

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
April 2024, Volume VI, Issue 4

CONQUERING TRANSITION OBSTACLES



THE NETWORK THAT WORKS

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FORCENET

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

The Indian financial year just ended yesterday. I am sure many of us must have been very busy meeting year end company targets or finalizing our yearly tax planning. For military personnel planning to switch to a civilian career the Transition to the civil world has always been challenging, demanding and tricky. Those of us who have successfully transitioned into civilian careers have had to overcome several obstacles. However, these learnings mostly stay with us this, this results in the people following us repeating those mistakes. We at the Forces Network are determined to change that. With that background we have decided this month's theme to be **"Conquering Transition Obstacles"**.

As we all know the real power of Forces Network are its members. So we decided to crowdsource wisdom on this topic from our experienced veterans who have successfully switched to the civilian world. A large number of veterans have come forward and shared their learnings. Put together these serve as a veritable treasure trove of wisdom for any transitioning military person. In addition our Founder IQ has authored an article on this theme and shared his major learnings in the article. The first step in overcoming transition obstacles is to acknowledge and understand them.

From cultural differences to lack of formal education or civilian credentials, there are numerous challenges that we may encounter along the way. By identifying these obstacles early on, we can develop a plan to address them effectively. One of the most significant hurdles we face is the cultural shift from military to civilian life. The military operates on a strict hierarchical structure, with clear lines of authority and protocol. In contrast, the civilian workforce often values creativity, collaboration, and individual initiative. Adapting to this new culture requires us to be flexible and open-minded, willing to learn new communication styles and navigate office dynamics.

Additionally, networking can also pose a significant challenge for transitioning veterans. In the military, relationships are often forged through shared experiences and camaraderie. However, building professional networks in the civilian world requires a different approach, including attending industry events, joining professional organizations, and leveraging online platforms like LinkedIn. By actively seeking out networking opportunities, we can expand our contacts and access valuable mentorship resources.

Despite these obstacles, we veterans have a secret weapon: the military work ethic. We are disciplined, adaptable, and resilient. By harnessing these traits and applying them to our transition journey, we can overcome any challenge that comes our way.



Yours authentic,

Capt Rajesh Nair
Editor, ForceNet E-Zine

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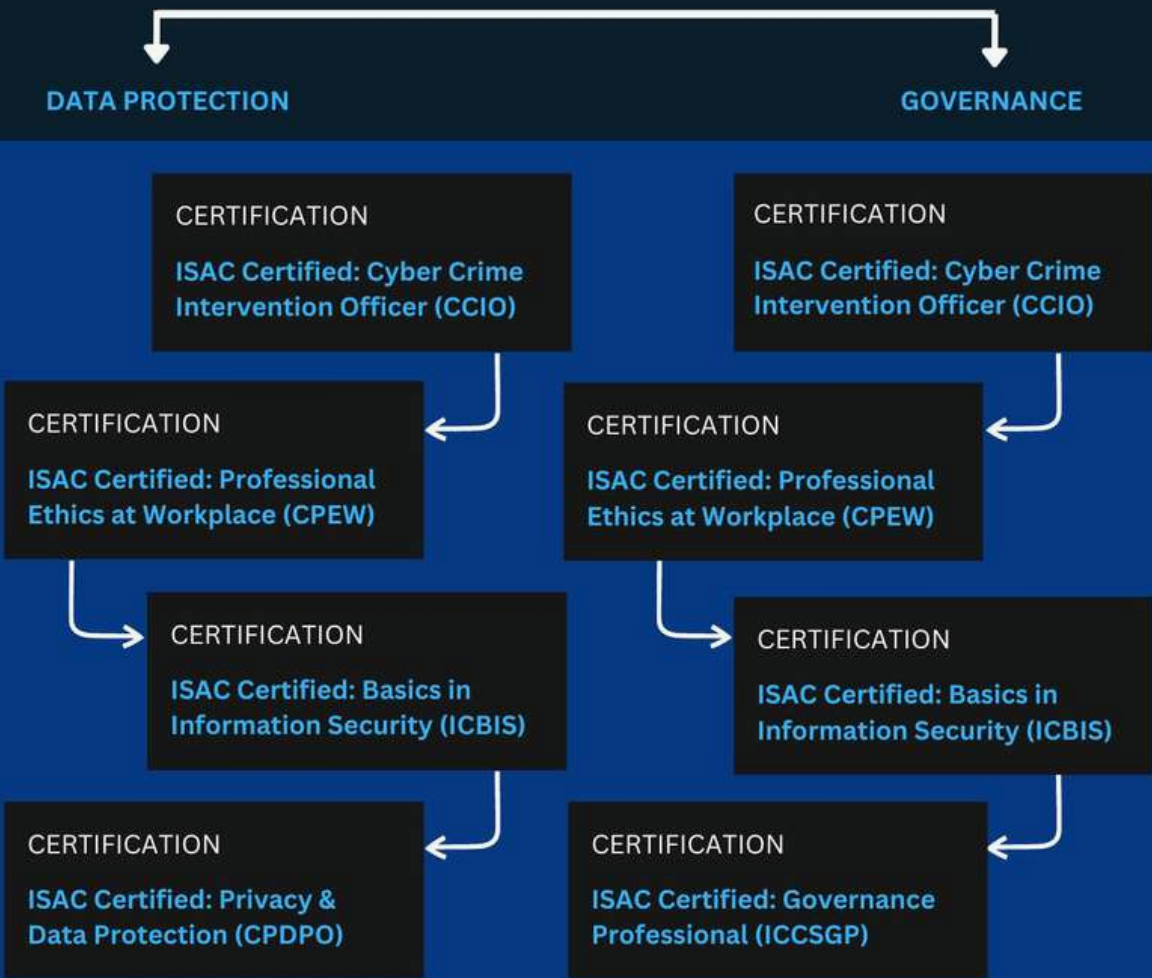
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		Protein-0.8 g	1.6%
		Fat- 0 g	0%
		Fibre-5.6 g	5.2%
		Total carbohydrates-96.5 g	-
		Vitamin C-25 mg	34.4%
Apple	Fruit pulp, sugar, liquid glucose, acid regulator (E330), stabilizing agent (E440), class II preservative (E224)	Energy-293.4 K cal	14.4%
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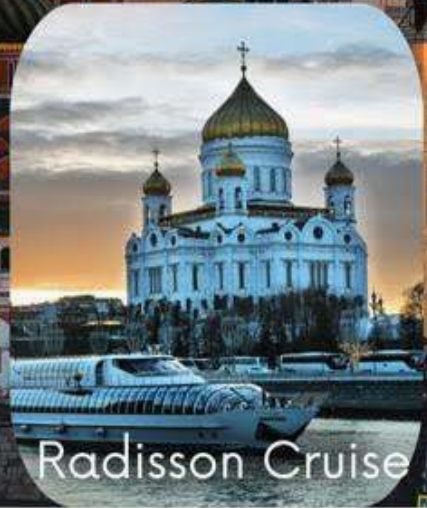
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[A NOTE FOR THE READERS](#)

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

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

Online Feedback / Review

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

Feedback on: The Power of Professional Networking : Building Bridges for greater good - Mar 2024

The article is to the point and easy to comprehend. It has beautifully explained the importance of networking for transitioning veterans. What I liked the most was the common misconceptions around networking. It acts as a wake up call - very frank and candid!

Additional Suggestions:

Thank you Iqbal Sir & team, for all the efforts put in for this magazine.

SQN LDR SHRUTI NAIK

Feedback on: The Power of Professional Networking: Building Bridges for greater Good - Mar 2024

IQ Sir highlighted the flip side of ignoring networking, busted stereotypes, explained tangible & intangible benefits of networking in detail.

Additional Suggestions:

Want to see article on successful stories entrepreneurship: Explaining step by step what young entrepreneurs need to do for successful transition.

LT CDR VARUN DHAND

Feedback on: Editor Notes - Mar 2024

For Editor in Chief (Nair Sir)

Additional Suggestions:

Motivate members to write feedback on the articles published in magazine.

LT CDR VARUN DHAND





SOURCE: UNSPLASH MARCRAFANELL

Conquering Transition Obstacles

Some Veterans Share Their Learnings

Theme Articles

Theme Article

Its All Up to Us Conquering Transition Challenges

BY IQBAL SINGH

"The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, its the illusion of knowledge "

- Stephen Hawking

This is a topic that really gets me excited! It is something close to my heart. I certainly cannot claim to know it all. However, I have made this journey, most people consider that to be a fairly successful one. I have shared my learnings, my mistakes and lessons with several military personnel undertaking this journey. Many have found them useful and effective – so most humbly I would like to share my experience and learnings on what are the major challenges that one encounters on one's journey from the Military to the Corporate/ Civil (M2C).

Leaving the military is an important decision and a big one at that. It is perhaps as important if not more important than your decision to join the military. In most cases we were very young, uninitiated and naïve when we joined the service. Consequently most of us are unprepared for the military service. However, what is even sadder is that most military personnel quit service to start a civilian career quite unprepared. While being unprepared at the beginning of the military service maybe pardonable considering one's young age that excuse is no longer valid while leaving service. The good news is that it does not have to be this way This theme article is a humble effort in that direction.

This article would be mostly applicable to the short service (SS) officers who are leaving after 5-10-14 years of military service or the Pre Mature Retirement officers (PMR) who typically quit after 20 years of service. Some of the lessons may also be applicable to officers superannuating after their full military service.

