

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
September 2024, Volume VI, Issue 9



DEMYSTIFYING



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A NOTE FOR THE READERS

This is an interactive e-magazine with active links on many pages, including the advertisements, which can be used by just tapping or clicking on them. For ease of providing feedback, such links have been provided at the end of the articles too.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this e-magazine are the personal opinions of the authors and interviewees. Thus, the information and viewpoints presented in the articles do not represent those of Forces Network, and neither does Forces Network accept any duty or responsibility for them.

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

In continuation of our last few editions we come up with yet another edition of DEMYSTIFYING. The theme for this edition being **“Demystifying the Sales Vertical”**. While there are numerous paths available, one that is often overlooked or misunderstood is the sales vertical. One of the biggest barriers to veterans considering a career in sales is the perception of what sales actually entails. The stereotypical image of a pushy salesperson is outdated and unrepresentative of the modern sales environment. Today, sales are about creating value, solving problems, and building long-term relationships.

The notion of sales as a viable career option can be daunting for many veterans. It may seem like a field that is entirely driven by profit. However, this perspective overlooks the vast potential that a career in sales offers, particularly for those who have honed leadership, strategy, and interpersonal skills during their service. Many of the skills developed in the military align perfectly with those required in sales.

Leadership is a prime example. In the military, leadership isn't just about giving orders; it's about understanding your team, motivating them, and achieving objectives under pressure. In sales, leadership plays a crucial role in building relationships with clients, guiding them through decision-making processes, and ensuring their needs are met. Strategy is another key area where veterans excel. The ability to analyze situations, develop plans and execute them effectively is fundamental in both the military and sales. Sales strategies require a deep understanding of the market, the competition, and the customer's needs. Interpersonal skills, which are critical in the military, are equally vital in sales. Building trust and rapport with clients, negotiating deals, and resolving conflicts are all aspects of sales that veterans are uniquely equipped to handle. The discipline and resilience ingrained in military personnel can also be a tremendous asset in a field where perseverance is often the key to success.

Veterans, with their focus on service and mission accomplishment, can bring a fresh perspective to sales. They can approach it not just as a job, but as a way to serve customers, helping them navigate challenges and find solutions. The sales vertical offers numerous opportunities for growth, both professionally and financially. It's a field where hard work and results are directly rewarded, and where veterans can continue to climb the ranks, much like in the military. For those who crave challenge and the chance to continuously learn and improve, sales can be an immensely satisfying career.

So happy Learning



Yours Seller

Capt Rajesh Nair
Editor, ForceNet E-Zine

Online Feedback / Review

We would be featuring Feedback received from users post clicking on the interactive active links of the e-magazine. These links can be used by just tapping or clicking on them. For ease of providing feedback, such links have been provided at the end of each articles.

Feedback on: Star Of Forces Network

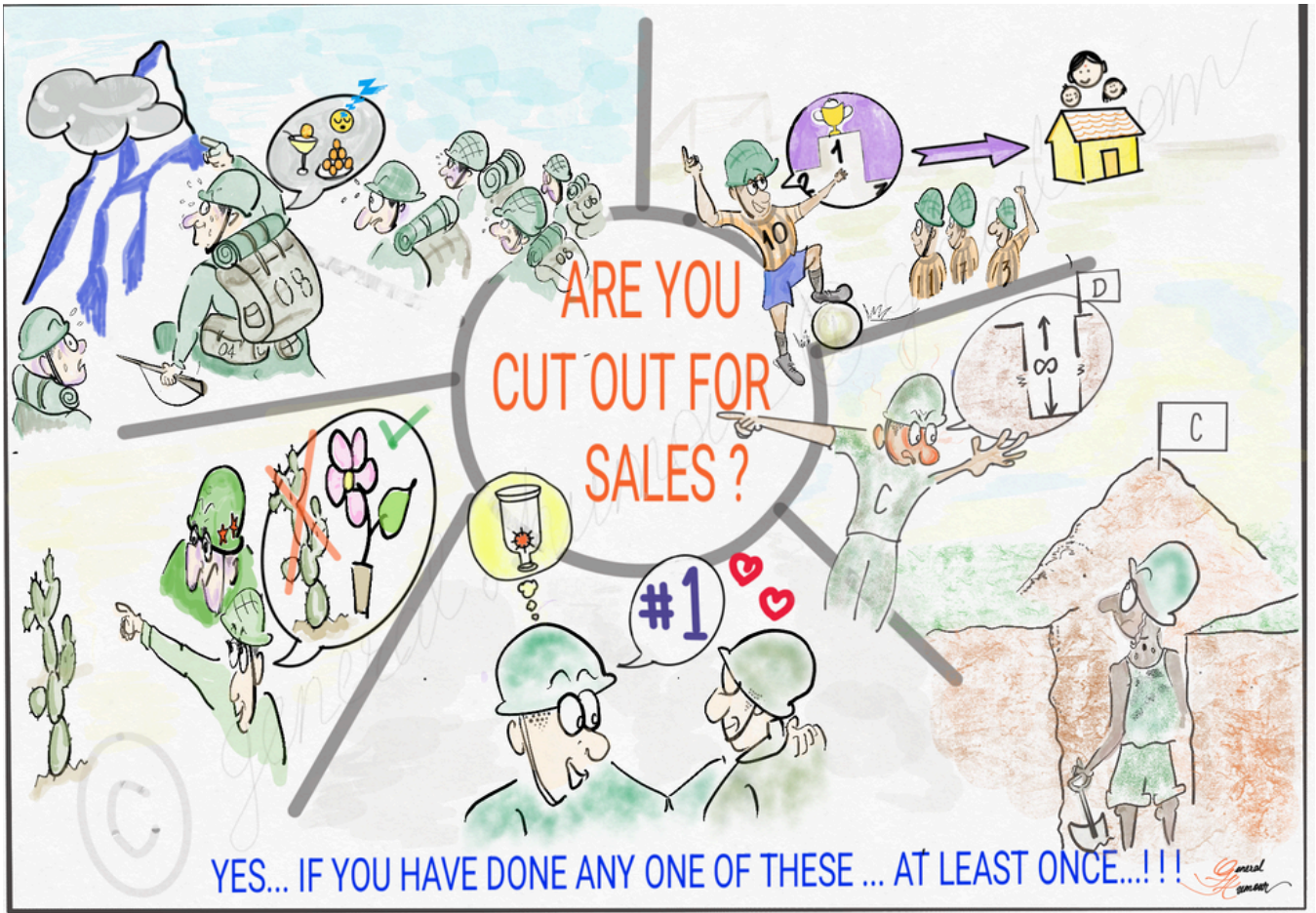
My compliments to Brig Krishna Raj for giving one of the best 'Star' interviews in this magazine. While on one hand his Fauji career, transition to corporate and journey in civvy street itself is motivating, on the other his distilled experience in the form of Dos and Don'ts and suggestions are like pearls of wisdom, making this article a must read for transitioning offrs.

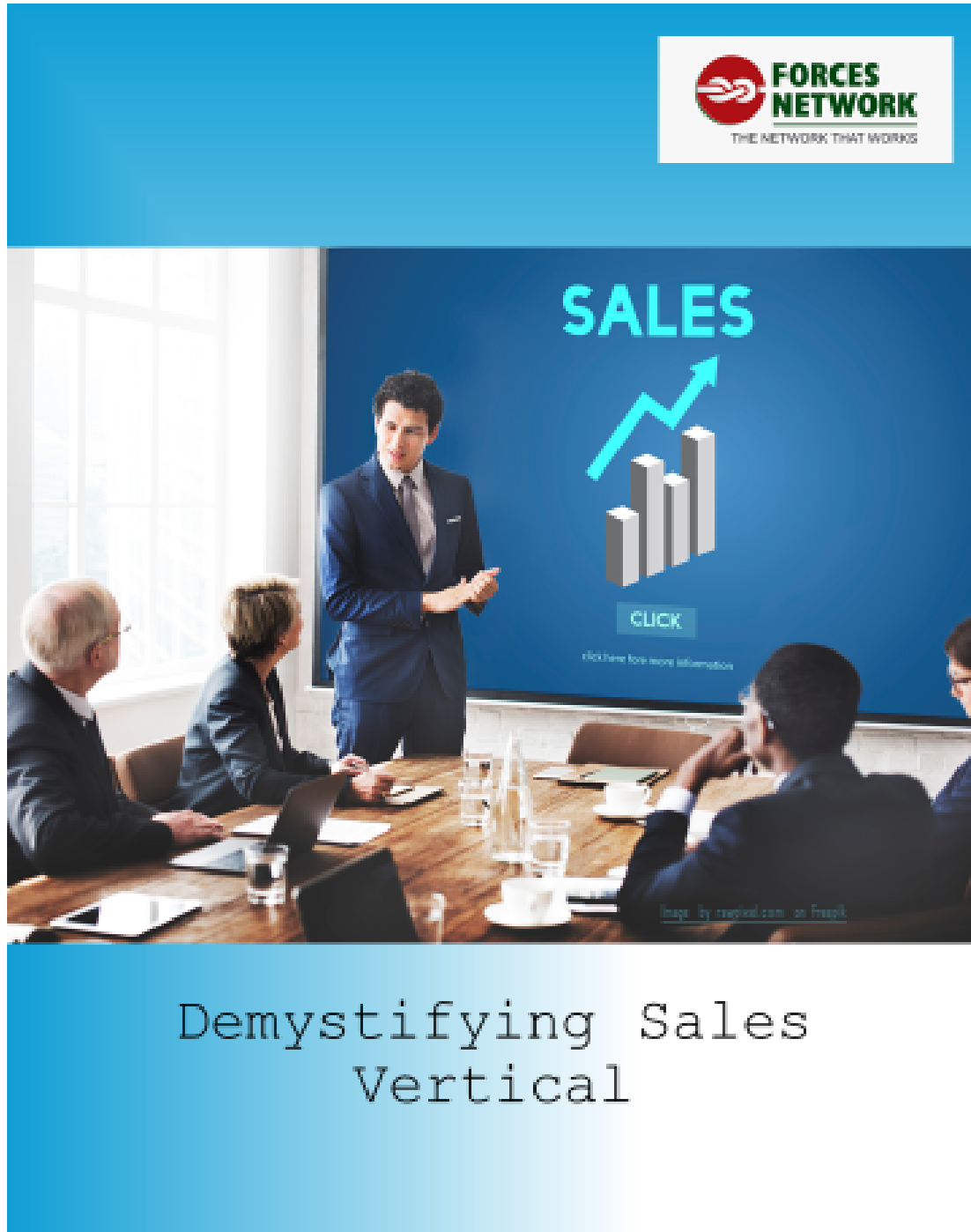
LT COL NARINDER BAHL

Feedback on: Author of the Month :- Col Ashish.Raisinghani

Had met Col Ashish .Raisinghani along with his motorcycling group at Dushanbe airport in Tajikistan and had a brief talk with him little realizing his accomplishments as a traveler and blogger. I was a "Marine Engineer" in the Merchant Navy having sailed for 23 years and hence developed a passion for travel and "travel Vlogging" post premature exit from the shipping Industry. At the time of writing have travelled across entire India and 99 Country's across the Globe. Bizarrely after reading this interview of Col Ashish Raisinghani by Capt Uday.K.Shriwas was surprised at how identical we were in travel as well as thoughts and opinions regarding "TRAVEL" and "TOURISM " although as a bachelor i travel "Solo".. Happy that Col Asish. Singhani's book " Confessions of a Traveloholic" has received rave reviews from important personalities.

RETIRED MR RUDOLPH.A.FURTADO





Theme Articles

Theme Article

Why Military Veterans Should Consider a Career in Sales

BY IQBAL SINGH

Military officers tend to naturally get attracted to careers in security, administration, operations, management and project management - because that is what they are comfortable with. However, consider this, if you were to dispassionately analyze the requirements for a sales professional you will realize that the things that made you a great military officer are almost identical to what makes a good sales representative: your intelligence, drive, your mission-oriented and competitive nature, good communication skills, strong interpersonal skills, a desire to be the best, and a desire to be challenged.

Transitioning from military life to the civilian workforce can be challenging for many veterans. The structure, discipline, and camaraderie that define military service often stand in stark contrast to the more fluid and competitive civilian job market. However, there is one career path that not only aligns well with the skills developed in the military but also offers significant growth opportunities: a career in sales.



Sales is an exciting adrenaline rush profession – Pic source: [freepik luis molinero](#)

The Skillsets Required for Success in Sales

Sales is a dynamic field that requires a blend of interpersonal skills, strategic thinking, and resilience. To succeed in sales, one must be able to:

- **Communicate Effectively:** Clear, concise, and persuasive communication is crucial in sales. Whether it's explaining the benefits of a product, negotiating terms, or closing a deal, effective communication can make or break a sale.
- **Build Relationships:** Sales is often about building long-term relationships with clients. This requires empathy, patience, and the ability to understand and address the needs of others.
- **Problem-Solving:** Sales professionals need to be quick thinkers, able to identify challenges and offer solutions that meet the customer's needs while aligning with the company's goals.
- **Adaptability:** The sales environment is fast-paced and constantly changing. The ability to adapt to new products, markets, and customer demands is critical.
- **Resilience:** Rejection is a part of sales. A successful salesperson must be able to handle setbacks and remain motivated to achieve their goals.

Route into Executive Leadership

85% of CEOs and senior managers either started their career or have spent some time in their career in sales and felt that their roles in sales were critical to their professional development and career progression. It tells you about what happens at the "tip of the iceberg"—at the customer interface. As a military leader, you have already developed leadership skills and have solid excellent experience. After performing well in a sales role, former military leaders routinely get selected for promotion into leadership positions faster than their peers. Not all great sales people are good leaders, so this can be a great advantage to you starting a new career.

