

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
January 2023, Volume V, Issue 01

OPTIMISM



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**HAPPY
NEW YEAR
2023**

KEEP LEARNING

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Here we are on the first day of the calendar month to serve you your favourite magazine. What's special is that this first day of the month also happens to be very the first day of the year 2023. So, a very Happy New Year to all our readers and their families. At Forces Network we always like to look at the future with optimism. So, we would like to usher in the new year 2023 with a flood of optimism – that is the reason that we have decided to have Optimism as the theme for this month.

What exactly is optimism? Optimism can be defined as a mental attitude characterized by hope and confidence in success and a positive future. Optimists tend to view hardships as learning experiences or temporary setbacks. Even the most miserable day holds the promise for them that "tomorrow will probably be better." Researchers have spent a lot of time studying people who think positively. It turns out that an optimistic attitude helps us be happier, more successful, and healthier. Optimism can protect against depression – even for people who are at risk for it. An optimistic outlook makes people more resistant to stress. Optimism may even help people live longer.

The best thing about optimism is you can learn it, even if your outlook tends to be more pessimistic. In his book *Learned Optimism*, Martin Seligman, Ph.D. says that research has proven that the pessimists can learn to be optimists “not through mindless devices like whistling a happy tune or mouthing platitudes... but by learning a new set of cognitive skills.” We would urge our members to be self-aware and learn optimism as it is an extremely useful quality to have. One more thing it's extra important to be optimistic when there's negativity surrounding you.

You would already perhaps know that being an optimist has several health benefits, however, what you may not know is that optimism is the secret skill of successful people. Since optimistic people have a positive outlook about the future, they're inclined to work harder to achieve their goals, so they can realize the bright future they're envisioning. Because of this, optimism breeds success; it acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy, but in a good way. By cultivating optimism, you can boost success for yourself and those around you. And if you harness it with the right skills and education, the opportunities are boundless.

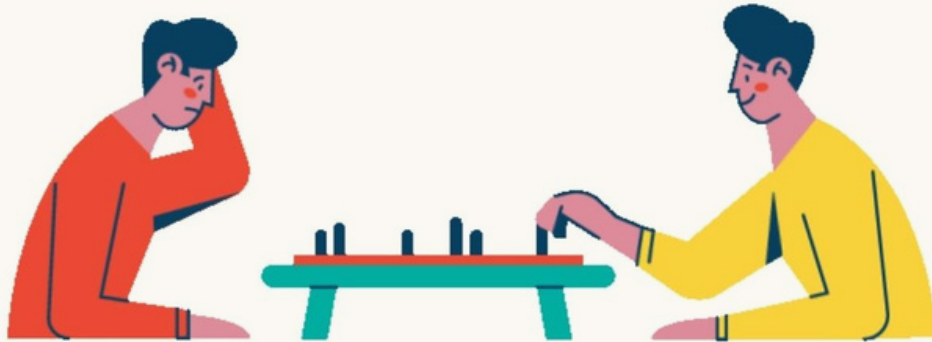
The world needs more optimism than it currently has. Here's wishing you a fantastic and successful year 2023 and of course stay optimistic, always, come what may!



Happy reading the New Year Issue. JAI HIND.

Optimistically Yours
Capt Rajesh Nair

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
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Being the ideal model investor is not enough if your family has zero knowledge about savings & investments made for them.


A list of **MUST DOs** for every family to follow for a smooth transition if ever the need arises (List compiled after assisting investors through such transition, but this is bound to change whenever the family has unique requirements.):

1. Invest in a **joint profile** with your spouse. (Suggested for couples married for a while and can financially trust each other.)
2. Keep your **children as nominees**. Assign a trustworthy adult as their guardian, for minors.
3. Compile a **hardcopy list of investments** across all platforms and portals with folio numbers, passwords, email IDs and phone numbers. Place this list securely and tell your spouse about it.
4. Share your advisor's number with family and mention it on the list. A **trustworthy advisor** is a must to help your family reach your investments when you are not around. Just because someone is a relative or a services veteran does not make them trustworthy, something which a large, but silent, number of veterans have realized over the years.
5. **Have a Will prepared** and ready at all times. For special children, ensure they are looked after even once you're not there.
6. Have **term life insurance** till you have financially dependent family members. Teach your family that investing in insurance policies is a bad idea.
7. Your term insurance amount should be large enough to **cover on-going loans** and maintain the standard of living of your family.
8. **Teach your spouse** how to redeem money from your investments and do trial runs for the same to ensure that they know where to go and how to redeem money if and when required.
9. Help your family understand how to **manage money that comes from insurance**. It is not to be splurged on discretionary items. The gap in usual monthly expenses and pension must be filled by having a part of the insurance pay-out received as monthly income.
10. Make your family take enough **interest in the financial planning** you follow. Most people don't like managing finances but must learn to do so to avoid getting cheated and defrauded.


There will be variations to these suggestions depending on each family's specific and unique requirements. Reach out to us at our website www.faujiwealth.in or email us at sunil.diddee@faujiwealth.in to learn more. Read the full article at <https://faujiwealth.in/f/keep-your-family-invested-in-your-investments>



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- Vikram

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- Puneet Goyal



I was having lower back pain problem and sitting was very much hard for me. But after the treatment from IPSC Hospital, I got recovered from the pain and that was a amazing feeling for me.

- Khobi Attai

I have been suffering from huge Disc Bulge in both my right and left sides. I was roaming different neurosurgeons last 6 months but nobody could diagnosis me and help me there that time. Then I came to know about Dr Pankaj N Surange, IPSC, Delhi. I came here and Dr. Pankaj diagnosed my disease and gave me a clear treatment plan via an endoscopic procedure. He gave me endoscopic treatment. It has started helping me. I'm getting better now.

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Contents

From the Editor	3
Star of Forces Network: Col A A Jafri	19 - 24
General Humour : Col Amit Dalvi	24
Expatriate Interview: Capt Karan Bajaj	25 - 29
Women Power: Ms Tina Garg	30 - 38
Author of the Month: Commodore Aspi Cawasji NM, VSM	39 - 44
Moment In Time	45 - 47
Tech Corner: Introduction to Cyber Security Roles by Iqbal Singh.....	49 - 57
Knowledge Byte: Our Treasure by Sqn Ldr Meena Arora.....	58 - 60

[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/clicking on them.

For the ease of providing a 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. The facts and opinions appearing in the articles thus do not reflect the views of Forces Network, and Forces Network does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.

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 RAJESH NAIR

Col AA Jafri was commissioned into 191 Field Regiment on 6 Dec 1997, and also has the honour to serve with 136 Field Regiment and 165 Field Regiment. Having already served as COO of SaveLIFE, he is presently heading MAIT, which is India's apex industry association for ICT companies, as its Director General. He is also a Director in the Board of Electronic Sector Skills Council of India.



Rajesh: Please tell us something about your background prior to joining the Army, and your subsequent Army career?

Ali: Thanks, Capt Rajesh for this interview opportunity, and I really appreciate the time and energy put in by Col IQ to forge this vibrant community together.

To answer your question, I am an alumnus of St Francis' College (SFC) Lucknow from where I did my schooling. I used to regularly participate in debates, declamations etc which put me at ease while speaking in public from a young age.

I joined NDA straight after 12th and had no other career pursuit. Was commissioned into 191 Field Regt, a unit that I later commanded too, I excelled in all courses with Alpha and Instructor gradings. My exposure to the bureaucracy comes from my tenure as ADC to two Governors of State. Post the mandatory two year tenure, I did my LGSC and then qualified for DSSC. I also had a stint as an AMS in the coveted MS Branch besides commanding my unit, and being Col Q of a Division and Col GS of a Corps. The latter was after HDMC and the former before it. All in all, I led a very regimented life and wanted to explore something beyond what I had been doing so far and hence took PMR in 2019.

Rajesh: Can you please give us an understanding about your role and what you are presently engaged in?

Ali: Presently, I am Director General of MAIT. MAIT is the apex association of all ICT companies in India and we work towards the growth of the Industry. MAIT is a 40 year old association and is recognised by the Government and the Industry as a leading voice on issues that concern the industry.

I interface with my members on a variety of issues, both strategic and tactical. Strategic themes could be dealing with macro issues such as demand generation, ways to enhance India's share in ICT manufacturing globally etc. Tactical issues are more related to day to day ease of doing business challenges, environmental challenges etc.



The laying of foundation and good old days at NDA Khadakwasla

Rajesh: How different was this role from your previous military role?

Ali: I feel this role has a lot of similarities and a lot of differences too. It's similar as the core skills of stakeholder management, government relations are quite embedded in all of us, while understanding issues related to customs, tariffs and global value chains is something that one needs to prepare himself or herself for.

Rajesh: What were the challenges faced during your transition? How did you overcome the challenges?

Ali: I think the biggest challenge that I faced was to explain to the recruiters what I could do or what military officers can do. I feel that barring a few companies who recognise and recruit military talent, a large portion of absolutely competent veterans still goes untapped and fades away slowly.

I focussed by leveraging my strengths in Government relations, and my experiences in command, in staff, AHQ and as ADC did come handy. Lastly I want to mention that networking does help and in my case when I was moving on after COVID from SaveLIFE Foundation, where I was the COO, I did reach out to the veteran community who assisted in whatever way they could, and that was a great help. It not only helped me build confidence about my prospects, but also faith in our community.

Rajesh: How has been your experience in this new domain so far?

Ali: It is both enjoyable and challenging at the same time. Leading policy discourse and trying to stay ahead of the policy curve across the galaxy of domains that confront the industry is both challenging and exciting. Each day is a humbling experience and there is so much more to learn.

I also am the spokesperson for MAIT so it enables me to bring industry matters to attention of the public as well. I find that exciting too. Overall I feel the Public Policy domain comes naturally to us faujis.



An enriching experience as COO of SaveLIFE

Rajesh: Academy training teaches us a lot and it prepares us for our future life. What has been your biggest take away from your training at the academies, which has really been really a big lesson and helped towards taking up new challenges?

Ali: The biggest take away has been the belief that we all develop in our abilities. We are all wonderful professionals and wonderful human beings. We tend to punch below our weight and that's where some guidance from fellow veterans can assist the transitioning veterans.

Rajesh: How important is it to understand your own expertise and then to work towards upskilling in that domain, to have a better outing outside Forces?

Ali: I did mention about how I leveraged my strengths in Public Policy and Government Affairs in my tenure as COO of SaveLIFE and as DG MAIT. This is an era of specialists, and what we veterans must do is to recognise the specialist within us that we want to focus on.

Rajesh: What are your future plans, and do you have any special goals? And, how are you preparing to achieving them?