To Quit or Not to Quit ?

This is like the quintessential Shakespearean question as asked in Hamlet **"To be or Not to be?"**



To be or Not to be

HAMLET PORTRAYED BY EDWIN BOOTH

To me, this is the first obstacle in the Transition obstacle course. However, this is the most important one, but most people do not realize that. The Why behind the decision needs to be crystal clear. However, sadly, in most cases this is not the case. Most people base their decision on herd mentality. Let me give you some examples:

- “My coursemate who was overlooked for Colonel quit and is earning a CTC of 70 Lakhs pa, I am a select rank Colonel many overlooked officers who quit are doing very well I obviously can do better than them.”
- “I have missed my promotion board. “
- “I did not get the permanent commission”

This is an absolute slippery slope. What I have quoted above are almost verbatim answers that I get when serving officers call me to seek advice. The answers I would rather like to hear are something like:

- I feel my full talent is underutilized here. I can do more.
- I am aware of the great opportunity unfolding in XX sector (technology, renewable energy, quick commerce, etc) I want to be part of that action.
- I understand myself well and also understand what the civil world needs. I am confident that I can deliver value.
- I feel trapped – I want to fly, fly high.
- I can't wait to fly – I feel that I am alive – as Celine Dion would like to put it.



I can't wait to Fly

COURTESY – CELINE DION VIDEO I AM ALIVE

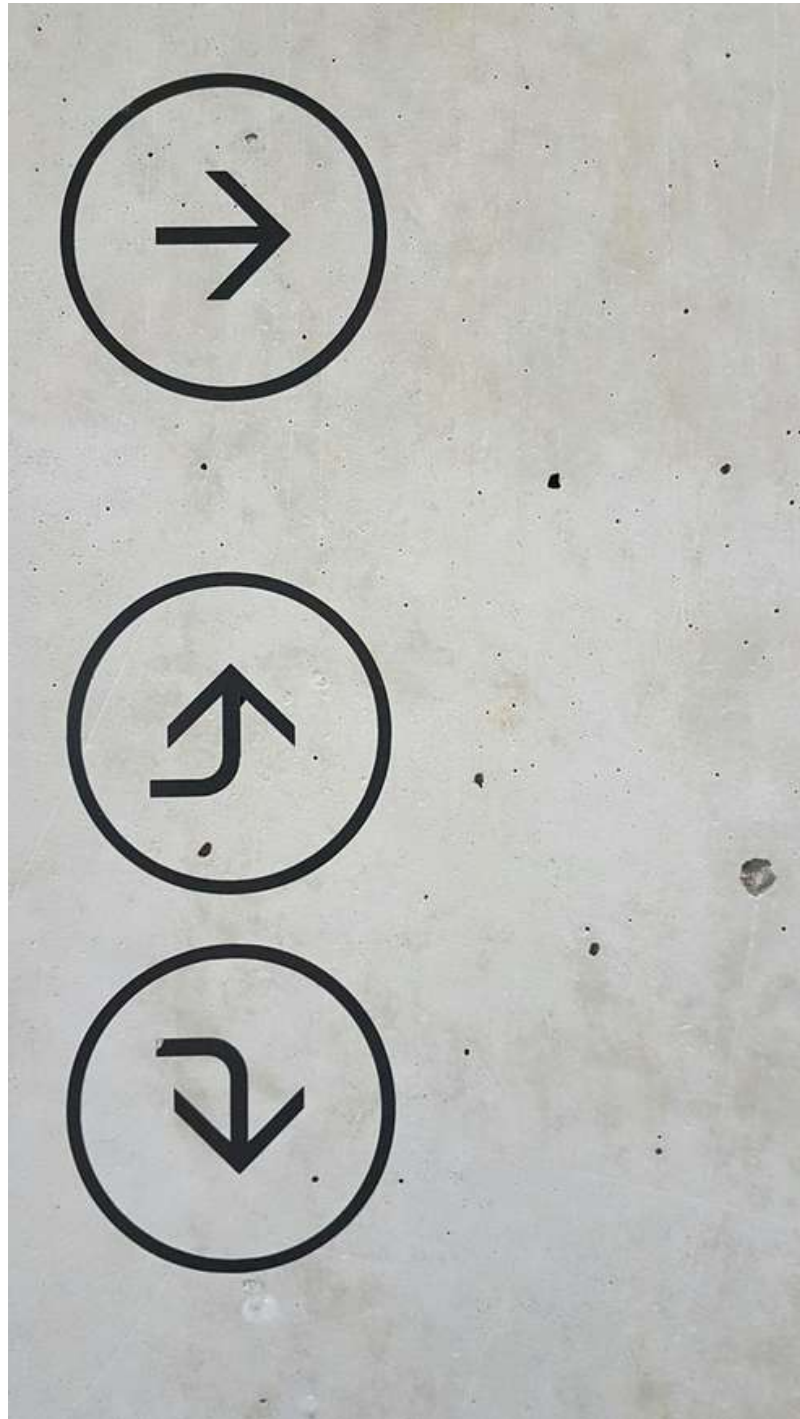
So, my humble advice to all those aspiring for a civilian career. Quit for the right reasons.

This is obstacle number 1. If you get this right, you are already halfway through in my assessment.

Don't Know What to Do?

Ask any transitioning military officer as to what is it that he or she exactly wants to do? Nine times out of ten the answer you would get is "Anything". To a civilian recruiter this answer would elicit a response that this candidate lacks "focus". However, this demands a deeper understanding of the military culture and a nuanced understanding of the military psyche. The answer from the military person comes from a high degree of respect for the organization - which is instilled in him or her in the service ethic of "Service Before Self". Secondly, what needs to be understood by the civilian recruiters is the fact that the concept of choice is alien to military personnel. They have never been given a choice in their entire service career whether it was regarding their choice of arms/ services, postings, courses, etc. Now at the fag end of their military career if they are suddenly being asked to exercise choice- that becomes difficult for most. It is a no longer a simple decision making matter, it is a psychological problem now! They are overwhelmed by the multitude of professions on offer and deficit of adequate understanding of them in order to make an informed choice. They need help to make this decision and this help is neither forthcoming and neither are they in contact with the right people who can help them make this decision.

There are several ways to make this decision. One way could be by the process of elimination. I mostly ask such people do you know as to what you absolutely do NOT wish to do. Make a negative list and then using a process of elimination reach a conclusion. Another method is to undertake a Psychometric test. Here again, the skills of the psychometric counsellor matters a lot. In most cases the psychometric counsellors lack an understanding of the military career and adequate industry knowledge of various professions in the marketplace so as to correctly advise these people. Also, the psychometric report in most cases gives a pretty wide array of professional choices that does NOT help them shortlist a clear and precise career choice.



Don't know what to do ?

COURTESY: UNSPLASH MARIANNE BOS-

This is the second major obstacle. If this is not correctly negotiated then it could lead to the military persons making the wrong career choices. A career advisor must be able to help a candidate arrive at the choice of the suitable industry, role, 4-7 target companies and the skills matrix required for these roles.

Understanding the Concept of Value Creation

This is another major stumbling block. When you know that you don't know you can address the issue by taking suitable actions to fill that gap. However, when you do not know that that you do not know you are in deep trouble. This is what we call a blind spot. This is exactly where most transitioning military personnel are. Unless you know this, you cannot take the next step know what you don't know which is a necessary precursor to then filling that gap.

Most veterans are clueless about several verticals and roles in the industry like marketing & sales, product management, Design, UX/UI, Digital supply chain management, Compliances, Finance, risk management, latest cutting-edge technologies, industrial relations and more.

Secondly, there is a mindset issue that generally plagues many government employees. They generally look for free things and are mostly reluctant to pay for any training, upskilling, advice, counselling, etc as they are not used to the concept of value exchange. This results in a large number of military personnel not investing seriously in upskilling, advice, consulting for their second careers. They largely like to stick to the DGR 24 weeks management course only. This has a telling effect on their preparation and take s a toll downstream in their second career.