Sales can be a powerful route into executive leadership for several reasons:

- **Direct Impact on Revenue:** Sales professionals are at the forefront of driving revenue, which is the lifeblood of any organization. Executives with a sales background have a deep understanding of how to generate income, making them valuable leaders.
- **Customer-Centric Insights:** Sales roles provide firsthand experience in understanding customer needs and behaviour. This customer-centric perspective is crucial for executives who need to align the company's strategies with market demands.

- **Strategic Thinking:** Successful salespeople often engage in strategic planning to meet targets. This skill translates well into executive roles, where strategic decision-making is key to driving business growth.
- **Relationship Building:** Sales professionals are skilled in building and maintaining relationships, not only with clients but also with stakeholders and partners. This ability to foster strong networks is essential for executives who must navigate complex organizational dynamics.
- **Resilience and Adaptability:** The sales environment is competitive and constantly changing, requiring resilience and adaptability. Executives with a sales background are often better equipped to handle the pressures of leadership and steer the company through challenges.
- **Leadership and Team Management:** Sales roles often involve leading teams, managing performance, and motivating others to achieve goals. This experience is directly applicable to executive leadership, where guiding and inspiring teams is critical.
- **P&L Responsibility:** In many organizations, senior sales roles involve profit and loss (P&L) responsibility. This experience with financial management prepares sales professionals for the broader financial oversight required in executive positions.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Sales professionals frequently work with other departments, such as marketing, product development, and finance. This cross-functional experience is valuable for executives who must lead and coordinate across the entire organization.

In summary, the skills and experiences gained in sales roles—such as revenue generation, strategic thinking, relationship management, and leadership—create a solid foundation for transitioning into executive leadership positions. Does that get you interested? Read on for more details and insights about a career in sales.

Correlating Military Skills with Sales

Veterans possess many of the skills that are crucial for success in sales. Here's how military experience translates into the sales profession:

- **Discipline and Persistence:** Military training instills a high level of discipline, which is invaluable in sales. The persistence to follow through, meet deadlines, and maintain a strong work ethic is essential for achieving sales targets.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** Veterans are natural leaders and team players. In sales, leadership qualities help in guiding clients toward making decisions, while teamwork is essential in collaborating with colleagues to achieve organizational goals.

- **Strategic Thinking:** Military personnel are trained to think strategically, plan operations, and anticipate challenges. In sales, this translates into the ability to develop effective sales strategies, anticipate customer objections, and find innovative solutions to close deals.
- **Resilience Under Pressure:** The ability to perform under pressure, which is honed in the military, is critical in sales. Whether it's dealing with a tough client or managing a high-stakes negotiation, veterans are well-equipped to handle the stress and remain focused.
- **Effective Communication:** Military roles often require clear and effective communication, whether it's giving orders or coordinating with allies. This skill directly transfers to sales, where clear communication is key to understanding client needs and conveying the value of a product or service.

SALES AS A HIGH-GROWTH CAREER



While sales can be a high-pressure job it is equally rewarding as well

Pic Source: freepik; [Kamran Aydinov](#)

Sales is one of the most lucrative and high-growth career paths available. Here's why:

- **Unlimited Earning Potential:** Many sales positions offer commission-based earnings, meaning your income potential is directly tied to your performance. This allows for potentially high earnings, especially for those who excel.
- **Career Advancement:** Sales roles often provide clear paths for career advancement. Top performers can quickly move up the ranks, taking on roles such as Sales Manager, Regional Director, or Vice President of Sales.
- **Industry Versatility:** Sales skills are transferable across industries. Whether it's technology, healthcare, finance, or manufacturing, the need for skilled sales professionals is universal. This versatility allows veterans to choose an industry that aligns with their interests and expertise.

- **Building a Network:** A career in sales provides the opportunity to build a vast professional network. This network can be invaluable for career growth, opening doors to new opportunities and collaborations.
- **Job Security:** Companies will always need to sell their products or services, making sales a relatively secure profession. Top sales performers are often among the most valued employees, further enhancing job security. Sales is a vertical where layoffs do not come first even in times of recession.

Sales Domains and Where Veterans Are a Natural Fit

Sales is a broad field with many sub-domains where veterans can thrive. Here are some of the key areas:

- **Business-to-Business (B2B) Sales:** B2B sales involve selling products or services to other businesses. Veterans, especially those with experience in logistics, procurement, or supply chain management, may find B2B sales particularly appealing. Their ability to understand complex organizational needs and negotiate at a high level makes them ideal for this domain.
- **Technical Sales:** For veterans with a background in technology, engineering, or telecommunications, technical sales can be an excellent fit. This role requires a deep understanding of the product and the ability to explain technical details to potential clients. The precision and attention to detail honed in the military are valuable assets in this field.
- **Government Sales:** Veterans are uniquely positioned to excel in government sales, where knowledge of government procurement processes and regulations is crucial. Experience in the military provides insights into how government agencies operate, making it easier to navigate this complex sales environment.
- **Medical and Pharmaceutical Sales:** Veterans with experience in military medicine or healthcare administration can transition into medical or pharmaceutical sales. This domain requires an understanding of medical products and the ability to communicate effectively with healthcare professionals.
- **Retail Sales:** While retail sales might seem less specialized, the leadership, discipline, and interpersonal skills developed in the military can make veterans highly effective in retail management and sales roles. This domain offers opportunities for rapid advancement, especially in large retail chains.
- **Consultative Sales:** This domain focuses on selling solutions rather than products. Veterans who excel in strategic thinking and problem-solving may find consultative sales particularly rewarding. The ability to assess client needs and offer tailored solutions is a key aspect of this role.

Conclusion

A career in sales offers veterans the opportunity to leverage their military skills in a dynamic, high-growth environment. The discipline, leadership, and strategic thinking developed during military service align closely with the demands of a successful sales career. Moreover, the earning potential, career advancement opportunities, and job security make sales an attractive option for veterans seeking a fulfilling post-military career. While many people may question my credentials in writing this article considering that I myself did not pursue a career in sales. This is what I would like to say now that I have the benefit of a 16 year corporate experience I will say if I were to re transition from the Army to the corporate world I would have chosen Technology Sales as a profession to pursue.

Veterans bring a unique set of skills to the table, making them natural fits for various sales domains. Whether it's B2B, technical, government, or medical sales, the attributes honed in the military can be the foundation for a successful and rewarding career in sales. As more veterans transition to civilian life, the sales profession offers a promising pathway to continued success and growth.



Lt Col Iqbal Singh is an infantry officer who is now working with a Big Tech firm based at Gurgaon. He is also the Founder of Forces Network. Iqbal took premature retirement from the Indian Army in 2008. He has in the past worked with Satyam Computers at Hyderabad and Nokia at Noida. He is fond of public speaking , writing and training and loves to share his knowledge with others. He has mentored hundreds of military officers in their transition journey into the corporate.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Article, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

“

Great salespeople are relationship builders who provide value and help their customers win.

-Jeffrey Gitomer

Theme Article

Salesperson and Sales

BY UDAY SHRIWAS

1: - Introduction to Sales – 1 amongst many perspectives.

2: - What Sales is and What it is not?

3:- And Veterans must Look at Sales as a Good Career Options.

Introduction to Sales

Storytelling and Stories have been with us from times immemorial, With that I come to a very humble submission in the present era, Who you think are the best storytellers when we look at the Professionals in the world today, Whether that person is an Employee or an Entrepreneur, A **SALESPERSON**-

Yes, a Salesperson is THE best storyteller that one can come across, He can create stories out of nowhere, He can create amazing characters in all his stories to engage the audience (Customer), He can look so Familiar to even a stranger from the other Continent- And you can hear this Question being asked – **Have we met before?** HE can convince you against your own wish and still make you feel happy about the decision.... Agree? I think a Good Sales Guy can change this world for the Good on the gloomiest day... Worth Trying.

With that Let me come to the next part of Sales as a domain/field/profession,

How many of you agree that Sales is an Art? How many of you agree that Sales is Science? Well Now, how many of you agree that the Sales is perfect balance of ART and SCIENCE..... what do you think? Ok let us get a hang of these two worlds ART and SCIENCE.

Art : Is a broad range of human activity that uses imagination and creativity to express ideas and emotions through a physical medium. Art can also be a way of doing or applying creative skills, such as in music, theater, or literature,

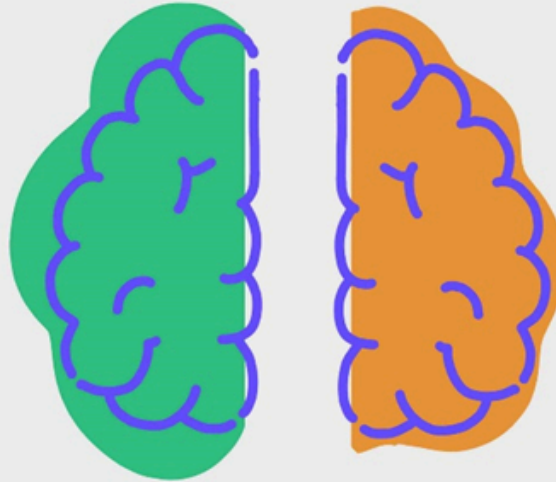
Science: The systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation, experimentation, and the testing of theories against the evidence obtained.

Now -What is Sales? Simply put, Art & Science Blended perfectly is Called Sales. Imagination, Creativity, Structure, Analysis, Experimentation and many such traits and qualities come together to bring out a perfect SALES.

Let us move forward...

Left Brain VS Right Brain

Logical
Analytical
Linear
Verbal
Factual
Sequential



Creative
Intuitive
Artistic
Non-verbal
Emotional
Imaginative

Now that is an Actual Mind Map of a Good Sales Guy.... **Hahhha** I mean this is a good depiction of our Brain and how it has two distinct sides. And a Salesperson needs to cater to both the sides of the customer. He must be creative to appeal to the someone seeking novelty and bring logical reasoning in the discussion to get the buy in from the customers for the novelty being offered coz' that can lead to an optimal outcome for both the parties engaged in any exchange. In true sense, a Salesguy is that Tight rope walking expert who must continue doing the balancing act, A simple Buying process would make us understand the stages and the interventions of a Salesperson at each of these stages,

Buying decision process according to Dewey in 5 stages



1. Problem / need recognition



2. Information research



3. Evaluation of alternatives



4. Purchase decision



5. Post purchase behaviour



IONOS

(Reference- Credit for Image to IONOS Website)

A Good Sales Guy would be there with customer in each stage and would assist to get THE best Product or Service for the Customer.

Over a period, Sales has gone through lots of changes and at times it occurs to us that it has moved from a Pull to a PUSH and in your face kinds,

What Sales is and What it is not?

Sales is never about – We have This Product – Please Buy it.... NO not at all!

Sales is about – Please let us know your needs and We will bring you a Solution (Product or Service).

Sales is not about Making something and selling,

Sales is Journey taken along with the Customer and arrive at the destination together.

There can be many such one-line explanations- for Sales as a Win -Win idea and not just a Profit-Making Process – The Debate on this is always an ongoing Agenda for all Businesses....

One must read few books to get a Right Mindset to be a good Salesperson.

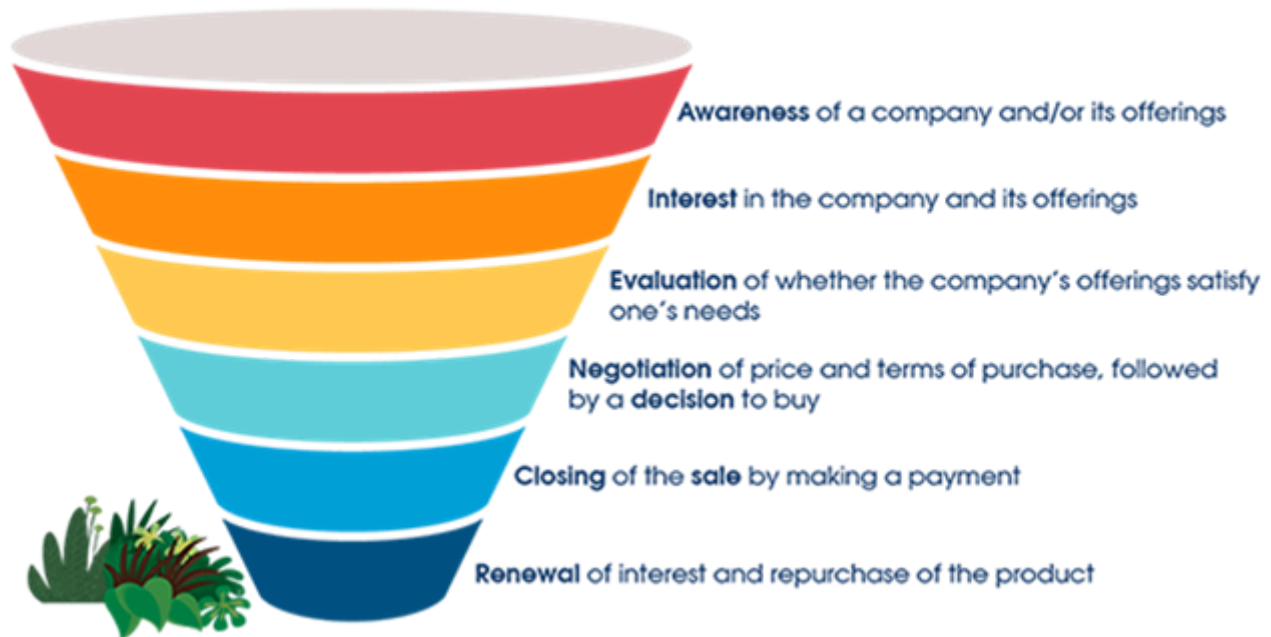
- **Good to Great** - Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't. The writer Jim Collins talks about 6 key principles a company needs to have to transform itself into a great company. This is a beautiful work of research to understand what makes a company Great. And thus, why they have nurtured the culture of Customer First and thus also creating Great Products and Services. Which In turn Makes for PERFECT SALES
- **Creative Confidence**- A powerful and compelling book by David and Tom Kelley on unleashing the creativity that lies within each and every one of us. This book talks about the process of Creatively developing solutions and products to meet the customer needs and not just stop at that- But BRING the touch of DELIGHT in every environment that has a Buyer and a Salesperson and wherever SALES is happening. It aims at Making SALES a Celebration for both the Buyer and Salesperson.