Ali: I look to take MAIT to greater heights and forge the policy landscape that can create demand for the Electronic, Telecom and Recycling Industry. The geopolitical economic situation is challenging, with India being one of the few bright spots. We need to be able to utilise this opportunity to close the manufacturing ecosystem gap in the ICT industry. The PLI schemes are a step in this direction and there is a lot at stake. I look forward to working with OEMs, ESDM and EMS companies to leverage growth and realise India's manufacturing target of \$300bn by 2025.

Rajesh: The new world order is changing and so are the policies. Could you please share how much the present world situation has impacted your professional world? And what is your insight and suggestions to our readers?

Ali: We currently live in tumultuous times. The war in Ukraine and the COVID related lockdowns have rattled global supply chains like never before. Nations are looking at de-risking manufacturing assets by having multiple factories across different geographies.

A lot of manufacturing has shifted to Vietnam, Indonesia and India from China. All this does impact as the appetite of businesses to take risks is reducing. We see that resulting in more layoffs, moderation of demand and lesser capital investments. I think that a lot of start-up support is going to dry up in future so my advice would be to evaluate offers from the perspective of the company's balance sheet as well. I would also advice not to make major moves such as immigration and major relocation on the back of offers from companies with a weak balance sheet.



Concluding an important conference at MAIT

Rajesh: Top 5 qualities that you feel are very important for excelling as a member of a governing body?

Ali: I feel CXOs should be passionate, ethical, decisive, knowledgeable (data driven) and compassionate.

Rajesh: Do you have any other hobbies or interests, which you pursue passionately? And how?

Ali: I like to write poetry. It puts my mind to rest. I also pray. It gives me peace which is essential to keep me purpose driven.

Rajesh: What are your views on the role played by family, friends and well-wishers during the transition, and in future assignments?

Ali: I think the social support base is extremely important as it helps keep you focussed. In the busy times of social media hellos and good byes, one has to find time for the odd call and meeting. Balance is essential for one's overall persona. We live in a very connected world and the power of the network is your power! Your friends , family and well wishers are part of this network.



The strength to excel, from strong family support

Rajesh: Do you feel that Forces Network has played a significant role in your transition, both during and after? And, if yes, then how?

Ali: I transitioned in April 2019 and joined FN around the same time. I did receive a lot of leads , applied for a lot of the openings that members of the FN shared within the community. While frankly I did not get a job through any of those leads, but many of those within the community did find a suitable match.

The network also helped me understand the job market better in a variety of ways

and most importantly helped me connect with some wonderful members who enriched my professional experience in many unique ways. I keep bumping in to many fauji kids, spouses and parents and even in the civi world we connect instantly. There is an inherent trust quotient that the network brings in and I complement Col IQ for fostering that with unparalleled zeal!

Rajesh: Thank you so much Ali Sir, for taking out your time for this interaction and sharing your experiences and views. Wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Ali: Actually, the feeling is mutual. I also want to thank Col IQ for making this platform so that we can all leverage our collective strength for mutual benefit. I congratulate him for this and wish all readers the very best!



Capt Rajesh Nair is from the 75th Course, OTA, and was commissioned into 14 Maratha Light Infantry. Post Army service, he has worked in the field of administration for more than a decade, having worked with companies like Wipro, Mahindra Automobile, Tata Communications and Credence Global Solutions.

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



Expatriate Interview

In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of the members of Forces Network who have settled abroad and carved a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination. The aim is to bring to fore the mechanics of such transitions, and thereby quell the apprehensions of the larger community in the Network. Learning from each other would help us exploit our true potential in any part of the World. And, it could be beneficial for our families too.

IN INTERACTION WITH RAJESH NAIR

Capt Karan Bajaj was commissioned into 15 PUNJAB (1st Patiala) in 2004. He served with the battalion for six years before beginning his corporate voyage. During his last 18+ years of relevance, he has had an opportunity to work in eight countries and four continents with top brands. Currently based out of Canada, he validates a deeper sense of engagement with his fauji fraternity even more now.



Rajesh: Please tell us something about your background prior to joining the Army, and your subsequent Army career?

Karan: I am a second generation Infantry officer, and third if I count my grandfather's service with the British. I started my career from the KPO industry and then straight into the olive-green folds when I was 22+ in 2003. I served in a modified-field area in Punjab, United Nations (Lebanon) and Rashtriya Rifles before joining IIM, Lucknow, for the EGMP course in 2009.

Rajesh: Please give us details about what you are presently engaged in your professional role and where are you based out of? What's different in the new country?

Karan: I am currently working for an American MNC and based out of Ontario, Canada, in the last mile operations domain. Canada is famous for its gorgeous scenery and uninhabited vast-lands. It has one of the most friendly, disciplined and polite people. Its delightful maple syrup, Ice hockey and the undeniable Tim Hortons are all hallmarks of cultural influence it has on new immigrants.

Rajesh: What was the impetus for you to leave the uniformed service?

Karan: After sweating for a few years in the Army, I thought of seeking recourse for my newly discovered skills acquired while in forces. It was definitely the most agonizing decisions for me, and I surely miss the forces as the thought of surviving without the uniform couldn't have been much worse initially when I stepped out. But overall, it has been a nourishing and learning experience till date.

Rajesh: Please tell us about your vision as you prepared for your second career after Army?

Karan: Frankly, I did not have a 30 second future outlook about my second career. I went with the flow and one thing led to the other. I kept landing jobs, in fact I boast of having seven offer letters to choose from after I completed my six months course at IIML. But one thing is for sure, I remained optimistic, always!

Rajesh: How did Forces Network help him in his Transition?

Karan: “Your network is your net worth” - most connected people are often the most successful. Forces network is one such platform which makes one invest in relationships – professional and personal which pays back in dividends throughout the course of one’s career. Since it helps newly released/retired Officers develop and improve their skill sets, stay on top of the latest trends in different industries, keep a pulse on the job market, meet prospective mentors, partners, and clients, and gain access to the necessary resources which help foster a faster career development - Forces Network has almost become an essential.



The exposure and experience while in uniform

Rajesh: What challenges you faced in this new journey? And, how did you overcome those challenges?

Karan: Ex forces Officers, like their civil counterparts, face many challenges throughout the second career life. Each step on a career path can bring new expectations and obstacles to overcome. I simply kept reminding myself of my background, looked forward to the sage advice provided by my mentors, and let life take its course as is. Am personally a wanderer, therefore had no issues in adjusting to what came across as a test.

Rajesh: Would you like to share important learnings as you grew up in the corporate?

Karan: I don't think I have acquired enough growth stature to share, but would definitely ask new corporate warriors to network as much as you can. Shed the attitude, keep the pride of an officer. Humility and kind words can take one places. Admit faults and learn not to repeat! Add certifications to your resume and choose one line of business to outclass in. And yes, learn excel.

Rajesh: What is your team like, and how is it working in a place (a new country), full of different cultures and individuals from varied backgrounds?

Karan: Allow me to indulge - Having worked in seven countries and four continents I was kind of familiar working with different cultures having varied backgrounds. My current team is a scintillating mix of people from many cultures. And FYI, I'm not just talking about politeness and apologizing for everything (sorry) - Canadians are just generally really happy people who are super friendly and courteous to strangers, including recent arrivals to the country like myself. It definitely is a melting pot of varied cultures!

Rajesh: What's the most important factor for any Forces Officer to settle down and succeed in any place outside India?

Karan: Settling down is easy for anyone who comes out of forces, Anyone! Everyone's survived in ILPs/basha's and therefore settling abroad shouldn't be a apprehension. Succeeding - must and will take effort. Also depends on what success for someone actually is. If its money, I swear it doesn't come easy. But if its something else, then am still discovering!



Work while you work, and play while you play - but sometimes both go together

Rajesh: How has been your corporate journey so far? Are you satisfied?

Karan: Being satisfied with your life is something a little different. Life satisfaction is being happy about your life. I am contended for sure, but I don't think I am satisfied as yet. There's a plenty more to see and experience hitherto, to sense satisfaction. But am definitely not dissatisfied too!

Rajesh: What are your future plans going forward?

Karan: I am certainly not an overtime and long terms planner. I personalize carpe diem theory and give little thought to the future (my bad). Travelling will remain part of my plans always. Rest, Qué será, será - What will be, will be!



Spending quality time with family

Rajesh: So, what advice would you like to give to the fellow ForceNet members who want to take up similar corporate profile?

Karan: I will definitely suggest officers to stick to one profile if possible. Security operations comes naturally to us, but look outside of security. I ventured in Operations including S&Op as fundamentals, but would implore Officers to look at marketing, programming including coding and manufacturing to mull as a few options. Definitely try and acquire tech skills if you can. Worlds changing fast, its going to be all digital in a few years from now! Be the relevant!

Rajesh: Any important projects undertaken by you over these years?

Karan: Each job I worked in, provided ample opportunities for projects. From learning secondary lead manufacturing to gold mining, I think I had my share of fun on a few. Running an event management company as a side hustle for a few years in itself was a great project to undertake and succeed in. For now, my current company has a few I am trying to accomplish, the list is long!

Rajesh: Tell us more about your family?

Karan: Me, my wife and our two children. Heredity I shall not believe in, until my children act wise!

Rajesh: In a busy world, how do you pursue hobbies or interests?

Karan: Canada is one of the most Instagrammable - read stunningly beautiful- places in the world. For now, I travel the countryside, indulge in cooking different cuisines (Including poutine, and read non-fiction when I get time. Rest, playing with my children is a recently acquired and an evolved hobby for me, making the best of time for the same!



Capt Rajesh Nair is from the 75th Course, OTA, and was commissioned into 14 Maratha Light Infantry. Post Army service, he has worked in the field of administration for more than a decade, having worked with companies like Wipro, Mahindra Automobile, Tata Communications and Credence Global Solutions.

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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

Tina Garg is the Founder of Pink Lemonade, a full-service, Integrated Marketing, and Communications agency headquartered in Bengaluru. Tina launched Pink Lemonade in 2011 with one person on board. Today, Pink Lemonade is a team of about 200 and is known for its award-winning work in brand communications and digital services, and Tina is well known to be a sharp marketer, with extensive experience of 25 years in the creative industry. As the Founder, she is the firm's key strategist and planner, working with CXO-level and senior leaders across client organizations. Tina has also received numerous awards for her contributions to the marketing industry. In 2018, Tina was named the Agency Head of the Year (Creative) by Social Samosa. In 2022, Social Samosa awarded Pink Lemonade Best Agency of the South (Silver). She also received an award for her contributions as one of the emerging 'Women Leaders in Marketing and Sales' in 2021, from the Vedica Women's Alliance. She won the Vedica Scholars Award for being one of the 'Top 50 Women Who made an Impact' in 2021. She has also been named as one of the top 200 Women Entrepreneurs by Niti Ayog. Pink Lemonade's portfolio has grown to include a staggering 1000+ brands in the last 10 years. Tina is passionate about helping women achieve their true potential and bringing women back to work. She has been instrumental in driving policies for the same and also helping other organizations with this. Prior to setting up Pink Lemonade, Tina was the Creative Head at a Bangalore based agency, and managed communications at Ernst and Young. Tina holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication from Symbiosis Institute of Mass Communications, Pune, a Masters in Marketing from Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies, Pune, and a B.E. in Computer Science from Pune Institute of Computer Technology.



