

MAGNUM INTERGRAFIKS - BLOG

Our Chairman - Mr. Sudhir Ghate



Mr. Sudhir Ghate - the Chairman

Success comes in different shapes and sizes but it needs a combination of dreams, aspirations and oodles of hard work to tread the path of success. That is what Mr. Sudhir P Ghate possesses in abundance that made Magnum Intergrafiks Private Limited, a small town advertising agency ride the wave of success to emerge as one among the top 30 advertising agencies of the country in a short span of 15 years.

Think big and act big seems to be the mantra that guides Mr. Sudhir, an entrepreneur and organizer par excellence, who believes in leading from the centre rather than from the front. One can but admire his fortitude in establishing his advertising business with Mangalore as the head office only to spread its tentacles in different parts of the country by setting up 19 branches.

Geographical expansion and adoption of latest software has been the touchstone that played a pivotal role in firmly establishing his company. His relentless pursuit for excellence saw fruition with his company, starting from a meager capital of Rs. 10,000, in 1992, setting a target of 100 crores turnover for 2008. But modesty is his virtue when he says "I attribute my success to the unique structure of the organization and to the power of team work and innovation. Our Company is equipped with unique software for branch networking that gives me a clear picture of the organization within a fraction of second wherever I am".

BLOG ARCHIVE

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Our Chairman - Mr.
Sudhir Ghate

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A REBEL WITH A CAUSE

There is more to the man than just the acumen that makes Mr. Sudhir a successful entrepreneur. The turning point of his life was the imposition of emergency that saw a young Sudhir taking a plunge into the movement wholeheartedly. He was a rebel with a cause who vehemently opposed the threat to democracy and freedom. The home atmosphere was conducive as the political exposure he had helped him grasp the finer nuances of politics and the art of organizing and managing people. His father, late Prabhakar Ghate dedicated his life for the cause of anti-communist trade unionism. He played a quintessential role in changing trade unionism from class struggle to a struggle for productivity based demand. He was the brain behind setting up Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the trade union wing of BJP.

Prabhakar Ghate was also the first party candidate of the erstwhile Jana Sangha to contest the first Karnataka state assembly elections from Mangalore in 1956.

“At a young age I saw my father organize people for various activities including planning election strategy. He was the anchor person who always led from the centre. Whatever success I have achieved today is because I have been able to place different types of people in proper places to build a solid team by leading from the centre. It is an attribute which I learnt from my father”, he reveals.

Mr. Sudhir was dismissed from college for his proactive role in opposing emergency. He was 1st degree student in Canara College, where his mother Sharada Ghate was the faculty member. Sudhir was the student leader in charge of young Satyagrahis who was entrusted with the mission of motivating the student community. His father was already in the scanner for opposing emergency and had gone underground. One can but imagine the turmoil and agony the mother might have undergone when she was faced with stark reality of the son being dismissed from college and father son duo going underground and to the jail in support of the cause they believed in.

“Despite my father going underground my mother did not dissuade me from participating in anti-emergency movement. There was nothing but stillness at home considering the sudden turn of events and I took that silence as an approval. She was like a pillar of strength”, he recalls.

THE THRILL OF TREADING THE CENSORED PATH

With censorship ruling the roost young satyagrahis found great thrill in printing uncensored matter through pamphlets/periodicals during this period. Sudhir still remembers the consequences of circulating it to the police by putting the periodical in a police jeep. “The police rummaged around every house in Mangalore to trace the printing press that was used for publishing but their Herculean efforts failed miserably. Emergency had a bitter-sweet impact on me and the thrill, courage, trials and tribulations I experienced during emergency are indelibly etched in my mind. The experience is bitter but the memories are sweeter”, he says.

But emergency which had left a lasting imprint helped him shape his future in a different way. “Emergency completely obliterated the fear factor within me. I was not scared to take risks and experiment with innovations, which has been the hallmark of my success”, he confesses.

After completing graduation through a court order, Sudhir joined Chartered Accountant Ganesh Shenov in Mangalore. When Ganesh left for Dubai in 1989. Sudhir followed him only

to return as he could not live in a place with restricted freedom. 1989 also proved to be a turning point of his career as he went to America and identified four areas with potential for business in the service sector namely credit card services, general insurance, T V Channels and Advertising. He chose advertising for its low investment and hit the bull's eye.

