with devices that closely resemble what we use today. Though these phones still functioned with a greyscale screen, typing was made easy with an innovative slide keyboard pattern that was both efficient and user friendly. These phones did not gain popularity among the mass as they were supremely expensive and hard to own. Consumers also felt that these phones were brick-like and too heavy to carry around.

As Apple, RIM, Nokia and Motorola started releasing mobile devices that could run on a wireless data plan, the cost of a smartphone gradually decreased in order to accommodate the majority of the market. The revolutionary touch typing became a must-have for every consumer. For those who found touch phones difficult to use, QWERTY keypads were favoured. A glorious era of smartness was born, bringing an abrupt end to anything 'normal'.

With a user friendly interface, people started seeing these smartphones as an efficient device to have around. With its vibrant technology and slim designs, owning a sophisticated phone was used as a status symbol among teenagers and young adults. Where a regular phone was used just for calling and sending an SMS, a smartphone could be used for checking emails, surfing the net, logging into facebook, tweeting, playing music, watching videos, downloading apps and so much more.

After the creation of 'App World', the fad of owning a smartphone just grew bigger and wider.

With a million different applications available for download on the app world, people started buying smartphones solely for the purpose of entertainment. Games like Angry Birds and Fruit Ninja, applications that foretold the weather and photo editing software like Instagram and PhotoEdit is considered to be a necessity while purchasing a smartphone.

With the growing popularity of smartphones, several companies started releasing applications that allowed people to communicate around the world for free. One of the most popular inventions that led to the growth of the smartphone was an instant messaging platform called Whatsapp. A smart innovation which allows you to chat with anyone across the world for free, this application was available across all operating systems and data providers. In an age where texting was getting more expensive than calling, Whatsapp was a great free-for-all application which set the trend for instant messaging over a phone.

The world has been dazzled by the way manufacturers pack more and more digital information into tiny devices. For all you know, phones in the future might replace the need for having real money. With apps that enable you to pay directly from your account with just a tap from your phone instead of swiping your debit card, value for having actual cash might diminish. It might seem like a dream to us now, but after witnessing what smartphones can do, there is no limit to what can be achieved in an age where information technology rules over other fields.



### Festival of colours

Holi announces the arrival of spring and the passing of winter. The festival breathes an atmosphere of social merriment. Employees of RNSSL as part of their celebration.



### Letter & Spirit



At RML safety day celebrations started with the Safety Oath. The Deputy Chief inspector of Factories addressed the employees. Prizes were distributed to the winners of the various competitions to be like slogan, suggestion and essay writing conducted during the Safety week.

RTSSL-SGD celebrated the Safety Week with competitions emphasizing the importance of safety. Employees were asked to talk extempore on topics of industrial, road and domestic safety. Fun events like Oru Vaarthai Oru Nimidam, quiz, puzzles and unscramble safety words saw energetic participation by all. Hands-on awareness was created through risk assessment of unsafe conditions.

### HarFest

On the occasion of the harvest festival – Pongal, at RML Rangoli competition was organized for female employees and male employees competed at Uri-adi and slow cycling event. Winners received attractive prizes.





## Well@RBL

RBL launched health management programs under the banner 'Well@RBL'. Its objective is to prevent health risk and create health awareness among employees and their family members. Programs like health talks, specialist consulting – outpatient treatment at RBL, e-health tips on every Wednesday, periodic monitoring of BP and blood sugar level and corporate physio care are being organized.

## Daily Bytes

Theme based Daily Bytes provide for a refreshing start everyday for employees of RTSSL-SGD.

- Moral Monday shares thought provoking messages of different genres
- Tantalizing Tuesday excites with interesting information,
- Worldly Wednesday keeps them posted on the current global affairs
- Tummy Thursday is filled with health and fitness tips
- Factful Friday takes you to the world of facts and
- Sparkling Saturday and Sunday makes you look forward to the hot happenings in the city like sales, discounts, exhibitions during that weekend.



## Plan your Finances

Informative and interactive session on the subject was organized by RTSSL-SGD in association with AEGON Religare by an Associate Financial Planner from Financial Planning Standards Board of India to give valuable inputs to its employees. A similar session was organized for RHL employees addressed by representatives from India Nivesh Securities Private Limited.

For the first time in history, we have 4 generations working side by side! What is your take on this?

The whole phenomenon of generational diversity is here to stay considering that longevity has increased as much as it has. As a result, there is much greater fluidity in communication between people of different generations. Even at home, parent-child, parent-grandchild equations are slowly changing to accommodate the fluidity. Today's grandfather is much more actively engaged with his grandchild than say the grandfather of 15 to 20 years ago.

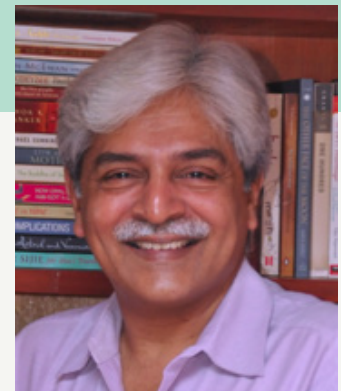
Therefore if there is an organization with a lot of generational diversity, I think it makes for a very potent mix. Potent in the sense of much greater energy. However, the real challenge is in managing that energy by not being rigidly hierarchical or imposing dyed-in-the-wool structures to control it, but by learning how to adapt to it.

Diversity brings with it, opportunity. For instance, in the past our educational process was very conservative, focused primarily on building intellectual capability and knowledge. Today, the focus is on developing multiple intelligences that psychologists have identified – logical, interpersonal, kinesthetic, linguistic, spatial and so on, depending on whatever the individual possesses. Our work space too needs to be designed to accommodate all of these and more.