Uday: Please tell us about yourself and what you do?

Tina: I run a brand marketing agency called Pink Lemonade Communications. We are into branding solutions, marketing communications, and digital marketing. I pivoted to the marketing industry after studying to be a Computer Engineer. It was a

fascinating journey – my love for brand marketing ensured it was a cakewalk. The growth of my organization has been really significant in the last decade.

I am married to Tapan Garg, whom I met in college, and we have two wonderful children – a 21-year-old son, soon-to-be an investment banking graduate, and a 17-year-old daughter looking to study psychology and marketing.

Uday: What is it that inspired you to embark on the entrepreneurial journey?

Tina: Companies and brands need to plan for good brand communication – internally and externally. I realized that not all ad agencies meet online, offline, digital, and organizational communications holistically, so clients end up working with different vendors and service providers. Having noticed this, both from outside and within the agencies I worked with, I felt the need for a good, strong agency that could be the think tank for brands as well as their execution partner.

I started out with consulting, but soon realized I was running my own firm and delivering creatives anyway.

We began as a small agency in 2011 with two-three people. It gives me pride to say the company has grown at a fast pace since its inception.

Today, Pink Lemonade’s portfolio has grown to include a staggering 1000+ brands across more than 14 domains. With over 150 years of collective team experience and about 200 FTEs, we have carved a niche for ourselves in the industry.



The leader, and the strong supporting team

Uday: We all have mentors and guides in our professional world and they are a great influence. Could you please tell us about them from your life?

Tina: Yes, I totally agree that mentors can selflessly chart your journey and open the door for you. They spot your talents and nurture you, so you can go forth and achieve your goals.

My initial mentors were those I met in my various workplaces. The top leadership at EY and my previous organizations really made this possible for me. Later, Tapan, my husband, came on board to professionally mentor Pink Lemonade for fast-paced growth, bringing his experience from the software industry into our processes.

Today, I would advise you to look around and find mentors in whatever way you can. One mentor may not always give you all the answers and advice, so find multiple people to talk to and be hungry for what you can learn from them.

Uday: What are your biggest sources of inspiration?

Tina: My biggest sources of inspiration are women who have done it before me and to learn from those who did it with no precedents, less opportunities, and fewer sponsors. When I read stories of Indra Nooyi, Sheryl Sandberg, Arianna Huffington, Michelle Obama, and even some of our own women running SMEs, I am hugely inspired.

Uday: As an Army Kid, the Army life must have had an influence on your choices as you travelled and grew in personal and professional life. Could you please tell us more about the Fauji aspect of your life journey?

Tina: Oh, absolutely! I think I am so much richer in my understanding of human beings from different walks of life, thanks to my Fauji background. I can speak to almost anyone in Hindi or English and mingle freely with the audiences I meet in my brand studies on the field. I also feel that I have a good understanding of the hinterland and the various socio-economic segments owing to this exposure.

Most Fauji kids build genuine associations and friendships and this is something that comes to us easily. You have to get up and reinvent yourself every couple of years and that's what my early life taught me. Of course, my parents also gave me the exposure I needed to become a well-rounded individual.

Uday: Would you like to share more details about Pink Lemonade – an exciting workplace you have raised and established, and how it all started?

Tina: Over the years, we have created award-winning, marketing magic for brands and built a company culture that makes all the difference. We have extensive training hours for all our teams so that they can stay ahead of the curve in a digital-first world. Not just that, we really put in efforts to create people-friendly policies and innovative engagement activities to foster a fun, energizing, safe, and creative work environment for all.

We recognize the importance of learning during formative years to enable our new and young talent to grow with us while improving their quality of work and getting better projects.

We are a holistic workplace where our people can enjoy benefits such as massages at the end of the month, a game of pool to unwind, snacks on the house, participate in hobby classes, be part of in-house training sessions to upskill themselves, and go for team outings. This helps them maintain a good work-life balance as well.



With women from across the world mentored by Fortune 500 leaders, by US State Department

Uday: How has been the journey so far and any stories of great remembrance and significance you wish to share with us?

Tina: So many special moments and unforgettable firsts.

Right from moving to our first large office, our first manufacturing unit visit, bagging our first award as an all-women team, working with the aerospace industry, visiting the offices of Airbus, watching the Aero India shows from close quarters, attending the launch of Chandrayaan-2 with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, winning multiple national and state-level awards, traveling to the US as one of the 13 women chosen by the US state department to be mentored by the founders of Airbnb, and surviving the pandemic without any pay cut for all our people.

There are myriad stories I can think of and each one speaks of our values, culture, resilience and spirit!

Uday: Being an entrepreneur in the field of communication and branding, what are your thoughts, learning and what you think is required so that more women take up entrepreneurship in this field?

Tina: I feel women are naturally gifted when it comes to soft skills and that coupled with their love for marketing communication should help them grow brands and themselves. Women who have trained at Pink Lemonade have gone on to build sound teams and risen to occupy top positions within and outside the organization.

Our diversity ratio is fantastic with 75% women. We have women from finance, marketing, and engineering backgrounds who add deep value to some of the creative campaigns we work on.

In fact in the field of marketing and communications, it's very common to find women achieving and growing. Each woman is already a buyer in her home and marketer in some way and I think one can easily structure this learning by attending some quick sessions at schools like MICA, ISB and IIM - in order to build a successful career in the field of marketing and branding.

I am happy to guide and help women to develop these skills further and help them have a stepping stone to a great career.

Uday: Consumer – how would you like to explain or demystify this mystery?

Tina: Surprisingly, a consumer is not a mystery at all. It's all about dissecting and understanding their psyche well. We study and analyze consumer behavior closely based on three major factors: segmenting, targeting, and marketing.

A demographic and psychographic study gives you a closer look into who your consumer is and gives you great insights into their needs and wants.

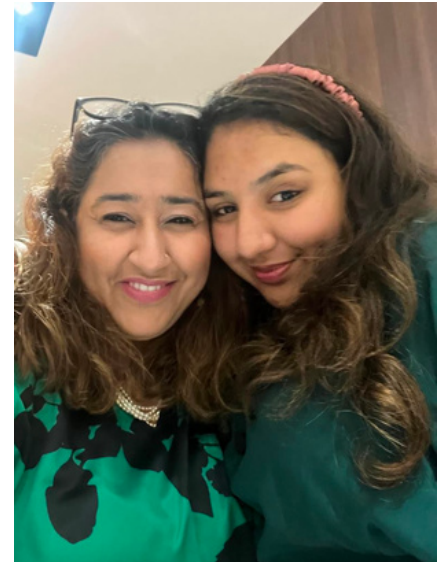
We do thorough persona mapping to better target them, understanding what makes a consumer tick and study why they will buy, what influences them, what are their motivations, fears and drivers.

The marketing message is key and to intuitively know their response is something that comes to you when you put yourself in the consumer's shoes. So the more you really know the customer, the easier it is to demystify them.

Uday: Any challenges you faced so far on the way to establishing yourself and how you challenged those? Was there any turnaround event or moment in your life? Let us know about the Role of Family in your life as an entrepreneur?

Tina: Finding the right talent was a concern during the early days. We overcame it by opening the door to people with the right attitude, even if the aptitude was not 100%.

It is one of the most remarkable solutions that has worked for us over the years. We started talking about our perks and benefits more because no one was doing what we were then – mid-week holidays, quarterly bonuses, bringing children to work and so on. The talent branding we invested in really paid off.



Husband, mother, twin sister, son and daughter - strong family ties and pillars for success

My family is at the core of who I am and what I do. Everyone needs to play a role with equity where all members of the family must have the freedom to achieve whatever they have set their hearts on and get equal footing in discussions. My husband and I make sure that we give each other enough space to co-exist with respect and this is something the children have quickly imbibed too.

My dad has always been a stickler for discipline and that has rubbed off on me. I have imbibed social graces from my mother and picked up strength from my constant pillars of support – my twin sister, her husband, and my in-laws.

Uday: Live in the present moment and/or Plan for the future? What's your mantra?

Tina: As you grow, you realize there is beauty in living in the moment. However, it is wise to keep some thoughts about what the future might have so that you are prepared for it in all ways. For example, you might want to do your marketing job well while keeping in mind that it doesn't hurt to build digital marketing skills for the future.

Uday: Lessons learnt as the world transitions through one of the most challenging times?

Tina: Be prepared, anticipate, and take steps to survive a VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) world. We need to predict trends and plan somewhat in advance to be ahead of the game while giving our best in the present.

The other thing that stands us in good stead is, to be really good at what we are

– it gives us the confidence and ability to withstand challenges even if we didn't see them coming. In order to do this it's important to spend time learning – 1% every day, which compounds in the long run and makes you a much smarter person at the end of the day. Learning puts you heads and shoulders over others when it comes to problem-solving and creative thinking.

Uday: What advice do you have, especially for family members from Fauj?

Tina: One of my favourite real-life stories that always encourages me to keep going no matter what is that of Thomas Edison. He made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts before he finally invented the light bulb! One of the mottos I live by – never give up. Reach out and ask for help. There's always someone waiting to help if you ask. There are ample courses and support available out there. Try it!

I also believe that time is critical. Too much too soon will always result in something slipping through your fingers. Give yourself time and nurture yourself through the journey. It will happen. Patience is key. And learn while you wait.

Life is uncertain and a Fauji knows it better than anyone. Just when the kids are settling in school, you get posting orders. So if you could survive it then, you can survive it now.

Marketing is one of the richest and most vibrant fields to work in and grow. We will be more than happy to support and guide ex-Faujis and their families.



Completing ISB Ambassador's Program

Uday: As an aspiring and confident woman in the World of Entrepreneurship, How's your experience? Five Leadership Qualities that Women bring on the table?

Tina: In my view, these are:

- Inner strength – women absorb and channel deep in times of adversity to bring out the strengths that teams can leverage
- Empathy – women connect easily with peers and colleagues, thereby creating a workplace that truly nurtures
- Tribe – women build a community around them and take people along on the journey of growth, personally and professionally
- Holistic development – women create opportunities for their teams with all-round development, from technical to soft skills
- Resilience – women withstand the toughest of challenges, looking at them as lessons before an upcoming success



Representing Pink Lemonade at a conference

Uday: Most importantly, what is the best thing you love about entrepreneurship?

Tina: The fact that you work for yourself and can take path-breaking decisions every day. It's an exciting ride, albeit with challenges. If you create a good ecosystem around yourself, you will rejoice in solving those challenges. Then it becomes a great journey of learning, taking action, and achieving.