LEARNING FROM CRISIS

As Chairman of Magnum running the business was not a bed of roses as the company went through a privation between 1996 and 2000. But the financial crisis and resulting down slide offered more insight into the business by broadening his thinking. That is when he had a chance meeting with former Minister and BJP leader Murlī Manohar Joshi who told him "in an era of computerization, internet and broadband no power on earth can prevent the wave of globalization. Rather than sinking in this wave try to make use of globalization to your advantage". That stuck a chord with him and he felt confident of "riding the wave of globalization". Bill Gate's biography "Business @ the Speed of Thought and Friedman's "The Lexus and the Olive Tree" further boosted his self-belief. He began networking by concentrating full time in his company and by investing heavily on software. The company also took a conscious decision to diversify its business activities. The hard work paid off and now the company is raring to go.

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS COME TO THE FORE

With early exposure in politics Sudhir Ghate had natural inclination towards politics, where his organizational skill once again came to the fore during the 1991 elections. Congress stalwart Janardhana Poojary was riding on the wave of 'loan mela' and was considered a sure winner for the Congress from Mangalore. The Congress went to the extent of boasting through ads campaign that even if Mr Vajpayee was to contest from Mangalore, Poojary cannot be defeated. Mr. Ghate was the election agent in charge of BJP's campaign in his capacity as the District General Secretary, who took it as an affront and began working to take the bull by the horn. With BJP having a negligible presence in the state with only 2 MLA's it was no easy task. Discontent was brewing among the professionals like bank employees, teachers and the middle class who felt their self dignity was at stake due to Poojary's enthusiasm to implement his programmes.

Sensing the wave of discontent Sudhir planned a strategy by rallying the party workers around, set up booth committees and concentrated meeting voters at the booth level. The final result was that Poojary lost against a political novice, BJP's Dhananjaya Kumar, for the first time, by a margin of 35,000 votes at a time when Rajiv Gandhi sympathy wave was at its peak. The credit certainly went to Sudhir Ghate, who, by his organizing skill made possible what was considered to be impossible.

GLOBE TROTTING FOR IDEAS

Globe trotting seems to be his hobby and it has broadened his horizons. "I get ideas on a range of topics when I travel", he reveals. He is also associated with Trichur Heart Hospital and in VRL as Director which along with his business commitments keeps him on the move constantly.

His wife Sumana Ghate is working as an officer in Karnataka Bank. Daughter Shalmali Ghate, a high school is an accomplished Bharathanatyam dancer and son Pranjal Ghate has been proving his prowess in myriad fields. Both his children studied in Kannada Medium schools up to 5th standard. "I wanted my children to mingle with ordinary people and learn the harsh realities of life from an early age. Moreover there is less homework and thus more

the harsh realities of life from an early age. Moreover there is less homework and thus more time for their creative activities”, he justifies.

He fondly remembers the role played by his friend Vivian Kamath in making him what he is today. “It was Vivian who goaded me to accompany him to America in 1989 saying it would change my vision. His prophecy has come true”, he recalls.

Every human being has certain flaws and Mr. Sudhir Ghate is no exception. He reveals that but for his leniency in taking action against erring and incompetent employees Magnum would have achieved more glory. Having reached a certain level he feels his own limitations

have come to the fore and a high level management degree would have given him more insight to take the organization to the next level. At 54, he has a wealth of experience and vision that usually comes only with age. He is adept at recognizing talent and nurturing it and his 200 odd employees vouch for that. He has given a free hand to his staff and shares an emotional bonding with them which makes him a rarity in today’s society.



Addressing to the MBA Students at Mangalore University

He had a chance to deliver the lecture on the advertisement sector for MBA students of Department of Business Administration at Mangalore University.

Sharing his point of view, he said - ***“India, which is on the path of rapid growth, offers good scope for the growth of advertisement industry. The industry would open up tremendous opportunities for the young in the next two decades. The country has been witnessing rapid urbanization. The number of cities in the country is set to increase in the next 20 years. The urbanization process will add a significant number of middle class people to society. This will open up huge opportunities in the advertisement industry.”***

This statement shows the future vision that he had about the advertisement industry in India.

Sudhir is not the one to rests on his laurels. He is working steadfastly to realize his burning desire of creating India’s first multinational ad agency. He has prepared necessary groundwork for his organization attaining greater heights in the days to come. Considering his determination and zest to achieve what he aspires for it is just a matter of time before he fulfills his burning desire.



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