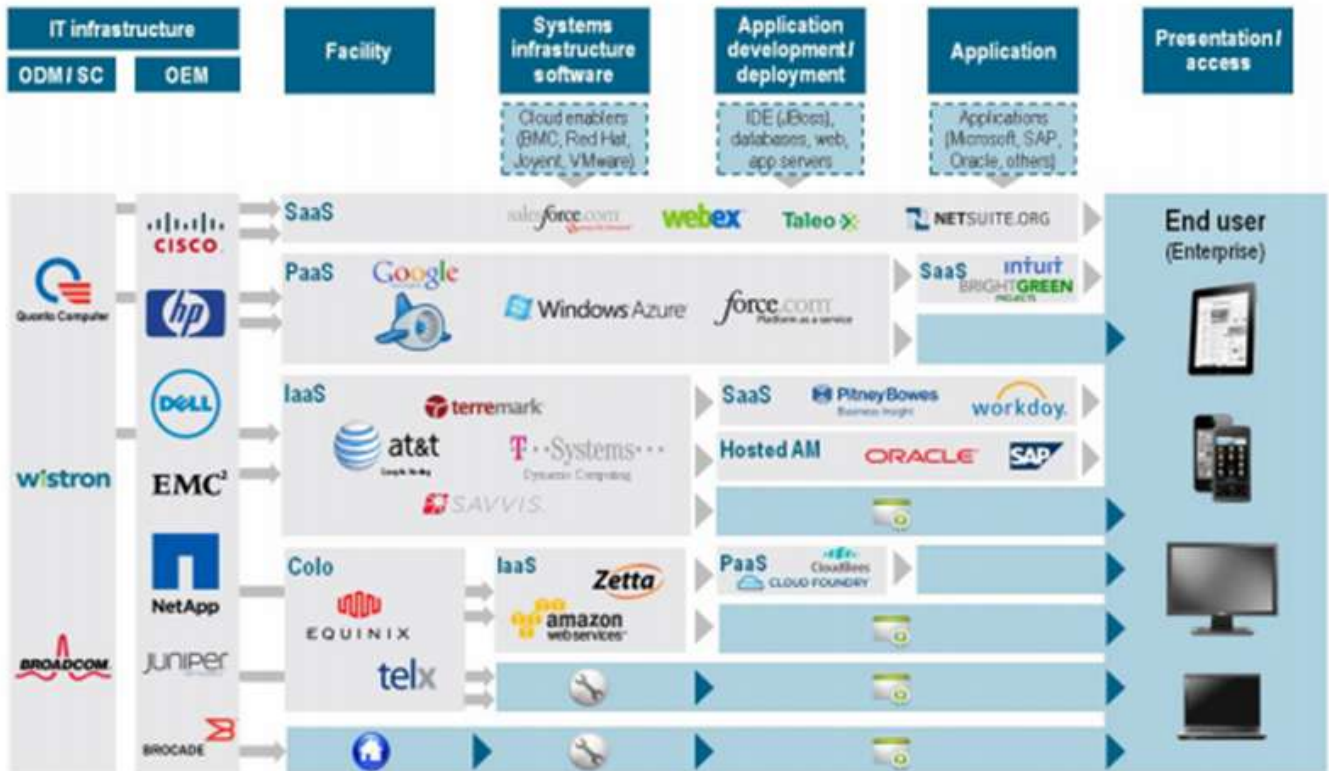


Blind Spots : Know What You Don't Know

SOURCE: UNSPLASH [OSARUGUE IGBINOBA](#)

This deficit is further compounded by the lack of understanding of the value chain of an industry. This is important to understand for as an employee/ an entrepreneur in an industry you must exactly know as to where exactly can you add value and in what form or manner. This is easier said than done. This requires mentorship and guidance from an industry veteran. This piece cannot be handled by the psychometric tests counsellors alone. They need help from practicing industry professionals.

Figure 1. The Cloud Computing Value Chain.



SOURCE: CISCO IBSG,2012

Psychological Mindset Shift

This is the real elephant in the room that no one is talking about. The military system and the corporate system are entirely different systems. Some of the highlights of the differences are as below:

- One is a values driven culture while the other is a bottom line driven system.
- One is largely process driven while the other one is outcome driven.
- One greatly encourages generalist a while the other places a premium on specialists.
- Salary based on rank/ seniority vs salary based on value addition/ contribution
- The Job description and share of responsibilities in the military is mostly well laid out. In the corporate it maybe fuzzy.

While the military does an excellent job of training you for your role in the military including at a psychological level when it comes to doing the same in the civilian domain you are on your own. The problem gets worse because while leaving the military you are made to believe that you are **“good to go and conquer the world”**. This may not exactly be true.

This obstacle ie the psychological shift is mostly overlooked, in fact, it is unknown to most military personnel. I feel it is a long drawn out process. If I speak for myself, I feel that my psychological shift is still work in progress even after a 16year corporate career. The importance of this shift cannot be under-estimated.

Lack of a Mentor

This is the last of the major obstacles that I wish to share however this is not an insignificant obstacle. A mentor can help you shorten your pathway to success. In the military there is a concept of a senior subaltern in the army. This is similar to that. The problem in choosing a mentor is that the people who are best suited to be your mentors are themselves working in the industry. They are largely busy in their jobs or professions with little time to spare for mentoring others. The other option could be choosing those veterans as mentors who have retired after a successful stint in the industry. However, with the fast pace of technology and obsolescence this could render those retired long time ago as less useful. While this is a tricky part, my advice for transitioning military personnel choose a mentor who has been in his past where you want to be in your future.



A Mentor shortens your path to success

What Has Forces Network Done in This Regard?

Well, we at the Forces Network have made a humble contribution towards this endeavour. Forces Network pioneered the concept of Military to Corporate (M2C) Transition Workshops in India. We have been running these Workshops for several years now. The below figure shows the details of these Workshops. These workshops used to be a physical event typically a 1 day workshop. However, in the covid era we pivoted to an online delivery model and conducted several of these workshops online.



M2C Transition Workshops Conducted by the Forces Network

In addition, we also ran a transformational program called **ABCT- Any Body Can Tech.**

Under this program we took the transitioning officers from a complete non-tech background to an industry recognized technology certification level. We ran three courses under the ABCT banner. Several participants got certified by appearing in external exams conducted by the certifying organizations like Microsoft, etc. Many officers from non-tech background went on to make a corporate career in the technology world.

Conclusion

Despite these obstacles, transitioning military personnel possess a unique advantage: their military work ethic. These people are disciplined, adaptable, and resilient, qualities that are highly needed & valued in the corporate world. The same determination and perseverance that enabled them to excel in the military can be applied to overcoming challenges in their civilian careers.



ABCT – Any Body Can Tech the most popular course of Forces Network

While the transition from military service to a civilian career may present obstacles, they are not insurmountable. With determination, adaptability, and a willingness to learn, veterans can overcome these challenges and achieve success in their chosen or aspired civilian endeavours. The military has already equipped them with the skills and mindset needed to conquer any obstacle that comes their way.

In my opinion the veterans must dream big!

No dream is too big provided it is followed up with planning, preparation and relentless zeal. Regardless of the dream they pursue, whether it's climbing the corporate ladder or starting their own business, veterans have the potential to achieve it all.

They must however be ready to seize the opportunities, put in the hard toil and make their aspirations a reality.

After all. – Its All Upto Us!



Lt Col Iqbal Singh (retd) was commissioned into 4 GARH RIF in Dec 1987. He has seen active service in Sri Lanka, Punjab, J&K and Nagaland. He is also an alumunus of the prestigious DSSC, Wellington. He took premature retirement from the Army in 2008 with an ambition to make a career in the technology industry. He has worked with Satyam Computers and Nokia. Currently he is working with Google based at Gurgaon. Iqbal is the Founder of Forces Network and is extremely passionate about veterans civilian employment. He feels that veterans can be extremely successful in their second careers provided they are focussed, prepare and are ready for the grind. He has mentored advised and guided hundreds of officers in their transition from the military to the civilian world. Any feedback to this article can be emailed to him at iqchucks@gmail.com

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

Theme Article

Conquering Transition Obstacles

BY KANWAL KISHORE

Transitioning from military life to the corporate world is no small feat, especially when one has spent 20 plus years in olive green. The journey is riddled with uncertainties, doubts, and challenges. However, with deliberate planning, determination, and the right mindset, conquering these obstacles is entirely possible. Here is a detailed look at the various hurdles I faced and overcame during this significant transition.

- **Decision Dilemma: To Take the Plunge or Not?**

One of the first and most significant challenges is deciding whether to make the transition from military to corporate life. After dedicating years to military service, the thought of stepping into the VUCA world of corporate can be daunting.

How I Overcame It: I planned my transition for over two years, evaluated my skills, experiences, and passions. I recognized that the leadership, discipline, and problem-solving skills I acquired in the Army were invaluable assets in the corporate arena. I sought advice from Veterans who had made a similar transition and weighed the pros and cons meticulously. Ultimately, I chose to take the plunge, trusting in my abilities and the transferability of my skills.

- **Square Peg in Round Hole: Will I fit in?**

As an Army Officer, one has dedicated his life to the ethos and culture of the organisation. The corporate world runs on business mindset and has different core values. There is often a fear/conflict in mind that military skills and corporate requirements are worlds apart, leading to the concern of not fitting in or being misunderstood.

How I Overcame It: I took proactive steps to bridge the gap between military and corporate cultures. Researched about corporate world/businesses. I attended workshops, webinars, and networking events to understand the corporate landscape better. Networked with own brethren to understand the nuances of corporate life, and continuously updated my skills which helped me navigate the uncertainties of the corporate world effectively.



- **From Living in Cocoon to Wading in Corporate Jungle**

Army life offers a structured and predictable environment. We live in our own 'cocooned environment' and are proud of the same. We know someone is always there to 'cover your six.' However, the thought of transitioning to the dynamic and often unpredictable business world was overwhelming for me.

How I Overcame It: Once decided, to ease into the world of corporate I opted for DGR sponsored IIM Certified Course from Indore. I was already part of 'Forces Network' and requested the core team to visit the transitioning officer, they obliged. That one-day workshop by Forces Network team at IIM, Indore changed the course of my life. The workshop not only cleared cobwebs related to corporate environment but also gave confidence that I can make the cut. That day one thing was clear to me – "Mentorship is the key for transitioning military officers".

- **Specialist or Jack of All Trades?**

While in the Army, we get trained on large number of operational aspects, we can take on many responsibilities. However, corporates need specialist in one stream only. Deciding your 'one specialized skill' can be challenging. Having decided to take the plunge, I deep dived into my own skills, carried out SWOT analysis.