Uday: I am just intrigued, as to how come you decided on the name 'Pink Lemonade'. Is there a story?

Tina: Well, there is no story. However, the idea behind the name was to connote freshness in brand communication – which is imperative to create differentiation in a brand.

Uday: There are a lot of persons in our fauji fraternity who have, and are venturing into businesses and entrepreneurship. How can they gain in associating with you, what would be your advice to them, and how can they reach out to you?

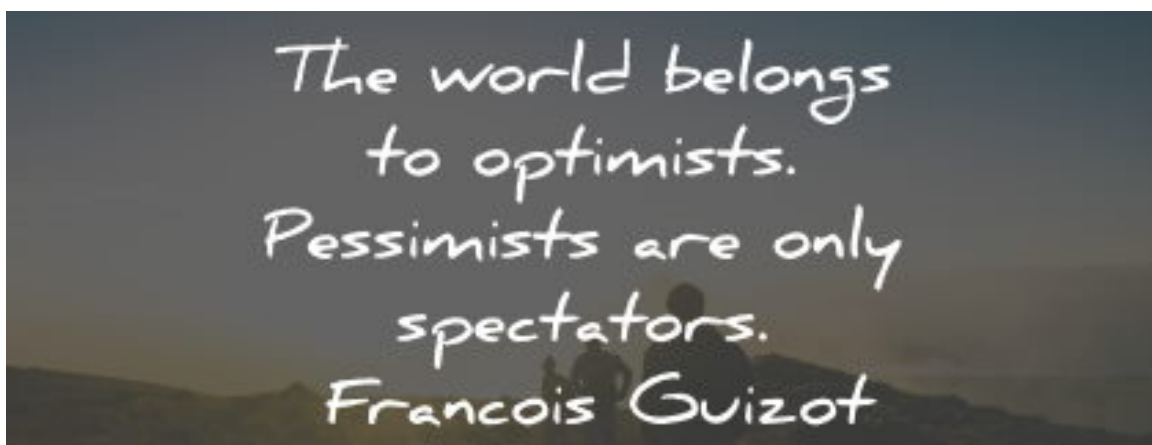
Tina: An insight into what we are actively engaged in can be seen at our website <https://www.pinklemonade.in/>. My advise to all new entrepreneurs would be to plan the source of income and revenue clearly. Don't make heavy investments in infrastructure and people before you have your revenue stream worked out. That's often a mistake I see enthusiastic startups make. Secondly find your niche and differentiator that will make you stand apart from the others. Then build pure excellence in that.

I would be happy to help a bunch of folks from the armed forces build some knowledge on marketing and the digital space. Happy to have conversations to help people anytime.



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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Author of the Month

COMMODORE ASPI CAWASJI

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY SHRIWAS

Commodore Aspi Cawasji, NM, VSM is an alumnus of NDA Khadakwasla and was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1981. The officer has participated in numerous Naval operations and is an experienced submariner having served for 36 years in the Indian Navy. He has held various important command assignments of Commodore Commanding Submarines (East Coast), Commanding Officer of Submarine Base Virbahu, Commanding Officer of Guided Missile Frigate Gomati and Commanding Officer of Submarines Shishumar, Karanj and Shalki in addition to other staff assignments as Director (North East) in Defence Intelligence Agency and Commander Submarine Operations at Western Naval Command. He has also served as the Principal Director Strategic Operations (Systems) and Principal Director (Sea Vector) at the premier Strategic Forces Command and OIC & Project Director at Naval Alternate Operating Base, Rambilli. He has crossed the portals of DSSC Wellington, NWC Mumbai and NDC Delhi acquiring academic qualifications of BSc, MSc and MPhil (Defence & Strategic Studies). He has authored a book Strategic Vision 2030 - Security and Development of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The officer holds an MPhil degree from Madras University and is also an alumnus of Management Development Institute, Gurugram. He is a Soft Skills Trainer and Visiting Faculty at New Delhi Institute of Management, New Delhi. He is a recipient of Nao Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal.



Uday: Please tell us something about your journey in the Armed Forces?

Aspi: I am from 57th NDA course, commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 Jan 1981. I volunteered for the Submarine Arm in 1983 and was deputed to West Germany as the Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer of INS Shankush, the second submarine procured by the Indian Navy from HDW Kiel West Germany. Thereafter, I have served continuously at sea as ASWO, Executive Officer and then Commanding Officer of three submarines INS, Shishumar, Karanj and Shalki. I have represented India at a seminar held in Halifax Canada conducted by Dalhousie University on Regional Maritime Power in the Indian Ocean. On promotion to Captain, I assumed charge as the Captain Submarines of the 11th Submarine Squadron. Soon after, I did a pioneer stint in the Defence Intelligence Agency, wherein, I was deputed to the UK to study about the functioning of their DIA. I then went in Command of guided missile frigate INS Gomati, the

workhorse of the Western Fleet – better known as the Sword Arm of the Indian Navy. As the Commodore Commanding Submarines on the East Coast, I had the occasion to deploy numerous submarines on operational missions. My stint at the Strategic Forces Command was most satisfying as I headed the Systems and Sea Vector departments. My last stint was on the East coast as the Officer in Charge of the new base under construction which was equally challenging.



Displaying the might of the naval forces to the leaders of the country

Uday: How satisfying was your Naval career?

Aspi: I have held numerous command assignments afloat and independent assignments ashore which gave me great exposure to the functioning of the Navy, teaching me the valuable lesson that the bedrock upon which our service is laid is – trust and teamwork. It is on the shoulders of sailors that our service thrives.

I have had the privilege of taking part in a host of multi-national exercises with foreign navies in the capacity of Commanding Officer of submarines and the frigate that I commanded. Getting exposure to Navies of the world like the US Navy, Royal Navy, Australian Navy, Russian Navy, Omanese Navy, German Navy, Chinese Navy indeed broadens one’s horizon. In addition, I have participated in numerous Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations.

Uday: What did you do after you retired from service?

Aspi: I have always been of the opinion that the teaching profession is next best to the Armed Forces where a person is respected and honoured adequately. Besides, I always harboured the conviction that I should give back to society all the experience gained having served in the Armed Forces. Hence, being a graduate from Management Development Institute, Gurugram, immediately after my superannuation in 2016, I joined as a Visiting Faculty in New Delhi Institute of Management Delhi teaching soft skills to MBA students. I have always felt that this is a weak area in the corporate world and students could stand to benefit from my vast experience in people management having interacted with diverse societies within India and from overseas for years. Then in 2017, I jointly authored a book titled, Vision 2030: Security and Development of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

With an intention to empower 'Young India' and to ignite the minds of the not so fortunate youth of our great country, who after obtaining an education with difficulty aspire to cross the threshold of the corporate doorway vying for a successful corporate life, I intended to impart knowledge required to survive in the corporate world. Using my people handling skills and leadership experience of three and a half decades gained in the Indian Navy, as well as, sufficient time spent as a visiting faculty at the academic portals of business management, I discuss and give tips on various issues pertaining to Leadership, Soft Skills, Personality Development, Group Discussions, Personal Interviews and Personal Grooming & Business Etiquette. Currently, I have taken up writing as a full time activity and contribute to numerous undersea professional journals and other diverse publications.



International exposure and experience through interaction and exercises with Navies of other nations

Uday: What inspired you to write a book? How did it all start?

Aspi: Since the time I joined the Indian Navy, I have been penning professional articles contributing to numerous submarine related magazines. My friends tell me that I have a flair for writing. Then, as I progressed in service with higher responsibilities, I could not devote much time to writing seriously. Thereafter, after retirement, I started writing once again. When the Covid-19 pandemic struck in 2020, I suddenly had a lot of time on my hands and started writing short stories and anecdotes that I had experienced over the years on the various submarines, ships and shore establishments that I had served in. I started maintaining a blog too and was getting plenty of encouragement from my family, coursemates and friends.

That is when, I decided to compile these short stories into a book. This is how I got motivated to bring my words to print. Infact, this Covid phase really brought out my creativity and I even wrote a picture story book for six year old children, which is under print currently. Infact, the realization that I had not spent adequate time with my family in my younger and serving years dawned on me quite late in life during the prolonged lockdowns that we experienced during the pandemic. I realized the immense hardships that my spouse and kids must have endured when I was away at sea for prolonged durations.

Uday: Any friends who have been a part of your journey in publishing your latest book?

Aspi: Although, I had put the written material together all from my own memory, it was not until I met Brigadier Rajendra Singh from the publishing house Sabre and Quill, that my book saw the printer's ink. He gave me a patient hearing and actually guided me through the various steps to bring my book to print. The quality time that I spent with him and his courteous and positive attitude influenced me immensely. I'm indeed grateful to him for his guidance. Another dear friend and coursemate, Lt Commander Harinder Sikka, an accomplished corporate giant and successful author of "Calling Sehmat" which later on was picturized as "Raazi" and his latest book "Vichhoda" helped me immensely in firming up my thoughts about taking the plunge as an author. He has been a prime mover in my book writing journey. I am very thankful to him for his perineal encouragement.

Uday: Please share briefly about the contents of your book?

Aspi: My book is about the difficult life onboard submarines and brings out the hardships that this group of brave men endure at sea. Submarines get their character from predator fish, which lie stealthily unseen in the oceans ready to pounce upon their prey from depths within. In fact, they are called "Sharks of Steel" named after nature's perfect killing machine, the "Shark". All the traits of a shark, like the ability to detect its prey from a long distance, its stealthy approach, swift and ruthless attack are replicated in a submarine. The sonar of the submarine has been designed from the Dolphin possessing the capability for underwater communication. A submarine is a complex weapon platform built with a trade-off between size, stealth characteristics, weapon load, dynamic performance, endurance and of course cost. In general, the smaller the submarine, the more weapons it carries per displaced tonne, the more offensive its role, since size largely determines endurance and patrol range. As Admiral McKee of the US Navy put it rather bluntly, "A submarine in the water scares the hell out of people". The bottom line in battling a submarine is survival. "You don't have to kill him, you have to keep him from killing you or anyone else". Even today, submarines strike terror in any adversary's heart and compel countries to spend disproportionate amounts on human and material resources in order to hunt them down.

Submarines are good at hiding. That is their strength. They can remain undetected if they are stealthy, clever and do not become careless in giving away their position. A submarine, therefore, must be able to reach its objective without being detected, accomplish its mission and return home without exposing itself.

The hard living conditions that exist onboard require a special breed of human beings who possess a strong mental makeup, determination, motivation, grit and conviction to operate these complex ultimate war fighting machines. The psyche of the submariner thus has to be cultivated to a superlative level of conditioned unexpected

responses with an ability to think out of the box, attacking the target with swift ruthlessness.