## DEMYSTIFYING GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

with Dr. Vijay Nagaswami - Psychiatrist

Since 1991, he has concentrated his energies on Individual, Marital and Corporate Psychotherapy.



In this scenario what are the qualities to be demonstrated by leaders to achieve high engagement levels and productivity?

The business scenario today is such that chaos is inherent in individuals and groups. Leaders need to learn how to function effectively with chaos. When I say function, it is not by 'dechaosing' chaos but by working with chaos and taking advantage of it. For this, the older generation has to reinvent their approach. For example, rigidity of leadership affects the younger ones adversely. They are creatively stifled if the rigidity is too high. Therefore, leaders need to possess, or acquire if they do not already have it, the capacity to adapt to new emerging realities and avoid the tendency to reject outright. They would probably be better off trying to understand and accommodate changing expectations.



In your experience, what are some of the practices that have proved to be effective in managing the differences in perception?

There are companies that go for the recreational method through outbound workshops and while these can be very engaging, the changes may not necessarily be lasting enough. I believe that it is a sensitization process that can bring about the engagement that matters. Brainstorming exercises are a must, involving the different generations. Initially, Gen 1 & 2 would not want to hear the ideas that come from Gen 3 & 4; eventually having such discussions often and more in number will sensitize both the groups and make them appreciate each other's perspectives. In this, the middle management has a role to act as a bridge between the junior and the senior management.

What according to you are the aspects of a healthy work environment that the different generations look forward to?

Gen 1 & 2 expect predictability, they look for organization with Systems, Loyalty and Commitment whereas the Gen 3 & 4, work in high-energy bursts. What probably works best for them are a peculiar combination of Energy, Activity and Laid-backness. They expect a process that allows a blend of challenging work and work-life balance, well-defined roles and variety at work, possibility of entrepreneurship, as well as job security.

What are the top three traits employees should develop to maintain a healthy work-life balance?

Work and life are inseparable. There is a need to move away from the perception that work is work and home is home. I would urge people to develop flexibility. Each life space that we function in has some demands. One has to learn to move seamlessly between these life spaces and meet these demands. We do this through judicious emotional investment. Also we need to understand and feel legitimate about our aspirations. Aspirations may not always match with the realities we operate in. However, this does not mean that one should stop aspiring. Value your aspirations, for it is these that keep you going. Finally, gratitude has to be replaced by genuine respect.

*Note: In this context, Gen 1 is Traditionalists, Gen 2 is Baby Boomers, Gen 3 is Generation Xers and Gen 4 is Millennials*

What are the upcoming themes under corporate well-being that organizations need to proactively be prepared for?

Indian corporates are realizing that staying back in office after working hours is no more desirable. There is much greater awareness that employees lead a complex life in different spaces like family, friends, work, and community. If work constitutes the majority of our mind space, individuals fail to satisfy the other spaces and can end up becoming unproductive. Peace, health and happiness are central to having a productive workforce and these are what we need to strive for.

Going beyond just establishing policies on work life balance, companies are even taking initiatives on enhancing quality of married life for their employees. Enhancing couple relationships speaks highly of organizations. They believe a happier married life will lead to a happier employee at work.

Also, fortunately most corporates are realizing the need to recognize the value of aspirational growth and the axiom that individual growth is the precursor to organisational growth.

Finally, what are the general myths that people have developed when it comes to comprehending 'generational diversity'?

The myth is, generational diversity is a challenge and not an opportunity. Fear of diversity exists because of the myth that confrontation produces conflict. In truth, conflict can be resolved only by confronting it. We need to welcome confrontation and provide the space for it. For example, older people say that the values have changed amongst the younger ones. Actually it is not the values that have changed; it is the manner of expression that has. The onus is on Gen 1 & 2 to adapt to the ways of Gen 3 & 4. Otherwise, we will remain stuck to the age of ambassador cars.

Take a typical example; in the past, one of the biggest HR initiatives was to ensure that the employee turnover was low. Nevertheless, the scenario today is different. Many young people change jobs quite frequently. When I ask them why they leave jobs with good organizations within 2 years, the response I get is "It looks bad on my CV if I don't". Therefore, change is something that many young people are really hardwired for. However, the organization is not prepared for this and the usual argument is the cost involved in recruitment and training and when the person leaves in 2 years, it is seen as very unhealthy. Some might argue that we are back to square one. Whereas, I do not see it that way. On the contrary, I believe that if a person feels stale and leaves, it is an opportunity to get some freshness in.

What we need to understand is that Gen 1 & 2 is the central spine along which the rest of the body develops. While they represent the core, Gen 3 & 4 has the ability to fluctuate and adapt, until they become Gen 1 & 2 in the years to come. When people leave, although there is a challenge, there is an opportunity as well. It is all about tweaking our own mindset. Concentrating too much on retention is like trying to plug a hole in the dam with a finger.

# Turning Candles into Soap

In 1987, there was a company that did well by selling candles. This company was going into financial loss and Thomas Edison had just invented the light bulb. Most people stopped buying candles and started investing in a light bulb for their house. The company's worst nightmares came true when candles started selling only on special occasions and holidays.

However, the company's luck turned around when an employee at one of the small factories forgot to turn off the candle making machine when he left for lunch. When he got back, he was shocked to see a huge frothing mass of liquid filled with air bubbles. Thinking he might get fired he almost threw the lather away but at the last minute decided to turn it into soap.

## The result?

Ivory soap was born and the company was saved from bankruptcy. Just like this employee, learn to never give up when things go wrong. Instead try to make the most of the situation. Creativity can make an idea grow and develop into a treasure box!





Expanding Horizons

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