

Believe in yourself, take pride in what you do, feel the need to change

When I asked S. Sekar, deputy general manager at The Times of India, Bengaluru, whether he could write a piece for this issue, he readily agreed and sought some suggestions from me. I offered him a few, all based on issues relating to newspaper production. When Sekar's article arrived, I was pleasantly surprised to see that it was refreshingly different – it focused on 'mindset change' and the need to change your approach to add value to yourself and the company you are working for.

Sekar dwells on the basics. Believe in what you do; feel the need to change your mindset from the bottom of your heart, he says. He urges you to ask yourself every night one "simple but effective question" – have I added any value to myself and to my job or industry? How many of us do that!

I think successful organisations are those where employees are encouraged to innovate and take risks, and adequately trained to handle contingencies and become effective managers. They are those where employees take pride in the work they do, know what their priorities are. I remember Sanat Hazra, the technical director of The Times of India then, telling me when I met him at the Kandivili plant some years ago that "it's all about character; we all have a pride in what we do".

Factories that do constantly well are those where employees are given ample opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge and capability and where the production department sets a high standard of performance with quality benchmarks. A good manager is one who gets things done and has some special skills. One thing I have noticed, however, is that many technical people do not have managerial skills. There is, therefore, the need to train them to become good managers, teach them how to delegate and manage time.

This month's WAN-IFRA Conference at the Hotel ITC Grand Chola in Chennai will mark the 25th year of the conference/ expo in India. Magdoom Mohamed who has been steering the WAN-IFRA ship in India with a fair degree of success says about 350 delegates are expected but the number could go up if there is a last-minute surge. On September 13 evening, there will be a silver jubilee gala dinner where the founders of the company will participate.

In what will be a first, the World Editors Forum South Asia Summit will be launched. India has never hosted such a regional summit on behalf of the Forum before. The South Asia Digital Media Awards will be presented in the afternoon of September 13. And on the previous day, there is an interesting workshop that will be conducted by Google, a workshop that will give the audience a feel of the technological tools in storytelling.

Magdoom has a small team comprising Suresh Babu, Prabhu Natarajan, Jaiganesh and Vijaylakshmi pulling off a major event in the news publishing calendar. Babu and Natarajan are new entrants to WAN-IFRA South Asia. We wish the event all success.

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