The question is - Why would someone buy something?

For that let us look at Acquisition - Acquiring customers is a combination of marketing, sales, and support steps with an aim to converting prospective customers into Buyers.

The sales process can be well understood as a funnel which consists of several steps. From a Prospective customer at the top to finally the Buyers at the end of the funnel.

The 6 stages in a sales funnel



(Image – Credit to Salesforce- [\(Reference- Credit for Image to IONOS Website\)](#))

IF you wish to close a Sale – then it is so important that all these stages have the involvement of the Salesperson so that we create a Product or service or a proposition which is well received by the End users. This process of explorations has a lot to do with the inputs from the Salesperson, who is also the REAL Foot Soldier on Ground. With that I would now Touch upon the topic from the point of view of Veterans and why they would make a GREAT SALES guy....

Remember Rocket Singh - Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year is a 2009 Indian Hindi-language comedy-drama film.



A very simple and humorous but good take on the Salesman and his life journey. But it talks about the Self-Belief and finding Inspirations everywhere including within us and thus achieve our Goals whether otherwise in life or as a SALESMAN.

Veterans in SALES-

IF you ask me, I would say We in Armed Forces on almost daily basis, are actually Engaging in lots of SALES pitching and Effective Negotiations and finally Onboarding the Decision Makers. Let us do this 1 Minute experiment -

Just close your eyes for 1 Minute and look back!

1 MINUTE----- Done.

..... See I told you,

Wondering why I feel Armed Forces trains you to become the best Talkers and makes you into a perfect Salesperson.... Think and dive deep ... See your training from an angle of Training for Sales and handling tough Decision Making and Negotiations.... Think and just visualize.... Think about those engagement you had as a young Captain with your CO Think Yes, I Bet you would agree that I am a TRUE Rocket Singh who can create GREAT Sales opportunities from any and every conversation.... I can become a Perfect Salesperson - Who Blends Art and Science - Who Keeps Customer First- Who can Create Perfect Sales opportunities from nowhere- Who has Eyes on the Goals but to aims create happiness for the Customers.

To keep this easy to assimilate - I will quote few Interesting Dialogues -

Risk toh Spiderman ko bhi lena padta hai ... main toh phir bhi salesman hoon

I think every Veteran should look at Sales as an Amazing career opportunity,

And the Golden RULE in SALES is,

Business number nahi, business log hai ... sirf log



Capt Uday K Shriwas was commissioned into the Corps of Signals, and served in various theaters during his service for five years, including in a newly raised RR Battalion. Thereafter he has worked with many renowned Companies, like Kingfisher Airlines, IFB Home Appliances, JK Cement, and Yes Bank Ltd. He enjoys working in the field of Marketing, Business Development, Strategy. He also has keen interest in the field of Personal Branding. He is presently working as Regional Head - Honour First (Defence Vertical) IDFC FIRST Bank

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Article, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

Theme Article

Demystifying the Sales Vertical

BY ANISH JAIRATH

Transitioning from the military to civilian life is a significant professional and personal shift. The military provides a highly structured, mission-focused environment where teamwork, discipline, and leadership are paramount. In contrast, the corporate world, particularly in sectors like sales, is often characterized by fluidity, competition, and rapid changes in market dynamics. Despite these differences, the sales vertical offers a compelling career path for veterans. The demand for skilled sales professionals is rising across industries in India, driven by economic growth, digital transformation, and the increasing complexity of customer needs. The sales vertical, encompassing roles such as presales, direct sales, account management, and sales operations, offers numerous opportunities for veterans to leverage their experience and thrive in new professional environments.

Sales roles allow veterans to leverage their military training in new and meaningful ways. The ability to lead teams, develop and execute strategies, and adapt to rapidly changing environments are all critical skills in sales. Furthermore, the sales vertical provides a range of roles—each with its unique challenges and rewards.

This article aims to demystify the sales vertical for military personnel who have chosen to transition, providing insights into various roles, required skillsets and pathways for success.

The Sales Vertical

The sales vertical is an integral part of any business, responsible for driving revenue and fostering long-term customer relationships. As businesses become more customer-centric, the role of sales professionals has evolved. The sales vertical is a broad and dynamic field that plays a crucial role in the growth and sustainability of businesses across industries. It involves identifying customer needs, presenting solutions, closing deals, and ensuring long-term customer satisfaction. The vertical can be broken down into several key areas, each offering unique opportunities and challenges.

Educating Your Buyers and Establishing Authority



Building Clientele

Google Images

Presales:

Presale is a critical phase in the sales process where the focus is on understanding the client's requirements and aligning them with the company's offerings. Presales have become increasingly important in industries like technology, where products and services are complex and require detailed explanation and customization. Presales professionals often work closely with the product development and technical teams to ensure that solutions are aligned with customer needs. Veterans with a background in logistics, operations, or planning may find presales roles particularly well-suited, as these positions require strategic thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively.

Key skills:

- Strong analytical abilities to assess client needs.
- Technical expertise to understand and explain product functionalities.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Collaborative mindset to work closely with sales and technical teams.

Career Pathways:

- **Presales Consultant:** Focuses on providing technical support and expertise during the sales process.
- **Solution Architect:** Designs tailored solutions that meet the specific needs of clients.
- **Bid Manager:** Oversees the proposal process, ensuring that all client requirements are addressed in a competitive bid.

Direct Sales:

Direct sales involve interacting directly with customers to sell products or services. This role is highly customer-focused and requires strong interpersonal skills, the ability to build relationships, and a deep understanding of the market and competition. Direct sales are evolving with the rise of digital sales channels and e-commerce. Sales professionals are now expected to be proficient in using digital tools, such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems and sales automation software. Veterans with experience in leadership, negotiation, and strategy planning are well-equipped for direct sales roles.

Key skills:

- Persuasion and negotiation skills.
- Strong understanding of market dynamics.
- Ability to build and maintain relationships.
- Resilience and persistence to handle rejection and competition.

Career Pathways:

- **Sales Representative:** Directly engages with customers to promote and sell products.
- **Account Manager:** Manages relationships with key clients, ensuring their ongoing satisfaction and retention.
- **Sales Manager:** Leads a team of sales professionals, setting targets and strategies to drive revenue growth.

Account Management:

Account management is about maintaining and nurturing relationships with existing clients to ensure continued business and upselling opportunities. This role requires a deep understanding of the client's business, proactive problem-solving, and the ability to identify new business opportunities within the account. This involves not just managing the day-to-day relationship but also identifying opportunities for upselling and cross-selling. The role of data analytics in account management is growing, as companies seek to understand customer behaviour and preferences in greater detail. Veterans who have managed teams or projects in the military may find account management a natural fit due to their experience in relationship management and strategic planning. Their experience in logistics and operations can be applied to their organizational skills in managing complex accounts and driving customer satisfaction.

Key skills:

- Strong relationship-building abilities.
- Strategic thinking to identify growth opportunities.
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills.
- Proactive approach to problem-solving.

Career Pathways:

Junior Account Manager: Focuses on managing a portfolio of smaller accounts.

Senior Account Manager: Handles key or strategic accounts with significant revenue potential.

Key Account Manager: Manages the most critical accounts, often with a focus on long-term strategic partnerships.

Sales Operations:

Sales operations are the backbone of the sales function, providing the tools, data, and processes that enable sales teams to operate efficiently and effectively. This role involves managing sales data, forecasting, and optimizing sales processes. Sales operations is becoming increasingly data-driven, with a focus on optimizing every aspect of the sales process. This includes everything from pipeline management and sales forecasting to performance analysis and process improvement. Veterans with analytical skills and experience in managing large-scale operations can find rewarding careers in sales operations, where they can contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the sales team.

Key skills:

- Analytical skills to manage and interpret sales data.
- A process-oriented mindset to streamline sales activities.
- Ability to work with sales technologies, such as CRM systems.
- Strategic planning skills to align operations with sales goals.

Career Pathways:

Sales Operations Analyst: Focuses on analyzing sales data and trends to provide actionable insights.

Sales Operations Manager: Oversees the entire sales operations function, ensuring efficiency and alignment with business objectives.

Sales Enablement Specialist: Develops tools, content, and training to support the sales team in achieving their targets.

Best Lead Nurturing Practices



Segment your leads



Send personalized & targeted emails



Follow-up in a timely manner



Utilize targeted content



Align marketing and sales teams



Create landing pages



Use multiple channels

Key Sales Cycles for Success

Google Images

How Military Skills Translate to Skills

Veterans bring a unique set of skills and attributes to the sales vertical, many of which are directly applicable and highly valued in the corporate world. Here are some key military skills that translate well into sales roles. The skills acquired during military service are not only valuable but often essential in sales roles. Let's take a closer look at how specific military skills align with key sales functions:

- **Leadership:** Veterans are trained to lead by example, manage teams, and make strategic decisions under pressure. These skills are crucial in sales, particularly in leadership roles such as sales managers or directors. In the military, leadership is about more than just giving orders—it's about inspiring and motivating a team to achieve a common goal. In sales, leadership is crucial for managing teams, driving performance, and fostering a positive sales culture.
- **Discipline and Work Ethics:** The military instills a strong sense of discipline, time management, and perseverance, all of which are essential for success in sales, where meeting targets and deadlines is paramount. Military personnel are trained to complete missions with precision and dedication. This mission-oriented mindset is invaluable in sales, where achieving targets and meeting deadlines are key to success. Veterans bring a strong work ethic and a disciplined approach to their roles, ensuring that they stay focused on their goals even in the face of challenges.
- **Communication Skills:** Effective communication is critical in both the military and sales. Veterans are adept at conveying ideas, negotiating, and building relationships—key aspects of any sales role. They are skilled in articulating strategies, giving clear instructions, and negotiating under pressure—skills that are directly applicable to client interactions, deal negotiations, and relationship management in sales.
- **Adaptability and Problem-Solving:** The ability to adapt to changing situations and solve problems quickly is a core military skill. Veterans are trained to think on their feet, solve problems creatively, and remain calm under pressure. In sales, this translates to the ability to handle objections, pivot strategies, and find creative solutions to meet client needs.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Veterans often have experience in planning and executing complex operations. Strategic planning is a critical component of military operations, where every decision must be carefully considered and aligned with broader objectives. In sales, strategic thinking is essential for understanding market trends, identifying opportunities, and developing long-term plans for growth. Veterans with experience in operations planning or strategy development will find that these skills are highly transferable to roles in sales strategy and account management.

Challenges and Solutions for Veterans Entering Sales

While veterans have many strengths that make them well-suited for sales, there are also challenges they may face during the transition:

- **Understanding Civilian Business Culture:** The corporate environment can be very different from the military, with different expectations, communication styles, and work dynamics. To address this, veterans can benefit from mentorship programs, networking, and professional development courses that help bridge the gap.
- **Learning Industry-Specific Knowledge:** Sales roles often require knowledge of specific industries, products, or technologies. Veterans may need to invest time in learning about their new industry, either through formal education or on-the-job training.
- **Building a Professional Network:** Unlike the military, where career paths are often predefined, success in sales often depends on building a strong professional network. Veterans can leverage veteran-specific networking groups, LinkedIn, and industry events to connect with potential mentors and employers.
- **Overcoming Stereotypes:** Unfortunately, some employers may have misconceptions about veterans' abilities to transition to civilian roles. Veterans can overcome this by clearly articulating how their military experience translates to sales, and by showcasing success stories from other veterans in similar roles.

Sales Challenges



Most Common Challenges faced by Sale teams

Faster Capital

Conclusion

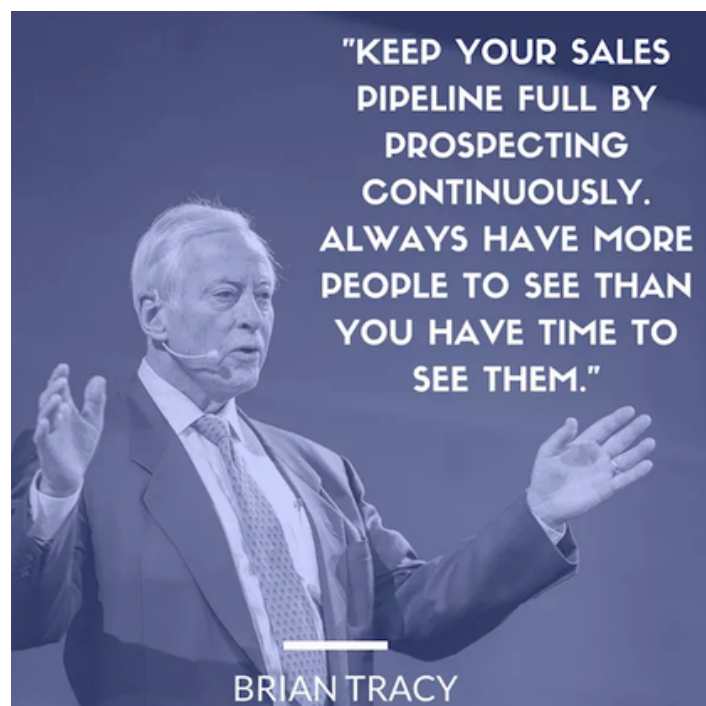
Transitioning from the military to a career in sales may seem like a significant shift, but for many veterans, it's a natural fit. The skills developed during military service—leadership, discipline, communication, adaptability, and strategic thinking—are all highly valued in the sales vertical. By understanding the different roles available, from presales to direct sales, account management, and sales operations, veterans can identify the paths that best align with their strengths and interests.