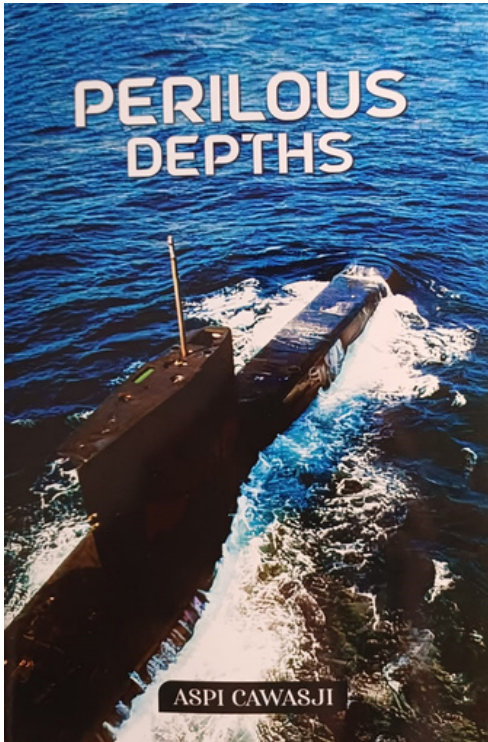
Submarine operations are mostly clandestine in nature and thus secrecy is ingrained into an officer's psyche. An officer in the submarine is subjected to a variety of situations before he can be termed as a professional. There is no substitute for experience gained at sea in dealing with numerous instances encountered both at sea and on land. These short stories depict the making of a submariner.



A potent weapons platform and a force multiplier - with demanding work ethos and living conditions

Uday: A book is a great friend for everyone. How would you like to explain this? Would you recommend some books for the members of Forces Network?

Aspi: Reading is the path to knowledge. Since my childhood, I have been a voracious reader. In my younger years, I have read almost all children's books. My reading habits kept changing from fairy tales and fiction in childhood to more serious subjects later. After joining the Navy, I got hooked to military history and biographies of great leaders like the 'Long Walk to Freedom' – Nelson Mandela, 'Order in Chaos' by Herman Balck and 'Karl Doenitz and The Last Days of the Third Reich' by Barry Turner just to name a few. Then, I became an avid reader of international affairs and strategic analysis. Even my mode of reading has changed over the years going a full cycle. From hard copies to soft versions as e-books available on the PC, to Kindle, to audio books and now back to hard copies. I read when I travel and at bedtime.



Uday: What is your message to your readers of “Perilous Depths”?

Aspi: My intention of writing this book was to highlight the hard life that submariners experience at sea and in harbour. I wanted to demystify submarine operations explaining as to what actually goes on inside a submarine to the lay person. The underlying message throughout the book is the importance of the man behind the machine.

This book will also serve as a great motivator for young adults at the threshold of choosing a profession and those who are exploring avenues about joining the Navy and specialize in Submarines. The underlying motivating message in this book is about living a life of adventure under sea.

Book name: Perilous Depths; **Publishers:** Sabre and Quill; **Distributers:** Bookmart (bookmart329@gmail.com); **Available on:** Amazon, Bookmart

Price: Rs. 599/- (Paperback) Discounted copy on Amazon India (Rs. 499/-)
Rs. 899/- (Hardcover) Discounted copy on Amazon India (Rs. 799/-)

Link: Perilous Depths [paperback] Aspi Cawasji [Dec 08, 2022], via @amazon
https://www.amazon.in/gp/product/BOBPC6N7YG/ref=cx_skuctr_share?smid=AYF7V89O40F69

Perilous Depths [hardcover] Aspi Cawasji [Dec 08, 2022], via @amazon
https://www.amazon.in/gp/product/BOBPCQPQKH/ref=cx_skuctr_share?smid=AYF7V89O40F69

Uday: How does one contact you for guidance,help or suggestions.

Aspi: My email ID is aspicawasji@gmail.com . After making initial contact, we can message one-on-one (1on1) on mobile.



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

Moment In Time

We have started with a Photography section “**Moment in Time**” to provide an outlet for creative side of our esteemed members. The rules for submission are as under:-

1. Forces Network members, spouses and their wards can submit images for publication.
2. No Nudity or Porn.
3. No mention of Mil establishments or unit identity or tac numbers or tail numbers.
4. It's a photography section so no images of various get togethers and social functions will be published.
5. The longer side of image should be 2048 pixels.
6. Maximum 5 images will be published every month. The images must be submitted by 20th of every month.
7. Mention your Instagram ID.
8. **While submitting the following details be submitted along with the suitable Title:-**
 - a. Aperture
 - b. Shutter speed
 - c. ISO
 - d. Camera used
 - e. Lens
 - f. Focal length.
 - g. In case of a mobile click, the same may please be mentioned.

All Photos may please be sent to forcesnetworkz@gmail.com by 20th of every month.

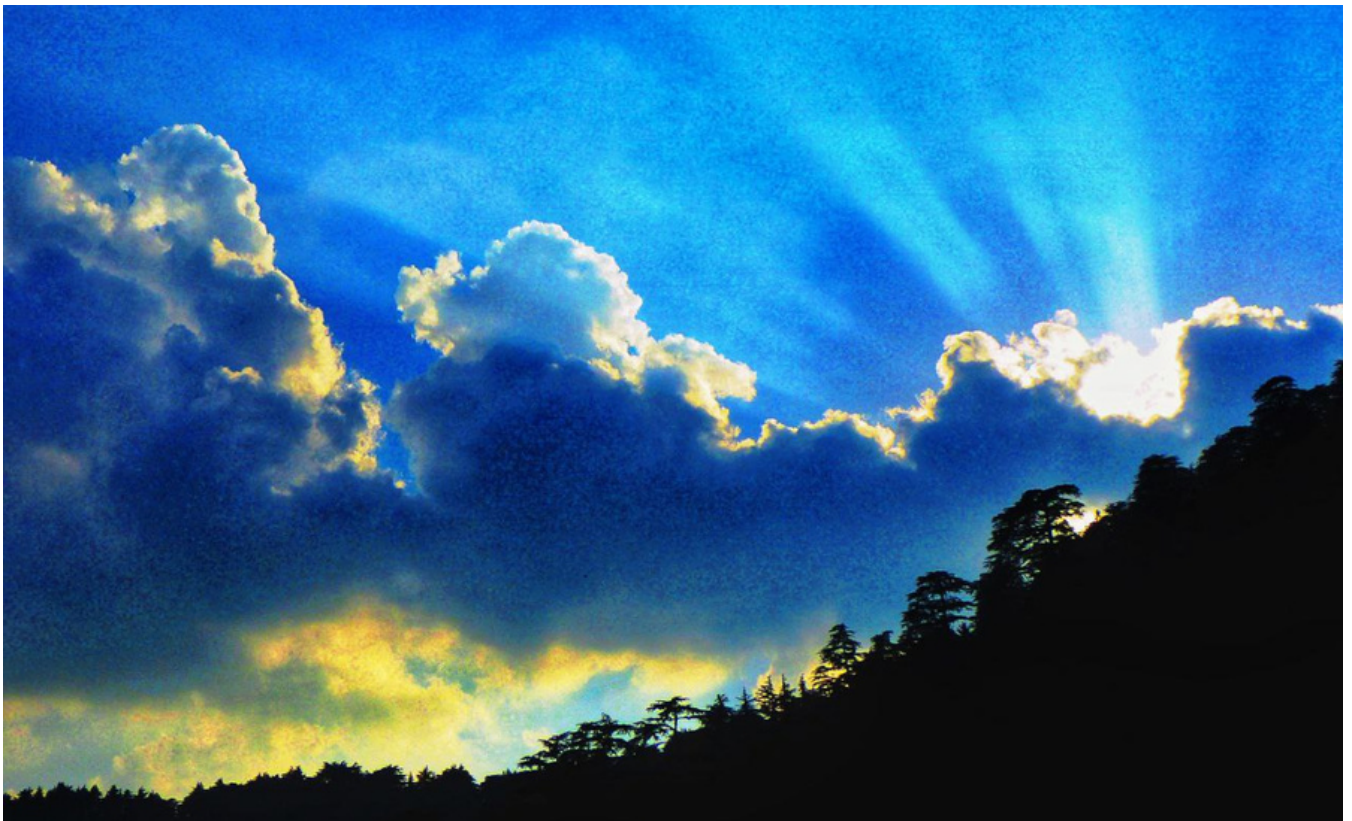


Palace Hotel at night in Lake Pichola, Udaipur - Panasonic Lumix FZ-150; f/5.6; 4 sec, ISO-100

By Lt Col Ranvir Singh



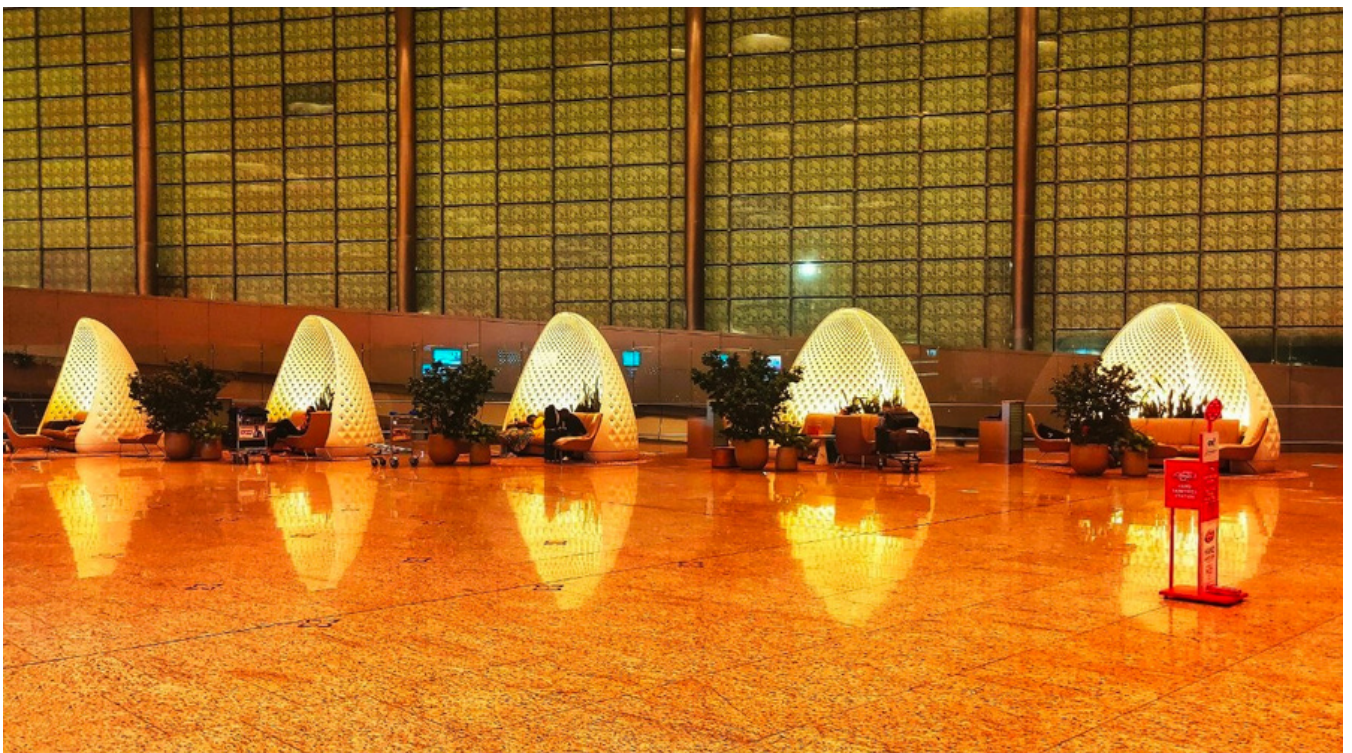
Cool bat, at Murud Beach (Dhakoli) - Panasonic Lumix FZ-150; f/4; 1/80 sec, ISO-100
By Lt Col Ranvir Singh



