



Sadhana Educational & Empowerment Foundation's (SEEF)
**Sadhana Centre for Management & Leadership Development
(SCMLD)**

Seminar: “**Learning from the Leaders**” - Series IX

Theme: “**Converting Adversity into Advantage: The challenge to change – Men, Minds and Methods**”

Venue: **Le Méridien, Pune** | Date: **10th & 11th October, 2009**

CONCEPT NOTE

His Holiness Dalai Lama once said “If there is a problem and a solution is possible then it is not a problem. Similarly, if there is a problem and no solution is possible then also it is not a problem”. According to the undersigned all the problems on this earth is the creation of man and man alone. No other creation has created any problem to the world as man has. The current economic problem has also its origin in the greed of man. It is engineered by the so called highly educated, intellectually superior, most upwardly moving people graduated from the topmost institutes in the world. People call them the cream of the business world. They did the most innovative financial engineering and re-engineering to offer the world newer and newer products and services. They were smart. They created paper money and called it wealth. However, the illusory hot air balloon created by these best minds & brains - the talented ones of the world, burst suddenly with a small prick of the consumers who stopped buying their latest innovations operationalized for personal success.

As a result, professionals, organizations, business community, governments, political leaders, economic experts, consulting gurus, intellectuals, academicians, investors including angels, learnt lessons that customers - mostly ordinary people with less or no brains, hold the key to success of any business endeavour. It will be good if all concerned understand and accept that shortcuts, gimmicks, grand predictions, projections, promises, ratings and being street smart etc. will not yield lasting success and enduring relationships. I believe that business must be an endeavour to serve people with good products and services – for solving problems, enhancing quality of life or feeding wants and thus raising standard of living, as one sees and chooses. Quality of living and standard of living are different. What is important is improving the quality of living of the vast majority as compared to standard of living of a few. This majority offers great business avenues. Thus, conscience, character, integrity, reverence to nature and all life forms, surrenderfulness to the all-pervading cosmic intelligence, gratitude for being borne as human being and therefore the importance of living as a human being etc. must inform the very purpose and processes of businesses. If so recession will not occur. There are business organizations which emerged stronger every time adversity visited them, because of practising these enduring values with

enlightened awareness and being responsible. Heightened demand created by greed and frenzy will only take economic activities to an unnatural level. It soon naturalizes itself and that is recession according to me.

However, this thought may not be acceptable to many and may be, all. Therefore, let us take recession as a natural cyclic adverse situation for business and industry and thus for economic growth. Can these adverse conditions still be converted into an advantage? Even in this materialistic approach, adverse situations like this recession and past mistakes can act as a guru if we look into it and inside each one of us and learn from it. One needs to revisit the vision, mission, purpose, values and principles of doing business. A clear internal inquiry in search of the uncompromising value, the larger purpose of doing business, the way business is done and the outcome delivered and outcome received, will make one wiser and humble. If so adversity can be turned into an advantage by re - engineering the systems, processes, methods, men & their minds. A learning and determined mind operating with deeper conviction for collective good can, quickly reinvent and resurrect the organization.

With this concept in mind, may I propose that the audience would like to listen to your experiences, thoughts and wisdom. How the current economic slowdown did impact your organization / company, sector & industry and how the organization steered clear etc. will be of great value for us. The students the budding executives, the faculty and the entrepreneurs present would benefit immensely and may avoid such mistakes as the best brains committed. Sharing your learning from experiences and the challenges faced and change operationalized would be more impactful as compared to any theoretical presentation. Also, this concept note is not binding at all. You may like to differ and share your views and experiences as you feel relevant to the theme.

Yours Sincerely,

M.S. Pillai
Founder Director, SCMLD