

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
October 2023, Volume V, Issue 10



REALISE YOUR POTENTIAL



**FORCES
NETWORK**

THE NETWORK THAT WORKS

FOCUS | PASSION | IMPACT

SCAN ME



FORCENET

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our newest edition. The year is slipping by. Are you making substantial progress in your life and career? In the spirit of this month's theme, "Realise Your Potential," we come together to explore a topic that resonates deeply with each of us: the pursuit of greatness beyond our military service. As veterans, we carry within us an abundance of potential despite the gruelling years of dedicated military service. Yet, as we embark on our civilian careers, it's essential to remember that our journey is far from over. It's easy to get complacent and slip over. We must remain vigilant against complacency and continue to strive for excellence. However, as is common with most humans, it is easy to get comfortable and avoid change and challenges. Complacency is the enemy of progress. It's the temptation to settle for the status quo, to rest on our laurels, and to believe that we've already achieved our best. This mindset can be detrimental to our growth and personal development. As veterans, we've been conditioned to excel, to adapt, and to overcome obstacles. We must carry this ethos with us into our civilian careers.

Each one of us has immense talent, abilities, and skill sets. Realising our full potential and finding our niche in life is a journey that can lead to a fulfilling and purpose-driven existence. To realise our full potential in civilian life, we must first acknowledge the barriers that stand in our way. These barriers may include the fear of failure, the comfort of routine, or a lack of self-belief. Recognising these challenges is the first step towards overcoming them. We cover these aspects in detail in our thematic article by Iqbal Singh in this issue. We also share the inspiring success stories of other fellow veterans.

Realising your own potential and finding your niche in life is a deeply personal and lifelong journey. It requires self-discovery, passion, skill development, resilience, and a commitment to continuous growth. By following these steps and remaining true to yourself, you can unlock your full potential and achieve greatness in your chosen path, ultimately leading a fulfilling and purpose-driven life.

In the words of Vince Lombardi, "The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will." We are veterans, and our will is our strength. Let us use that will to reach new heights, to realise our full potential, and to inspire those around us with our unwavering commitment to excellence.



RYP

Capt Rajesh Nair

From Battlefield to Balance Sheet MILITARY WISDOM FOR WEALTH

Unlocked by Our CEO, Col Sanjeev Govila (Retd.) as he shares Indian Wisdom and Military Strategy for Prudent Financial Decisions Tailored for Indian markets.

आत्मवान् मन्यते जगत्

Focused Equity

Concentrated effort yields results; avoid herd behaviour, as your perspective shapes your success.

सर्वदोष सम्मोहन

Coordination for Prosperity

Craft a cohesive financial plan tailored to your well-being.

निष्काम कर्म

Holistic Purpose

Wealth is a means, not the end. Use it for education, retirement, or noble endeavours.



परिवर्तनमेव

स्थिरमस्ति

Embrace Change

Anticipate disruptions, maintain realism and forge ahead.

स्थितप्रज्ञ


Reserve Your Triumph

Safeguard liquidity through assets like secure bonds.

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

Balanced Diversification

Remember, "He who defends everything, defends nothing." Assess risks and diversify wisely.

Click here  to read the detailed article

Our team of experts is ready to empower you with military wisdom and Indian philosophy to ensure your financial triumph.

Contact us today and embark on your journey to financial victory!

Financial Planning | Retirement Planning | Corporate Bonds & FDs | Central & State Govt Bonds | Insurance – Life & General | Wealth Creation | Tax Planning | Mutual Funds and much more...



Hum Fauji Financial Services Private Limited

Visit at : 2nd Floor, Bimal Plaza, Sector-11, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075

+91-9999053522, +91-9999838923 (SMS & WhatsApp)

www.humfauji.in

EXCLUSIVE
INVITE



studio pepperfry

Hazratganj, Lucknow

Saluting The Defence Forces

Contact Now

For Best Deals | Pre and Post Order Assistance
For All Items Bought Through Us Pan India!

studio pepperfry

Sapru Marg, Hazratganj, Lucknow

☎ 9305216506

STUDY IN IRELAND



- World-class education ... Steeped in history
- Education is in the DNA of Ireland
- Second highest exporter of software after India
- Ireland has third highest GDP per capita in the world, - after Luxembourg and Switzerland
- Universities with high world-rankings

We are specialists for Critical Skill Work Visa after studies

We provide help for admissions to study Medicine in Europe



HEPTA CONTINO INC



A STUDENT RECRUITER TO IRELAND WITH A DIFFERENCE

www.heptacontino.com

Email: heptainformation@gmail.com

Phones: +353 8949 14324, +91 72176 26824

We support our students to select courses based on their education and experience and give them support to integrate with European countries

ISAC CAREER PATH



Privacy & Data Protection

A Privacy and Data Protection Officer (DPO) ensures that an organization complies with data protection laws and regulations. The DPO acts as an advisor and coordinator for all data protection activities within the organization.



Average salary in India

5L to 30L PA

Average salary Globally

70L to 1.5Cr PA

Eligibility:

- Any Graduate
- Legal Knowledge
- 5+ Years work Exp
- Regulations knowledge
- Risk Assessment
- Strong communication skills

Certifications for Privacy & Data Protection

CERTIFICATION

ISAC Certified: Cyber Crime Intervention officer (CCIO)

Exam: DEF700
Foundation.

CERTIFICATION

ISAC Certified: Professional Ethics at Workplace (CPEW)

Exam: CEP700
Basics. Foundation.

CERTIFICATION

ISAC Certified: Privacy & Data Protection (CPDPO)

Exam: CXO704
Techno Management.

CERTIFICATION

ISAC Certified: Basics in Information Security (ICBIS)

Exam: DEF701
Foundation. Technical.



INVESTMENT बोले तो **FINVISION**



About Us

Finvision Financial Services is one of the fastest growing investment firm across India and as on date we are managing multi-hundred crore investments of 1000+ armed forces personnel and generating the best risk-adjusted returns.

5 Solid reasons to choose Finvision



Proactively manage portfolios



Emphasis on risk management



Continuous monitoring and periodic re-alignment of portfolio



Focus on customized services and sound fundamentals



Robust track record



+91-7508055826
+91-9654341212

Change Adapt and Grow with Finvision



www.finvision.in

FOLLOW US





Unveiling a Cutting-edge Collaboration
Dual Certification Diploma Program in

CYBER SECURITY



**Offensive Defense Certified
Professional - Blue (ODCP-Blue)**

Advanced Certification in Cyber Defense & Blue Team Operations

+

Diploma in Cyber Security from
State University of New York (SUNY)

**World class Curriculum with internationally
acclaimed credentials**

9 Months
40 hours live Classes
200+ hours practical labs

300+ real life
scenarios of Cyber
Defence & Hacking

Career Support for all
incl. veterans &
transitioning officers



+91 99538 59662



T-Hub, Hyderabad Knowledge City,
Madhapur, Hyderabad - 500081

**Exclusive discounts available for Forces Net members
<https://academy.theoffensivedefense.com/odbsuny/>



Enjoy our **FRUIT ROLLS** and let the explosion of **NATURAL FLAVORS** rush over you with each bite.

Our Mission to help convert a **10 Lakh Acres** of agricultural land to **Natural Farming** in next **10 years**; and in the process, help **100,000** ex-servicemen, rural women & youth to become Natural Farming entrepreneurs.



WHO WE ARE

Gratitude Farms is an Agri-tech start-up that combines traditional knowledge of organic farming with latest technologies and operational processes. A Social Impact enterprise for livelihood and entrepreneurship opportunities for ex-servicemen, youth and rural women.

Our Vision

Make Indian Agriculture natural (chemical free) and sustainable

Buy Two – Get 20% off | Buy Four – Get 30% off

Click <https://gratitudefarms.co.in/buy-products/>

Fruit Rolls Tasty and Nutritious



Name of the fruit roll	Ingredients	Nutritional Facts per 100 grams of product (Approx. values)	% daily value based on a 2000 Calorie diet
Guava	Guava pulp, Sugar, Liquid glucose, Acid regulator (E330), Class II preservative (E224)	Energy- 350 K cal	17.5%
		Protein-1.4 g	2.8%
		Fat- 0 g	0%
		Fibre-3.16 g	2.9%
		Total carbohydrates-85 g	-
Mango	Mango pulp, Sugar, Liquid glucose, Acid regulator (E330), Stabilizing agent (E440), Class II preservative (E224)	Vitamin C-13 mg	17.9%
		Energy- 360 K cal	18%
		Protein-0.8 g	1.6%
		Fat- 0 g	0%
		Fibre-5.6 g	5.2%
Apple	Fruit pulp, sugar, liquid glucose, acid regulator (E330), stabilizing agent (E440), class II preservative (E224)	Total carbohydrates-96.5 g	-
		Vitamin C-25 mg	34.4%
		Energy-293.4 K cal	14.4%
		Protein- 1.15 g	2.3%
		Fat 0 g	0%
	Total carbohydrates-72.2 g	-	
	Total sugars-47 mg	-	
	Vitamin C-14 mg	19.17%	



For Bulk Orders Contact: Ms Jyoti Senger, Manager - CRM
T: +91.93609.03652 | M: jyoti@gratitudefarms.co.in



SAM International



Explore The World WITH US



Look for packages to suit
You & your Family's
desires or create your
own "Bucket List" and we
will design it for you!



Customized packages for
Dubai, Europe, North
America, Maldives,
Singapore, Kenya,
Thailand, Caribbeans,
South Africa and so much
more!



We provide curated,
customized as well as
standard packages for Land
& Cruise Holidays which are
luxurious in nature but
economical on your pocket!

BOOK NOW



+971 551856218

WhatsApp BOTIM

www.saminternationaluae.com

contactus@saminternationaluae.com

[@saminternationaluae](https://www.instagram.com/saminternationaluae)

<https://www.facebook.com/saminternationaluae>



YOUR JOURNEY TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM BEGINS HERE



Lets Invest Wisely

WHY CHOOSE US?

- Trusted by over 250+ officers
- Expert Guidance you can trust
- App to track and update investments
- Complete transparency
- Professional & ethical investing
- Your best interest, always

SERVICES

Retirement planning
Estate planning
Mutual funds, FDs
Financial planning
Real estate
Tax optimisation

I am Col Rakesh Goyal (Retd), a certified financial planner. I run Lets Invest Wisely with an aim to educate and empower our brothers in the armed forces to achieve financial freedom. 30+ yrs of experience in the financial markets

"Lets Invest Wisely transformed my approach to personal finance. Their help with retirement planning and mutual funds has been life-changing. I can relax and enjoy family time now"

- Col(Retd) Jagadeesh Singh



+91 7341137190



Plaza@106 Dwarka
Expressway, Gurgaon



www.letsinvestwisely.com

Contents

From the Editor	2
Star of Forces Network: Capt Shantanu.....	13 - 25
General Humour : Col Amit Dalvi.....	25
Realising Your Full Potential: A Journey Beyond Comfort: By Lt Col Iqbal Singh.....	26 - 34
What Makes you Come Alive?: By Sqn Ldr Meena Arora.....	35 - 40
Expatriate Interview: Sqn Ldr Sangeeta Gupta Nair.....	41- 44
Star on the Horizon: Siddhartha Dubey.....	46 - 54
Moment In Time	55 - 56
Book Review - Tiger of Drass : By Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand.....	59 - 66

[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.

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 IQBAL SINGH

Capt Shantanu is a second-generation Gunner Officer who was commissioned into the 200 Field Regiment on 02 Mar 2002, from OTA Chennai. His family has a rich tradition of serving the motherland in all three arms of the Defence Forces. After completing his short-service tenure in 2007, he became a corporate warrior. In his sixteen years of corporate experience in sectors of banking, telecom, and emergency services, he has been part of the core team involved in client acquisition and servicing. In addition, as a part of senior management, he has handled projects at the global level and was involved in implementing and handling strategic initiatives. He joined Pinkerton in 2016 as Director for South and West India, based in Mumbai. He worked his way up to being a Managing Director.



IQ: Please tell us something about your background prior to joining the Army, and your subsequent Army career. Please share any significant achievements?

Shantanu: I did my schooling from the Army Public School, Dhaula Kuan. I graduated in hotel management from IHM Pusa, New Delhi. I started my career with a part-time job at Domino's Pizza as a Customer Services Representative at the Satya Niketan (New Delhi) outlet in 1998 at a salary of ₹2200 per month, 4 hours a day, 6 days a week.

I was trained at the OTA and was commissioned on 02 Mar 2002, in my father's unit, the 200 Field Regiment. I served with the unit in Rajauri (J&K) and then at Ferozepur (Punjab). In my short 5 years in the unit, I had the experience of working with 3 wonderful COs who were my mentors, and I till date carry with me the learnings of my service and association with them: Col NR Mitra (Retd) YSM, SM, Col T Ravindra (Retd), and Col Rahul R Singh (Now Lt Gen, Corp Commander). I feel fortunate that I had the opportunity to experience all that one could in field tenure at J&K. I also had the opportunity to take part in trans-LC firing at the peak of Op Parakram.