Magic in the clouds, at Khajjjar (HP) - Panasonic Lumix FZ-150; f/5; 1/1600 sec, ISO-100
By Lt Col Ranvir Singh



Patient Bee (when only phone camera is at hand) - Realme 3 Pro; f/1.7; 1/50 sec; ISO-1000
By Lt Col Ranvir Singh



Rest pods, at International Airport Mumbai - Realme 3 Pro; f/1.7; 1/33 sec; ISO-800
By Lt Col Ranvir Singh

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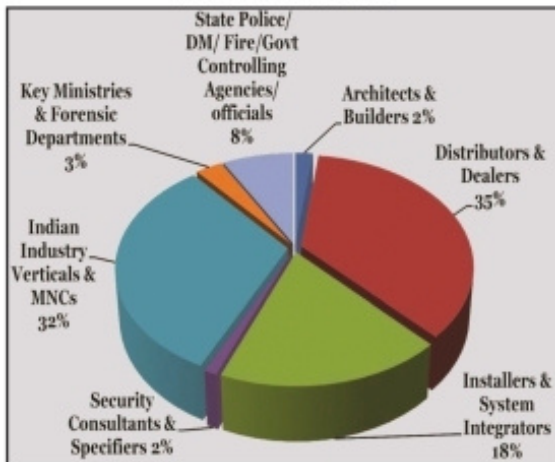
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Tech Corner

Introduction to Cyber Security Roles: A Day In the Life of a SOC Analyst

BY IQBAL SINGH



Cyber Security Professionals are in Great Demand Today

There has been a lot of buzz around cyber security as a career option as the sector is witnessing a boom. There are more job openings than qualified candidates. That makes it a suitable career option to pursue for the Transitioning military personnel. However, there is a lot of fog around how you can make a career around cyber security coming from a different industry or sector. This article will try and remove that fog for at least one role SOC Analyst.

What is a SOC (Security Operations Center)

A Security Operations Center (SOC) – sometimes also called as Information Security Operations Center, or ISOC – is an in-house or outsourced team of IT security professionals that monitors an organization's entire IT infrastructure, 24/7, to detect cybersecurity events in real time and address them as quickly and effectively as possible.

An SOC also selects, operates, and maintains the organization's cybersecurity technologies, and continually analyzes threat data to find ways to improve the organization's security posture.



A typical SOC

The chief benefit of operating or outsourcing an SOC is that it unifies and coordinates an organization's security tools, practices, and response to security incidents. This usually results in improved preventative measures and security policies, faster threat detection, and faster, more effective and more cost-effective response to security threats. An SOC can also improve customer confidence, and simplify and strengthen an organization's compliance with industry, national and global privacy regulations.

What Does a SOC Do?

Take Stock of Available Resources: The SOC is responsible for two types of assets—the various devices, processes and applications they're charged with safeguarding, and the defensive tools at their disposal to help ensure this protection.

- **What The SOC Protects:** The SOC can't safeguard devices and data they can't see. Without visibility and control from device to the cloud, there are likely to be blind spots in the network security posture that can be found and exploited. So, the SOC's goal is to gain a complete view of the business' threat landscape, including not only the various types of endpoints, servers and software on premises, but also third-party services and traffic flowing between these assets.
- **How The SOC Protects:** The SOC should also have a complete understanding of all cybersecurity tools on hand and all workflows in use within the SOC. This increases agility and allows the SOC to run at peak efficiency

Preparation and Preventive Maintenance: Even the most well-equipped and agile response processes are no match for preventing problems from occurring in the first place. To help keep attackers at bay, the SOC implements preventative measures, which can be divided into two main categories.

- **Preparation:** Team members should stay informed on the newest security

innovations, the latest trends in cybercrime and the development of new threats on the horizon. This research can help inform the creation a security roadmap that will provide direction for the company's cybersecurity efforts going forward, and a disaster recovery plan that will serve as ready guidance in a worst-case scenario.

- **Preventive Maintenance:** This step includes all actions taken to make successful attacks more difficult, including regularly maintaining and updating existing systems; updating firewall policies; patching vulnerabilities; and whitelisting, blacklisting and securing applications.

Continuous Proactive Monitoring: Tools used by the SOC scan the network 24/7 to flag any abnormalities or suspicious activities. Monitoring the network around the clock allows the SOC to be notified immediately of emerging threats, giving them the best chance to prevent or mitigate harm. Monitoring tools can include a SIEM (Security Information & Event Management) or an EDR (Endpoint detection and response), better even a SOAR (Security Orchestration, Automation, and Response) or an XDR (Extended Detection and Response), the most advanced of which can use behavioural analysis to “teach” systems the difference between regular day-to-day operations and actual threat behaviour, minimizing the amount of triage and analysis that must be done by humans.

Alert Ranking and Management: When monitoring tools issue alerts, it is the responsibility of the SOC to look closely at each one, discard any false positives, and determine how aggressive any actual threats are and what they could be targeting. This allows them to triage emerging threats appropriately, handling the most urgent issues first.

Threat Response: These are the actions most people think of when they think of the SOC. As soon as an incident is confirmed, the SOC acts as first responder, performing actions like shutting down or isolating endpoints, terminating harmful processes (or preventing them from executing), deleting files, and more. The goal is to respond to the extent necessary while having as small an impact on business continuity as possible.

Recovery & Remediation: In the aftermath of an incident, the SOC will work to restore systems and recover any lost or compromised data. This may include wiping and restarting endpoints, reconfiguring systems or, in the case of ransomware attacks, deploying viable backups in order to circumvent the ransomware. When successful, this step will return the network to the state it was in prior to the incident.

Log Management: The SOC is responsible for collecting, maintaining, and regularly reviewing the log of all network activity and communications for the entire organization. This data helps define a baseline for “normal” network activity, can reveal the existence of threats, and can be used for remediation and forensics in the

aftermath of an incident. Many SOCs use a SIEM to aggregate and correlate the data feeds from applications, firewalls, operating systems and endpoints, all of which produce their own internal logs.

Root Cause Analysis: In the aftermath of an incident, the SOC is responsible for figuring out exactly what happened when, how and why. During this investigation, the SOC uses log data and other information to trace the problem to its source, which will help them prevent similar problems from occurring in the future.

Security Refinement and Improvement: Cybercriminals are constantly refining their tools and tactics—and in order to stay ahead of them, the SOC needs to implement improvements on a continuous basis. During this step, the plans outlined in the Security Road Map come to life, but this refinement can also include hands-on practices such as red-teaming and purple-teaming.

Compliance Management: Many of the SOC's processes are guided by established best practices, but some are governed by compliance requirements. The SOC is responsible for regularly auditing their systems to ensure compliance with such regulations, which may be issued by their organization, by their industry, or by governing bodies. Examples of these regulations include GDPR, HIPAA, and PCI DSS. Acting in accordance with these regulations not only helps safeguard the sensitive data that the company has been entrusted with—it can also shield the organization from reputational damage and legal challenges resulting from a breach.

Roles in the SOC Team

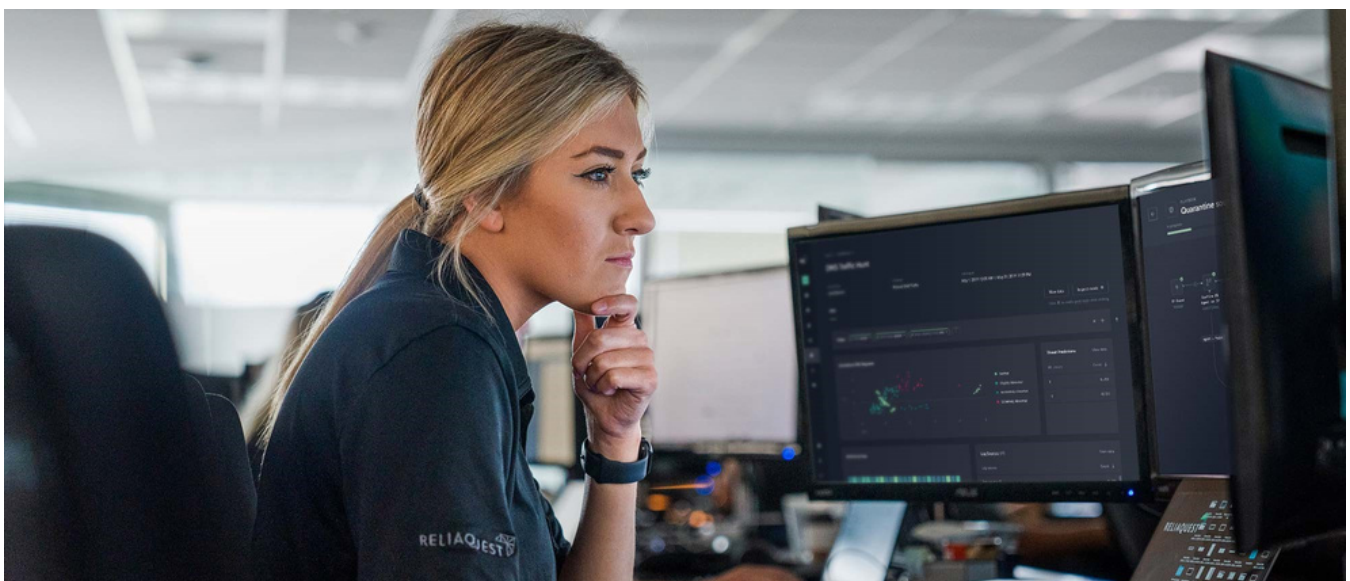
In general, the chief roles on an SOC team include the following:

- **The SOC Manager.** He runs the team, oversees all security operations, and reports to the organization's CISO (chief information security officer).
- **Security Engineers.** They build out and manage the organization's security architecture. Much of this work involves evaluating, testing, recommending, implementing and maintaining security tools and technologies. Security engineers also work with development or DevOps/DevSecOps teams to make sure the organization's security architecture is included application development cycles.
- **Security Analysts.** They are also called security investigators or incident responders – who are essentially the first responders to cybersecurity threats or incidents. Analysts detect, investigate, and triage (prioritize) threats; then they identify the impacted hosts, endpoints and users, and take the appropriate actions to mitigate and contain the impact or the threat or incident. (In some organizations, investigators and incident responders are separate roles classified as Tier 1 and Tier 2 analysts, respectively.)