With the right support, training, and mindset, veterans can not only transition into sales roles but excel in them, bringing a unique perspective and invaluable experience to the corporate world. As more veterans explore opportunities in sales, they will continue to demonstrate the significant contributions they can make to this dynamic and vital sector.



Anish Jairath is currently pursuing his undergraduate degree in Journalism at the University of Regina, aiming to leverage his strong research and writing skills to excel across various media platforms, including print, television, and online social media. Anish's goal is to seamlessly integrate his capabilities to create compelling content that engages audiences across different mediums. He is committed to staying updated with the latest trends and technologies in journalism and media, as he understands the importance of adaptability in this ever-evolving industry. By developing skills in digital storytelling, data journalism, and multimedia production.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Article, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor





Settling Claims, Impacting Lives!



Swipe to take a glance at our
claim numbers from Apr to Dec 23



Col R Srinivas (Retd)
Director Galaxy Associate Business
Partner Star Health
7400160159
gagbhavana@gmail.com

Survey: Members Speak

As you know ForceNet E-Zine is the monthly e-magazine of the Forces Network- the network of military veterans in the corporate. We produce a specialized theme each month; for this issue, we chose, Demystifying Physical Security Vertical.

We sourced our content from veterans who are thriving in the field of Physical Security themselves.

The next few pages are dedicated to a few randomly picked veterans in their own words.

Here are the questions we asked them:

1. In the military we nearly never do sales. Many people think of sales poorly due to the stereotypical view of the untrained salesman next door who keeps bugging us. What was your understanding of the sales profession while you were in the military?
2. Having worked in Sales now what is your changed perception about the function now? Why do you think it changed?
3. What are the various subdomains in the sales vertical which you could recommend to transitioning military personnel as a good fit based on your exposure in the sector. Also suggest some industries.
4. What would be your advice to military personnel aspiring for a career in B2B or B2C Sales with regards to acquiring qualifications, certifications, skills, etc ?
5. Does the salary in the Sales vertical also vary from industry to industry? Which typically are the high paying industries?
6. Is the technology quotient required to succeed in a corporate sales role also getting raised? What in your opinion are the bare minimum tech skills that an aspiring Sales professional must have?
7. What are the three things you like about being in the Sales function?
8. What are the three things you do NOT like about being in the Sales function?



Col Vijay Pathak

Artillery DOC:2006

Years in Corporate: 15

Consultant Defence
Business, QodeNext india pvt ltd

Your Perception? Sales are good, as a veteran one should know own limits, and respect to service and you will get respect back.

View on Sales? Didn't know anything, one retired Army officer contacted me and offered me a job as VP of sales. He taught me how to go about sales.

Recommended Sub-domains?

Sales per se are the same. There are no subdomains, Transitioning people should be open-minded and, learn the product they are selling thoroughly. Industries suggested: drones, fuel cells, AI software.

Any advice?

Companies hire retired military personnel to create a footprint in an unknown area the Military. If one can do that, then there is no need to acquire any extra qualifications or certification.

Salary variation?

This again is relative to how much business you can get for the industry, and how many hours a day you are willing to put.

Importance of Technology?

Depends on which sub-domain you choose to invest yourself in.

3 things you like?

Independence to work

travel to military establishment and meet old friends

stay updated

3 things you don't like?

Too much traveling, boss breathing down your neck for meeting deadlines, unrealistic targets set by bosses.



Lt Col Sudhanshu Srivastava
Infantry DOC:2014
Years in Corporate:10

**Business Channel Head,
Pramerica Life insurance**

View on Sales? Thought it to be target-oriented and more pressure without realising that all verticals have quantifiable KPIs always

Recommended Sub-domains?
Sales subdomains would be Campaign and program management, frontline sales, product designing, customer service Industry recommended
Finance, Alcohol, Defence equipment , FMCG, Luxury real estate ,

Any advice?

Industry and product knowledge is a must . Orientation for the industry specific knowledge is a must. Pre sales preparation is a must as well as pitching practice and patience .

Salary Variation?

Finance is definitely a high paying sector. Initial start may be medium in any industry but picks up post delivery .

Your perception?

Learnt from mistakes . Observed other channels . Learnt products and sales funnel . Knowing impact of your business on the organisation. Played on strengths of people management and ability to dirty hands on ground . Sales has the ability to deliver tremendous growth in a short span of time .

Importance of Technology?

Data analysis needs to be very strong . All basic and advanced Excel, power bi , skills, ability to use AI is needed .

3 things you like?

Team, Growth, Influencing the larger organisation

3 things you don't like?

Continuous non stop focus gets to you sometimes, Priority for your channel may vary in comparison to other channels or verticals , High attrition . High poaching



Lt Col Naveen Navlani

EME DOC:2016

Years in Corporate:8

VP Sales, Kusumgar Pvt Ltd

Your Perception? In the military we nearly never do sales. Many people think of sales poorly due to the stereotypical view of the untrained salesman next door who keeps bugging us.

View on Sales?

Sales is - Presenting a value proposition to the customer. You got to become the preferred go to man for the customer for your line of products. Sales also needs quick thinking, crunching numbers and to be a good negotiator.

Importance of Technology?

Tech skills will depend on which product the company is into. However, working with spreadsheets, email applications and MS Office will come under essential skills, irrespective of the nature of business of the company.

3 things you like?

Kick you get out of 'running' a business, Incentives, Flexi working hours, travel.

3 things you don't like?

For some people, travel becomes a problem.

Recommended Sub-domain?

Core Sales is the preferred role. Not recommend Pre Sales (at least for newly transitioning veterans because Pre Sales is a more technical role). Industries - Aerospace & Defence, many non A&D companies are wanting to enter this sector. Veterans would be ideal to guide them and head the A&D arm of such companies.

Any advice?

There aren't any specific qualifications or certifications required for Sales roles (at least in non IT sector).

Salary Variation?

Salary depends on one's negotiation skills, industry standards, job location etc. However, must negotiate on the incentive structure. In Typical Sales driven organisations, Sales people make 25-125% of their CTC in Sales incentives.



Major Azmi Siddiqui

Infantry, DOC: 2007

*Head Sales(ME), Mahindra
Defence*

Years in Corporate: 16

Your Perception?

It is easy. Once inside you
make your way out

**Recommended Sub-
domains?**

Sales in defence sector can
be an ideal choice however
a military person can fit in
any industry if he is open
to learning, stays humble
and is aggressively looking
for growth

Any advice?

Each category has its plus
and minuses, however it
depends on individual choice.

Salary Variation?

A sales person always
earns from his profit
share (incentive) and
the figures are amazing

View on Sales?

A military man makes the best
salesperson as he is always selling his
commitment to his subordinates and
this sale is so effective that his
soldiers are ready to pay for his
commitment with their lives

Importance of Technology?

Basic computer knowledge and
continuous learning is good enough

3 things you like?

Independence, respect and high
earning potential

3 things you don't like?

Nothing



Capt Shantanu Krishna

Artillery, DOC: 2007

Years in Corporate: 17

Managing Director, Pinkerton

Your perception?

I always wanted to join the sales vertical and prepared myself for it by reading also the resettlement course at IIM Indore really helped me to firm up my decision.

Recommended Sub-domains?

When choosing a vertical, an army professional should consider their personal interests, the transferability of their skill set, and the extent to which they wish to leverage their military experience. Additionally, they should remember that transitioning to sales often requires developing new skills, such as a deeper understanding of the specific market, sales techniques, and often, product-specific knowledge.

Any Advice?

Understand the Sales Process: Sales can be similar to military operations in that it requires a systematic approach, from prospecting and building relationships to negotiating and closing deals. Familiarize yourself with the concepts of sales funnels, CRM tools, and sales cycles.

Salary Variations?

In general, individuals with a military background might find certain sales industries particularly attractive due to their high potential for earnings, as well as those industries where their skills and experiences could be especially relevant.

View on Sales?

While the context and stakes are different, there are many parallels between the skills and attributes developed in the military and those utilized in the sales profession. Both fields require a strong work ethic, strategic thinking, and the ability to work under pressure to achieve specific objectives.

Importance of Technology?

The sales landscape has become increasingly tech-driven, and to be competitive, a salesperson should possess a baseline knowledge.

3 things you like?

Adrenaline Rush of meeting the targets and being one who is responsible for revenue generation. Hard work pays (literally and figuratively) Sky is the limit

3 things you don't like?

As such there is nothing that i dont like about sales, but people might fight it difficulty to adapt due to heavy Dependency on various departments or teams for success of one's project.



Lt Cdr Krishna Kumar Jhala

Electrical, DOC:2021

Business Development ,Kaynes

Technology India Ltd

Years in Corporate: 4

Your Perception?

It is all about networking and understanding customer requirement

Recommended Sub-domains?

Technology Sales

Any advice?

A basic knowledge of finance and management accounting helps. Remaining is on job training

Salary Variations?

Initially may not be lucrative but if you are a performer sky is the limit

View on Sales?

Sales is an art, especially in the technology domain.

Importance of Technology?

MS Office and CRM software knowledge vital to navigate sales

3 things you like?

Get to meet people, chance to improve your people skills and flexibility

3 things you don't like?

Requires a high level of motivation, high pressure to achieve targets and there is no limit on target setting



Major Rajneesh Dhar

*EME DOC:2007 Years
in Corporate: 14
Freelance, Consultant*

Your perception?

Worked more than a decade successfully as sales person.

Perception changed as now I know I am selling value to anyone who is willing to buy.

Recommended Sub-domains?

Sales Programs, Partner Sales , Sales Operations

Any Advice?

Sales is an art too so qualifications are not prerequisite but can help. Business acumen is far more important.

Salary Variations?

Sales will be highly paid in industries where the product is made to order.

View on Sales?

When I was in military, I always respected Sales as had done it prior to army. I just thought it to be very difficult profession where you lower your esteem to sell.

Importance of Technology?

If you are going into technology sales , it will help to know the nuances of product.

3 things you like?

The thrill, Acting as a hunter and the patience while waiting

3 things you don't like?

Analysing the risk or failure



Commander Ashin Mahajan Navy DOC:2019 Years in Corporate:5

GM Sales, Campus Activewear Limited

Your Perception?

Thanks to my INCS Experience, I was aware that Sales is not an easy vertical and involves a lot of skill, strategy, and genuine value creation

View on Sales? In reality, effective sales professionals are often deeply knowledgeable about their products or services and skilled at understanding and addressing the needs of their clients. They use their expertise to build trust and offer solutions that genuinely benefit their customers. Good salespeople are adept at relationship-building and problem-solving, rather than just pushing a product.

Salary Variation?

All depends on what you get to the table, sales roles in high-value or specialized industries tend to offer higher salaries, often due to the complexity of the sales process, the size of the deals, or the value of the products and services being sold.

3 things you like?
For me, it is Fun, Challenge and

Recommended Sub-domains?

Based on your Experience and Connects try to first venture in a comfortable area and build expertise in the outside world. Can range from Defence, Aerospace, Telecom, Government Procedures, Specialised Equipment Sales like Hydrographic, Marine Pumps, etc

Any advice?

Qualifications like an MBA are very helpful for all around development. Unlearning - Learning Skills are important to not only make value based sales but also for internal alignment within the Company. Certifications in your Domain are a must. Always be hungry for knowledge and sales. Don't win arguments with Customers or Organisation, always win the orders.

Importance of Technology?

Good Excel Skills, Outlook, Teams are a must

Growth and taken for granted (nobody even talks of these as a requirement, it's just a prerequisite). You need to exploit these and turn Data to Information to credible actionable insights, which is essential at the level we want to operate. Hence you need to master the whole domain from ground level to these Tech tools.

3 things you don't like?

There will always be pressure of sales targets linked to performance bonus which are always not in your hand. Supply issues, etc may adversely affect your performance.

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Star of Forces Network

A Forces Network Star is a member of the Forces Network who has gone on to achieve glory in the his/her corporate/civilian avatar. The aim of this series is not just to celebrate our successes from the veteran community, which unfortunately we do not do enough, but also to inspire others. The ultimate goal is to set up a virtuous self-sustaining cycle of inspiration leading to more successes in turn inspiring many more.

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY SHRIWAS

Capt Abhinaya Sharma was commissioned into 5 Rajputana Rifles on 20 Mar 2004 and served until 19 March 2009. His transition was supported by a Business Management course from XLRI. Adept at blending military precision with corporate strategy, he is the Business Head of Value Engineering at Jindal Stainless Limited. Before joining Jindal, Abhinaya enhanced his expertise at Vedanta Resources, focusing on key accounts management in non-ferrous metals. He now leads global expansion and revenue initiatives at Jindal, implementing strategies like "China Plus One." Abhinaya lives with his wife, Sarabjeet Kaur Sharma, and their daughter, Sarabhi, drawing daily inspiration from his family.



Uday: Can you share some insights into your early life before joining the military? How did your family, upbringing, and community shape your aspirations?

Abhinaya: I grew up in a middle-class family where my father juggled equations as a professor at Delhi University and penned plays, while my mother managed the banking world. With both parents working, our household ran on a mix of love, discipline, and the occasional mislaid homework. My dad always had two pieces of advice: be true to yourself and work hard—advice that seemed more suitable for ancient philosophers than a youngster. But as I stumbled into my twenties, these words became my unofficial life hacks, laying a solid foundation that proved useful from the military barracks to the boardroom.