A Proud Soldier

IQ: Give us an understanding about your current role and what you are presently engaged in. Also please share in chronological order the roles and companies in your corporate career?

Shantanu: I joined my current company, Pinkerton, in 2016 as Director for South and West India. Today, as the Managing Director for Pinkerton Corporate Risk Management India Pvt. Ltd., my primary responsibilities encompass strategic planning, team management, and ensuring the successful execution of our risk management services. I am responsible for setting the company's vision, goals, and objectives, while leading a talented team to achieve these objectives. I oversee all operational activities, ensuring efficient resource allocation and effective risk mitigation strategies. Additionally, I foster strong relationships with clients, providing them with reliable and innovative solutions tailored to their needs. By maintaining high standards of professionalism, integrity, and customer satisfaction, I uphold Pinkerton's reputation as a leading risk management firm.

After my release from the Army, I joined ICICI Bank. I worked there from 2007–2008 as a Manager- Personal Loans. In 2008, I joined Vodafone Essar as a Manager-Enterprise Business and served there till 2011. After this tenure, I joined International SOS as the Country Operations Manager and worked from 2011–2016.

IQ: How did you prepare yourself for the Military to Corporate transition?

Shantanu: Transitioning from the structured environment of the military to the dynamic and often complex corporate world requires careful preparation. As a military veteran who has successfully made this transition, I understand the significance of being proactive and ready for this new endeavour.

- **Leverage Your Military Skills:** Identify the skills and qualities gained during your military service that are transferable to the corporate environment. Leadership, teamwork, adaptability, discipline, and problem-solving are just a few examples. recognise the value they hold and articulate it effectively in your professional narrative.
- **Research and Understand Corporate Culture:** Familiarise yourself with the corporate environment you are entering. Conduct research on the company, its values, and its business practices. Understand the communication style, hierarchies, and expectations to ensure a smooth integration.
- **Enhance Your Skill Set:** Identify any gaps in your skills or knowledge that could benefit from further development. Take advantage of training programmes, certifications, or further education to bridge the gaps, making yourself an even stronger asset in the corporate world.

- **Networking and Mentorship:** Build a professional network within the corporate sphere. Attend industry events, join professional associations, and engage with veterans' support organizations. Seek mentorship from seasoned professionals who can provide guidance and insights tailored to your specific career goals.
- **Interview Preparation:** Practice interviewing techniques and prepare examples that demonstrate how your military experience can benefit the organization. Be ready to articulate how your skills can contribute to specific business objectives and address any concerns the employer may have.
- **Adapt and Learn:** Embrace the learning curve in the corporate world. Be open to new processes, technologies, and ways of doing things. Demonstrate your adaptability and willingness to continuously grow and improve.

Remember, your military background brings a wealth of unique experiences and skills that are highly valued in the corporate world. Stay confident in your abilities, be receptive to learning, and remain resilient in the face of challenges. With proper preparation and a positive mindset, you have the potential to thrive and achieve tremendous success in your corporate career.

IQ: What were the challenges faced during your Transition? How did you overcome the challenges?

Shantanu: Transitioning from the military into the corporate world presents a unique set of challenges. As military veterans, we bring valuable skills and experiences, but we must also navigate unfamiliar terrain as we embark on this new journey.

- **Cultural Adjustment:** Adapting to the different organisational cultures of the corporate world can be daunting. The hierarchical structure, decision-making processes, and communication styles differ significantly from the military environment. Understanding and aligning with new cultural norms is a challenge faced during the transition.
- **Skill Translation:** Effectively translating our military skills and experiences to the corporate setting presents its own difficulties. Articulating our leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities in a way that resonates with civilian employers can be challenging but crucial for success in the corporate world.
- **Networking and Professional Relationships:** Building a professional network and establishing relationships within the corporate realm may require extra effort. The military network that provided a strong support system may not have the same reach in the civilian world. Therefore, developing new connections and fostering relationships become essential.

- **Civilian Qualifications:** In some cases, employers may focus on formal qualifications and degrees, which can create barriers for military veterans without these credentials. Obtaining relevant certifications or pursuing further education can help bridge this gap and increase marketability.
- **Hierarchical Transition:** Moving from a military structure, where rank and authority are clear, to a corporate environment with varied organisational hierarchies can pose challenges. Adjusting to new reporting structures and understanding the dynamics of authority can take time and adaptation.
- **Understanding Corporate Lingo:** The corporate world has its own unique language and jargon. Mastering the terminology and acronyms specific to the industry or organisation can be overwhelming initially. However, with time and effort, veterans can become fluent in this new communication style.
- While these challenges may seem daunting, military veterans are resilient and adaptable, qualities we developed during our time in service. Recognising and addressing these challenges head-on can lead to success in the corporate world. Seeking support through veteran alumni networks, mentorship programmes, and career transition resources can help ease the transition process.
- It is important to remember that the skills, discipline, and leadership abilities honed during military service are highly valuable. With determination, perseverance, and a willingness to learn, military veterans can overcome these challenges and find fulfilment and success in their corporate careers.

IQ: What is the role of technology in risk management? Did you have to learn some technology related subjects? How did you do so?

Shantanu: In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, effective risk management is crucial for organisations across industries. Technology has revolutionised the field of risk management, empowering businesses to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate risks more efficiently and effectively. Here's a look at the key ways technology is shaping risk management:

- **Data Analytics and Predictive Modelling:** Technology enables the collection and analysis of vast amounts of data from various sources. Advanced analytics and machine learning algorithms help identify patterns, trends, and anomalies that can be indicative of potential risks. This data-driven approach allows organisations to make informed decisions and take proactive steps to mitigate risks before they materialise.
- **Risk Assessment and Threat Detection:** Technology facilitates automated risk assessments and real-time threat detection. Tools such as risk assessment software, cybersecurity platforms, and surveillance systems leverage artificial

intelligence and machine learning to identify potential vulnerabilities, malicious activities, and security breaches in real-time. This allows businesses to respond promptly and minimize the impact of risks.

- **Incident Reporting and Tracking:** Technology streamlines incident reporting, tracking, and management. Digital platforms, mobile applications, and integrated software systems enable employees to report incidents quickly and efficiently. Automated workflows ensure that incidents are addressed promptly, investigations are conducted effectively, and appropriate actions are taken. This leads to enhanced transparency, accountability, and improvements in risk response.
- **Decision Support Systems:** Technology equips organisations with decision support systems that provide real-time risk intelligence through customizable dashboards and interactive visualizations. These tools enable risk managers to make informed decisions, prioritise mitigation efforts, and track the effectiveness of risk controls. By providing actionable insights, decision support systems enhance risk management capabilities.
- Technology continues to evolve and reshape the risk management landscape. As a brand ambassador for the world's oldest risk management firm, one had to be aware and updated about innovation progress. My journey was smooth as a brand like Pinkerton ensures that each one of us is given the training (hand holding) and exposure to be the "trusted risk advisor" to our clients.

IQ: If you were to Transition from the military to the corporate today with the benefit of all the insights and wisdom that you have gained in the corporate today what would you have done differently?

Shantanu: The transition from military service to a corporate career has changed significantly over the past 20 years. If I were to transition today on this new journey, it is important to recognise the evolving landscape and adapt accordingly. Here are some key considerations for me and fellow veterans transitioning today, compared to those who transitioned two decades ago:

- **Embrace Technological Advancements:** Technology has transformed the way businesses operate. Veterans must familiarise themselves with current trends, tools, and software relevant to their chosen field. Developing digital literacy is crucial to navigating the modern corporate landscape.
- **Embrace Continuous Learning:** The pace of change in the corporate world is rapid. Veterans must be proactive in seeking opportunities for continuous learning and professional development. Pursue certifications, attend workshops, and engage in lifelong learning to stay ahead and remain competitive in the job market.

- **Prioritise Diversity and Inclusion:** Today's corporate world places a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion. Veterans should understand and appreciate the importance of working in diverse teams and collaborating with individuals from various backgrounds. Embrace different perspectives and foster an inclusive work environment.
-
- **Emphasize Soft Skills:** While technical expertise is vital, soft skills are equally important. Effective communication, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and problem-solving skills are highly valued in today's corporate setting. Elevate these skills alongside technical competencies.
-
- **Leverage social media and online presence:** Establishing a professional online presence is crucial in today's digital age. Leverage social media platforms, such as LinkedIn, to showcase skills, accomplishments, and professional interests. Engage in thought leadership and build a network of like-minded professionals.



My Life Mantra Work Hard Party Hard

IQ: Any important lessons you learnt while switching jobs and companies in your corporate career? Any advice for transitioning military personnel on this front?

Shantanu: Transitioning from the military to the corporate world involves navigating new terrain, adapting to different cultures, and embracing change. As a military veteran who has successfully transitioned between jobs and companies, I have encountered valuable lessons along the way. Here are some key learnings from my experiences:

- **Embrace the Learning Curve:** Each new job and company presents a learning curve. Embrace the opportunity to expand your skill set, industry knowledge, and familiarity with organizational processes. Be open to new ways of doing things and seek mentorship or guidance to accelerate your learning.
- **Adaptability is the Key:** The ability to adapt quickly is essential in the corporate world. Embrace change, remain flexible, and embrace new challenges. Each role and organization brings unique dynamics, cultures, and expectations. Adaptability allows you to navigate through uncertainties and seize new opportunities confidently.
- **Continual Professional Growth:** Prioritize continuous learning and professional development. Seek opportunities to enhance your skills through certifications, training programs, and workshops that align with your career goals. As you switch jobs and companies, invest in building a diverse and robust skill set that propels your career forward.
- **Embrace New Perspectives:** Each company has its unique culture, values, and ways of doing things. Embrace new perspectives, norms, and practices, even if they differ from your previous experiences. Be open to learning from colleagues, understanding their perspectives, and embracing diverse thinking. This fosters collaboration, innovation, and personal growth.
- **Build a Personal Brand:** As you switch jobs and companies, focus on building a consistent and authentic personal brand. Identify your areas of expertise, hone your professional identity, and communicate your value proposition clearly. Leverage social media platforms and thought leadership opportunities to increase visibility and showcase your unique strengths.
- **Seek Purpose and Alignment:** It is essential to find meaning and alignment in your work. Reflect on your personal values, passions, and long-term goals. Seek opportunities that align with your aspirations and enable you to contribute meaningfully. Purpose-driven work fosters job satisfaction and fuels long-term career growth.

Switching jobs and companies in the corporate world as a military veteran presents a dynamic and rewarding journey. Embracing the learning process, adapting to new environments, and prioritizing continual growth are keys to success. By leveraging your transferable skills, networking strategically, and remaining open to new perspectives, you can navigate transitions confidently and build a fulfilling and impactful career.



With my colleagues

IQ: How important is it to understand your own passion and expertise and then to work towards upskilling in that domain so as to have a better innings in the corporate? How does one identify one's passion?

Shantanu: Transitioning from the military to the corporate world provides an opportunity to explore new domains and uncover your passions and expertise. Understanding and leveraging these areas can lead to a more fulfilling and successful career. Here are some tips to help identify your passion and work towards upskilling in that domain:

Self-Reflection: Take time for self-reflection to identify what sparks your interest and energizes you. Reflect on your past experiences, strengths, and the activities that bring you joy and a sense of fulfilment. Consider the tasks or responsibilities in your military service that resonated with you the most. These reflections can provide valuable insights into your passion.

Follow Curiosity: Pay attention to the subjects or topics that pique your curiosity. What do you find yourself naturally gravitating towards? Curiosity often indicates areas of passion and potential expertise. Dive deeper into these subjects, engage in conversations, and seek opportunities to learn and grow within them.

Seek Feedback: Leverage the support of mentors, peers, and colleagues who can provide valuable feedback and insights regarding your strengths and areas of expertise. Their observations and perspectives can help you gain a better understanding of where your true passions lie and where you may excel.

Validate Your Passion: Once you have identified a potential passion, validate it by immersing yourself in related activities or projects. Seek opportunities within your current organisation or through volunteer work to gain hands-on experience. This validation process will confirm whether your passion resonates and allow you to further discover your expertise in the domain.

Remember, passion is a journey of self-discovery. It may take time and exploration to identify your true calling, and that's perfectly normal. Remain open to new experiences, be curious, and embrace any opportunities that align with your passions. Understanding your passions and expertise will allow you to shape a fulfilling and purpose-driven career in the corporate world.



Follow your passion and success shall follow

IQ: You have had a long stint in the corporate. To be successful what traits from the military must be give up and what must we imbibe?