How I Overcame It: I evaluated my interests, strengths, and career goals to determine whether I wanted to become a specialist or a generalist. Heartfelt thanks to Col Sameer Anukul (God Bless His Soul); who guided me on this aspect. I brushed my present skills, deepen my expertise in specific areas, matched up with the requirement of corporate world to remain versatile and adaptable. This balanced approach allowed me to leverage my unique strengths and opportunities in the corporate world effectively.

- **Family Back Up and Financial Planning**

The transition affects not only the officer but also their families, who might have apprehensions and reservations; same was the case with my family too. I being a second-generation officer, concerns were double!!

How I Overcame It: Open communication was crucial within family members. My wife backed me well, we had open discussion on the topic for hours, days and weeks. Once decided, spoke with my parents who gave their unwavering support. Parents blessings and understanding played a pivotal role in my successful transition. Also planned my finances well for the first six months into transition, spoke with many financial advisors and planned investments accordingly.



- **Resume Preparation**

I had no idea how to convert my 20 plus years of service into resume. It took me two months of iterations to bring my life journey from 7 pages to 2 pages. Crafting a compelling resume that highlights military experiences in a way that resonates with corporate recruiters can be challenging.

How I Overcame It: Again, saviour was Forces Network session at IIM, Indore. My resume was flashed on screen and was dissected by Col IQ team. However, that gave me an insight how to prepare a captivating resume. Did my own research from various resources, and learnt the art of resume preparation based on Job Descriptions. In addition, I tailored my resume to emphasize transferable skills and achievements relevant to the corporate world. I highlighted leadership roles, project management experience, and specific accomplishments that demonstrated my ability to excel in a business setting.

- **Interview Jitters**

Facing interviews was nerve-wracking experience, especially, at the age of 45 years, when transitioning from a familiar environment to the corporate sector.

How I Overcame It: I prepared extensively for interviews by researching the company, practicing common interview questions, and conducting mock interviews with mentors and peers. Art of storytelling assisted me in my preparation, I was able to showcase my relevant skills & experience with same. This helped me overcome interview jitters and present myself effectively to potential employers.

- **Deciding on 3 x P - Pay, Place, or Position**

Choosing between salary, location, and job role can be challenging.

How I Overcame It: I prioritized what mattered most to me and aligned it with my career goals and personal values. I researched the market to understand the salary range, evaluated the job location considering my family's needs, and assessed the job role to ensure it aligned with my skills and interests. Balancing the three Ps allowed me to make an informed decision that was best for my career and personal life.



- **Work-Life Balance**

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance was challenging in the corporate world, I was accustomed to the structured environment of the Army – PT, Office, Games, Cultural Life etc. Corporate life is quite opposite of this, one needs to adapt to this environment.

How I Overcame It: I prioritized setting boundaries between work and personal life, ensuring time for family, hobbies, and self-care. Effective time management, setting realistic expectations at work, and seeking support from family and colleagues helped me achieve a harmonious work-life balance.

Conclusion

Transitioning from military to corporate life is undoubtedly a complex and challenging process. However, with determination, resilience, and strategic planning, coupled with continuous learning, networking, and support, it is possible to overcome the obstacles and establish a successful and fulfilling career in the corporate world. With the right mindset, preparation, and support, transitioning from military to corporate life can be a rewarding and empowering experience, allowing veterans to leverage their unique skills, experiences, and values to achieve success and make a positive impact in the corporate world.

ALL PIC SOURCE: FREEPICS.COM



Col Kanwal Kishore has been the head of security for Asia's largest integrated business infrastructure, Jio World Centre of Reliance Industries Ltd., for the past six years. His expertise lies in asset protection, security automation systems, crisis management, and business continuity. He holds prestigious international certifications, including the Certified Protection Professional (CPP) from ASIS International and the Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP) from DRI International. Prior to his current role, Col Kishore proudly served in the Indian Armed Forces for 21 years, where he was commissioned into the Royal Battalion of the SIKH Regt (Bravest of the Brave). He has international experience as a Military Observer at the UN and was handpicked for a training course in Austria. Col Kishore is the recipient of the Gallantry Award of Sena Medal and was commended for rescue operations in HAA. Under his command, the Unit received the GOC-in-C Citation. He has also served as an instructor at three prestigious institutes of the Indian Army.

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

Theme Answers

Those of us who have successfully transitioned into civilian careers have had to overcome several obstacles. However, these learnings mostly stay with us this; results in the people following us; repeating those mistakes. We at the Forces Network are determined to change that.

With that intent we have decided to keep the theme of our Apr 2024 Issue of our magazine the ForceNet E-Zine as "Conquering Transition Obstacles".

Following below are some of veteran's learnings, which they have shared.

Name : Col KPM Das

UNIT: SIGNALS

CURRENT ROLE: NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY
AND TRUST OFFICER ASIA PACIFIC

COMPANY: CISCO SYSTEMS



Number of Years in the Corporate: 21 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Joined a technical team. Being a hands on software engineering, development, testing team the learning curve for me was very steep.

How did you overcome the same: Joined the fresher batch of software engineers hired out of college and learnt, updated myself. Support and patience from leadership.

LinkedIn:

[https://www.linkedin.com/in/kpmdas?](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kpmdas?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=android_app)

[utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=android_app](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kpmdas?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=android_app)

Name : Lt Col Jojo Jacob

UNIT: INFANTRY

CURRENT ROLE: SENIOR CONSULTANT

COMPANY: DELL TECHNOLOGIES



Number of Years in the Corporate: 2 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Educational Qualification Gap. As an officer with no technical qualifications, its is difficult to get traction when submitting the resume for technical roles which I aspired for.

How did you overcome the same:

1. Doing short term certifications to enhance knowledge and visibility.
- 2 Networking to get beyond ATS resume screening.
- 3 Convincing hiring manager and senior managers that even without a classic technical education like BTech or MS, I will be able to pitch in.
- 4 Enrolling for a MS in AI to bridge the gap.
- 5 Willing to join at a level lower to find a niche than trying for higher level roles based on salary alone.

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Joining on contract than as FTE

How did you overcome the same: Once within the organisation, prove that you are worth hiring into FTE Ranks. I managed to do this successfully.

LinkedIn:

[https://www.linkedin.com/in/jojo-jacob?](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jojo-jacob?lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base_contact_details%3BBUiQ9GrnQ8C%2F7QZExCD8GA%3D%3D)

[lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base_contact_details%3BBUiQ9GrnQ8C%2F7QZExCD8GA%3D%3D](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jojo-jacob?lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_profile_view_base_contact_details%3BBUiQ9GrnQ8C%2F7QZExCD8GA%3D%3D)

We develop our character
muscles by overcoming
challenges and obstacles.

STEPHEN COVEY

Name : Cdr Srivatsan Varadarajan

UNIT: NAVY

CURRENT ROLE: CEO

COMPANY: PRAGMALYTICS TECHNOLOGIES
PVT LTD



Number of Years in the Corporate: 16 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Faced withdrawal of job offers as the global financial meltdown of 2008 hit on the eve Of my premature retirement

How did you overcome the same: Bided my time with patience & forbearance. Kept a positive outlook. Appeared in as many interviews as possible, so I could keep the faculties sharp.


Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Desperation: Being Without a Job for 5 months upon quitting service.

How did you overcome the same: Took mentorship, guidance & self-management lessons from seniors, classmates, and other corporate honchos.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Resume Building

How did you overcome the same: Persevering with writing, rewriting, re-rewriting my Resume to tailor make it for each & every role. Reading & researching, scouring through limited online resources.

Obstacles are those frightful
things you see when you take
your eyes off your goal.


HENRY FORD

Name : Maj Daksh Nakra

UNIT: ARTILLERY

CURRENT ROLE: ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR - RESEARCH & THREAT INTELLIGENCE

COMPANY: CYBER SECURITY



Number of Years in the Corporate: 10 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Guidance: I needed guidance on which sector to join. Through I was non tech I wanted to know if I could make a career in cyber security. However, no one could answer that query of mine.

How did you overcome the same: Forces Network : It was at the Forces Network that I found answers to my queries and doubts. I joined their ABCT course and that was transformational. I was able to switch after that to a cyber security role from a complete non-tech role.

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Skills Required

How did you overcome the same: Forces network helped me to understand this. They also guided me on the pathways for upskilling. From the Forces Network platform, I could also connect with industry stalwarts and that helped me propel by upskilling journey.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Lack of Preparation during Transition

How did you overcome the same: I did not prepare adequately I feel now in hindsight. A lot of it was due to lack of guidance. Thanks to IQ sir despite being late in understanding my career possibilities his webinars and personal guidance helped me immensely to draw this road map and be where I am now.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Lack of Industry Understanding

How did you overcome the same: Out of the box thinking by me helped me overcome this. I reached out to non-fauji connections on LinkedIn for understanding the career market.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/daksh-nakra-b8a54b7b/>

Name : Maj Pravin Singh

UNIT: ARTILLERY 17 PARA FD

CURRENT ROLE: MANAGING DIRECTOR

COMPANY: CARDINAL WARRIORS



Number of Years in the Corporate: 20 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Financial Stability: Being an SS officer without pension who wanted to be an entrepreneur.