Uday: What role did your educational experiences play in preparing you for the challenges of military training? Were there specific instances or mentors that significantly influenced you?

Abhinaya: My journey towards the military started quite humorously; as a preschooler, my class teacher's husband was an army officer, and one glimpse of that uniform had me pestering my dad for my own. I sported it for my fourth



On Mother's bday with father and sister

birthday, and from then, my heart was set on the NDA, initially aiming to be a pilot. After a detour in my dreams due to the PABT test, I shifted my focus from the skies to the grounds of the army. Throughout school and while studying at Khalsa College, mentors like Mrs. Bharti Gandhi and Mrs. Rashmi Raj pushed me towards critical thinking and leadership. Not to forget, my best friend and cheerleader Sarabjeet, who was a pillar of support and later turned out to be my partner in life, played a significant role. This mix of support and education not only prepared me for the military's challenges but also taught me to adapt and chase my dreams, no matter the altitude!



Mud bath with coursemate during academy days

Uday: Sports often teach essential life skills. How did your involvement in sports contribute to your leadership style and teamwork philosophy?

Abhinaya: In 9th grade, I began my journey in track and field sports, which turned out to be a pivotal experience for me. Under the guidance of my coach, Mr. Shyam Choudhary, I honed my skills in shot put and discus throw. His training not only improved my athletic performance but also instilled in me the principles of discipline and persistence. I achieved considerable success, winning medals at the state level and representing Delhi in national championships for shot put and discus throw during 1996-1997. In 1997, my school recognized my leadership potential and appointed me as the games captain. This role was more than just an honor; it was a practical training ground in leadership. It involved organizing team practices, making strategic decisions during competitions, and motivating my peers. These experiences taught me valuable lessons about teamwork, resilience, and leading by example, which have been incredibly beneficial in my subsequent military and corporate roles, where leading diverse teams and managing pressure are part of everyday life.

Uday: Reflecting on the beginning of your military career, what were your initial thoughts and feelings during training, and how did they evolve over time?

Abhinaya: Joining the military academy was like stepping into a whole new universe—I was the first in my family to don a uniform, so everything from the relentless schedule to the shiny boots was uncharted territory. At first, I was as nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs. But then I met my roommates, and it turned out none of us had a clue—making us a perfect squad of rookies. Together, we learned to navigate the rigorous demands of military life. Amidst this, I faced the personal tragedy of losing my father to dengue before my graduation. My mother, a pillar of strength, alongside my wife Sarab and sister Anukriti, held the fort at home, encouraging me to pursue my dreams. This profound support and the bonds formed during training deeply shaped my sense of duty and leadership, solidifying my commitment to serving as a commissioned officer.

Uday: Throughout your service, which missions or postings were particularly transformative for you, and why?

Abhinaya: First is always special and the transformation was my first posting and first CO. My unit treated me so well in terms of imparting training, grooming about its traditions that I start feeling that this is my second home. Second transformation happened when I did my YO course where I realised that hard work and correct method helps in achieving the goal. Third transformation was experience of north east which actually helped in going into details before taking any decision because that place is full of misinformation. These experiences sharpened my decision-making skills and taught me the importance of calmness and clarity under pressure.

Uday: Could you discuss a particularly challenging situation during your military service that taught you a critical lesson in leadership or resilience?

Abhinaya: During a challenging four-day unit movement, I was the senior officer in charge of organizing transport with just 3 years of service and my CO has shown full confidence on me, food, and troop logistics. Managing the trains, food supplies, and the loading and unloading of equipment required meticulous planning and adaptability. I leaned heavily on the expertise of my more experienced junior colleagues, which was crucial for overcoming obstacles. This experience taught me the importance of collaboration, flexibility, and staying calm under pressure. It was a pivotal moment in my career, highlighting the value of teamwork and effective leadership.



With the CO during promotion

Uday: What motivated your transition from military to civilian life, and how did you approach the challenges of adapting to a corporate environment?

Abhinaya: Due to medical reasons, I had to make the difficult decision to leave this exceptional organization. The timing was particularly challenging, as it was 2009 and the IT market was experiencing a downturn. After completing my five-year short service commission, I undertook a course at XLRI to bridge the gap between corporate and military life. Interaction with various corporate leaders inspired me to pursue new opportunities in logistics and procurement. This led to an opportunity at Vedanta in my desired field. Adapting to this new environment required me to apply my leadership and problem-solving skills, seek mentorship, and continually learn about industry practices. Building a strong network and remaining adaptable were also essential to successfully navigating this transition.



With seniors during the Asam tenure

Uday: Can you outline your journey through the corporate world from procurement to becoming a business head? What were the key challenges and achievements?

Abhinaya: I started my journey with procurement and working in a plant. Both the things were very new for me. Transitioning from military to corporate procurement can be challenging due to cultural differences, the need to learn new terminologies and systems, and building a new professional network. As I was learning new things and adding skills, I was also open to accept new opportunities so that I can move upward in the ladder. Challenges were different in different role but main was to be ready to learn new things with every new opportunity. Among various achievements in the corporate world, I have selected as star of business in third year of joining and awarded chairman's award in my sixth year while leading Silver and Lead sale for Pan India. Later I moved as Business Head to manage a complete vertical of OEM business.



Posting in the Mahajan ranges



Meeting with a new customer in US, along with CEO

Uday: Tell us in brief about your role as a Business Head? What are the key deliverables in the Business Development area?

Abhinaya: As the Business Head at Jindal Stainless Limited, my role revolves around steering our strategic direction, expanding our market presence, and driving revenue growth. In the realm of Business Development, my key deliverables include identifying and securing new clients, particularly in international markets such as the USA and Europe. This involves representing our company at global trade shows like the Inspire Homeshow in the USA and Index in Saudi Arabia, where we enhance our brand visibility and forge strategic partnerships. Another major aspect is product diversification; I've introduced four new products to our lineup, broadening our domestic presence and contributing significantly to our revenue. Additionally, I am responsible for ensuring that the overall business remains profitable and identifying areas where we can reduce costs. The global "China Plus One" strategy is a significant initiative that I am leveraging to diversify our supply chain and enhance market opportunities. My role is to ensure that we not only meet but exceed our growth targets through innovative strategies and effective team leadership.



KitchenAid plant meeting for new contract



Conducting Visit of Mr Abhyuday Jindal in our plant. He is second from left.

Uday: What specific skills from your military training have been most beneficial in your corporate roles, especially in sales and leadership?

Abhinaya: Throughout my corporate career, the strategic planning and execution skills honed during my military service have been pivotal in navigating the complex landscape of global procurement and sales. For instance, while at Vedanta Resources and Jindal Stainless Limited, my ability to manage key accounts and drive global expansion initiatives was underpinned by disciplined leadership and robust team management skills—attributes nurtured in the military. Additionally, my clear and direct communication style, developed in the military, enabled effective negotiation with international partners and helped in securing long-term contracts, enhancing supplier relationships and boosting revenue growth in challenging environments. These military-derived skills have been integral not just in achieving, but also in surpassing the strategic goals set in my corporate roles.

Uday: What advice would you offer to veterans who are transitioning to civilian careers, particularly in sales or leadership roles?

Abhinaya: As an infantryman transitioning to corporate roles, particularly in sales and leadership, I found that my military experience served as a strong foundation. Skills developed in military logistics, such as local procurement and vendor management, directly translate to similar functions in the corporate world. Managing accounts and funds in a military capacity is akin to overseeing a business's profit and loss, offering valuable insights into financial management and operational oversight. My advice to veterans entering civilian careers is to leverage their inherent discipline, strategic planning abilities, and leadership skills. It's also crucial to understand the specific contexts of your new industry and remain open to continuous learning and adaptation. This proactive approach will not only ease the transition but also enhance your contributions and opportunities in your new roles.



Annual Business plan finalisation meeting

Uday: How do you continue to grow and develop professionally in a rapidly changing business environment? What strategies do you use to stay ahead in your field?

Abhinaya: In the rapidly evolving business landscape, my professional growth is fueled by a blend of military-derived discipline and a commitment to continuous learning. I actively keep abreast of industry trends and technological advancements, crucial for maintaining a competitive edge in procurement and strategic management. Networking is vital; attending industry events like the Inspire Homeshow in the USA and Index Saudi Arabia broadens my perspectives and connections. Additionally, I consistently seek feedback and set clear goals, ensuring my development aligns with the dynamic demands of my field. These strategies enable me to not just adapt, but to thrive and lead in my professional endeavours.



Representing Jindal Lifestyle in Mumbai exhibition



Family pic with mother, wife and daughter

Uday: Please do tell us more about your family?

Abhinaya: I was born and brought up in Delhi. My father, Dr. K.C. Sharma, was a Hindi professor at Delhi University. My mother, Itee Sharma, worked as a banker at Bank of Baroda. My sister is married and lives in Jaipur, where she runs a business as a financial consultant along with my brother-in-law. My wife, Sarabjeet Kaur Sharma, is a trained fitness advisor and heads sales and operations at M/s Wooden Strings Interior Design Company. My daughter, Sarabhi Sharma, is a commerce student in class 12th at Army Public School, Noida. I currently reside in Noida.

Also i would like to add name of Mr Rajesh Mohata who has guided me in my career since 2012 in Hindustan Zinc limited when he was the CCO of that company and he only gave this opportunity of business head in this company in 2021 when he was the CEO of Jindal Lifestyle Limited.



Capt Uday K Shriwas was commissioned into the Corps of Signals, and served in various theaters during his service for five years, including in a newly raised RR Battalion. Thereafter he has worked with many renowned Companies, like Kingfisher Airlines, IFB Home Appliances, JK Cement, and Yes Bank Ltd. He enjoys working in the field of Marketing, Business Development, Strategy. He also has keen interest in the field of Personal Branding. He is presently working as Regional Head - Honour First (Defence Vertical) IDFC FIRST Bank

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Interview, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

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Team Forces Network Visits Hony Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Padmashri

L-R: Capt Praveen Dahiya, Dr Lal, Capt Uday Shriwas and Maj Daksh Nakra

Forces Network Team Visited Hony Brig Dr Arvind Lal, Padma Shri in his office at Gurgaon

BY UDAY K SHRIWAS

It was a momentous occasion for the Forces Network to have some of its key members pay a courtesy visit to the Founder of Dr Lal Pathlabs at his corporate office at Gurgaon on 20 Aug 2024.

For those who may be unaware Dr Lal was a Speaker at the Forces Network - The Career Sprinters Seminar held at New Delhi on 14 July 2024.

The Forces Network team had gone to express their gratitude to Dr Lal as well as present him with a few special pictures from the seminar. The team comprised of the following officers:

- Capt Uday Shriwas.
- Capt Praveen Dahiya.
- Maj Daksh Nakra.

The Founder of Forces Network Lt Col Iqbal Singh unfortunately could not visit due to some pressing family commitments.

About the Interaction

The visit was a dream come true for our team.

Despite being a billionaire and his stupendous success Dr Lal is an extremely humble and affectionate person. His journey has been extremely special and inspiring to say the least.

To sum up the interaction with him it was it was wisdom personified. Every minute was worth thousands of words of wisdom. The team talked to him across varied subjects ranging from medical research to space exploration to fighter jets to Spirituality and Life in in general. One of the most important messages that our team could gain from the affable Dr was Happiness and Peace of Mind- are the two most valued treasures of one's life.

And oh yes, he was gracious enough to accept a small token of our gratitude and love for him.... Check out the pictures below,

We would like to thank Dr Lal for sharing his experience with us during the Forces Network Seminar in Aerocity New Delhi on 14th July 24 and also for giving us time to meet up again on 20th Aug 2024.



Dr Lal opens the wrapping while (L-R) Capt Praveen Dahiya and Maj Daksh Nakra looks on

Women Power

Spouses/Daughters of Defence Officers as well as those who have donned the uniform, have immense potential as individuals. While many of them have already established themselves as successful independent entities, a very large number still has to recognise and exploit their inherent hidden capabilities and worth. In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of such women of the members of Forces Network who have carved a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination, so as to provide adequate motivation to the others.

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY K SHRIWAS

Ms Shivani Singh is the Founder and Owner of Shivani's Bake Box. She has been a school and university topper and did her graduation from Delhi University and post-graduation from JNU, Delhi. Her love for biology guided a successful career in pharmaceutical consulting. However, the precision and creativity that fueled this journey eventually found a new outlet in the world of baking. She is a proud mom to two lovely daughters and happily married for 19 years with a truly bestest and most supportive life partner cum best friend.



Uday: Tell us something about your background before you became an Army Wife?

Shivani: I am born and brought up in Delhi and had access to one of the best schools and colleges in India. My educational journey began with a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry from Sri Venkateshwara College, Delhi University. It was here that I delved deep into the molecular mechanisms that underpin life itself. The curriculum not only equipped me with theoretical knowledge but also honed my practical skills in laboratory techniques, data analysis, and critical thinking. It was a challenging coursework that required discipline, perseverance, and a keen eye for detail. However, amidst the academic demands, I found a creative outlet through dance. I consistently won awards at various inter-college dance competitions. These achievements not only boosted my confidence but also taught me valuable lessons in teamwork, time management, prioritization, perseverance, and the importance of disciplined practice.

Building on my passion for biochemistry, I decided to pursue post-graduation in this field. The selection process for the Master's Degree at top universities in India was through All India Entrance Examinations and I surprised myself with my performance at all the entrance tests. I was amongst the top 10 AIR in all the entrance examinations I appeared for and opted to pursue a Master's degree in Life Sciences from the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University. This transition from undergraduate to post-graduate studies was marked by a shift towards more advanced topics such as molecular biology, human genetics, bioinformatics, and biotechnology.