Shantanu: As a military veteran who has successfully transitioned into the corporate realm, I understand the importance of balancing certain traits from the military while also embracing new ones to thrive in the corporate world. Here are some aspects to consider:

- **Hierarchical Structure:** While the military operates under a strict hierarchical structure, the corporate world often encourages a more collaborative and egalitarian approach. Transitioning successfully requires letting go of a strict top-down mindset and embracing a more inclusive and collaborative working style.
- **Adapting to Flexibility:** The corporate world offers more flexibility compared to the military's structured routines. Veterans should adjust and embrace flexibility, ranging from dress codes to working hours, while ensuring productivity. Being adaptable and open to change will help navigate the corporate landscape effectively.
- **Communication Styles:** Military communication is often direct and authoritative, whereas the corporate environment may require more nuanced and diplomacy-focused communication. Veterans must adapt their communication style to speak respectfully and effectively with colleagues, superiors, and clients in the corporate setting.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** In the military, decisions are often made based on authority and rank. Corporate decision-making, however, emphasizes collaboration and gathering input from diverse perspectives. Veterans should shift their focus from unilateral decision-making to seeking input and valuing diverse viewpoints.
- **Flexibility in Problem-Solving:** In the military, problem-solving is often driven by predefined processes and standard operating procedures. In the corporate world, however, challenges demand flexibility and agility. Veterans must learn to adapt problem-solving approaches and think creatively to address diverse situations and obstacles.

A successful transition requires finding a balance between the cherished traits cultivated in the military and adapting to the requirements of the corporate world. Embracing new approaches, fostering collaboration, open communication, and continuous learning will empower veterans to excel and make a lasting impact in their corporate careers.

IQ: Tell us about your family. What role did your parents play in shaping your value system. Also share the role played by your family including spouse in your successful transition?

Shantanu: I am from a family that has proudly served the motherland and has the rare distinction of having officers in all three services: My father, Col S K Sinha (Retd), is from the 50th NDA, J. Sq. Two of my uncles (my father's brothers) studied at Sainik School Tilaya and then joined NDA. My father's generation contributed to the three services: my father in the army, an uncle in the Air Force (Wg Cdr Akhilesh Kumar, 54th NDA, I Sqn), and the youngest in the Navy (Cdr Paritosh Kumar, 66th NDA, C Sqn).

From my generation, I joined the Army, while my younger brother, Cdr Satyakirti, is a serving Naval Officer -NEC 17. My mother Mrs. Sudha Sinha, played a crucial part in our upbringing; she juggled very well between the roles of a teacher, army wife and mother.

A person's upbringing and the role played by their parents are critical in shaping their value system, influencing decisions, and moulding their character. My transition from an army brat to an Army Officer and to being a Managing Director of a leading risk management firm was undoubtedly influenced by my parents' guidance and support, which played a pivotal role in shaping my values and contributing to my successful journey.

Foundation During Childhood: In the early stages of one's life, the values instilled by parents significantly impact personal development. It is during this impressionable period that parents lay the groundwork for their child's understanding of integrity, responsibility, discipline, and moral ethics.

Encouragement and Support: Parents who provide consistent love, encouragement, and support foster a sense of confidence within their children. This nurturing environment enables individuals to dream big, take risks, and overcome obstacles fearlessly. My transition from an Army Brat to an Army officer reflects the confidence inherited from my parents. Their support undoubtedly fuelled my aspirations and instilled in me the belief that I could achieve great heights.

Military Life and Values: Being from a family who has served the mother land, the values imbibed has shaped me in monumental way, inculcating values such as discipline, teamwork, perseverance, and loyalty. While military training is intensive, my success can be traced back to the values instilled during my childhood. The strong foundation built by my parents laid the groundwork for absorbing and embodying the military's core principles.

Adaptation and Flexibility: Transitioning from military life to civilian professional life requires adaptability and flexibility. The ability to apply military values within a

different context showcases the individual's adeptness in embracing change and successfully integrating their acquired skills. My smooth transition from the military to becoming a Managing Director highlights my capacity to adapt and harness values in diverse settings.

Leadership Skills and Ethical Decision-Making: My journey necessitates the honing of leadership skills and ethical decision-making. Here, parents play a crucial role by imparting principles of fairness, accountability, and empathy. These qualities, combined with military training, empower individuals like me to lead with integrity and inspire those around them.



With My Family

In conclusion, my parents have played a vital role in shaping my value system, guiding me from a schoolboy to a military man, and finally into my current corporate leadership role. Their influence during childhood, encouragement, and support throughout my journey, combined with military training has fortified my character, instilling key values such as discipline, integrity, adaptability, leadership, and ethical decision-making. The role parents play in moulding individuals' value systems is an enduring one, consistently echoing through every phase of life.

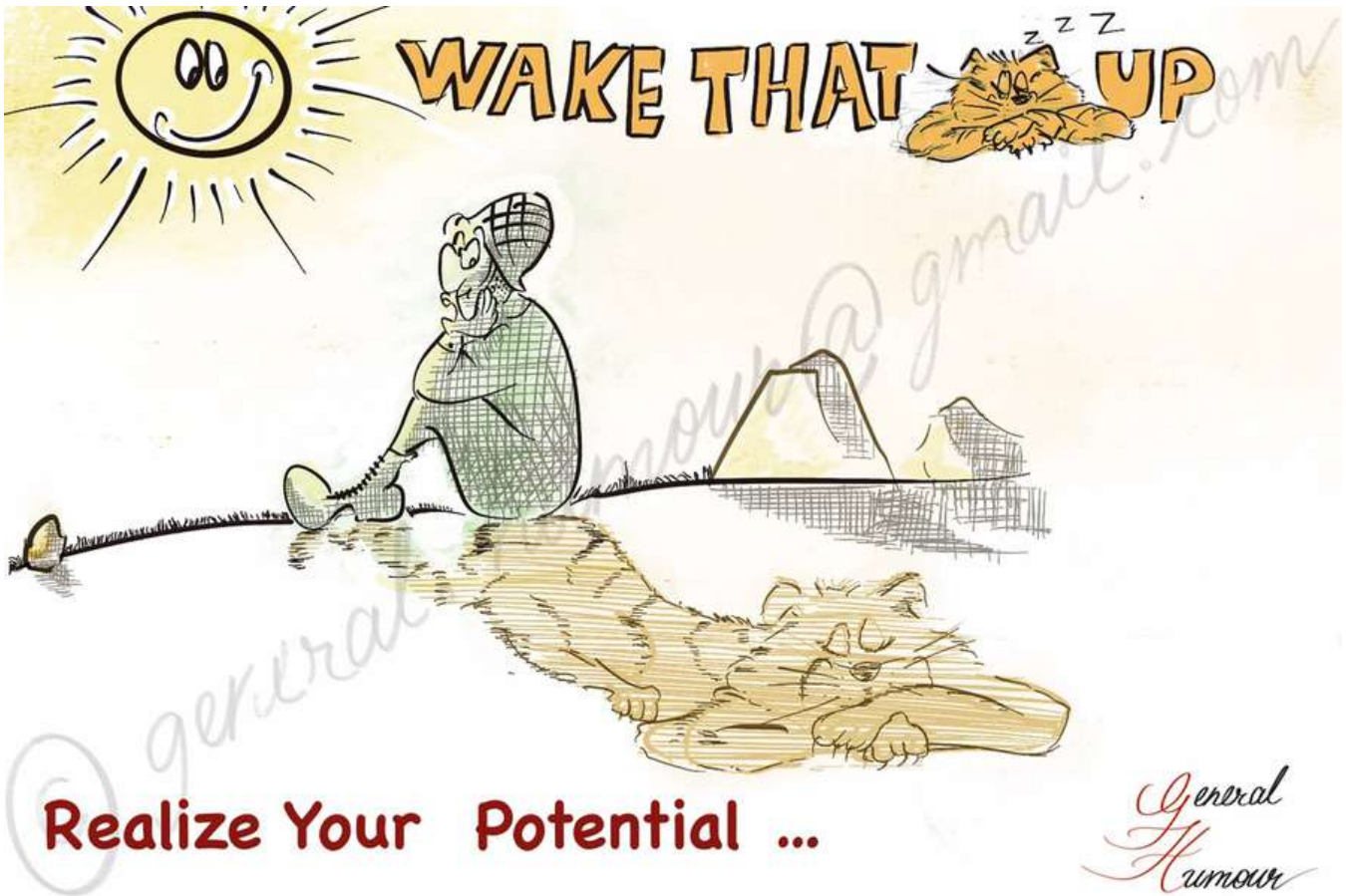
Behind every successful man, there is often an unabating source of support and encouragement – his spouse. My wife (Ms Neha A .Sinha) has played a pivotal role in nurturing and empowering me to achieve my career goals. Through various means and gestures, she has supported my professional endeavours, helping me thrive in my chosen path.

In my journey, I have faced numerous challenges, including long working hours, work-related stress, and ambitious goals. In such times, the emotional support of a loving spouse becomes invaluable. She created a safe space that allowed me to vent, share my struggles, and seek solace when needed. As a super supportive spouse, she recognised the importance of maintaining equilibrium and actively helped me manage responsibilities beyond work. Whether it is taking care of our son (Master Arunoday Sinha), household tasks, maintaining social connections, or scheduling quality time together, she ensured that I could focus on my career without sacrificing my personal life.



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. 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.

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



Theme Article

Realising Your Full Potential: A Journey Beyond Comfort

BY IQBAL SINGH

He started with a dream and envisioned a community of military veterans, which transformed into the Forces Network that we know today. Aligned with this month's magazine theme, Iqbal shares the insights, strategies, and life lessons that have guided him. He shares knowledge on the profound possibilities that await when we tap into our deepest reservoirs of potential and embark on a path to personal greatness.

Do you remember the first year of your career? Like most people, you were probably full of ambition and dreams. You were self-motivated, driven, and energetic. Fast forward: after a decade or more of working life, most likely you are just going through the motions. While some may like to call that being comfortable, I would like to call that complacency. It is, in fact, viewed from the right perspective, like a disease. Complacency stops or, at best, degrades your progress and growth. It prevents you from achieving your audacious dreams, thus encouraging you to accept mediocrity. Professionally, getting too complacent could lead to being fired, overlooked for a promotion, or downplayed in importance.

For most veterans in their second careers after a demanding Forces career, this may seem like a natural progression, a biological order, and being par for the course. However, I wish to encourage at least those still in their working careers to think a little differently. Complacency, if it sets in once, may also make inroads into your personal life and take a toll on your health and even relationships at times. I feel that within each military veteran lies a reservoir of untapped potential, waiting to be unleashed. Your years of service have honed your skills, discipline, and determination, but there may still be untapped potential that remains hidden beneath the surface. In this article, we will explore the factors that often hinder us from realising our full potential.

The quest to realise one's full potential is a journey that has fascinated and challenged humanity throughout history. It represents the pursuit of excellence, self-discovery, and the fulfilment of innate talents. Yet, for many, the path to unlocking one's true potential remains elusive.



Unleash Your Full Potential

SOURCE: UNSPLASH MIGUEL BRUNA

Understanding the Elusive Nature of Human Potential

Human potential is a vast and multifaceted concept. It encompasses the reservoir of skills, abilities, creativity, and resilience inherent in each individual. However, realizing this potential is often hindered by a complex interplay of psychological, societal, and personal factors.

The Primal Aversion to Leaving the Comfort Zone

Throughout human history, the comfort zone has been our sanctuary, protecting us from danger and preserving energy. The human brain is wired to resist change, as it often equates it with potential threats. For military veterans, the structure and predictability of military life can become a comfort zone. Leaving the structured environment of the military can be challenging, as it means stepping into the unknown. This aversion to change can manifest as resistance to pursuing new opportunities, further education, or even transitioning to civilian life.



Humans have a primal aversion towards risk

SOURCE: UNSPLASH MICHAEL HEISE

Psychologically, humans are wired to prioritise safety over risks, the known over the unknown, and the status quo versus change. However, over the past few millennia, the world has changed drastically, but the human mind has not received any major upgrades. This is a necessary condition for growth in today's world. Linear life is dead. The nonlinear life involves more changes, upheavals, crises, risk-taking, and life transitions. Life transitions are a skill we can and must master.

It's human nature to put things and ideas into boxes. That means we have a tendency to fall into linear thinking. When we use words like "limit" and "potential," we reinforce the idea that certain ways to live are better than others. The truth is, we have no limit to our potential. In a practical sense, the brain can continue to grow and change for our entire lives. This mastery over this primal instinct is the first step towards unlocking your true potential.

Lack of Ambition

Ambition, the driving force behind setting and achieving goals, can often wane after leaving the military. In the military, ambition is cultivated through the pursuit of mission objectives, promotions, and achieving personal and professional excellence. However, when veterans transition to civilian life, they may lose sight of these motivating factors and find it challenging to set ambitious new goals. It also may stem from the fact that in their second careers, after a couple of decades, most veterans have sufficient financial security to lapse into the lack of ambition mode.