How did you overcome the same: Assistance by DGR, support from family, friends, well wishers and Banks

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Identifying your niche and passion

How did you overcome the same: Started with a DGR security company but I found my passion in military schools project during a job as commandant of private military school at Gondia. Cadets of first batch went to NDA, IIT and Medical colleges. Later I launched my own private military school.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Product Creation: How to add value to your product and services and to stop losses.

How did you overcome the same: Research, listen, take feedback, replan, readjust and redeliver. If you cannot figure out a plan of action, stop losses and quit. (It's not giving up as in army parlance, it's an exit). We exited from cash van business to start AI powered security business after due diligence, trials and research, with a mission to reduce the security cost of clients by fifty percent using AI.

Your 4th Transition Obstacle: Blind Trust: Do not trust anyone blindly especially in financial matters.

How did you overcome the same: Proven systems, sop and software to track everything that helps you in decision making while you scale. Get the best consultation in field where you feel you need help. Don't feel shy to ask for help.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/majorpravin>

Name : Cdr Saket Singh

UNIT: NAVY ENGINEERING

CURRENT ROLE: VP OPERATIONS

COMPANY: BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES



Number of Years in the Corporate: 17 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Stereotype Bias: A Service Officers is only good for Security Jobs.

How did you overcome the same: Dropped my rank and highlighted my IIT MTech besides my other qualifications and my diverse work experience and achievements.

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Lack of Automation: Manual Procurement Processes in business add inefficiencies.

How did you overcome the same: Volunteered to be in the SAP implementation Core team of my company and customised the Procurement module.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Financial Perspective: I needed to improve this.

How did you overcome the same: Studied the existing financial model. Did courses on Finance for Non Finance Managers.

Your 4th Transition Obstacle: Lack of Industry Domain Knowledge: There were many aspects new to me.

How did you overcome the same: Training programs, On the Job learning and supportive superiors went a long way in mitigating obstacles in Procurement, Operations and P&L responsibility.

LinkedIn: <http://linkedin.com/in/saket-singh-b897a9a>

The greater the obstacle, the
more glory in overcoming it.

Name : Col Rahul Tyagi

UNIT: INFANTRY

CURRENT ROLE: SENIOR OPERATIONS MANAGER

COMPANY: AMAZON



Number of Years in the Corporate: 1.9 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Adapting to Corporate Culture

How did you overcome the same: Learning the corporate way of functioning, both informal & formally was the key for me to overcome this obstacle. Informally I started interacting with senior in tenure military veterans of Amazon and took mentorship from two of them. This was of a great help for me to understand the day to day functioning and long term perspective of the new environment. Formally, I upskilled myself on Project Management Professional course which helped me in understanding the corporate functionality and jargons which were unknown to me.

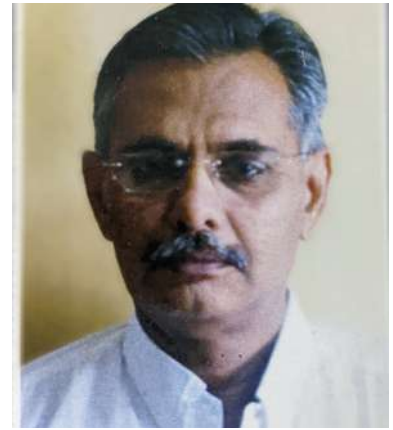
Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Ambiguity: Absence of Directions from Top

How did you overcome the same: In my military career, up till 1 year of my command, I was used to clear directions/ guidelines from the chain of command. This was an obstacle in corporate as one has to pick work on their own to excel in a corporate career. With help of my mentor, I started looking in to the gaps in my present system and then started thinking on short and long term solutions to navigate these gaps. This was basically "questioning the status quo" This helped me in getting involved in day to day functioning as well as strategic thinking. I delivered on 3 major strategic products in the first year itself.

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/colonel-rahul-tyagi-romeo-tango-r-6aaa29196](https://www.linkedin.com/in/colonel-rahul-tyagi-romeo-tango-r-6aaa29196)

A challenge only becomes an
obstacle when you bow to it.

RAY DAVIS

Name : Capt Janmejy Vaishnav**UNIT:** *ORDNANCE***CURRENT ROLE:** *OWNER***COMPANY:** *SPIT & POLISH***Number of Years in the Corporate:** 35 Years**Your 1st Transition Obstacle:** Trusting colleagues

How did you overcome the same: Fortunately, my boss in the first organisation was a Brig. I shared some confidential information with a Head of Department trusting him. He immediately complained to the Brig. The Brig. called me and told me that this was not the Army and not to blindly trust anyone, whatever his designation! A lesson learnt albeit the hard way!

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Put Things in Black & White: Sometimes the Support from seniors may not be forthcoming.

How did you overcome the same: I had been updating my HOD about a series of thefts in the campus and suggesting measures to tackle these; however, he merely thanked me and said he had taken note of this. The issue snowballed and the second most senior officer in the top hierarchy asked for an explanation. My boss stood silent and let me face the music. He did not even acknowledge the fact that I had not only been updating him, but also been suggesting actions to tackle the issue. After the incident, I told him that in the Army a senior would shield a junior at all costs and that I expected him to stand by me. My boss merely said - "That's the way the cookie crumbles, my friend! It's everyone for himself!" I started putting things in black and white after this.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Handling Labour Unions: Accompanied by workers indiscipline.

How did you overcome the same: When a new Trade Union was formed in one of the companies, the entire Union managing committee would come and raise a hue and cry for minor, insignificant issues. Fortunately, my boss here was a Brig. He advised me not to get excited and keep telling the boys that we were employees of the same organisation and that we had a role to play and justify our jobs. It took us a year and a half to tune the Union to see things our way and stop confronting the Management. The strategy was to use appropriate body language, role play and also maintain cordiality with the workers at most times. I could later stand amongst the workers attending any meeting called by the Union without arousing hostility. The same Union managing committee members gave the Brig. a very emotional farewell when he retired. I am still in touch with some of the Union guys although I left the company in 2004.

CONTD.....

Your 4th Transition Obstacle: Setting example

How did you overcome the same: Your 4th Transition Obstacle: Setting example

How did you overcome the same: One of the organisations I worked with was a top class state of the art plant manufacturing milk products which were also exported. Hygiene and housekeeping standards were high and had to be maintained 24x7x365. I used to personally take rounds inside the plant and outside regularly as I was assigned the role of coordinating all functions of the plant. This included cleaning up any area without asking any worker to help/assist. Some of my colleagues didn't quite appreciate this and sarcastically named me "the sweeper" and also "Managing Director" (who acts as if he owns the plant!). I along with my peers decided to keep doing this irrespective of comments made behind our backs. Gradually, things came to a stage where if a worker saw me coming along, he would scan the area for even a scrap of paper and would retrieve it before I could! At no time was any individual admonished or counselled to help keep the plant spick and span! Perseverance and respecting even the safai kamdars for their work and treating all employees fairly and impartially did the magic!

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/excaptjay



Name : Lt Cdr Varun Kumar Dhand

UNIT: NAVY EXECUTIVE

CURRENT ROLE: MANAGER SECURITY

COMPANY: STATE BANK OF INDIA



Number of Years in the Corporate: 6 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Understanding Civvy Street

How did you overcome the same: It came with experience with the first job when I learnt that if I had to survive in corporate world then I have navigate it diplomatically and must have evidence for each and every job which I was performing.

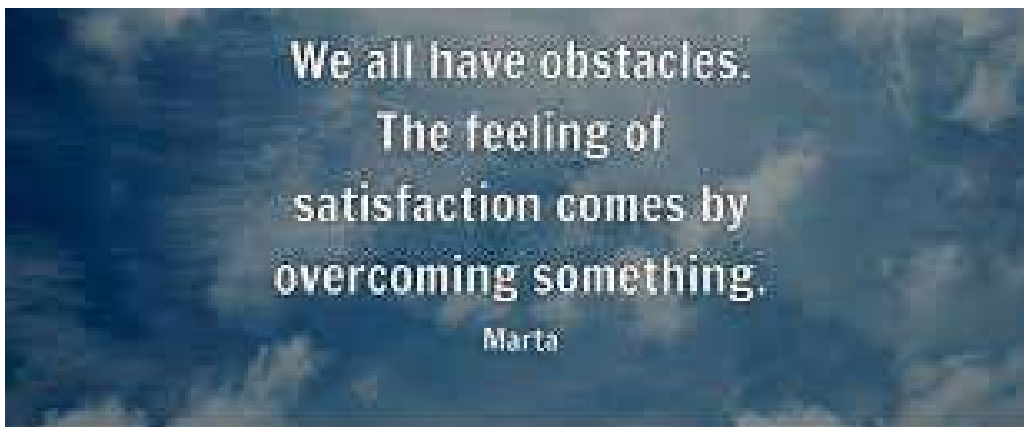
Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Shoulder Responsibility in Corporate World.

How did you overcome the same: In Civvy Street if you are handling additional responsibility then it means money. I learnt when I was given an additional responsibility of fire and safety. My line manager was supportive and it resulted in increase in my pay package.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Understanding Terms and Conditions of the Roles & Responsibilities in Appointment Letter

How did you overcome the same: I have a habit of taking time in going through official documents. This habit helped me where HR of company had put additional responsibilities in my appointment letter and increased my notice period. I politely raised my concerns and new appointment letter along with required amendments was issued.