- **Threat Hunters.** They are also called expert security analysts and specialize in detecting and containing advanced threats – new threats or threat variants that manage to slip past automated defenses.

The SOC team may include other specialists, depending on the size of the organization or the industry in which it does business. Larger companies may include a Director of Incident Response, responsible for communicating and coordinating incident response. And some SOCs include forensic investigators, who specialize in retrieving data – clues – from devices damaged or compromised in a cybersecurity incident.

A Day in the Life of a SOC Analyst



A SOC Analyst at work

The cybersecurity industry relies on the strength of different teams working together. It's a diverse field comprised of technical and security experts of all kind to legal analysts, finance specialists, and beyond. To learn more about the skills and experiences that make up the cybersecurity industry, we will dissect a job position each month in our magazine.

This month we take a look at the role of a SOC Analyst.

Role In Brief: A SOC analyst assists in monitoring their org's networks for malicious activity. The job requires great attention to detail and a general awareness for all things cyber. They look at IDS (Intrusion Detection System) alerts, suspicious emails, network logs, and any other resource that provide insight into an entity's network activity. Analysts are expected to be able to read, understand, and notify on cyber trends. Its critical that they have basic knowledge in areas like networking, malware analysis, incident response, and cyber etiquette. SOC analysts, or Security Operations Center analysts, monitor, investigate, and resolve cyber security attacks and alerts. If needed, they escalate incidents to managers, incident responders, and other security

analysts. While exact responsibilities differ from organization to organization, SOC analysts stand on the front lines of cyber defence.

The Three Levels of a SOC Analyst. SOC analysts often fall into different "levels" that determine what they do on the job on a day-to-day basis. Many organizations typically have 3 levels.

- **Level 1:** Level One (L1) analysts focus mainly on alert triaging, or identifying and reviewing alerts to determine if they need to take additional action. If a suspicious process occurs that triggers an alert, they will check the alert and go through different logs. They'll do whatever they need to do to remedy the situation based on the alert type.
- **Level 2:** Sometimes, that calls for escalating an alert to the Level Two (L2) analysts. These analysts typically handle escalated incidents and other functions:
 - Perform alert fine-tuning to cut down on irrelevant alerts or false positives.
 - Add/on-board new log sources into the SIEM (Security Information and Event Management) system.
 - Administer and maintain different tools.
 - Implement new use cases to strengthen cyber defenses.
- **Level 3:** Level Three (L3) security analysts typically take on similar responsibilities and handle any escalation from L2 analysts. They also communicate with clients and management as needed.

An organization might use a different kind of structure, though. "It's not like everybody will just sit in front of a system and do alert triaging," says an Analyst. "There are a lot of things we need to maintain or install and a lot will differ depending on how the job, team, or organization is structured."

What Does a Day in the Life of a SOC Analyst Look Like?

SOC analysts typically begin their day by checking a list of news, alerts, and systems, sometimes even before the work day properly begins.

"Normally, the first thing I'll do is go through some blogs like BleepingComputer and Threatpost. This way, I'll know about any hacks, ransomware, or anything related to security," says an Analyst. "Then, in the office, the first thing I check is my email and communication channels in Slack to see if anybody needs help."

Once a SOC analyst completes this cursory review of major communication channels, they dive into a series of deeper level checks to probe the organization's security:

- **Phishing Emails:** 3.4 billion phishing emails are sent each day, and it's often the SOC analyst's job to identify them before they can cause harm. Whenever a user flags a suspicious email, the SOC analyst steps in to analyze it and determine whether it's a legitimate email, harmless spam, or a true phishing threat.

- Vulnerabilities and Dependencies: SOC analysts can take on vulnerability management responsibilities to identify shifting weak points and continually strengthen cyber defences. Once they identify a vulnerability, they'll provide a recommended course of action and sync with other teams as needed. With various system and environment dependencies in mind, they might recommend remediating, mitigating, or accepting the vulnerability depending on its severity. SOC analysts also keep an eye on the news. If threat actors compromise other companies, they need to understand these new tactics to shore up their own organization's defences. In some cases, they'll also follow up with business users to see if any of their systems were compromised and if there are any dependencies they should know about.
- Alerts of All Kinds: Monitoring cybersecurity across all aspects of an organization requires a variety of tools. But it is difficult going through different tools separately, so they will mostly use a central SIEM tool.
- A Security Information and Event Management (SIEM): This system is a centralized location for most system and network logs. SOC Analysts will check these tools and any alerts that were triggered. By prioritizing alerts based on their severity, they'll work their way through the queue.

SIEM	SOAR
✓ Aggregates logs	✓ Aggregates security alerts and threat intelligence
✓ Generates alerts	✓ Ingests alerts from SIEM and other tools
✓ Analyzes data to identify potential threats	✓ Enriches and correlates alerts to determine risk
✓ Limited response workflows	✓ End-to-end, automation-powered response workflows
✓ Notifies users and analysts of suspicious activity	✓ Orchestrates actions across integrated tools

A SOC Analyst at work

What Happens When a SOC Analyst Identifies an Alert?

The first step is to confirm whether the alert is a false positive or a true positive. If it's a false positive, the analysts will close the case and fine tune the alert rule (if required) so it doesn't flag harmless actions in the future.

In the case of a true positive, the analysts will quickly jump into action. They may also contact other teams for clarification about things relevant to alerts or blocking an IP address. If they need to escalate an alert to other teams or leaders, they'll do that, too.

Responding to alerts is an iterative process. "Once we start getting the alerts, we will fine-tune them. If we can remove the extra stuff, it will give us more true positives. Rule-defining—even in an established SOC environment—is a continuous process," says an analyst.

Skills Required for a SOC Analyst Job

Cyber security is a very dynamically evolving field. No two days in cybersecurity are the same. The thing that is so secure today may be compromised tomorrow. Each day, you'll interact with something new and face new challenges. For this reason, a deliberate approach to learning can help anyone preparing for a job as a SOC analyst.

Build a Solid Cybersecurity Foundation: It's the SOC analyst's job to respond to a wide range of alerts and incidents, which is why it's important to build foundational knowledge. As a beginner, it's good to learn networking, Linux, and any part of the cloud. Once you've gained some cloud computing knowledge, expand your skill set. The more you know, the better equipped you'll be to resolve any incident.

Expanding the Skillset: Web application security and programming courses like Python and Shell Scripting with Bash, for example, can be helpful depending on your organization's needs.

Cement Your Knowledge with Certifications: Entry-level certifications will give you a good base to build on (and can give your resume an extra boost, too). But you don't want to go into these certification exams unprepared. Prep courses and hands-on labs can give you the knowledge and practice you need to ace the exams and earn your certifications. When it comes to specific entry-level certifications, there are a few to check out:

- CompTIA Network+
- CompTIA Security+
- EC-Council CEH (Certified Ethical Hacker)
- EC-Council CTIA (Certified Threat Intelligence Analysis)
- EC-Council CHFI (Certified Hacking Forensic Investigator)
- AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner
- Google Cloud Certified Cloud Digital Leader
- AZ-900 Microsoft Azure Fundamentals

Sidenote: What is a SOC Analyst's Salary?

Before you drop money on course-prep and certifications, you probably want to know

the average SOC analyst's salary. According to Glassdoor, the average salary for a SOC analyst job in the United States is \$84,506 per year. Keep in mind that this is just an average. Actual compensation may vary based on experience, certifications, and other qualifications.

Get Hands-on Experience

Having a certification is good, but it's not mandatory if you've already done hands-on work. As helpful as theoretical knowledge is, it can only take you so far in hands-on cybersecurity jobs. If you can leverage lab environments and sandboxes to explore concepts practically, you'll learn your way around real-world situations and gain confidence in the process.

"It's all about the hands-on," says an analyst. "We have a lot of sites today, like [TryHackMe](#), [Hack the Box](#), and [A Cloud Guru](#) that will give you hands-on experience. You can just make a subscription or log in, and learn in a practical way."

If you have the intent, there are no barriers to learning you are only a few clicks away!

Stay Calm, Stay Curious

When incidents arise, it can be easy to panic, and transfer that panic to others in the organization. But staying calm is the key to resolving any issue. If you can clearly state the issue, without disrupting or interrupting the other teams, you possess a valuable soft skill for SOC analyst jobs. This is an area of strength for most veterans.

One last piece of advice for cybersecurity jobs? Use your curiosity to your advantage. The threat and cyber defence landscape is always changing. Even once you've gained foundational knowledge, keep learning. Spend at least one or two hours learning each day. Keep separate time for learning something new.



***Iqbal Singh** is the Founder of Forces Network. Iqbal is an infantry officer who is today working as a senior tech executive in a Big Tech company. Iqbal apart from two technology degrees has a slew of industry certifications spanning across IT service management, Cloud, AI/ML and Project Management. Forces Network is a passion project for Iqbal – one where he is seeking to create impact and make change happen for good. He is a keen technology enthusiast who firmly believes in breaking barriers to learning technology and making it accessible as well as easy. He has mentored thousands of veterans and guided them on to successful corporate careers in his 15 years of running the Forces Network.*