Lack of Self-Belief

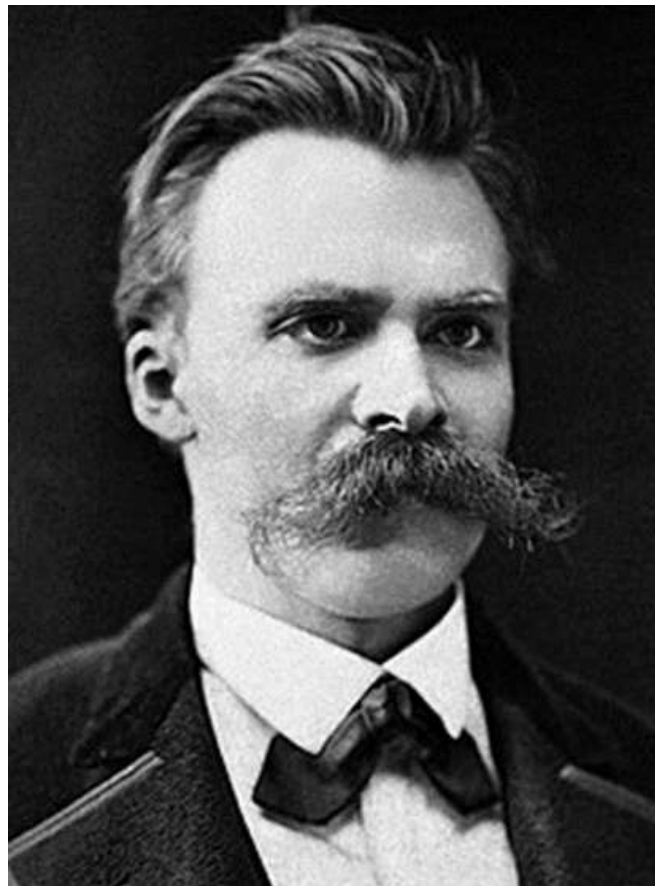
Self-belief is the foundation upon which success is built. Yet, most people struggle with self-doubt as they transition to civilian life. The demanding nature of military service can lead to high levels of self-confidence in specific areas, such as combat skills or leadership abilities. However, these skills may not necessarily translate directly to civilian careers, leading to a lack of self-belief in one's ability to succeed outside the military. In addition, after having made a successful transition to a civilian career and also rising a few notches in the corporate hierarchy, the hunger for success begins to get satiated. While this is natural for those seeking higher growth, this is a trend that they need to arrest.

Inertia of Rest

The inertia of rest is a phenomenon where individuals choose to remain in their comfort zone despite the desire for change. It is easy to become complacent and comfortable with the status quo, even if it means settling for less than what one is capable of achieving.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, a German philosopher, wrote that we are always in danger of becoming “a people of tame animals” who no longer question or challenge anything.

“Society tames the wolf into a dog. And man is the most domesticated animal of all.”



Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900)

He believed that too much comfort can actually lead to a lack of self-confidence and a lack of purpose in life. Comfort creates a false sense of security, which ultimately leads to complacency. Humans are dangerously complacent and need to be pushed to their limits in order to achieve greatness. He saw comfort as a danger and warned against becoming too comfortable or secure in one's life. If we are alive to these thoughts, we can do something better.

How to Realise Your Full Potential

Embrace Change

recognise that change is an inevitable part of life, and embracing it can lead to personal growth. Change is the only constant in your life. Start by setting small, achievable goals outside your comfort zone, and gradually expand your horizons. We should be constantly striving for something more, and stability and comfort are not always the best things. In order to remain alive and thrive, we need to constantly push ourselves to new heights.

Overcoming Fear of Failure

Many of us have probably experienced the fear of failure at one time or another. The fear of failing can be immobilising; it can cause us to do nothing and therefore resist moving forward. But when we allow fear to stop our forward progress in life, we're likely to miss some great opportunities along the way. It's easy to find successful people who have experienced failure. For example, Michael Jordan is widely considered to be one of the greatest basketball players of all time. And yet, he was cut from his high school basketball team because his coach didn't think he had enough skill. Most of us will stumble and fall in life. Doors will get slammed in our faces, and we might make some bad decisions. But imagine if Michael Jordan had given up on his dream to play basketball when he was cut from that team.

However, by reframing failure as a stepping stone to success, individuals can develop resilience and courage. Reframing changes the whole perspective and makes the endeavour sound positive and productive. A quick switch of mindset forbids the engraving of negative thoughts to be saved in the mind and creates a more fertile ground for positive thoughts and positive results to manifest and occur. Hence, reframing is a necessary skill that needs to be acquired in life for us to move ahead.



Do Not Let Fear Imprison You

Cultivating Self-Belief

“Whether you think you can or whether you think you can’t, you’re right.” - Henry Ford.

This classic quote from automobile magnate Henry Ford is a perfect start to this piece. The topic is self-confidence and self-belief, two ingredients to a healthy, successful, and happy life. According to Ford, your belief in yourself is a determining factor in your success.

Most people know that to become the best in the world at anything requires natural talent, an enabling environment, meticulous attention to detail, and the ability to work harder than everyone around you. But what is just as important and not discussed as much is the belief you have in your abilities. Your self-belief alters how your body performs. Your body responds most positively when you believe you can achieve a task and less positively when you think you cannot. And this is a virtuous cycle because the more you believe in your abilities, the better your performance will be, and the better you perform, your belief in yourself improves.

Through research, it has been proven that many Olympic races are won or lost even before the starting gun goes off, simply because some athletes do not believe they belong on that great stage. The imposter syndrome they face at the starting line affects their physical abilities, and years of hard work are ruined because of a moment of self-doubt. On the other hand, athletes with high self-confidence who believe they are made to shine in these moments are the ones that come out on top.

So always have self-belief, and this is something that is in your control, so do not lose it.



Learn to Dream Big

“What stands between us and our greatest goals are not obstacles but clearer paths to lesser goals.”—Bhagvad Gita

Reignite your ambition by setting clear, specific, and challenging goals. Whether it's pursuing a new career, starting a business, or furthering your education, having ambitious objectives will provide direction and motivation. There is a three-step process to this called the want, think, and focus method. "I want it with passion. Think about it often. Focus on the actions needed to make it happen." By changing your behaviours and habits, you can dramatically increase the odds of achieving the most important things you want out of life. True change can happen by first adopting a growth mindset and then by focusing on priorities, habits, and the system. Priorities outline the desired changes. New habits create change. Systems help cement the new habits.

Never be economical while setting your career and life goals.

Continual Learning

Learning doesn't end after we throw our caps in the air during graduation. Not only do employers now encourage professional development, they expect it. The habit of continuous learning is proving to be essential for employees to achieve career growth. Education and self-improvement are essential for realising your full potential. Invest in learning new skills, attending workshops, and staying up-to-date with industry trends. Knowledge is power, and it can open doors to new opportunities.

Examples of Continual Learning: Individuals need to stay updated through a variety of learning opportunities. You can take the following approaches towards continuous learning to build new knowledge and skills:

- Reading books, magazines, articles, etc.
- Attending industry talks and seminars;
- Enrolling in online courses and degrees;
- Watching videos and listening to podcasts;
- Undertaking challenging assignments and roles
- Asking for help whenever something is unclear to you
- Observing others who are more experienced in a particular area;
- Learning by the good old method of trial and error
- Practicing and applying the new skills on the job;
- Tracking one's own progress over time through self-analysis and
- Asking for feedback from others and working towards improvement.

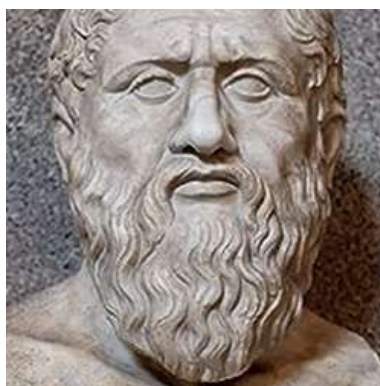
Network and Seek Support

The importance of the saying “no man is an island” has been proven to be the reason why many of us need to make a collective effort in our bid to achieve professional success. For many individuals who have succeeded in their careers, the causes have largely been attributed to the strong networking channels they have created over time. Surround yourself with a supportive network of friends, mentors, and fellow veterans who understand your journey. Lean on their wisdom, experience, and encouragement during challenging times.

Among other benefits, networking makes you noticeable. When people start noticing you, it opens the door for new opportunities. Business- and career-minded individuals who have networked over time have been able to expand with minimal effort because of the avenue of newer opportunities opened to them through networking. Opportunities like meeting the right clients or even meeting people that are superior to your career path could be a stepping stone that could change your life for the better.

Maintain Discipline

“The first and best victory is to conquer yourself. To be conquered by oneself is, of all things, the most shameful and vile.” - Plato.



Plato

The discipline instilled in military life can be a valuable asset in civilian endeavours. Apply the principles of discipline, time management, and dedication to your post-military pursuits. Discipline is the key to happiness, success, and fulfilment. Self-discipline is nothing more than having inner strength and control over yourself, your actions, and your reactions. It is what gives you the ability to follow through on your decisions without changing your mind.

Disciplined people trust that they grow the most when challenged by optimal levels of frustration. The frustrations that challenge them are the very ones that distinguish them as being a success rather than a failure. When disciplined people are challenged or frustrated, their problem-solving skills are called to the forefront, and they stay open and committed. They are willing to be flexible in their approach until they develop the wisdom necessary to succeed. These times of uncertainty challenge disciplined people on all levels and end up determining the strength of their character.

Conclusion

The journey to realising one's full potential is a boundless exploration of the self. In conclusion, we encapsulate the essence of this journey, emphasising the importance of self-awareness, perseverance, and the ceaseless quest for personal growth. Unlocking one's true potential is not a destination; it's a lifelong voyage that promises fulfilment, self-discovery, and the realisation of remarkable capabilities. **In the words of Winston Churchill, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts."** Your journey towards realising your full potential is a testament to your courage and determination. Embrace it, and you will undoubtedly achieve greatness beyond your wildest dreams.



Iqbal Singh is an ex-infantry officer now in a technology role working with a Big Tech firm based at Gurgaon, India. Iqbal started his career with The Garhwal Rifles in Dec 1987 and served in several conflict zones on active military service across Sri Lanka, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Nagaland. He quit the Army in 2008 to pursue a corporate career in technology. He has passion for technology and breaking myths and stereotypes. He is an established Speaker and Trainer. Iqbal is also the Founder of Forces Network.

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

Knowledge Bytes

“What makes you come alive?”

BY MEENA ARORA

Mark Twain once said, 'The two most important days in our life are the day we are born and the day we find out why.'

This article is not a spiritual discourse but an anecdote about that second day.

Many of us possess above-average intelligence, which facilitates the acquisition of more than sufficient wealth to lead a luxurious life. However, once we accumulate enough money, our chosen professions can lose their sense of purpose. In many cases, the generation preceding us endured financial insecurity due to various factors, such as migrating from different regions of the country and transitioning from farming to employment. This instilled a deep-seated sense of financial insecurity, leading to a strong desire for a guaranteed income framework for the next generation. Consequently, the norm became grooming and forcing their children into specific fields through education and societal influence.



We inherited this social framework and adapted to this mentality; with our above-average intelligence, financial stability was well within reach. As we progressed along this path, we earned more and got motivated to earn more. Ultimately, at a certain age or stage in life, there came a point when monetary concerns ceased to dominate our thoughts when we have accumulated enough corpus, children got settled and started earning on their own. For many, the desire to accumulate more and more wealth may be paramount, and so the pursuit of money as a primary goal continues to bring them happiness. Yet somewhere within, a sense of emptiness and frustration start developing, shadowing the sense of happiness after reaching financial independence, especially when the home becomes an empty nest.

There were times when we were driven more by our dreams, passions, interests, and hobbies than their financial aspects, but these got deeply buried under the pressures of pursuing the forced path. But do remember that they were buried, not removed or eradicated. So for those whose dreams were not primarily financial, the echoes or seeds of their unfulfilled desires start resurfacing. We may choose to ignore these calls by labelling them immature or citing different reasons, but actually, they are the ones whose fulfilment will give us a renewed sense of purpose with a lot of happiness and satisfaction. Determining how much money is truly enough for oneself and one's family becomes crucial because, until this threshold is defined, an endless and purposeless struggle can lead to frustration.

As the saying goes, 'Excess of everything should be avoided,' and this principle undoubtedly extends to the ambitious drive for the pursuit of money. It reminds us that while financial security is essential, it should not eclipse our deeper aspirations, potentials, and dreams.

Let me also put my point forward with the help of a story (which I just thought of) based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



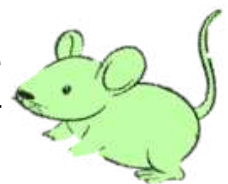
Imagine a family living in a five-story building. These family members, much like children, inhabited the first floor. Here, in their formative years, they revelled in the simple joys of life. They played, laughed, and grew, all the while learning the art of survival.

As they matured, their diverse temperaments led them down their distinct paths. They learned to study, struggle, snatch, or do hard work to attain and secure their livelihoods, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, and even primal desires.