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/varun-dhand-28658422?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=android_app



Name : Maj Saurabh Srivastava

UNIT: CORPS OF EME

CURRENT ROLE: DIRECTOR

COMPANY: CONTROL RISKS INDIA PVT. LTD.



Number of Years in the Corporate: 12 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Day 1 Ready: Being corporate ready on Day 1 and competing with peers with vast corporate experience.

How did you overcome the same: Extended utilisation of opportunities from IIM-A where I did the DGR course and grads in the institute. Further updating myself with real life scenarios and workmanship.

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Becoming a Consultant: Being a consultant in a negligibly recognised field in 2013-14 with no certifications to boot.

How did you overcome the same: Focus on the basics of problem solving with grass root solutions. Trusting myself to physically execute an activity on ground which helped in establishing credibility with the clients.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Starting a Business: Starting a bootstrapped consulting business with limited experience and little or no industry recognition.

How did you overcome the same: Trusted in oneself; networked with senior industry leaders for guidance and continued to work on a zero tolerance attitude with quality and integrity.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/maj-saurabh-srivastava/>



Name : Maj Harish Gaudi

UNIT: ARTILLERY

CURRENT ROLE: DIRECTOR BUSINESS
OPERATIONS

COMPANY: SWIGGY



Number of Years in the Corporate: 5 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: What: What to do.

How did you overcome the same: While in the Army, I was convinced that we are a perfect fit only for SLP (Security and Loss Prevention) / Admin Jobs. However, when I started connecting with already transitioned Officers via LinkedIn / social media, I realised that we are generalist. The skill set what we have can be transferred in any domain/ function It's just about honing the same in right direction.

Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Adoption to Corporate Lingo/ Quip/ Excel/ Google sheets/ MS Office tools.

How did you overcome the same: I realised and understood the importance of these tools while undergoing the DGR resettlement course in Indore. The course actually helped me to focus and learn these tools atleast theoretically. It made me confident and later on while at work it did not come as surprise, though actual learning happened while at work :)

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Which function/ domain to choose and for how long?

How did you overcome the same: I simply introspected and did a SWOT analysis bringing all the factors to include my skill sets, location, age, willingness to travel, growth mindset etc., Thereafter, I connected with experts specially military veterans and understood the nuances of each and every function, this helped me to take right decision.

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Switching the first corporate Job

How did you overcome the same: I switched my first corporate Job from a startup to MNC (after 1.5 years), while I was cautious about the less duration spent in current Org and it's impact in my overall work experience/ portfolio, it was worth exploring the same since the function/ domain was same and it was more from a growth pov and not a shift in industry function. Hence I would say there is no one answer to this how long one has to stick in one role/ organisation, it all depends upon what's the opportunity in hand and what is the current line of sight / foreseeable future.

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/major-harish-gaudi-veteran-789890159?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=android_app

Name : Lt Nishu Miglani**UNIT:** LOGISTICS (INDIAN NAVY)**CURRENT ROLE:** FOUNDER AND MANAGING
DIRECTOR**COMPANY:** SEARCH QUEST CONSULTANTS PRIVATE
LIMITED**Number of Years in the Corporate:** 25 Years**Your 1st Transition Obstacle:** What to do?: To choose the right job role in the civil world without any reference.**How did you overcome the same:** By planning ahead of time, gathering inputs on how the civil world worked, learning about the types of roles existing and what I wanted to do I was able to decide what role to join. I met people from these target companies in person to showcase my capabilities. I made my resume with powerful words that made all the difference**Your 2nd Transition Obstacle:** I got three offers by May 99.

- Reliance Jamnagar as engineer
- Marketing executive
- H R and recruitment

Which one to choose was my next obstacle.

How did you overcome the same: Based upon my nature and personality i sought guidance from my Navy seniors. Also I knew that eventually i have to set my own firm for giving back to the society. So I chose a HR and recruitment consulting job in the infrastructure sector from recruitment perspective in ABC consultants.**Your 3rd Transition Obstacle:** How to stay in an expensive city like Mumbai with less salary.**How did you overcome the same:** I was determined that I have to stay in a progressive city like Mumbai but the starting salary was low. Hence I picked up a Paying Guest accomodation near the office and sacrificed all my comforts which I was lucky to have in the Navy and restarted my life as a determined soldier all over again. But seeing my grit and determination my company promoted me 4 times and increased my salary. As a result I could buy a house in Pune, when it appreciated I sold that. I bought a house in south Mumbai in 2006, I worked 24x7x365 to make this happen.**Your 3rd Transition Obstacle:** Funding My StartUp: How to set my own firm how to organise funds.**How did you overcome the same:** My ultimate goal was to set up my own company but since I had bought a house in south Mumbai on loan I did not want to risk my team members career who wanted to join me. I joined a joint venture group of ABC was national Head Information Technology and gained global experience in return. By 2008 when I had gained clarity on my relationships with clients and future business opportunity! set up search quest on 01 Feb 2008 with 4 of my ex-team members. Our ex boss helped us with the seed funds for 6 months but with our hard work and blessings of clients my company did breakeven in 8 months. After that me and my team never looked back.**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nishu-miglani-3463447/>

Name : Lt Col Kailash Bansal

UNIT: SIGNALS

CURRENT ROLE: DIRECTOR

COMPANY: NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OPEN SCHOOLING



Number of Years in the Corporate: 01 Years

Your 1st Transition Obstacle: Decision Paralysis: I faced this challenge in my corporate job. I was not getting decision from my with command chain.

How did you overcome the same: Escalate the matter relentlessly. This is what I learnt the hard way.

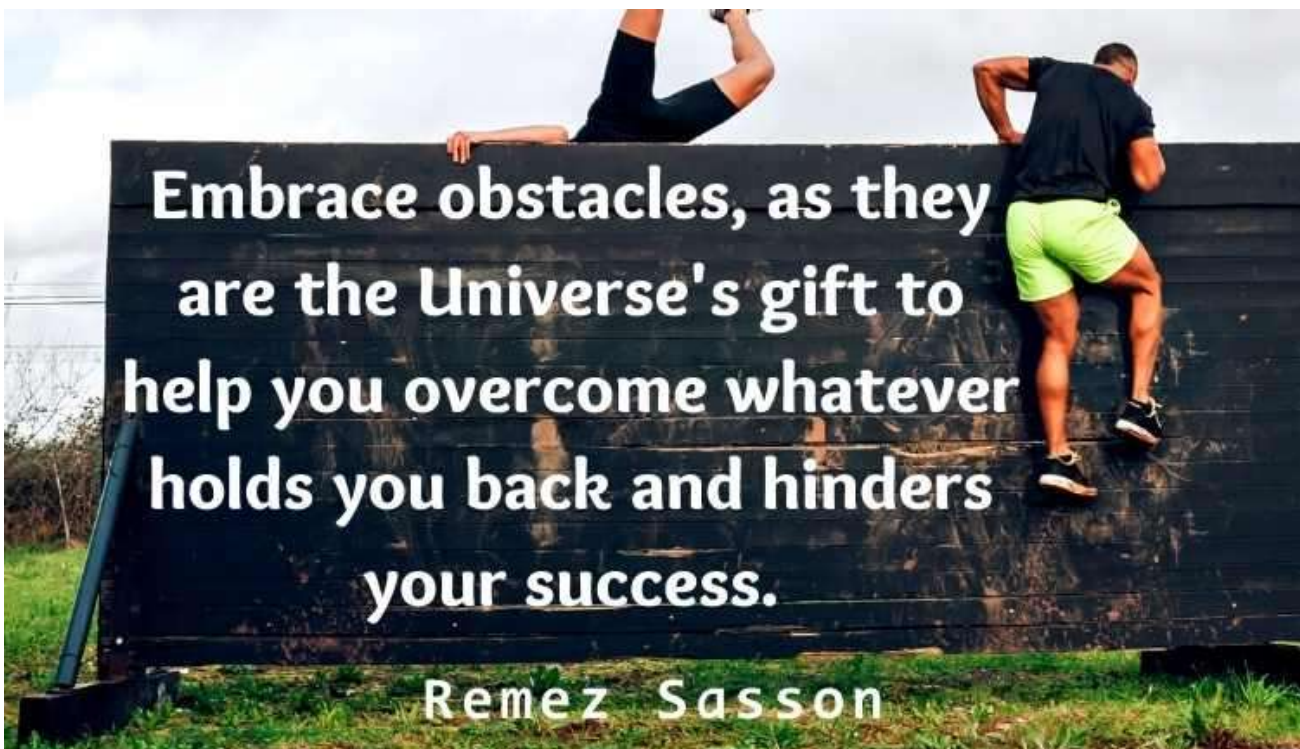
Your 2nd Transition Obstacle: Inertia of Rest: Getting out of comfort zone is a challenge.

How did you overcome the same: Tell yourself that shake up hard and go for it NOW. Follow the adage it is now or never!

Your 3rd Transition Obstacle: Chasing CTC: Don't be in a race for showing off your CTC to others.

How did you overcome the same: Be strategic while picking up jobs/ roles. Take a long term view even if that may the starting salary is low with potential to increase substantially later.

Linkedin: <http://linkedin.com/in/kailashbansal>



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 Vipin Jamwal was commissioned in Apr 98 from the Officers Training Academy into 23rd Bn of Punjab Regiment. Post his Army tenure he has worked in multiple corporates like Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance for 10+ years. Reliance Retail, BACS and ITC Hotels in Administration, Real Estate & Security domain. He currently heads the Cybersecurity vertical for Birlasoft globally.