Throughout my Master's program, I maintained a steadfast commitment to academic excellence. I actively collaborated with faculty members and fellow researchers on projects ranging from genome sequencing to human genetics. My work on sporadic breast cancer was also published in scientific journal (Breast Cancer Res. 2007;9(5):R71. doi: 10.1186/bcr1780).

I was nominated by the University to receive the prestigious “Presidents Gold Medal”, however, by the time the nomination letter was released, I was a proud Army Wife based at Army Cant, Bakloh. The Army Postal Services weren't the quickest back in 2005 and neither was online communication very popular. Unfortunately, by the time we received the letter, we were already late to accept the nomination and send in our confirmation.

Uday: Please give us more details about what you are presently engaged in?

Shivani: After 10 years in pharmaceutical market research and consulting, I decided to venture into my newfound passion for baking. I am the owner of “Shivani's Bake Box”, a gourmet cake studio based out of Sector 86, Gurgaon. We create enchanting eggless cakes, baked goods and hampers that delight and impress. Our passion for baking and commitment to quality have made us a favorite among those who seek exceptional, egg-free confections.

Our signature offering, customized / theme cakes, are crafted with the finest ingredients and a sprinkle of magic. Whether it's a birthday, anniversary, or any special occasion, our cakes are designed to bring joy and wonder to every celebration. We offer a wide variety of flavors and designs, ensuring that each cake is as unique and special as the moments they commemorate.



In addition to our delightful cakes, we specialize in creating hampers for birthday return gifts and corporate hampers. These hampers are perfect for expressing gratitude, celebrating milestones, or simply spreading joy among friends, colleagues and clients. Each hamper is thoughtfully curated, combining delicious treats and elegant presentation.

Last Diwali, we had the pleasure of crafting and delivering more than 600 corporate hampers, each meticulously designed to capture the festive spirit and deliver joy to recipients. Our hampers were a hit, filled with a selection of our finest eggless baked goods, artisanal chocolates and other surprises. The overwhelming positive feedback we received is a testament to our dedication to quality and customer satisfaction.

Uday: It was wonderful to know that you found your calling and could hear the inner voice. Trust me very few are blessed with such moments in life. Could you please take us through this special moment?

Shivani: My journey into the world of baking began in the most unexpected way. As a pharmaceutical researcher, my life was deeply rooted in the scientific and analytical world. However, it was during my maternity leave after the birth of my second daughter that I discovered a new passion that would transform my career and life.

As a workaholic at home with my newborn, I found myself spending lot of time watching baking reality shows and cake competitions. I started experimenting in the kitchen and what started as a simple hobby to pass the time soon became a profound passion. I realized that baking was more than just a way to create delicious treats; it was an art form that allowed me to express my creativity and bring joy to others.

Encouraged by the joy and satisfaction I felt while baking, I decided to take a leap of faith and venture into the world of baking professionally. Transitioning from pharmaceutical research to baking was a significant change, but it was one that felt incredibly right. The precision and attention to detail I had honed in my research career seamlessly translated into creating perfect pastries and cakes.

Looking back, the journey from pharmaceutical research to baking has been an extraordinary one. It taught me that sometimes, our true passion is discovered in the most unexpected places. Today, as I craft each cake and curate every hamper, I am reminded of the joy that comes from following one's heart and the magic that can happen when you embrace your passions fully.

Our Cake Studio and Bakery is not just a business; it's a manifestation of a dream realized and a passion pursued. Every cake and hamper we create is a testament to the passion and dedication that started in my kitchen during those precious maternity leave moments.



Uday: What is your vision behind starting your venture?

Shivani: With the support of my family and friends, I established our Cake Studio and Bakery. Each cake is a masterpiece, meticulously designed and baked to perfection. We believe that every celebration deserves a touch of magic, and our cakes are the perfect centerpiece for any occasion. We are committed to using the best quality ingredients and deliver excellence each time, both in looks and taste.

However, at Shivani's Bake Box, our vision goes beyond creating magical cakes. We are dedicated to making a meaningful impact in our community by empowering underprivileged women. Our goal is to offer them a chance to transform their lives, gain financial independence, and build a brighter future for themselves and their families. We currently have 3 female staff who are an integral part of our day to day operations. They have been with us for 1.5 years and in just this short span, I feel elated to see how much they have achieved. One of my female staff recently visited her hometown in Bhopal and has purchased a land to build their home. Another girl has turned her long-drawn dream into reality by purchasing brand new car.

Watching them grow, gain confidence, and excel in their craft is truly rewarding. We are elated to be a part of their journey and success, knowing that we have contributed to transforming their lives in meaningful ways.

Uday: What were the challenges you encountered, and how were you able to overcome them?

Shivani: Running a successful bakery comes with its set of challenges, especially when it comes to building and maintaining customer trust. Ensuring the quality and consistency of our products is paramount, and we continually strive to meet and exceed our customers' expectations despite the obstacles we face.

I still have some not so good memories of one of the first cake we delivered to a client for their anniversary. We started this journey from a tier 2 city and wanted to venture into delivering something unique. Hence, we started with buttercream cakes. However, to our surprise they weren't quite well received in the small city we were based out of. This certainly shook our confidence but we decided to rectify things and started promoting whipped cream cakes that were loved by all.



Being in the baking industry has made us realize the power and importance of seasons. The scorching summer heat poses a significant challenge for our whipped cream cakes. Maintaining the perfect texture and preventing melting requires meticulous temperature control and timing. During the rainy season, high humidity levels make fondant sticky and difficult to work with. To combat this, we use high-quality ingredients and several tricks to maintain the integrity and appearance of our fondant cakes. We also ensure that our storage and preparation areas are climate-controlled to minimize humidity's impact.

Ensuring that our cakes and hampers reach the destination in perfect condition is always a priority. Over the years, we have developed the skills and techniques that allow us to create sturdy cakes and transport them via Uber Cabs to as far as Greater Noida, Bhiwadi etc. Our team is trained to handle products with care, ensuring they arrive as beautiful and intact as when they left our bakery.

In the current economic climate, managing the rising costs of raw materials due to inflation presents significant challenges, especially for small businesses like ours. Unlike big brands, we cannot simply increase our prices to offset these costs without affecting our customer base. As an example, purchase price for pure chocolate has increased 3x in the last 6 months. This hike is inevitable as in Ghana and the Ivory Coast, the West African nations that produce the major share of the world's cocoa beans, a bad harvest season has been brought on by El Niño weather conditions, black pod disease and ageing cacao trees. Moreover, In India cocoa is imported by sea and with the crisis in the Red Sea, all cargo prices have shot up by 20%-30%. For the time being, we have only increased our prices marginally (5%-7%) and reduced our profit margins. We have no intentions to disturb the recipes of our signatures and bestsellers, come what may.

Having mentioned about the techniques and skills we have developed, there still have been unprecedented circumstances where our hard work couldn't reach the customer as we desired. There was a cake for first birthday celebration to be transported 40 km to the venue. On the way, our car met with a near fatal accident and in order to avoid serious injury to the driver as well as major damage to the car, the cake took a toll. I am really proud of how the team kept calm and handled the situation. Within 2 hours we made the cake again and delivered a perfect looking cake to the venue.

Uday: Any special memories of your time spent with your Army Cantonment Friends?

Shivani: Some of the most beautiful memories I've made are with my friends from the army. These experiences have not only enriched my life but also influenced my journey into baking. The first posting after our marriage took us to one of the most picturesque and serene location. Rajeev was posted at Bakloh Cantonment, a few kilometers before Dalhousie. This place had such a unique charm and offered beautiful experiences. Meals shared with army friends hold a special place in my

heart. These gatherings were filled with laughter, stories, and the joy of camaraderie. Cooking and enjoying meals together strengthened our bonds and created lasting memories. There hardly used to be any meal that we had without friends, either at our place or theirs.



Bakloh was a very small place amidst the mountains, where even fresh veggies used to reach us twice a week. But being a beautiful, serene place, it was definitely a favorite place for friends and family. At any time, at least one to two army friends had guests at their place. Being an extended family, we had meals together. There was one such instance where we invited all the army families and their guests at our place for a Chaat Party (as golgapas, papri chaat etc was a farsighted dream in Bakloh). We were expecting around 15-18 guests for the evening celebration. And to my surprise (or rather a short stint of shock), guests just kept pouring in till we had about 30 people at our place. That is when Rajeev realized that during his evening games session he casually invited officers and their guests from a neighboring unit and forgot to update. However, we all know that Army Friends are a blessing and all the ladies came together to prepare a wonderful feast in a short time. After all, we had to uphold the hospitality of our unit.

During the time spent with Army friends, I had the opportunity to learn so many new recipes. Each recipe came with its own story and tradition, adding a rich tapestry of flavors and techniques to my culinary skills. These cherished memories with my army friends continue to inspire my work in the bakery. The values of friendship, community, and shared joy are at the heart of everything we do.

Uday: What are your products and services?

Shivani: We specialize in crafting exquisite, eggless cakes tailored to your specific preferences and themes. Each cake is baked to order using premium ingredients, ensuring freshness and exceptional taste. Whether it's a birthday, wedding, or any other celebration, our customized cakes are designed to impress. Quality is at the heart of everything we do. We use only the finest, premium ingredients in all our products.

Apart from cakes we do a delightful range of desserts including cupcakes, doughnuts, cake pops, tea cakes etc. and savories like cream cheese buns, pizza buns, focaccia, creamy mushroom cups, paneer parcels etc. Each treat is meticulously prepared to offer a perfect balance of flavor and texture, making them a favorite for any occasion.

Our beautifully curated hampers and return gifts are perfect for any celebration. Filled with an assortment of our finest baked goods and treats. We also offer customized options to make these gifts truly unique and memorable. We understand the importance of corporate gifting and celebrations. Our corporate cakes and hampers are designed to reflect corporate brand elegance and sophistication. We offer customized gifts featuring company logo, ensuring a professional and personalized touch.

We have recently launched a range of gluten-free tea cakes and cookies and have also tied-up with a nutritionist for product development for specific target customer segments like Diabetics, Celiac Patients, people with PCOD/PCOS etc.

Uday: Where do you operate from and what is your reach?

Shivani: Located in Sector 86, Gurgaon our professional kitchen is equipped with advanced baking equipment, including commercial ovens and visicooler, to maintain the highest standards of production and storage. This setup allows us to efficiently manage large orders while ensuring consistency and excellence in every product.

We currently deliver across Gurgaon and Delhi NCR. Door delivery is available in a radius of 5 km using our car and delivery person. Beyond this, delivery is through Uber cabs. Our team is well trained to safely set the cake for delivery in the cabs and proper instructions are conveyed to the cab drivers.



For special occasions like weddings and large celebrations, we provide personal set-up to ensure that your big cakes arrive safely and beautifully. Our team handles these deliveries with extra care, understanding the importance of these moments and ensuring everything is perfect.

Uday: How do you manage your time during a busy day with multiple baking projects?

Shivani: Running a bakery involves juggling numerous tasks, especially on busy days. Effective planning and organization are key to managing multiple responsibilities seamlessly. Here's how we ensure smooth operations even during the busiest times:

- At the start of each day, we identify the most critical tasks and prioritize them. This helps us focus on what needs to be done first.
- Tasks are delegated based on team members' strengths and expertise, ensuring efficiency and high-quality output.
- Preparing ingredients in advance such as compotes, caramel, ganache etc. helps save time and reduces stress on busy days.
- For items that can be prepared in advance, such as cake layers or cookie dough, we pre-bake and store them properly, ready for final assembly and decoration.
- Before any order goes out for delivery, we perform final quality checks to ensure everything meets our high standards.
- Finally, creating a positive and supportive work environment boosts team morale and keeps everyone motivated, especially on busy days.

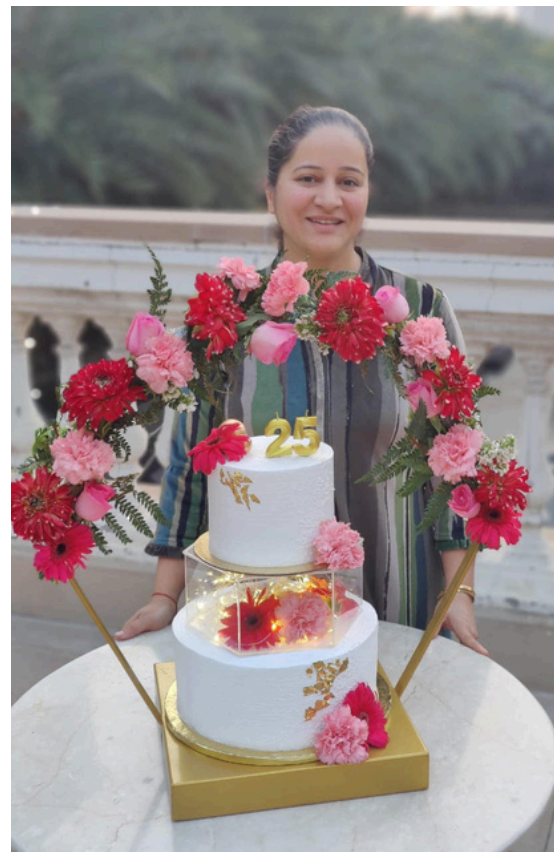
Uday: What strategies do you use to minimize food waste in the bakery?

Shivani: Everything in our studio is made to order. By focusing on made-to-order production, we ensure that every product is baked specifically for each customer's request. This approach significantly reduces the likelihood of unsold items and wastage.

Conducting regular inventory checks allows us to keep track of ingredient levels and avoid overstocking or running out of essential supplies. Implementing the FIFO method ensures that older ingredients are used first, reducing the risk of spoilage and waste.

Most of the non-perishable items such as cake boards, packaging, basic toppers, candles etc. are purchased in bulk helping us to reduce costs and minimizes packaging waste.