But there's a catch: they were not alone; a bunch of rats scuttled about, drawing the children's attention all the time. The children got engaged in chasing these rodents and, in doing so, became captives at ground level.

However, among the kids, a select few began to perceive that chasing rats wasn't getting them anywhere. These individuals sought something more, something beyond the relentless and futile pursuit of rodents. They ascended to the second floor, where life unfolded differently. Here, in the showcases, they found glimpses of better jobs, careers, personal and health security, insurance, and the prospect of accumulating wealth and resources. The guiding principle on this floor was to set short-term goals and work your tail off to grab those things one by one.

The teenagers and young adults embraced the challenge with fervour striving to amass these endless treasures. On this floor, a remarkable green rat caught their attention, leaping from one desire to another, illuminating their ambitions. The young adults were consumed by this quest, pouring their time and energy into the ruthless hunt. They tasted the highs of achievement and the lows of failure, navigating a roller coaster of emotions.



While most are stuck chasing that green rat, a handful of wise folks decided to keep climbing. They hit the third floor, where the showcases were adorned with things like relationships, familial bonds, friendship, intimacy, belongingness, and connection. But here too, there's a brown rat, doing its own little hop-and-skip routine from one desire to the next.



People, now driven by social norms, etiquette, customs, and traditions, pursued these goals passionately. They discovered love, formed deep friendships, joined various groups and organisations, and felt a great sense of belonging. Life seemed good here, and they didn't really see a need to climb any higher. But here's the twist: that brown rat sometimes slinks back down to the lower floors, ensnaring the folks in a never-ending chase across all three levels. People were running in circles, chasing desires left and right; their time and energy were becoming wholly consumed by these manoeuvres.

But hang on, there's more! Some of those folks on the third floor realised that rat racing was a bit too much. Hence, they decided to venture even higher, reaching the fourth floor.

People on this level drafted bucket lists, unleashed their creativity, and pursued side hustles and startups alongside their primary careers. They became coaches and consultants, dabbled in organic farming, participated in marathons, played other sports, became yoga and fitness coaches, learned salsa and other forms of dance, authored books, went on world tours, went on biking expeditions, went hiking, explored new hobbies, and the list went on.

They advanced to this stage while feeling extremely happy, proud of themselves, and appreciated by their loved ones. Some of them rose to fame as actors and motivational speakers. Some even transitioned entirely from their previous careers to follow their newfound passions. Realising their full potential, they fulfilled their dreams, aspirations, and accomplished goals that they had always had but were unable to due to their struggles on other levels of life.

On that floor, there were no specific rats to chase; people were calling the shots and following their own free will. Yet, a singular threat loomed—a devious grey rat could show up anytime, anywhere.

That rat might cause sudden accidents, natural disasters, epidemics, the loss of loved ones, or even falling victim to fraud or crime, sending those folks tumbling back down to the lower levels.

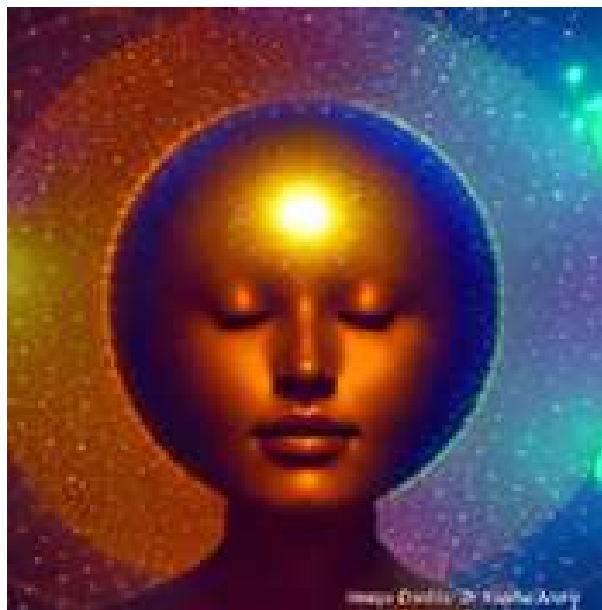


Obviously, you must have gauged by now that this story isn't just about some random family in a building. It's a reflection of our own lives and the different stages we go through. You might be nodding along, seeing a bit of yourself and your peers at each level. But guess what? The building has five floors, and there's one more to explore.

The majority of people choose to remain content on the fourth floor, content with the belief that there is nothing more to discover. Only a rare few, those who ponder questions about the purpose of life, what lies beyond, who owns and manages this grand structure, and what has become of those on the lower floors, dare to ascend further.

Such brave hearts reach the topmost floor, only to find it barren of material possessions. Instead, this floor is dedicated to unravelling life's purpose and seeking answers to profound questions. In this pursuit, there are no right or wrong answers; the journey itself becomes enlightening. Some individuals find their purpose in spiritual enlightenment, while others establish NGOs, welfare organisations for humans, animals, and the environment, or even enter politics and leadership roles to serve others.

Life's purpose is always bigger than us, even bigger than our immediate family and friends' circles. It's all about selfless service to humanity and the world. It's a call we all get but conveniently push aside. Also, achieving spiritual enlightenment stands as one of the ultimate goals of human existence. In this rarified realm, there are no rats to chase, and people follow the path of their own choice.



So, what's the point of this whole story, you ask? Well, it's a little message wrapped up in symbolism, based on Maslow's hierarchy of human needs. Those rats? They symbolise our compulsive habits and desires, always chasing more, even when we've got plenty. They are a reminder that the endless pursuit of wealth and fame can keep us stuck on the lower levels and hinder our ascent to higher levels of human existence.

Through this story, I want to remind you—yes, you, the one doing well in life, be it in your job, business, or any other role—to take a step back and think about where you're headed in this grand adventure called life. Are you caught up in the rat race, chasing after things you might not even need or already have enough of? The core point here is to make you aware of that race, the one that might be keeping you from exploring your full potential, living your dreams, and attaining true self-awareness.



SO I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF, “WHAT REALLY MAKES YOU COME ALIVE?”



Sqn Ldr Meena Arora is a Certified Life Coach, NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) Practitioner and Trainer, Author and Clinical Psychologist (Pursuing PGD in Rehabilitation Psychology, RCI Certified Course). She takes Personal Sessions (one-on-ones) and conducts workshops, group discussions and personal interviews in schools, colleges and corporates. She is also an active theater Artist and a Proficient Baker. She believes in following hobbies and a good physical fitness regime as the keys to good mental and psychological health.

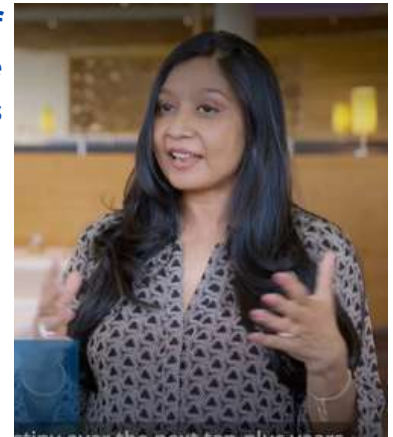
Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this article, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

Expatriate Interview

In this series, we plan to showcase the achievements of the members of the 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 IQBAL SINGH

Sqn Ldr Sangeeta Gupta Nair was commissioned as part of the 1 SSC(W) course on 21 June 1993. Currently she is the Global Head of Business Development and Alliances Biopharma at Sandoz based at Basel, Switzerland.



IQ: You were part of the Pioneers so to speak ie the first batch of women officers in the IAF. It must have been a memorable and a historic occasion when you got commissioned. Describe your feelings and emotions as you look back. Did you really realize the import of your achievement then??

Sangeeta: It was such a proud and defining moment for me and my family. It was all like a dream: getting commissioned, meeting with the Prime Minister, President of India, Chief of Air Staff, and several other dignitaries. That was when I realised, Hey, the Twelve of us made history! We were the pioneer batch of women in the IAF.



A Pic I am so proud -my Commissioning

IQ: Would you say that joining the IAF was a life altering experience? What exactly changed from what you were when you joined as cadet and the day you passed out of the IAF Academy at Dundigal?

Sangeeta: I come from a military background; my dad was in the Army and also my grandfather, so it was a legacy I was able to continue. Personally, it was life-altering—the life skills I garnered have stood me in good stead until today! I had the option to pursue further studies in the US, and I made a conscious choice to join the first batch of women officers in the IAF and have no regrets about the same.



Academy Days- Happy Days

IQ: Tell us more about your military career ? What were the challenges you faced, how you overcame them? Any abiding memories you wish to share?

Sangeeta: Well, being pioneers is certainly unique; the Air Force had to get used to having Women officers, and we had to get used to being in a male bastion. So, it was interesting—sometimes challenging, sometimes confusing, and sometimes funny—making the worlds meet! I had the opportunity to have very interesting tenures; the most remarkable one was in Leh during Kargil operations in 1999.

IQ: We would like to know about your family ? Tell us about the children as well.

Sangeeta: Well, I met my husband in the Air Force, but sadly, I lost him in Aug 2013. I have a son who graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, and is now working in Italy. I am close by, in Switzerland.

IQ: You had a wonderful career in the IAF for 11 years and then you decided to pursue a career in the corporate world. Tell us how did you prepare for your second career?

Sangeeta: When I learned that the government was undecided about granting us a Permanent Commission (PC), I wasn't prepared to risk my career. Since I had a master's degree in pharmacy, I enrolled in an evening college MBA for 3 years during my last tenure and decided to pursue a career outside the IAF. This was a very stressful period, managing the pressure of studies, work, and family all at the same time. I knew I had to start from ground zero outside and unlearn a few things as well to fit into the corporate world. So, I left in 2004 and joined a pharmaceutical company in Bangalore.



1 SSC(W) With the then PM and the President

IQ: Share your inspiring journey in the corporate from Bangalore to Basel? What is different here with regards to the work culture when compared to India?

Sangeeta: My journey to Switzerland was more out of tragedy than necessity. After losing my husband, my son went to Ireland to study, and I found it very difficult to continue living in my surroundings. I sought a role in Europe from my company and relocated to Switzerland, forfeiting my role and seniority in India and without having any clue about living alone in a foreign country and a foreign language. I moved with the hope that things could only get better. I have worked my way over the last 8 years, changed jobs, and established myself here in Switzerland.

People are humane the world over, but there are distinct cultural and ethical differences; there are no shortcuts or "chalta hai" here. There is a lot of rigour in business practices and consciousness on key themes like integrity, diversity, respect, and sustainability. To be honest, military training and life inculcate a lot of these traits.



With My Son

IQ: What are your future plans?

Sangeeta: Strangely, I have no future plans. I take life as it comes. Take the opportunities that are presented, learn from the life lessons, and remain grateful for what I have. I will go with the flow.

IQ: What advice would you like to give to young girls aspiring for a military career today?

Sangeeta: A career in the military moulds you; even with a short service commission (SSC) tenure under your belt, it is a stepping stone to success. Not only your career, but it also prepares you for a more important journey called life! It teaches you life skills. It prepares you for life, so I feel those who have the passion must try to do a stint in the military.



***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. 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.*

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



Why should you choose Star Health's Multiyear Health Insurance Policy?



**BY CHOOSING TO PAY MULTI-YEAR PREMIUMS,
ONE GETS PROTECTED FROM PREMIUM REVISIONS UNTIL THE NEXT RENEWAL**

Col R Srinivas
Director Galaxy Associates | Business Partner Star health
M: 7400160159

Star On The Horizon

Children of Defence Officers have the capability to excel in various fields, owing to their extensive exposure resulting from frequent transfers and changes of stations. They possess very high adaptability skills and immense potential as individuals. In this series, we plan to showcase the achievements of the children of the members of Forces Network who are on the path to carving a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination, so as to provide adequate motivation to the others.

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY SHRIWAS

Siddharth Dubey was born in 1988 to Col Rajesh and Bina Dubey. Siddharth studied physics, chemistry, mathematics, and computer science as his core subjects in school and later graduated as a computer engineer majoring in software programming. After which, he jumped right into the film industry with his relocation to Mumbai to follow his passion for sound. Siddharth advanced his skill set in the next few years and went on to work as a Sound Editor on major Hindi films. He has done his Master's degree in Sound Design for Film & Television from Bournemouth University, England, and is now working on a variety of titles worldwide in both production and post-production capacities.



Uday: The first time you had the realisation about your love for this world of music and sound?

Sid: Music was introduced quite early on by my parents, as I remember us having a huge collection of cassettes at our house that my father would listen to quite often. We had a vinyl player as well, which was phased out in favour of the cassettes later on. We literally had more than 500 cassettes, which included all sorts of music but primarily English pop from the likes of Beegees, Abba, Bob Dylan, etc. I started composing later on, though. This was back in college, when I was introduced to DJ'ing by some friends of mine. Shortly after, I started DJ'ing at clubs in Pune and realised instead of the playing aspect, I was interested in making music. I started with making electronic music, which I do even now whenever I have time to focus on it for a few days. In addition to playing songs by other artists, I started playing my remixes and original compositions in clubs, and they were received quite well. In electronic music, more than the composition itself, sound design plays a big part, as we don't use a lot of conventional instruments. So coming up with fresh sounds and effects was what appealed to me, and I started experimenting with musical sound design in my compositions. One thing led to another, and before I knew it, I developed an interest in film music and sound design.