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

Vipin: I come from a humble middle-class background, have done my studies in Srinagar and Jammu. After graduating from Commerce College, Jammu, I joined National Institute of Advertising, New Delhi, with an aim to become a copywriter but life had other plans. A letter confirming my qualification in the CDS exam and a date for SSB interview in Prayagraj led me to Officers' Training Academy, Chennai in Apr 1998. I joined the illustrious, Laungewala paltan (23rd Bn of the Punjab Regiment) after passing out in Mar 1999. Have been lucky to serve in all terrains that Indian Army fights in- Plains (DCB), Mountains and Deserts in my short and sweet 5 years with the Army. Served on the Punjab border during Op Vijay, did a high-altitude tenure in East followed by deserts. Got instructor grading in YOs and OTMC course and led the Div firing team in the Eastern Command Firing Competition and was adjudged the best shot amongst officers in carbine fire. Have served as an instructor in a Corps Insurgency Training School besides my unit tenure.



With buddies at OTA, Chennai

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?

Vipin: I lead the Cybersecurity practice for Birlasoft globally. Joined Birlasoft in 2018 and was fortunate to work with stalwarts like Cdr Amit Dhawan and Cdr Sanjeev Singh in this domain. Before joining Birlasoft, I was with Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance for 10+ years. This is where my journey in IT and Infosec started in 2008 (company was in launch phase when I joined). Have earlier worked with Reliance Retail, BACS and ITC Hotels in Administration, Real Estate & Security domain.

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

Vipin: First thing was the belief and rest of the things followed. I did a resettlement course before moving out of Army and ensured that I speak with the fraternity who re-attired and were successful in what they were doing. Was without a job for about a month after leaving and got my first break with ITC Maurya in physical security as Deputy CSO. I was 27 when I joined them and at that time my manager told me that I need to get a career and not only a job in hotel security. That was the day I realized that this transition hasn't ended but just started. Since then, I have been fortunate to not repeat a role/ industry so far in my career learning life lessons along the way. Always thankful to Col Irwin Extross, my manager at ITC, for that key message. It has been instrumental in shaping my career in the civil.

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

Vipin: Challenges were many, and at that time very few of us were getting into mainstream jobs. I had the opportunity of interacting with some great established leaders from the forces and get guidance on how to go about the complete exercise. In 2004, there was no forum or group where one could get support from but I was lucky to get tips from leaders I personally knew.



Team Birlasoft

IQ: Though you are an infantry officer now working in a Cyber Security role. Did you have to learn some technology related subjects? How did you do so?

Vipin: An infantry officer is a ground soldier as we all know, what held me good was sticking to the ground rules. As mentioned earlier, my journey in technology started in 2008 where I did anything and everything from IT projects to BCP/DR to IT Services to IDAM design and implementation to IT Procurement to IT Strategy. I also completed my 3-year Exec MBA from MDI Gurgaon in IT and Marketing in 2012 which helped me develop IT management skills. Move to cybersecurity was a natural progression after my 10+ years in IT and acquiring the skills required for that was completely based on hands on groundwork and burning the midnight oil. I was fortunate to have a mentor like Cdr Amit Dhawan at that stage when I was transitioning into this role. ISO 27001:2013 Lead Auditor certification helped to get the fundamentals in place during the start of this journey.

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?

Vipin: Stakes and environment is completely different now, to start with the management training courses from leading institutions like IIMs, MDIs and NMon, availability of forums and groups to seek guidance (must mention the fantastic work being done by Forces Network under your leadership).



Coursemates and families at a get-together

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

Vipin: In today's fast changing world it is important to continuously upgrade yourself, one might decide to grow vertically or horizontally in an organization (each has its own unique benefits), however the need to upgrade, upskill and be aware of the changes in the way business is conducted is extremely important. One lesson that stayed with me is the one taught at the firing range, the difference between Sight Alignment and Sight Picture. And the corollary that I draw from that lesson is that once you have set your eyes on the end state/ target/ objective, then focus on the effort that you put to get to that end state. This has kept me in good stead always.

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?

Vipin: That's a difficult question! I believe that each one of us has a different journey and a varied level of clarity on our passions. Also, there is another fact that we are passionate about what we are good at. Having said that, some of us would go for a highly rewarding career which would be taxing on our bandwidth and some of us would choose something that would be light and easy with time for our other preferences. Whichever the case, having clarity on the passion or preference would always help align the inputs that we put in and the results that we expect better.



The Naughty Four 😊

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?

Vipin: I strongly believe that the traits we pick up in the Army are extremely valuable. Idea is to follow them ourselves and not expect the civilians around us to replicate. While there would be few who would get inspired and adopt a few traits, I see no point of forcing a colleague to change.

IQ: What message would you like to give to transitioning military officers who wish to make a career in the technology industry in cyber security roles?

Vipin: My message would be to believe in the work that we do in the forces and prepare for the second career while you are still in service. Cybersecurity is a great career option and being from the forces gives us an inherent advantage in our approach and logic we bring to the table. Prepare well and go all out.



Diwali with family

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?

Vipin: I was the second born in a Rajput family from Jammu. My parents have always done the best for us. As both my parents were working, we got exposure of being independent from an early age. Lessons of life were taught to us beautifully by engaging us in all important discussions related to the family, openly sharing the household budget and the planning, giving us exposure on small activities like getting the monthly grocery, everyday fresh, importance of dressing neatly, taking care of our possessions and most of all accepting any situation with an open mindset and making our own decisions objectively.

I got married in 2001, my spouse has been the pillar of my strength during the transition. She believed in my abilities more than me and that is something which has kept me going, come what may. Her zest towards life and compassion towards people is an inspiration for me to follow.



With My Family



Iqbal Singh is a former infantry officer who started his career with The Garhwal Rifles in Dec 1987. He took premature retirement from the Indian Army in 2008 as a Lt Col to pursue a career in the corporate in the technology industry. He is currently working in a senior role with a Big Tech company based at Gurgaon. Iqbal is also the Founder of Forces Network – the Network of the military veterans in the corporate.

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ForceNetPreneur

In this series, we plan to showcase a few entrepreneurs who are members of the Forces Network and have achieved a reasonable degree of success in their business ventures. The aim being to celebrate their success as well as learn from them with a view to motivating more members of our community to take up entrepreneurship as a full-time vocation. Finally, we do need job creators in greater numbers than job seekers.

IN INTERACTION WITH IQBAL SINGH

Major Satnam Singh (Retd), is a former Short Service (SS37) officer turned entrepreneur. Major Singh's journey began in the tourism industry, where he founded a successful TRAVEL BUSINESS (TORNA LEISURES PVT LTD & TRAVEL BRACE). Leveraging his military expertise, he later expanded into the security sector with S3 Securitas, providing top-tier security services. Additionally, his initiative, SanitOIndia, specializes in prefab infrastructure and Adventure Parks Solutions reflecting his commitment to innovation and excellence across diverse sectors.



IQ: Tell us something about your background prior to joining the Armed Forces, and your subsequent Forces career?

Satnam: I graduated from DELHI UNIVERSITY, DAYAL SINGH COLLEGE, B.Com in 1983 and same year joined OTA SS 37. Top 5 Learning from the army forces career

1. Discipline,
2. Loyal to Profession,
3. Care of the men who work for you,
4. Integrity to the Organisation and colleagues,
5. Stress and Crisis Management.



MEMORIES OF LIFE IN ARMY: OP PAWAN (SRI LANKA)

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

Satnam: After a decade of dedicated service in the Indian armed forces, I made the weighty decision to leave. While my time in the military was fulfilling, offering challenges, camaraderie, and a profound sense of duty, I felt compelled to explore new horizons. My deep-rooted passion for outdoors drove me to seek greater adventures beyond military life. Additionally, I saw an opportunity in the travel world as the most liquid and fast expanding industry to leverage my skills and perspective gained from the military. Ultimately, my departure from the uniformed service was fueled by a desire to follow my passions, pursue new opportunities, and chart my own course in life.

IQ: If I have to ask you about that moment when your heart said that it is time and I want to start my own venture, Please give us details about it?

Satnam: In joining the Army, I sought not only discipline and organization but also a sense of the allure and honor that comes with wearing the uniform. During my military journey, I was fortunate to experience the adventures and challenges I had long yearned for, including participating in Adventure courses and Mountaineering expeditions. These experiences, particularly the five Army Mountaineering Expeditions, laid the groundwork for my future endeavors. However, it was during my deployment in Sri Lanka from October 1987 to March 1990, under Operation Pawan, that I truly gained exposure to overseas active military operations. It was a moment of both survival and loss when my tank encountered an IED blast during a mission in Jaffna, resulting in the tragic loss of my driver.



MEMORIES OF LIFE IN ARMY: OP PAWAN (SRILANKA)

IQ: Please tell us about your entrepreneurial venture? What was the vision behind starting your venture, and thereafter expanding it?

Satnam: TORNA EXPEDITIONS TOURS N TRAVELS, was initiated with the meagre funds I received from my time in the Army back in September 1993, amounted to less than Rs.2 Lakhs. However, that amount seemed to evaporate within a few short weeks. Thus began a lengthy and unpredictable journey in the business world, resembling the ups and downs of a game of Snake and Ladder, with its share of both profits and losses.