Moreover, adjusting recipes based on order sizes ensures that we only use the necessary amount of ingredients, preventing overproduction.



Uday: There must have been great lessons during this tremendous journey. Can you share top 5 learnings from your experience?

Shivani: Running a successful bakery has taught us invaluable lessons that guide our daily operations and long-term vision. Here are some of the top learnings that shape our approach:

- Honesty is the cornerstone of our business. We believe in being transparent with our customers, staff, and suppliers. By maintaining integrity in everything we do, we build trust and foster long-lasting relationships.
- Using honest, high-quality ingredients is non-negotiable for us. We carefully select the best ingredients to ensure that every product we create is not only delicious but also wholesome and true to our commitment to excellence. We use only pure chocolate (no compound or better known as fake chocolate) for all our baking. No premixes or preservatives; everything is baked from scratch.
- We understand the importance of reliability. That's why we focus on delivering exactly what we promise. Whether it's a custom cake design, a specific flavor, or the delivery time, we ensure that we meet our commitments without fail.
- To maintain trust and satisfaction, we avoid overpromising. Setting realistic expectations helps us deliver consistent quality and keep our customers happy. It's better to under promise and overdeliver than to disappoint.
- The journey of mastering the art of baking is continuous. We keep practicing, learning, and improving our skills and techniques. This dedication to growth and innovation ensures that we stay ahead of trends and consistently offer the best to our customers.

Uday: Your efforts must have been appreciated and recognized by your clients. Would you like to share the details in this regard?

Shivani: We are proud of the strong relationships we have built with our customers, which are reflected in our impressive 80 percent repeat customer rate. Our success is largely driven by word of mouth and positive Google reviews, rather than formal marketing efforts.

Word of mouth has been a powerful tool in growing our business. Our satisfied customers enthusiastically recommend us to their friends, family, and colleagues, helping us expand our reach and build a strong community of loyal patrons. We believe that a personal recommendation is one of the highest compliments we can receive.



We are honored that our customers continue to choose us for their special occasions, even after relocating to different parts of the world.

- One of our cherished customers, who has moved to the UK, made sure to get an engagement cake from us while visiting India. Their continued trust and preference for our cakes highlights the strong bond we have built with our clients.
- Another loyal customer, now residing in Canada, chose us to create a beautiful birthday cake during their child's vacation in India. Their decision to order from us despite the distance speaks volumes about their confidence in our quality and service.
- A customer who has resettled in the UK keeps ordering cakes from us for their family and friends in India. This ongoing patronage underscores the lasting impression our cakes have made, ensuring we remain a part of their celebrations, no matter where they are.

We are privileged to be a part of many touching and memorable moments in our customers' lives. One such special occasion stands out, reflecting the deep emotional connection we strive to create with our cakes. A dedicated customer ordered a cake for their son's 6-month birthday, marking a significant milestone after a challenging period. The little boy had been unwell and faced a tough fight to recover. This celebration was incredibly meaningful for the family, symbolizing hope and resilience. Understanding the importance of this celebration, we put our hearts into crafting a cake that would truly reflect the family's joy and relief. When the customer received the cake, they were overwhelmed with emotions, having tears in their eyes. This heartfelt reaction reaffirmed our commitment to creating not just cakes, but experiences that resonate deeply with our customers.

Uday: What are your future plans?

Shivani: As we look to the future, our goal is to not only expand our business but also to deepen our impact on the community by providing more opportunities for underprivileged women. We are committed to creating a flourishing business that transforms lives and supports meaningful change. Our plans for growth include:

- Continuously innovating and expanding our range of cakes, desserts, and customized gifts to cater to a broader audience
- Upgrading our facilities and equipment to handle larger orders and ensure consistent quality.
- Expanding our delivery services to reach more customers across Gurgaon, Delhi NCR, and beyond.
- Expanding our reach within the corporate sector

Central to our vision is the empowerment of underprivileged women. Our future plans include:

- Actively seeking to employ more women from underprivileged backgrounds, providing them with stable jobs and a supportive work environment.

- Offering extensive training in baking, customer service, and business skills to help our staff grow personally and professionally.
- Creating a nurturing community within our bakery where women feel valued, supported, and motivated to achieve their full potential.



Uday: What advice do you have, especially for spouses of defence officers and even the ladies in uniform, who desire or aspire to be similarly independent, and follow their calling?

Shivani: Embarking on a journey to follow your passion is a profound and transformative experience. It requires courage, determination, and a clear vision of what you want to achieve. My transition from pharmaceutical research to baking is a testament to the power of following one's calling.

Taking that bold step to pursue what you love is not easy. It demands bravery to leave behind the familiar and venture into the unknown. Whether it's starting a new business, changing careers, or pursuing a lifelong dream, the initial leap of faith is the most crucial and often the most daunting part of the journey.

While passion and courage are essential, it is equally important to have some financial backing or at least a grounded approach to ensure stability. Having a safety net allows you to navigate the challenges and uncertainties that come with pursuing your dreams. It provides the peace of mind needed to focus on your goals without the constant worry of financial instability.

In my journey, the transition from a stable career in pharmaceutical research to starting a bakery was made possible not only by my passion for baking but also by a great deal of hardwork and a strong mental, emotional and financial support from Rajeev.

I encourage anyone considering a similar path to follow their calling with courage and conviction. At the same time, it's essential to have a practical plan and the necessary financial backing to support your journey. Balancing passion with pragmatism can help you achieve your dreams while maintaining stability and peace of mind.



Capt Uday K Shriwas was commissioned into the Corps of Signals, and served in various theaters during his service for five years, including in a newly raised RR Battalion. Thereafter he has worked with many renowned Companies, like Kingfisher Airlines, IFB Home Appliances, JK Cement, and Yes Bank Ltd. He enjoys working in the field of Marketing, Business Development, Strategy. He also has keen interest in the field of Personal Branding. He is presently working as Regional Head - Honour First (Defence Vertical) IDFC FIRST Bank

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Lalit Panwar > Amit Batra

1 hr · 🌐

Hi Everyone.... attended the Amit Batra's webinar on Kids Coaching today and found it extremely useful and powerful session. Shall recommend parents of all kids from 1 yr to 18 yrs to attend and gain the useful insights right from foundation to communication. Great Job Amit....carry on the good work.



Rajiv Ghosh > Amit Batra

1 hr · 🌐

Attended a session on parenting by AB, it was quite insightful. Concepts like mentoring your child, setting rules, delegating responsibilities, respecting your child's opinion did invoke my interest and we will definitely implement the same in my daughter's upbringing. Loved the way he explained how right parenting creates an environment which will help the child grow in a positive direction. I highly recommend all parents to attend his webinar.

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Knowledge Bytes

ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGES

BY DINESH DUTT SHARMA



As the world awakens to a heightened awareness regarding the environment, it becomes the responsibility of every citizen to contribute towards repairing and conserving our invaluable heritage. Land restoration and drought resilience is the critical need of the hour and sustained efforts need to be undertaken in order to awaken a collective consciousness towards achieving this target at the global level.

As a nation, before we begin to debate the environmental challenges lined up before us, we need to understand why the environment, which shapes our existence and sustains every life form on the face of the Earth, has become a challenge in the first place.

And that brings us face to face with the harsh truth that the human race is the most selfish, self-serving and self-gratifying of all living species. The key word here is **SELF** and the single-minded preoccupation with this word has pushed the environment into the background. Ignored, uncared for and exploited.

Therefore, the real challenge before us today is to ensure that the environment features as priority one on every individual's agenda. A tall task indeed. In a democratic country of our size with more than sixty political parties contending for power at the national and state level, it is surprising that not a single one has fielded the environment on its manifesto.

Educational Institutes absolve themselves of their responsibility by celebrating an annual tree-plantation day. But the environment has been abused so badly and for so long that one day in a year is far too less and far too late. Let us wake up before the globe becomes a burning ball of fire without water or fresh air and we leave behind only fossils on what had once been the most glorious of all planets.

Fortunately, the situation is not beyond redemption. The example set by Sikkim is worth emulating. The government of the eastern state has initiated a scheme termed 'My tree, my child', wherein a hundred trees will be planted for every newborn baby. Similar agendas and a focused environment-friendly approach is the need of the hour.



Col Dinesh Dutt Sharma (Retd) is a Post Graduate in geography from Bareilly College and an alumnus of Military School Dhaulpur and Chail Shimla Hills. Commissioned in 1985 in Army Service Corps from IMA Dehradun, Qualified in Hospital Management (CHM) and in Finance Management and Audit Sensitization from CAG's International Institute of Noida. He Commanded Composite Food Laboratory Jammu, had been Col Transport HQ J&K, Col Supply & Transport HQ UB Area Bareilly & Director Recruiting, Muzaffarpur-Bihar, Deputy Group Commander and Chief Administrative Officer, NCC Group HQ Bhopal (MP) and NCC Group HQ Agra (UP). Finally superannuated as Director Administration, Coordination & Automation) Adjutants General Branch. Discipline and Vigilance Directorate (ADG D&V), Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (ARMY). DHQ with 36 years of experience. Performed the duties as Officer-In-Charge Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) Polyclinics at Greater Noida and Noida. Presently performing the duties of Officer-In-Charge Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) Polyclinics at Greater Noida

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Knowledge Bytes

Charting New Waters: My Journey from Navy Officer to Corporate Professional

BY NIKHIL PETER FERNANDEZ

Bidding farewell to the Indian Navy after 12 years of distinguished service was far from easy. The fear of stepping into an unfamiliar world and the uncertainty of what lay ahead was overwhelming, as it is for many transitioning officers. Now, after a year in the corporate world, I've had the opportunity to reflect on the critical factors that guided me through this journey, and I'd like to share my insights with you. While my path may not resonate with everyone—and there are countless role models who have successfully transitioned before me—if my journey can help even a few, I consider it a profound privilege.

The Challenge of Choosing the Right Career Path

One of the core dilemmas many of us face during this transition is choosing the right career path. We often find ourselves enrolling in a myriad of courses, from Six Sigma to PMP, yet in doing so, we may overlook our inherent strengths and weaknesses. The pursuit of courses should complement your self-discovery and career aspirations. Through my reflections, I've come to understand the importance of aligning our personal attributes with our professional goals.

Versatility: An Asset or Double-Edged Sword

As the saying goes, those of us in the Armed Forces are "jacks of all trades, masters of none" (or rather, "masters of many"), a trait that can be both an advantage and a challenge depending on how you plan to chart your course. This versatility opens up a wide range of opportunities, as it did for me, including Project Management, NGO Operations, Photography, Logistics & Supply Chain Operations, Administration, Facilities Management, Real Estate, HR Management, and Security.

Self-Assessment and the Power of a SWOT Analysis

These options led me to conduct a personal SWOT analysis, unveiling valuable insights. The unique skill sets and levels of creativity honed during service, along with the interpersonal skills gained from interacting with diverse groups, are beyond the comprehension of many in the civilian world. The primary difference between skill development in the Armed Forces and the corporate world lies in our managerial capabilities, which often mirror those in corporate settings, but we may lack the industry-specific jargon essential for success in the civilian sector. This became evident to me during an interview with an Indian MNC when I struggled to articulate my project management experience in the desired corporate lingo.

Learning from Experience: The Importance of Preparation

The interviewer asked, "Which project management function do you want to specialize in?" I didn't fully grasp the question, but I described my experience managing capital expenditure projects in the Navy, detailing the processes and outcomes. To my surprise, the interviewer responded, "You've indirectly indicated that you're well-suited for our Projects vertical, as those functions are part of project planning."

This experience taught me a valuable lesson: while I managed to clear the interview thanks to my presence of mind and the interviewers' interest, a lack of preparation could have had serious consequences. In hindsight, a PMP certification would have equipped me with a deeper understanding of the nuances of project management and made the interview process smoother, especially since I was aiming for the Project Management in the core sector.

Key Skills for a Successful Transition

- **Storytelling:** The art of storytelling is innate to all of us. A well-crafted narrative can captivate any listener, including interviewers. Once your resume is shortlisted, your story telling potential, will do the rest. Reading and writing helped me refine my storytelling skills, particularly through LinkedIn articles. Writing on a topic of interest on LinkedIn each month, allowed me to practice and gauge my progress based on feedback. And trust me, this skill is essential through out your corporate career and will hold you in good stead if you can hone it.

- **Ethics & Integrity:** Veterans are highly valued for their ethics and integrity, forged through ideals like camaraderie and putting the nation before self. Every business depends on ethical value generation, making ethical employees essential.
- **Man Management & Administration:** The diverse tasks and environments we've managed in the Armed Forces, from military exercises to Mess nights, have equipped us with exceptional man-management and administrative skills. These abilities will be invaluable in your new corporate role.
- **Diversity & Adaptability:** Having worked with individuals from diverse backgrounds and varied environments, we're well-versed in quickly adapting to new cultures and challenges. This ability ensures we can seamlessly integrate into new roles and organizations.
- **Continuous Learning:** The pursuit of knowledge should not end with a certification or degree obtained for a job offer. Instead, it should mark the beginning of a lifelong learning journey. It's essential to stay updated with industry trends and technologies. While you may not need to develop a specific technology, understanding it well enough to manage its development is crucial. For example, since I wanted to enter Project Management, I pursued courses like PMP, Primavera Software, CRM, and Project Finance Management certification. However, it's vital to choose courses aligned with your career goals based on a thorough SWOT analysis.
- **Networking:** Networking is the key to a successful transition. Engage with people, attend networking events (like Forces Network), ask questions, and seek advice from those (senior or junior or course mates) who have already walked this path. Don't hesitate to ask for referrals; some may not respond, but many will. This will also help you while deciding on the field you want to transition into.
- **Patience:** Patience is crucial in any job search. There will be moments of frustration when calls don't come despite numerous applications. These moments are opportunities for reflection, upskilling, and renewed focus. Engaging in hobbies during this time can also be a valuable learning experience.