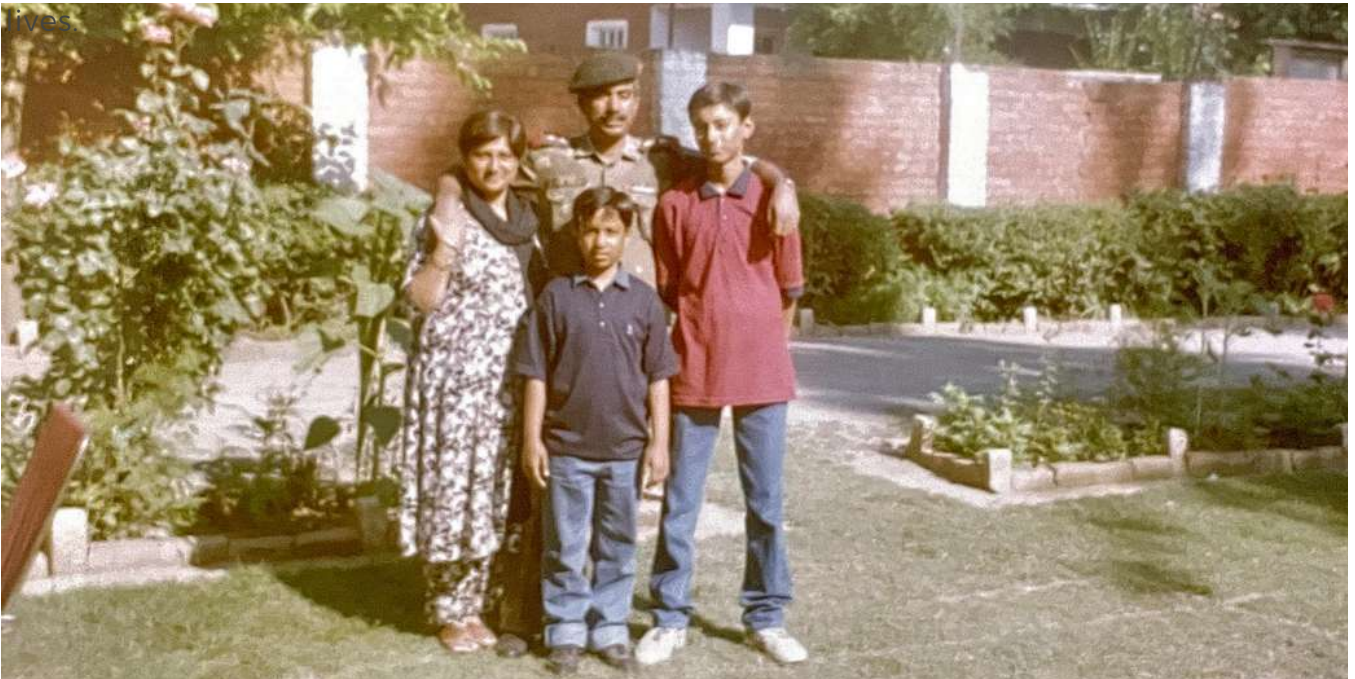


Me with my brother Karan

Uday: How has army upbringing helped your passion?

Sid: It was mostly to do with the constant moving around and being exposed to multiple cities all over India and the different cultures that I witnessed. One thing in film sound design is to know how things or places sound and what distinguishes these places. My Army upbringing helped me in this aspect by exposing me to these different places and their unique soundscapes. Right from the language people speak to their dialect and the different vehicles like the best bus horns from Mumbai, the Vikram autorickshaws from Alwar in Rajasthan, the markets of Delhi, and the ski slopes of Gulmarg, these are experiences that I wasn't particularly focused on while I was in these places, but looking back on my memories, these experiences have helped me shape my work in the present. I don't think I would have experienced all of this had it not been for the Indian Army.

I remember once being stuck with family just about 100-150 meters from a militant attack in Baramulla when we were travelling to Gurez Valley when my father was posted there. The constant gun shots, the hustle and bustle, and people shouting—these aren't experiences that people can usually manage to gather. So all in all, I would say the Army helped me experience India on a wide scale, which would not have been the case had my father been in a private job constricted to one city all our



With my Family during Dad's Army days

Uday: What are the important factors as you approach your journey to establish yourself?

Sid: The most important would be perseverance and hard work. In time, you can substitute some of the hard work with smart work and delegation, but mostly the will to carry on believing in your abilities is of prime importance. Here too, an army background helped me a lot because I've met so many people in my life because of it. Having the ability to strike up a conversation with just about anyone and keep the person engaged is what I see lacking in a lot of the younger people I see these days.

is also important as it helps upgrade your knowledge about your craft. It also keeps you relevant to your employers. Knowing what's new and what may be the next big thing is what upskilling is all about. Besides all this, just having and maintaining a great attitude works best. There should always be a vision of where you want to end up in life. This may keep changing every few years as your goals are achieved, but having a vision is what's important, and I've thought of this and set short- and long-term goals. This helps me maintain a roadmap.

Uday: Formal Training is important, how have you managed your career learning?

Sid: I graduated as a computer engineer, and although it doesn't have any direct relation to what I'm doing now, we still use computers every day, and having a technical knowledge of my tools keeps me ahead of people who have only learned the creative aspect of this craft. After that, I started working in Mumbai for a few years at a post-production studio and gathered some basic skills to be able to deliver quality work. In addition to being technical, it is needless to say that this craft is highly creative as well. For that, I decided to pursue a masters degree in sound design for visual media from Bournemouth University in Bournemouth, UK.

The higher education helped open my mind further to the creative aspect of sound design. We were taught not the how but focused more on the why. There are different ways to accomplish the same results in my craft, and everyone has a process. These processes can be learned, but without the "why", having knowledge of them doesn't help much. Most of the things we do in sound design affect the audience on a subliminal level, so psychology and auditory perception are skills to master, and that's something you learn about almost every day while on the job.

Besides this, as mentioned earlier, upskilling is important to understand trends and stay relevant. With artificial intelligence expanding to nearly all work sectors, that's my newest obsession. Not only does it help me get the job done faster, but it also gives me enough time to experiment with my sound tracks in a way I could never before. We work on strict deadlines, and anything that helps us get the job done faster and better is always welcomed. Some people may get the job done faster but not utilise the extra time to experiment further, and that's something I think needs to be done; otherwise, we won't be able to set new standards in our work, and overtime, it will turn stale and stagnant.



Me in my room during school days

Uday: Competitive world brings out new challenges and opportunities simultaneously. Your thoughts...?

Sid: Competition is everywhere; it's all based on an individual's perception of their craft. Competition is not something that instills fear in me but rather encourages me to seek new opportunities, opportunities that will help me set my niche. You can't do everything and be everywhere, but knowing your strengths and weaknesses will help here. Build on your strengths and work on your weaknesses. Collaboration is also something that helps cut the competition. If someone is really good at something you can't grasp, then make friends and collaborate with that person. Ultimately, it's the end product that matters, and if it's better than the rest, then you'll find yourself ahead of the competition.

Uday: Being surrounded with achievers and established names is both facilitating and encouraging as well as equally demanding at times, would you like to share such encounters?

Sid: Being surrounded by achievers means one thing for me, and that's to expect more from myself. Listening to stories by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and discussing life with R. Madhavan, you realise there's a lot to do and that there's no substitute for hard work and discipline. Yes, it is scary at times, where you might find self-doubt intruding the senses, but I believe you can't be overconfident of your achievements, and especially for a creative individual, self-doubt is really important to break the mould and progress further.



Post production of "Rocketry" with R Madhavan

I remember working on Rocketry, the film by R. Madhavan, wherein I was supposed to demo a certain section for approval, and what I thought was sounding great actually didn't impress the people in the room. I took a day off to ponder what went wrong. Mr. Madhavan later had a really interesting conversation with me regarding their expectations and just the approach in general that I had to correct. Although the people in the room had no experience with sound design, just having the experience, they had to gauge what worked and what didn't helped create a new approach and demo again. This time it was great, and everyone literally clapped. For me, this was the 'mould-breaking' moment.

Uday: How do you keep your balance in the 24x7 world of your working environment?

Sid: Overworking is highly glorified in India, I believe, be it any industry. Yes, there are certain time periods where a 24x7 kind of work is required, but most of the time it can be managed with smart work and delegation. It took me 5-6 years to realise this. I too used to work all night in my early stages, but I realised that's not required all the time. Plus, being in Mumbai, where everyone is always working around the clock to make a living, you fall into the trap as well. I now realise that 4 hours of continuous work is much better than sitting for 8-10 hours with breaks. Conceptualise what needs to be done when you're not working and execute as fast as you can when you actually sit down to work. There is no work-life balance that exists, but you need to have your priorities set straight. These priorities can change depending on the work at hand and the life stage we are in. Sometimes you will work more than enjoy life, and sometimes you will enjoy life and keep work at bay. Enjoy the downtime that a business like the entertainment industry offers, and don't use that time to find more work. Instead, enjoy life a little, learn new things, and gather new experiences.



On location for the shoot of "Rocketry" in Belgrade, Serbia

Uday: Important learnings that you have has in super exciting world of Entertainment?

Sid:

- Be very sincere in your work.
- Make new connections constantly.
- Gather new experiences whenever life permits.
- Be loyal to your team and share learnings.
- Don't be too concerned about where the next job is coming from; instead, create opportunities.
- Don't limit yourself to just one thing; explore new avenues when you can.

Uday: Give us some glimpses of your work and your work domain?

Sid: My craft entails creating an auditory experience for the viewer in relation to the story and, hence, enhancing the feel of the film. Feeling is a subconscious term that differs from person to person. We need to understand human psychology and see what works on a larger scale. For example, if there's a door that is closing in a scene, then it's not about using the exact same sound of that door or something that is authentic; it's much deeper. We need to evaluate under what circumstances that door is being closed: is the actor happy, sad, or angry and going with an emotion? The underlying emotional analysis is what makes or breaks the sound design. When done perfectly, it creates a subconscious experience for the audience. It's easier to catch mistakes, but not so easy to describe good sound design. It's a subconscious art form that's easy to learn but difficult to master.

The key aspect is for the design to always be relevant to the story. It's not about what sounds good, but about what sounds right given the situation the sound is being used in. When beginning a new project, conversations with the director are of the utmost importance because I feel nobody understands a film better than the director working on it. Another point is that I feel reading the script is very important, even if we already have the visual cut in front of us. The script sometimes has some hidden gems that could spark new ideas, like references to sounds and the characters' states of mind. A lot can be achieved by reading the script and trying to put the words into action! The visuals are 50% of that script, and the sound designer needs to come up with the other 50%!



On location in London for a shoot

Uday: Please tell us about Your Mentors, Your inspirations, important people in your life and your workplace?

Sid: My early mentors have been these fantastic sound designers from Mumbai: Parikshit Lalvani and Kunal Mehta. With them, I learned the ropes and how to translate my thoughts into sounds. We worked on a lot of projects over the years, and those years really helped me establish myself in the industry. Besides, my professors from Bournemouth University helped translate my chosen sounds into a character's point of view. That's what sound design is about: designing from a character's point of view. You design as if you are the character, and what the character hears or doesn't hear. My inspirations have been sound designers from the west, mostly and specifically ones that work on animation. As there are no hard-set rules in animation sound design, there's a lot of room for experimentation. Randy Thom, who has worked on films like "Ice Age", "How to train your dragon", "Revenant" and "The Incredibles", has an interesting view on sound design that I like to follow, and each of his posts encourages me to experiment more.

As far as my workplace is concerned, it's always ad hoc, and that's the beauty of this profession. You can make any place your workplace as long as you have your laptop and a pair of headphones at hand. I also work as a Production Sound Mixer which entails travelling with the film crew to many locations where a certain film would be shot, so today my workplace could be next to the ghats of Varanasi, and a few days later it could be the streets of Europe. Travelling is a love for me, and I think having an Army background has a part to play in this. I'm just happy I could continue travelling with the profession I chose.



On location for a shoot in Budapest

Uday: Anything that you love , like a hobby and how do you find time for yourself to unwind?

Sid: Hobbies are endless! As I stated earlier, there's always downtime between projects, and I have learned to enjoy those moments to learn new skills, travel to new places, and gather experiences. In the past, I've done graphic design, food photography, web design, coding, video editing, 3D design, and fixing Playstations when I was in school, and my hobbies have just grown over the years. In the lockdown, I taught myself the art of investing, and that's my newest hobby as of now. I read a lot, and to unwind, I would normally read a book from my library or watch a new film or show. I believe everything I've done and do teaches me a bit more about life, and you can't stop learning. I travel everywhere with a portable recorder in my backpack, and you'll find me recording new sounds whenever I'm on a trip somewhere. Some of these sounds make it into the projects I do, and some are waiting for the right project to happen.