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Knowledge Byte

OUR TREASURE

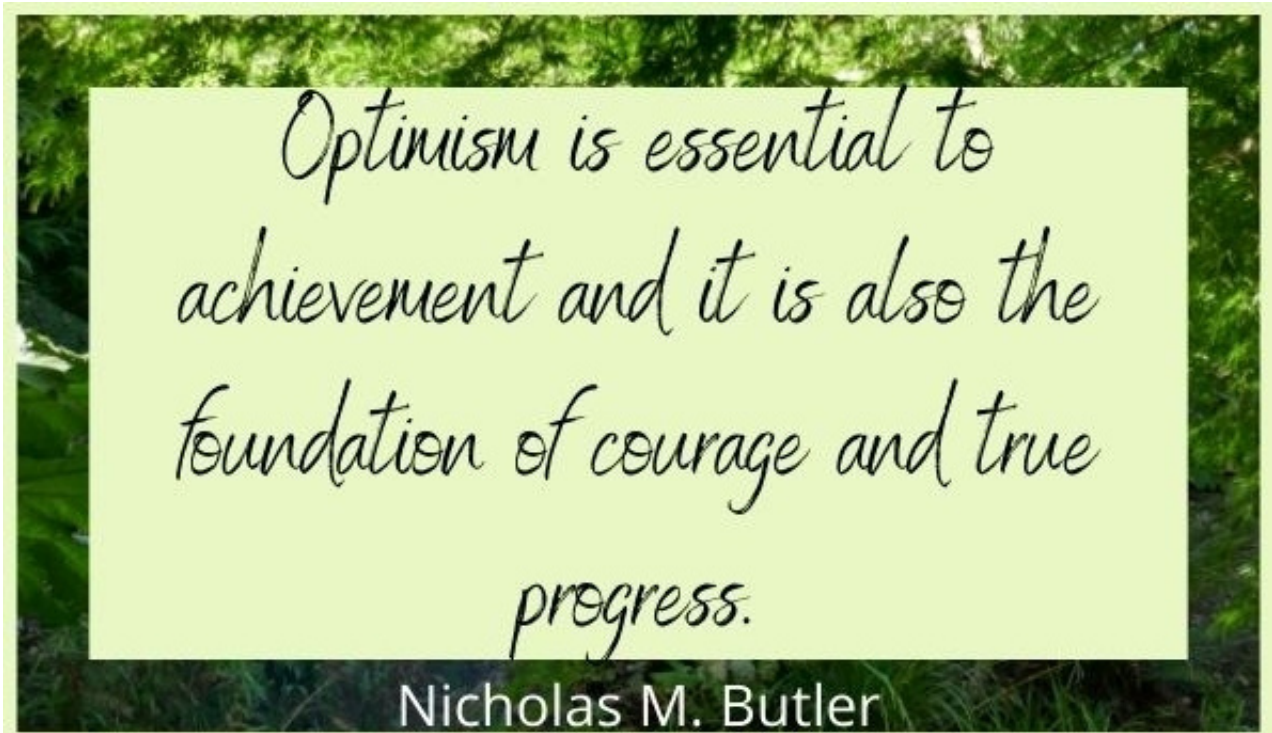
BY MEENA ARORA

Dear Readers, this is an interesting counselling session which I would like to share with you. Many a times, we only see one side or aspect of a situation, judge and analyse it, thereafter, visualize our whole life with that single aspect and suffer in despair.

This 26 year old girl, Rolli, was undergoing a similar situation in her life. Her father rebuked her for rejecting a fine marriage proposal. Her mother kept cursing her for not being keen with the household chores and her only sister calls her useless as she is not even taking up any job.

Rolli herself started feeling that she is good for nothing. After all so many people cannot be wrong. She came to me at this juncture of hopelessness.

During the psychotherapy process, I asked her to talk about an incident from her life in which she did a remarkable task that made her feel proud.



She related the following incident to me.

One day, she as very sad and went out of her house thinking that she will never return. In the middle of the crowded city, she felt lonely and discarded.

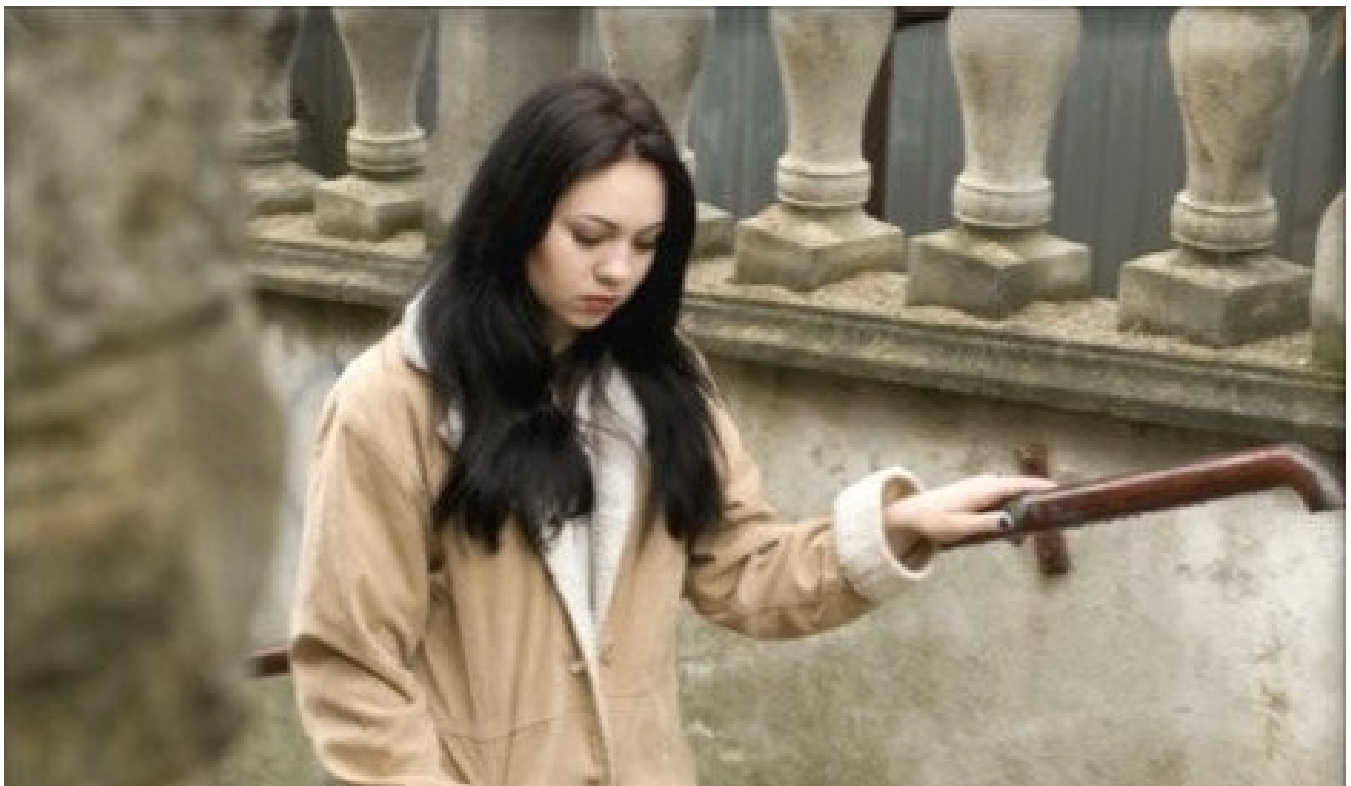
As she was lamenting in self-pity, her eyes caught the sight of a wounded cow. On the street, the injured cow was almost lying in a pool of blood. People passing by were keeping handkerchief on their noses to avoid the stink. Some had changed the route to a longer way to bypass the awful sight.

Rolli took charge of the situation immediately. She tried to gather people for help, she also knocked at the houses and shops in the near vicinity. No one was turning up for help. She could see her efforts going in vain. At any cost she would not give up and eventually managed to send the cow to a hospital.

After this incident, she really felt happy. She not only saved a life but also prevented the place from further infections and traffic nuisance.

As she was relating this incident, she was full of enthusiasm as if it was happening to her presently.

One of the processes of Psychotherapy goes with the belief that our sub-conscious mind stores the visuals, audio and feelings of everything happening with us to the minutest of details. If we access the positive memories and regain the resourceful state, we can utilize that positivity to deal with the adverse situations at hand.



After going through the complete process, Rolli regained her confidence and self respect. She returned to her social arena and performed very well socially and professionally.

Mostly at times of setbacks, such situations come as opportunities to convey to us that we are a very important entity on this earth and we do possess great skills and spirit to do unachievable tasks. There might not be anything great about this particular incident but what matters most is our zeal to fight all odds.

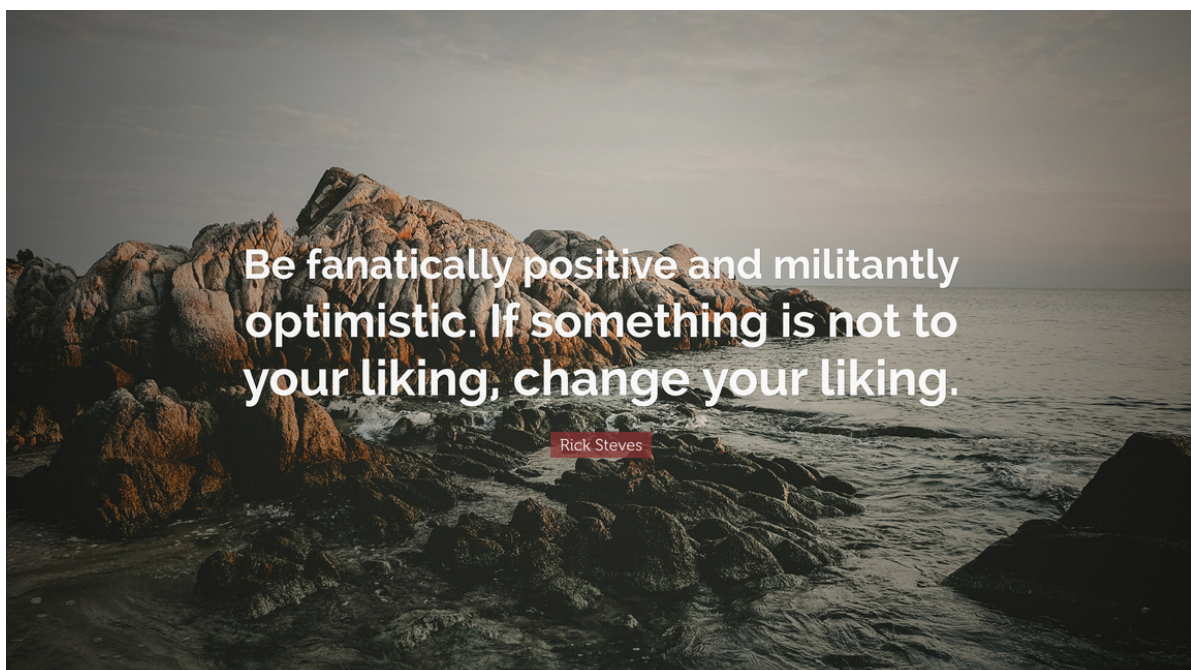
We all have such incidents in our lives. We must keep them as treasures. Whenever we feel we are in the depressive phase, these incidents remind us of the spirit and zeal that is inherent in us. We just need to ignite our spirits and deal with the next situation at hand.

Lets think about our treasure moments and regain our positive state. If we have been an achiever once, we can be an achiever always. Its just how well we encash our treasures.

STAY HAPPY SPREAD HAPPINESS :)



Sqn Ldr Meena Arora has served in the Indian Air Force for ten years. Thereafter, she has devoted herself completely to counselling and training. She is a competent Life Coach, Counsellor & NLP Trainer. She takes Personal Sessions (One on one's) and conducts Workshops in Schools, Colleges and Corporates. She also associates with organizations in creating specific training content, customized presentations, videos and audios, especially, utilizing her knowledge and awareness of Psychology and Neuro Linguistics Programming.





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