The Impact of Hobbies and Extracurricular Activities

Even the hobbies and extracurricular activities we engage in during our free time can significantly impact our interviews. For me, it was three aspects: volunteering for an NGO that teaches orphans (which enhanced my interpersonal skills by bringing me closer to people from different social strata,

apart from those in the Armed Forces), and photography (which gave me an additional skill set, expanded my imagination, and provided networking opportunities).

Conclusion: Embrace the Journey

Transitioning from military to corporate world is a journey filled with both challenges and opportunities. By leveraging our unique skill sets, embracing continuous learning, and actively networking, we can successfully navigate this transition and thrive in our new roles. The experiences and skills gained during our time in the Armed Forces are invaluable assets that, when properly harnessed, can lead to fulfilling and successful careers in the civilian sector. Remember, the journey is unique to each individual, but with the right mindset and preparation, it can be a rewarding adventure.



Lt Cdr Nikhil Peter Fernandez (Retd) is a former Indian Navy officer with 12 years of service. He was commissioned on Jul 2011 from the 13th NOC course in the Indian Navy. Currently, he Heads the Project Management Office for Expansion Projects at Hindustan Zinc Ltd, Vedanta Group. He is passionate about continuous learning, storytelling, volunteering, photography, and embracing new challenges.

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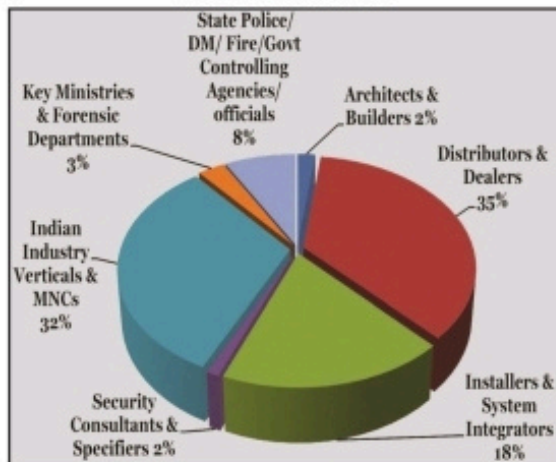
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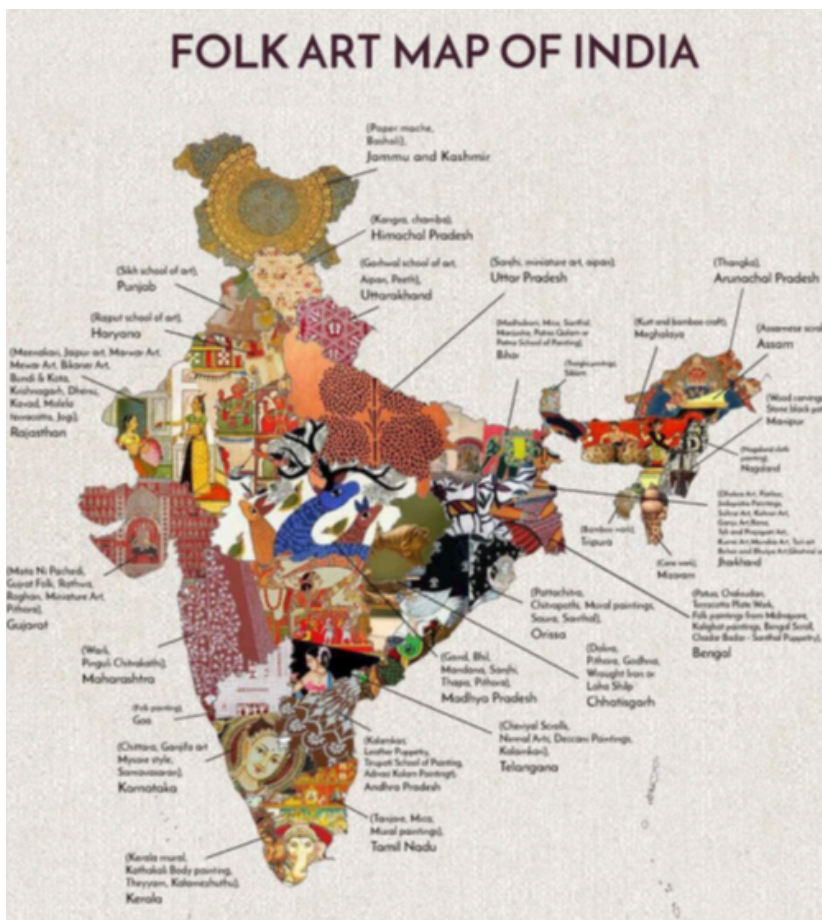


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In the world dominated by mass production, handcrafted products are a celebration of human creativity and individuality. These handmade treasures are not just products, they embody the passion, inspiration, and cultural heritage of its creators. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, handicrafts connect us to the rich tapestry of human tradition and shared experience.

Unlike the sterile uniformity of machine-made goods, each hand-crafted item tells



a unique story of creativity, dedication, and love.

These handcrafted products play a crucial role in preserving the cultural identity of the communities that create them. Whether it is the vibrant colors of Kalamkari Textiles or the age-old Gond Painting Techniques, these crafts often blend traditional methods with modern influences.

In a rapidly globalizing world, such crafts safeguard our ancestors' heritage while allowing for its evolution, standing as living expressions of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. Purchasing a handmade product is an

intimate experience. It is not merely a transaction; it is an appreciation of the artisan's talent, skill, and the time invested in creating something unique. Each handcrafted item, from a **Rogan Art** piece to a **Matanipachedi Fabric**, is a **testament to the artisan's creativity, ensuring that no two pieces are exactly alike**. This uniqueness reflects a level of care and thought that transcends the ordinary, adding immense value to the entire experience. The importance of handicrafts extends beyond cultural preservation. These products contribute significantly to economic development, particularly in rural and minority communities, by providing income and employment opportunities.

By supporting handmade goods, we empower the individuals and communities who sustain these traditions, helping to ensure their survival in a modern world. The journey of the craftsman is integral to the narrative behind each handmade product. It is a journey of creativity, courage, and perseverance that transforms raw materials into works of art. Each handmade item represents not just a product, but an expression of the artisan's inner world. In choosing handmade, we embrace these stories, valuing the artistry and personal touch that make each piece truly unique. In a world where machine-made products have become the norm, handicrafts like **Dhokra, Pichwai Tarakashi, Rogan, Kalamkari, Matanipachedi, and Gond** remind us of what it means to be human. They are not just objects. They are stories of passion, inspiration, and the indomitable human spirit. By choosing handmade, we become part of these stories, appreciating the beauty of imperfection, the value of tradition, and the transformative power of creativity.



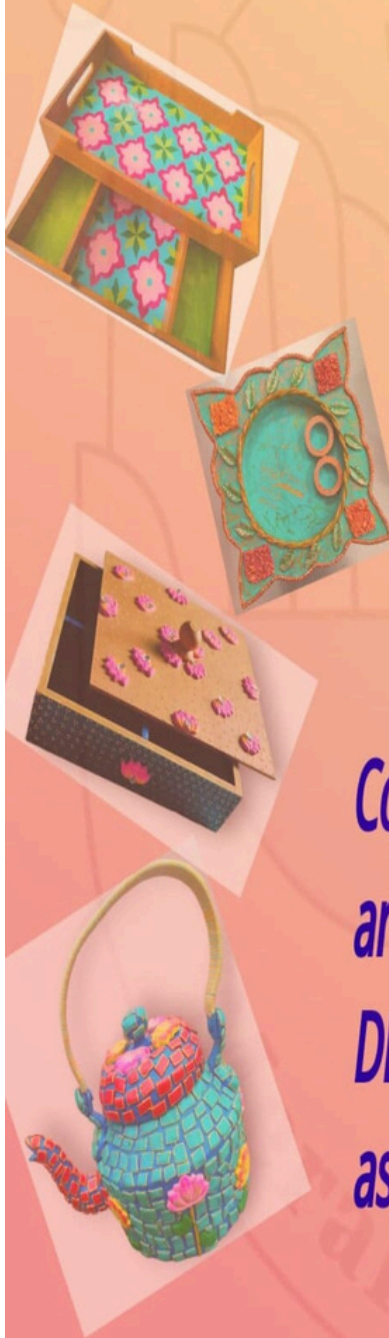
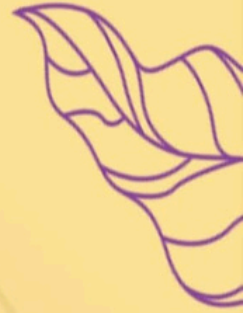
Mrs Neha Mathur is a Master Trainer of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Fevicryl (Pidilite Industries) Certified Expert Art & Craft Trainer and an Entrepreneur. She is Art Director in Sukriti Handicrafts Jaipur and takes rehab skill training classes for rescued child labourers.



Mrs Vinita Tiwari hails from Bilaspur Chhattisgarh. She studied Child and clinical Psychology in her graduation and post-graduation. She is teaching pre-primary students for more than 6 years. She is also a trained Boutique Jewellery Artist. She is a partner in M/s Sukriti Handicrafts Jaipur.



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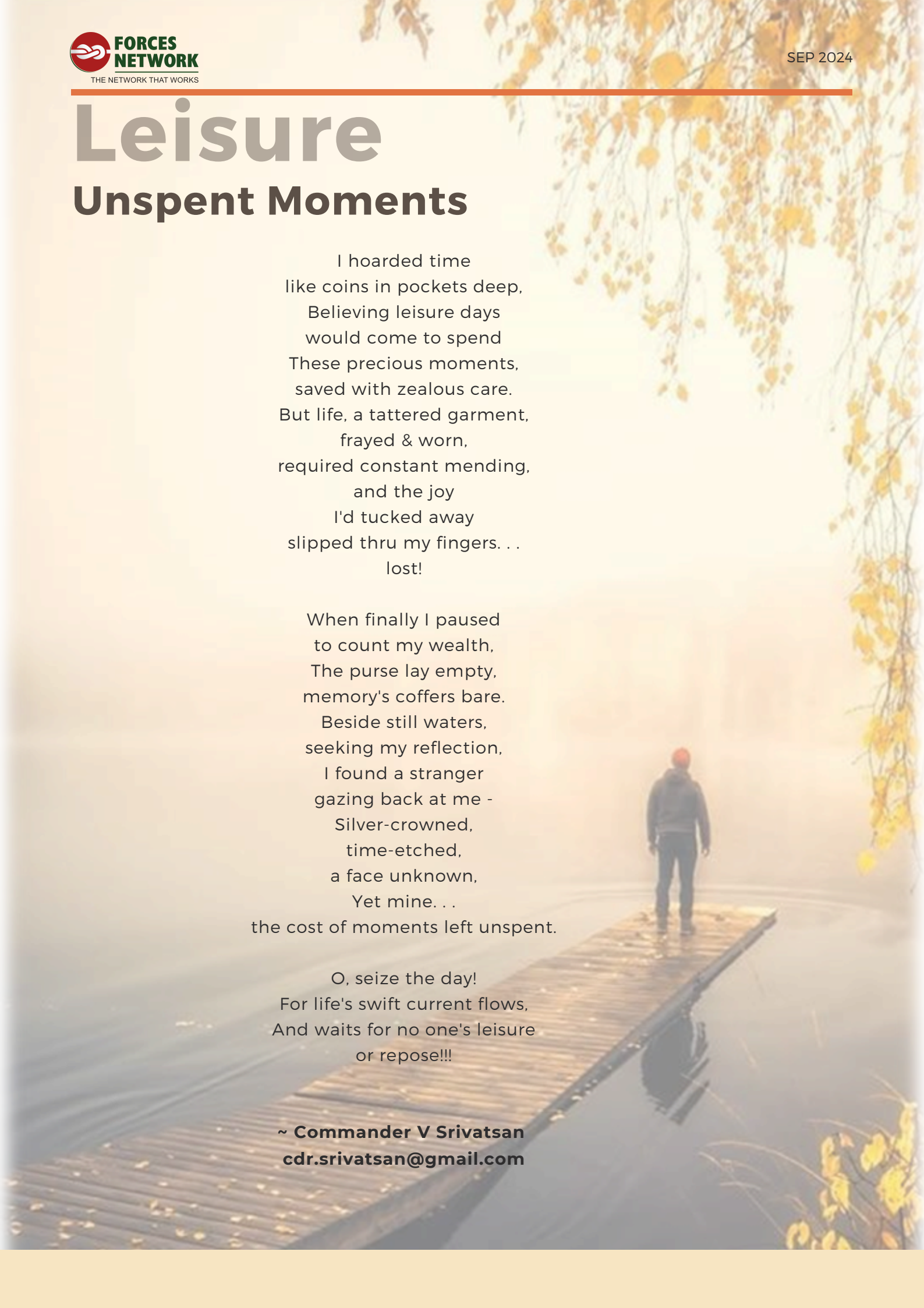
Unspent Moments

I hoarded time
like coins in pockets deep,
Believing leisure days
would come to spend
These precious moments,
saved with zealous care.
But life, a tattered garment,
frayed & worn,
required constant mending,
and the joy
I'd tucked away
slipped thru my fingers. . .
lost!

When finally I paused
to count my wealth,
The purse lay empty,
memory's coffers bare.
Beside still waters,
seeking my reflection,
I found a stranger
gazing back at me -
Silver-crowned,
time-etched,
a face unknown,
Yet mine. . .
the cost of moments left unspent.

O, seize the day!
For life's swift current flows,
And waits for no one's leisure
or repose!!!

~ **Commander V Srivatsan**
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**John K Chandy with Lt Col Ashok K Singh (Sikh Regiment),
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