Uday: Role of Family as you grow busier and successful?

Sid: Right from my childhood, family support has been tremendous. My parents never forced me to pursue a certain career path, even though I was doing something new every few years. They patiently let me discover my path. They invested in all my whims and fancies, and I believe it's because of them that I'm successful at what I do today. This career path also needs a wife who is extremely supportive, and I've been lucky in that aspect. She has supported me from the time I met her in college. I would be away for months on end for film shoots, and for her to be okay with this is exceptional. I plan to also start new career trajectories with her, and we are working on some exciting stuff for the future. No matter what you do, keeping family as your first priority will always help get you out of tough times.

Uday: Important Lessons you would like to share with our younger readers about how to approach this career path?

Sid:

- Don't try to figure out everything in life; focus on what you want to do now and work on that.
- Practice as much as possible because actual projects won't give you the opportunity to do so. That's the time to put your practice into action.
- Have mentors who believe in seeing you successful in life.
- Formal training is very important, and choosing the right place for it is even more important.
- Make friends with your best clients and always keep in touch; it's better than looking out for work with people you don't know.
- Never be afraid of trying new things in life, even if it means deviating from what you're doing now.
- Always make time for family and prioritise life as much as you can.

Uday: Your Motto for Life?

Sid: Onwards and upwards!

Uday: Few standout moments from your childhood till date?

Sid:

- I used to design and code websites when I was in school. Once one of my clients called me to New York to work on a website for him, this was pretty special for me.
- When my dad was in Kargil, me and my brother were stationed in Delhi with my mother. My brother had just taken up computers in his 11th grade with the hope of making a career out of it, and my mom went to great lengths at the time to buy us our very first computer. Although my brother dropped out of computers shortly and pursued commerce and economics, my love for computers began that moment, and I'm still very passionate about it. I was the one who ended up pursuing computer engineering!
- During the COVID lockdown, the entire entertainment industry was shut down. There was no new work coming my way, and all the existing work had stalled indefinitely. It was during that downtime that I started selling sneakers on Instagram as a timepass for my love of sneakers. I ended up making a very decent amount of money to not touch my savings at all and pay all my expenses while staying in Mumbai. That instilled confidence in myself that I really can do anything I want; the only thing holding me back is myself.
- It was the year 2012, and I had been working in the film industry for about a year. Although I had worked on several movies in a smaller capacity, there was nothing that could warrant a screen credit for myself. Seeing my name for the first time on screen was the most wonderful feeling that brought tears to my eyes, and even now, when I see my name on screen, it gives me goosebumps. I can never forget that moment.



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

This photography section, "Moment in Time" provides an outlet for the creative side of our esteemed members. The rules for submission are as follows:

1. Forces Network members, spouses and their wards can submit images for publication.
2. No nudity or porn.
3. No mention of Mil establishments, unit identity, 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 of five images will be published every month. The images must be submitted by the 20th of every month.
7. Mention your Instagram ID.
8. **While submitting, the following details should be submitted along with the suitable Title:**
 - a. Aperture
 - b. Shutter speed
 - c. ISO
 - d. Camera used
 - e. Lens
 - f. Focal length.
 - g. In the case of a mobile click, the same may be mentioned.

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



***Moon and Sky - Apple iPhone,
By Col BS Rai***



Heptr - Apple iPhone, Aperture - 1.6, SS - 1/50, ISO - 160, FL - 26mm
By Col BS Rai



Life in Life - Apple iPhone,
By Col BS Rai

SecurityLinkIndia

www.securitylinkindia.com ISO 9001-2015 CERTIFIED

(India's Leading Monthly Magazine & e-News Portal on Security, Safety & Fire)

PRINT & DIGITAL

India's Leading & Awarded Media Platform for Security (Physical, Homeland and Cyber) & Fire Safety

The Best Reach to the Indian Market

SecurityLinkIndia
(Print & Online)

✓ **Total Readership: 100000+**

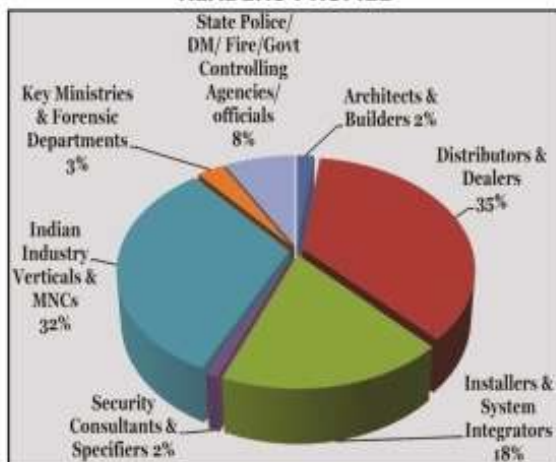
e-Newsportal: www.securitylinkindia.com

✓ **Average Monthly Traffic: 400000+**

✓ **Average Unique Visits: 60000+**

✓ **E-mail Blasts: 35000+**

READERS PROFILE



Offering
New Year Discount
on Advertisement &
Annual Subscription
Flat 30%

Exciting opportunity for the promotion of your products and services through advertisements and advertorials

Find us at:-

-  <https://www.facebook.com/SecurLinkIndia/>
-  <https://twitter.com/SecurityLinkIND>
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/in/securitylink-india/>

Recognized by



Online distribution through



Reach us at:

info@securitylinkindia.com; editor@securitylinkindia.com

Confused about your career? **Which stream/career to choose?** **What to become in life?**

Presenting
CAREER COUNSELLING & MENTORING
For STD IX/X/XI/XII/Graduates

- **PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT**
- **17 PAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT**
- **STREAM DISCOVERY**
- **SCHOLARSHIP GUIDANCE**
- **UNIVERSITY CHOICE**
- **ENTRANCE EXAMS**
- **CAREER PATHWAY OUTLINE**
- **CAREER COUNSELING APP WITH PERSONALIZED DASHBOARD**
- **INFO ABOUT 550 PLUS CAREERS**
- **NOTIFICATION OF ALL SCHOLARSHIPS & ENTRANCE EXAMS**



Dr. DELIN MATHEW

PhD (Education), M.Ed., MSc Psychology
Career Counselor, Child Psychologist
Positive Parenting Coach & Author

www.dbtc.co.in

9449053600 /9797424845

Book Review

TIGER OF DRASS

BY MEENA NAYYAR AND HIMMAT SINGH SHEKHAWAT

About The Author:

Meena Nayyar is the mother of Capt. Anuj Nayyar, MVC, a retired librarian at Delhi University, a protective mother, and a loving wife. For almost two decades, she had locked Anuj away in her memories. The pain of losing her son was too much to talk about, let alone write a book. It was only after she met Himmat that she started remembering him openly. She continues to run Kargil Heights Filling Station as a tribute to her brave son. She is based out of Delhi.



Himmat Singh Shekhawat has an MBA in sales and marketing and has been working in corporate for almost 15 years. He has made it his life's mission to help the families of the fallen soldiers and share their stories with the world. Along with Shivaditay Modi, he is the founder of the **Rashtriya Riders**, a biking group that pays tribute to the men and women in uniform. He is currently working with MakeMyTrip as the Regional Head. The son of an Army veteran, he belongs to an army family and is based out of Jaipur.



My journey with 'Tiger of Drass' started in 2022, when someone in the 'Forces Network, Chandigarh' What's app group recommended this book through a link. I ordered this book immediately and started reading the same day, though the consistency in reading this book broke until it was a few weeks ago that I started reading the same in Bullet Train speed and finished in two days. Thereafter, I felt guilty about having stopped reading this book in between. 'Tiger of Drass' is the gallant story of a young and fearless Capt Anuj Nayyar, MVC, who was 23 years of age when he gave the supreme sacrifice of his life for his country during the Kargil conflict in 1999.

Chapter 1: The Beginning

Anuj was always passionate about joining the armed forces, and the journey started when naive Anuj cleared the NDA exam and was enthusiastic to receive the SSB interview call. When Anuj cleared SSB, the Nayyars' officially handed over their son to the nation. Anuj's life revolved around his parents (Prof. Satish Kumar Nayyar and Mrs. Meena Nayyar) and his younger sibling Karan. Anuj had the ability to find a connection with everyone. It started with Karan, where he protected him in the way a father guards his son. This humane quality helped Anuj develop further bonds of brotherhood among his colleagues in the Army. His family fully supported his love for the armed forces. Anuj was a quiet and docile child. His transition story was from a calm and composed boy to a rebellious lad, from a passionate athlete to a responsible cadet, from a duty-bound soldier to a respectful officer, and from a valiant platoon commander to a martyr.

Chapter 2: Through the Pastures of Destiny

The Army was not a new institution for Anuj, as he had studied at the Army Public School in Delhi before joining the NDA. His father was an inspiration for him to join the armed forces, as he believed that titles and gestures held no value without the respect of people. Anuj had joined Echo Squadron as a gentleman cadet in the NDA. Anuj never gave up on life and always kept challenging his limits. He wanted to improve his cross-country performance and had squeezed out time for practice for his own version of the training module for running. It seemed that he was always daring to cross the levels of the game called life. By the end of the fifth term, he used to clear most camp races in the second streak and some in the first enclosure as well. Anuj was part of the dream squadron and had lifted the prestigious Gilder Trophy. Anuj graduated from NDA on 01 June 1996. Prof. Nayyar took a close look at the honour board of martyrs in Indian wars. The father asked the son, 'Yaar, Anuj, iss mein ek bhi Nayyar nahin hain?' (Anuj, is there not a single Nayyar on this list?). Anuj gave him a knowing smile in reply. He seemed determined to be the first Nayyar on that board. I think destiny sealed Cadet Anuj's fate on that day. After NDA, Anuj joined the IMA as a Gentleman Cadet (GC) of the Naushera Company, Cariappa Battalion.

The IMA training acted as a catalyst for Anuj's growth as a leader at the front. His organisational skills improved, as did his physical prowess as a combat soldier. GC Anuj Nayyar was a worshipper of the squadron spirit. He never remained quiet when anyone criticised or taunted his company. Anuj's education was not a slave to rules, structures, and routines. He liked to keep room for departure from the norm, a certain degree of spontaneity, and even uncertainty. I think this trait was an earlier sign that helped Anuj in the battle field of Kargil, as he never shied away from taking risks, reacted according to the situation, and made his own best practices to survive.

Initially, Anuj wanted to choose Signal Corps but took a U-turn by selecting Infantry. GC Anuj Nayyar was selected for the Jat Regiment and was commissioned in the Indian Army as a Second Lieutenant (IC-57111W) on 07 June 1997.

Chapter 3: From a Cadet to an Officer

It is said that when MVC recipient Brigadier Desmond Hayde (3 Jat Battalion) was asked what makes a Jat fearsome in combat, he said, "We fight because we hold nothing dearer than the respect we get back from our fellow men, family, and community back at home. Our fear of losing that respect is what overcomes the fear of death." Second Lieutenant Anuj Nayyar immortalised these values during his years of service. Anuj, true to his above-average interpersonal skills, chose to build a strong relationship with fellow officers and soldiers. He was most flexible in matters of granting leave and permission for extracurricular activities.

Before joining 'Young Officers' (YOs), Anuj was diagnosed with jaundice at the military hospital. The confines of the hospital bed were like prison for an active man like Anuj. Bunking hospital became common for Anuj to meet his girlfriend and future wife, Timmie. This extra time with Anuj helped Timmie make a decision. The two families held an engagement ceremony at a farmhouse, and Anuj's mother recalls that thirty-five out of thirty-six gunas (qualities) matched on their astrological charts.

Anuj went for the 'Young Officers' course, where an officer is given exposure to military tactics at platoon and company level with an overview of activities at battalion level. It comprises weapon and tactical training over a period of less than a year. Anuj made good on his promise to Brig. U.S. Bawa (Commanding Officer of 17 Jat) and secured an alpha grade in the YOs course.

After completing YOs, Anuj joined as Charlie Company 2nd in Command (2IC). He took over role of commander of Ghatak platoon to carry out counter-insurgency and search operations. He participated in three-day operation called 'Operation Aghao' where a total of 11 militants were killed. Anuj was lauded for his first Counter insurgency (CI) operation the Valley.

It was in May 1999 that the air was rife with rumours of military tension at the Line of Control (LOC). On 13 May 1999, suspicious movements reported by scouts and civilians in Ladakh started to appear credible. Capt Saurabh Kalia and his men of 4 Jat were sent to scout Bajrang post in Kaksar, Kargil, where they were taken prisoners of war.

Capt. Kalia's body was returned to India on 12 June 1999. There were signs of torture, mutilation, and multiple injuries (cigarette burns, ear drums pierced with hot rods, broken teeth and bones, fractured skulls, eyes punctured before being removed, cut lips, chipped nose, amputated limbs and genitalia) on the corpse. Capt Kalia's father, Shri N.K. Kalia, is still fighting a lone battle for his son to have the alleged acts declared a war crime by the United Nations and the people responsible in the Pakistan Army punished in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Demography depiction where Capt. Anuj Nayyar fought battle in Kargil conflict and earned name Tiger of Drass is as follows:

The Pimple Complex is a range of cliffs, 11k to 14k feet high, in the Mushkoh Valley of the Drass Sector. The Pimple Complex had a direct line of view of the NH1A crossing via the Zoji La Pass right up to Sonmarg. By holding Point 4875, the enemy had a strategic advantage that expanded their sight across Pimple Complex and the south-west angle on the NH1A. The whole range leading to Point 4875 included the Pimple Complex (Pimple 1 and Pimple 2), Rocky Knob, Whaleback, the Saddle (from the north-eastern ridge line held later by 2 Nagas), and South Spur.



Chapter 4: 'Did He Die Fighting?'

The Paltan (full-strength regimental unit) was asked to leave for Radhesar Post and replenish supplies at the base camp. Anuj and other officers coordinated the movement of the battalion. Anuj and his fellow officers got some time to call home, and he assured his mother that he was not posted anywhere near the action and that he had to sweep an area of 100 meters for land mines. Anuj also asked Nayyar's to refrain from discussing the conflict with outsiders. The Army did not want civilians to panic, he stressed.

The first war casualties of 17 Jat were Subedar Harphool Singh and five of his men. The news of Subedar Harphool Singh's death made Anuj furious. Then started deep reconnaissance operations to acquire detailed information about enemy locations, setup ammunition silos, and establish a firebase. These arrangements were made to shower a fully fledged assault on the enemy. In the next few days, the unit awarded wartime promotions to boost the morale of the troops and appreciate the work done by officers and soldiers. Lieutenant Anuj Nayyar became Captain Anuj Nayyar on 23 June, 1999, in the presence of Col U.S. Bawa, Lt Col. Anil Sharma. Anuj promised his seniors to recapture Pimple Complex.

Anuj turned to Lt Col. Sharma and said, pointing at Pimple 2, that it's going to be my present for you this year. Lt Col. Sharma's birthday was on 07 July and true to his words, Anuj secured Pimple Complex on 7 July. Lt Col. Sharma was aggrieved by Capt Anuj Nayyar's sacrifice, and since then he has stopped celebrating his birthday.

Jat Regiment was executing their attack strategy in Pimple Complex in Whaleback and Pimple 1 Peak. Anuj was packing his bags (Pack 08, Full Service Marching Order) for the attack even before he was asked. At the same time, another bag was being prepared in New Delhi. His mother and fiancée were packing sweets, chocolates, woollen clothes, and music CDs, which were handed over to Major Ritesh Sharma (Senior of Capt Anuj Nayyar in the Jat Regiment), who was in Delhi before being called back to Kargil. The Nayyar family got to know about the exact position of Kargil through Major Sharma. Anuj, being humorous, wrote his last letter to his father sympathising with him by saying, "I know you must be getting solid kicks from Mani for letting me join the Army." The last time Timmie and Anuj got on a call was on 02 July. Anuj told her that an important mission might be underway and he may get another chance to perform well. He ended the call by asking Timmie to think of honeymoon destinations. The bag from Delhi reached its destination 24 hours too late on 08 July, 1999. Anuj was already gone by then.

Maj Rampal had a rough time while launching the counterattack on Whaleback. He was running out of ammunition and crippled by the injuries of seven soldiers. After deliberations, Capt Nayyar and Maj Ritesh Sharma were sent to aid Major Rampal. Anuj was waiting for this moment and was eager to fulfil his promise made with Lt Col. Sharma. Anuj kept a watch and a leather wallet on Col Bawa's table and said, 'Sir, in case I don't come back, please have these returned to my family.' Anuj then asked Lt Col Sharma to help Col Bawa keep his engagement ring safe. 'My fiancée won't spare me if I lose it in the field. I will take these things from you if I return safely.' The Commanding Officer (CO) lightened the mood by saying, 'You will come back; we will all celebrate and dance at your wedding.'

Maj Sharma sustained a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) splinter injury during the attack. Anuj was given full responsibility to lead the attack on Pimple 2. The following actions were executed by Capt. Anuj Nayyar on the battle field, which changed the situation on the ground. Anuj made calls to firebase to calibrate the launchers. The final calibrations help to pound heavy cavalry on the incoming counter attacks. Shells falling at the right positions broke the final wave.

- Anuj decided that the best way to go about it would be in stealth mode. He crawled up to the posts and reached within a 50-meter radius of the enemy's line of fire. He confirmed enemy positions by risking his own life, and he silenced them forever with his bayonet.
- Capt. Nayyar ordered firebase support and even guided his men to hit the defence lines of the enemy.
- Capt. Nayyar decided to continue the attack with shoot and scoot movement (crouched and quickly switching positions) to get an effective fire radius for a direct assault.
- He took the lead during the counterattack by hurling grenades inside enemy bunkers, which gave him enough cover to lead the all-out assault.

Anuj knew that staying at their positions in broad daylight would not only expose them to the enemy units but also the enemy sniper on another peak. He knew he had to rely on his stealth and risky ascent for a breakthrough. Brig. Bawa remembers talking to Anuj on the radio set for the last time, telling him that reinforcement is not an option. Anuj replied, 'Sir, three down, one to go.' (He was referring to the number of peaks in Pimple Complex.) During battle, an RPG attack ended Anuj's life but not the spirit of the young captain. Soldiers still believe that Anuj saved 15 lives by taking on that RPG. Anuj cleared multiple enemy bunkers during a one-night assault, which led to victory in Mushkoh Valley.

Seeing this, Havildar Hari charged at the enemy with all his rage and killed two of them before attaining martyrdom. In the early morning hours of 08 July, 1999, the 17 Jat annihilated the remaining infiltrators from the Pimple Complex. Another battle was fought on the same day (07 July) at Peak 4875, now known as Batra Top. It is destiny that two of the greatest warriors of their time (Capt. Anuj Nayyar and Capt. Vikram Batra) fought and sacrificed their lives on the same day for the motherland.

Lt Col Sharma informed the tragic news of Capt. Anuj Nayyar martyrdom to his father. His father asked, '*Did he die fighting?*' Lt Col. Sharma replied, '*Indeed, he did. A glorious fight, worthy of immortal praise.*'

When relatives, friends, Timmie and her parents, and army officials gathered in the house, Anuj's mother, Mrs. Meena Nayyar, wept inconsolably, but Prof. Nayyar did not shed a tear or speak a word. There was another occasion when a number of people gathered in the house to remorse for Anuj's martyrdom, then suddenly Anuj's father stormed into the drawing room and said in an authoritative voice, 'Please stop crying! I will not have anyone tarnish the memory of my brave son.'

Anuj was only 23 years old when he attained martyrdom on the battlefield. Thousands of them gathered for last rites in Brar Square Crematorium and raised the call or war cry of the Jat Regiment: '*Jat Balwan, Jai Bhagwan*'. A few days later, Anuj's parents got the confirmation letter for the Maha Vir Chakra. On 11 April 2000; Prof. S. K. Nayyar received Maha Vir Chakra for his son, Capt. Anuj Nayyar from K.R. Narayanan, the then President of India in Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Chapter 5: The Second War

For the next fifteen years after Anuj's death, the family chose to lock away his memories. It was too painful to be reminded of his absence every time they came across any of his belongings. It was only when this book was first conceived that the family unlocked all his possessions.

In the evenings, Prof. Nayyar, Meena Nayyar, and Karan Nayyar would come together in the house to heal each other's' wounds. None of them wanted to be home alone with Anuj's memories, so they adjusted their schedules accordingly.

In March 2000, Nayyar's received a letter from the Ministry of Home Affairs. It said that the parents of fallen soldiers were being compensated. Families of Kargil war heroes were allotted filling stations each in return for their service to the nation. The whole family was in shock and unhappy, as they believed that Anuj had gone and nothing could make up for his loss, in cash or kind. Timmie's father convinced Anuj's father; he said, 'Filling station is not provided to you. It is being provided to Anuj for his supreme sacrifice. You would only be caretakers of his property.'

The filling station brought back the father, which Karan wanted to see. Prof. Nayyar found a purpose in life. It was like bringing Anuj back, giving birth to him, and raising him again. Prof. Nayyar also fought a second war with demands for bribes and the red-tape-ism of government officials while running a filling station. Prof. Nayyar was invited by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, to commemorate the second anniversary of India's victory in Kargil. Prof. Nayyar addressed the prime minister in a furious tone: 'This Vijay Diwas that you are celebrating today has come at the cost of my son. I have also been fighting a war. I also want to celebrate Vijay Diwas the day I win the battle against your bureaucracy'. Over the next few minutes, Prof. Nayyar told Lal Krishna Advani, Deputy Prime Minister of India, about the ordeal his family had been through. In the following weeks, the filling station got a government-approved electricity connection after the direct intervention of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It also led to an inquiry into the conduct of all those who harassed the Nayyars and openly asked for bribes. Two years after the victory in the mountains, the family had won their own war.

Some testimonials from seniors and colleagues who worked with Capt. Anuj Nayyar, MVC.

Brig. U.S. Bawa (Command Officer of 17 Jat)

'What worked well for Anuj was the kind of rapport he had built with the troops. They wouldn't have followed just anyone into the battle the way they did with Anuj. He did way better than what we could have expected from anyone. He fought like a true Jat and an Indian. I feel proud to have been served by such an officer and jewel of the country.'

Brig. Anil Sharma (Second in Command, 17 Jat)

'I had never seen such a driven officer. Anuj would sign up for everything and volunteer for every official or unofficial activity that gave him all kinds of exposure.'

Subedar Vinod Kumar (17 Jat)

'Anuj sahib had a peculiar nature of tying all loose ends. His attack plans were most efficient, and his patrol units were meticulous in their rationing. It is because of this habit that we had enough ammunition to take on Pimple 2. It's not like he was being reckless; he made spot strategies, made better decisions, and I sometimes reckon that if he hadn't been that way, we would probably be dead.'

Summary

I always asked myself, "What makes these young recipients of gallantry awards different from me in the years of my service to the nation?" I got the answer by reading this book that there is no difference between me and these young officers and other ranks like Capt Anuj Nayyar, MVC, Capt. Vikram Batra, PVC, and Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav, PVC, and the list is endless. These noble souls had the opportunity, and they stood against the odds and fought with great courage without thinking of their personal safety. They held up the ethos of armed forces like Naam, Namak, and Nishaan (name, fealty, and mark) while giving supreme sacrifice for their country and Paltan (a full-strength regimental unit). These young officers and soldiers had made a difference in turning the tables in the Kargil conflict. I kept crying while reading the battlefield scenario chapter in the book. I am now convinced after reading this book that patriots like Himmat Singh Shekhawat, Shivaditay Modi, Vikas Manhas, and many more who have not worn the uniform will always take birth and serve the motherland. I remember the words of an Army Officer for me while doing resettlement course together by observing my military bearing, "Tum Navy Mein Kaise Chale Gaye, Tum Army Ke Liye Bane Ho." The thought that crossed my mind was maybe I will be wearing olive green in my next birth as a human and serve my motherland. I thank the author, Himmat Singh, for his 'Himmat' for galvanising the spirit of Bharatiya and bringing Capt. Anuj Nayyar MVC's inspiring journey into the public domain. I also spoke to Mrs. Meena Nayyar (mother of Capt. Anuj Nayyar, MVC) and conveyed my feelings that I am like her other son.

Recommendation And Rating

The book is a must-read for every Bharatiya, as it motivates the young generation to fight for their country. Each countryman should understand that these young turks are ordinary citizens of our great nation who have done extraordinary deeds in their lifetime.

My rating for this book is 5 stars. Young generations must be told the stories of our brave men as a nation-awakening exercise so that a feeling of nationalism can arouse in their minds.



Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand *ret'd from Indian Navy with 11 years of service in Executive cadre. He had left Indian Navy in 2018. Presently, he is working as Deputy Manager (Security) in State Bank of India, Mumbai. He is passionate of reading books, running marathons, writing book reviews, write and debate on different topics of national importance. Readers can share their feedback of book review at dhand1984@gmail.com*

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



Forces Network Editorial Board members in the National Capital
Standing L-R: Capt Uday Shriwas, Lt Col Iqbal Singh

LOOKING FORWARD FOR THE FORCES NETWORK GATHERINGS ACROSS THE GLOBE;

If you do, please don't forget to share the photos along with the names

Do you desire to be a Member of this awesome Group, which is not restricted by National boundaries?

Forces Network is a 'Closed Group'. It is open only to the Commissioned Officers of the Indian Army, Air Force and Navy.

One can join only after being referred or sponsored by an existing Member of the Group.

For more information and details, visit:

<https://www.forces-network.com/>