IQ: What were the challenges faced in this entrepreneurial journey? And, how did you overcome those challenges?

Satnam: Navigating through the complexities of entrepreneurship has been both enlightening and demanding.

One of the significant challenges I encountered was in managing public dealings and establishing trust while assessing employees and business partners. It required honing commercial skills to comprehend various business streams such as HR, Banking, Sales & Marketing, Operations, and cultivating a network based on trust and results-oriented relationships at a global level.

Moreover, I grappled with the task of aligning my products and services to meet global standards, a feat that demanded meticulous attention to detail and adaptability.

Financial stress due to mismatches between receipts and payments, coupled with intense market competition and attrition of trained employees, posed additional hurdles. Managing these challenges was no easy feat, and required enduring the hardships until solutions were found.

As human beings, we each respond differently to circumstances, and my training and service in the Army equipped me with invaluable lessons in resilience and perseverance. Drawing from this experience, I learned to confront challenges head-on and persist until they were overcome.

In essence, overcoming the challenges of entrepreneurship is a continual process of growth and learning, marked by resilience, adaptability, and a steadfast commitment to success. **But it is a vicious circle.**



IQ: Would you like to share the details of your venture, services offered and your strategy behind growing your company forward?

Satnam: We operate across various segments, including domestic travel within India, inbound tourism catering to visitors from abroad, and outbound services for Indian travelers exploring international destinations. Our adventure tourism offerings cover a spectrum of thrilling experiences such as mountaineering, Himalayan hikes, biking expeditions, adventure park solutions, road trips, and cruise



holidays. Additionally, we specialize in organizing Royal Indian Weddings and educational voyages - trips to renowned institutions like NASA, ISRO, and the European Space Agency. Our services extend beyond adventure tourism to encompass essential travel-related assistance such as booking flights, accommodations, transportation arrangements, visa, forex and travel insurance.

IQ: How do you plan to tackle the challenges thrown at you in this VUCA world?

Satnam: COVID-19 has truly exemplified the VUCA nature of the tourism and hospitality sector, bringing Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity to the forefront. In response, we're focusing on diversification and building reserves to weather any future contingencies. At the heart of our approach is nurturing alternative sources of income, especially for small businesses.



A GROUP OF US JUDICIAL OFFICIALS ON THEIR TRIP TO INDIA

Within the tourism sector, we're witnessing a notable shift towards Nature Tourism, Road Drives or Driving Holidays, and Wellness and Multi-Activity Resorts. Embracing this trend, we've embarked on a new venture: SanitoIndia – providing Innovative Living Solutions. Discover a world of contemporary and sustainable living where comfort meets creativity and **Adventure Parks Solutions**. Through this initiative, we offer consultancy services encompassing Concept, Design, Development, and Operations of adventure park facilities with Prefab Construction Technologies: **Glamping, Prontohomes, Luxury Villas**.

One such endeavor is unfolding in Uttarakhand – **Lansdown, as AVENUE 7 Resorts**. This project aims to blend high-end thrilling adventure experiences with amusement activities tailored to cater to students, corporates, and families alike. The first phase of this exciting venture is slated to commence by October 2024.

We also ventured into Security Services and launched **S3 Securitas** - with a holistic approach to security that goes beyond traditional measures. We seamlessly integrate state-of-the-art technologies, cutting-edge systems, and expert personnel to create a comprehensive security ecosystem.

In the wake of the pandemic, we underwent a transformative reorganization of our travel business, emerging anew as **Travel Brace: Your Ultimate Travel Companion**. Alongside this, we also established **Torna Leisures Pvt Ltd**, specializing in catering to the vibrant world of Inbound Tourism, encompassing destinations spanning India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.



NDA PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION TRIP TO Australia & Newzealand in Jan-Feb 2024

IQ: How have you found your entrepreneurial journey so far? Could you please share the Moments of Happiness and those moments when it was really demanding and you dug deep and faced the situation?

Satnam: Reflecting on the path I've traveled for the last 30 years, it's been akin to a game of snakes and ladders, filled with moments of joy and challenges that have tested my resolve.

The moments of happiness have been fulfilling, especially when our projects, products, and services were embraced and cherished by our customers, both domestically and internationally. Some notable highlights include facilitating charter flights between Birmingham and Amritsar for overseas agents, orchestrating a lavish Royal Indian Wedding for NRIs in enchanting locales like Goa and Udaipur, and organizing an unforgettable student group trip to NASA from Saudi Arabia and Nepal. These instances stand out as milestones where our efforts were appreciated and brought smiles to many faces.

However, amidst these highs, there have also been moments of adversity that demanded resilience and fortitude. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges, disrupting operations and testing our ability to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. Additionally, there were instances where we experienced financial setbacks due to mismatches in vision with business associates, as well as the loss of trained employees, which impacted our operations and morale.



Satnam Singh, Jaipreet Kaur (Wife) Ramnik Kaur (Daughter)

Despite the ups and downs, each challenge has served as a learning opportunity, shaping our growth and strengthening our resolve to overcome obstacles. As we navigate through the uncertainties of entrepreneurship, we remain committed to embracing both the triumphs and tribulations that come our way, with unwavering determination and optimism for the journey ahead.

“SWEETEST IS THE KISS, I HAVE YET TO TASTE”

IQ: What are your future plans going forward?

Satnam: Just Keep going and growing together with family, friends and associates.

IQ: Do you have any other hobbies or interests, which you pursue passionately?

Satnam: Travelling and exploring with all modes of transportations: Biking & Hiking.



A motor bike expedition by IPKF VETERANS to North East – Kibithu (23 days via Nepal)

IQ: So, what advice would you like to give to the fellow ForceNet members who want to take up entrepreneurship?

Satnam: Follow your passion and don't give up. While boxing is considered a great test for OLQ in the academy, remember that challenges will arise. People may deceive, humiliate, and disappoint you. Be prepared for setbacks in both business and your profession, but always prioritize your mental & physical well-being and family.

- Carry disappointments in pocket
- learn to say NO and TURN BACK.
- EVERY TRANSACTION GIVES A FRESH LEASE TO BUSINESS.
- AVOID RELATIVES IN BUSINESS.



Lt Col Iqbal Singh (retd) is an infantry officer who started his career with the Garhwal Rifles in Dec 1987. He is currently a senior technology executive with a Big Tech firm based at Gurgaon. He is firmly of the belief that tech is an enabler and your friend. He is the Founder of **Forces Network** – the Network of the military veterans in the corporate. His message to comrades-in-arms has been do NOT be afraid of tech but embrace it. In line with thinking he relishes breaking stereotypes, crashing glass ceilings and doing the seemingly impossible. He believes that there are no barriers: all the barriers exist only in one's mind. It was with that firm conviction that Iqbal started the now famous **ABCT** (Any Body Can Tech) Program in Forces Network in 2019. Under this program non-tech officers were taken to cloud certification level. Over 40 participants got certified from Microsoft in cloud computing under this program. This launched the tech careers of many of such participants. Iqbal believes that cyber security as a career is set to boom. He is convinced that military personnel can easily transition to cyber security with some upskilling. Accordingly he has authored a series of articles demystifying cyber security. The current article is the sixth article to appear in the ForceNet E-Zine as part of the series.

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muscles by overcoming
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Women Power

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

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY K SHRIWAS

Mrs Devika Sanjay Ghule born and brought up in Latur. Since childhood she was exposed to social issues and developing solutions for them. Her father was a sarpanch and mother a social worker. After her graduation, she started helping her mother in her project for making widows and poor women financially stable through vocational training. After getting married in 2005, she left Latur and lived in various places in India due to her husband's postings. During those days, she was actively involved in AWWA activities to support other army wives in welfare. She is now settled in Pune. She manages to run an old age home and a primary school in tribal area near Nashik.



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

Devika: I am born and brought up in Latur. My Father was Sarpanch and Mother was a Social worker. In our house boys and girls are always treated equally. I have been helping my mother in her social work since my graduation.

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

Devika: I am heading Devika Mahila Mandal. We provide free training to women to become independent earner in Latur. The training includes stitching, spices making and montessori teaching. We also provide shelter free accommodation and food for underprivileged women and senior citizens in Pune. We provide primary education to tribal kids in Nashik.

Uday: What is your vision behind starting your NGO?

Devika: Founded in 1992, Devika Mahila Mandal, which literally means Devika Women's Association in Marathi language, has been dedicatedly working towards empowering women through vocational training and guiding them to become financially independent. It all started with simple yet powerful vision of my mother. She believed that women must figure out solutions to their problems on their own. This led her to build a support system for women, from economically weak sections, who were seeking solutions to their life problems.

Women play central and crucial role in family. Empowering women is never limited to just one person in the family. Improvement in woman's life affects health, welfare, financial situation, and self-esteem of family members in a very positive way. From earlier days, Mrs. Meena Suravanshi understood this fact deeply and started addressing all issues related to women's welfare. Since then, Devika Mahila Mandal has evolved into an organization which is empowering women and their families from unreached and undeserved poor households through: Vocational skill development Providing accommodation to separated, widowed divorced women Counselling them in health and family welfare Educating them about human rights Assisting them with legal issues Educating them and their children Developing self-help groups for financial services Supporting them to become financially independent Running old age homes for elderly women and couples

Uday: When and how did the spark of this passion ignite?

Devika: Since childhood I grew up watching my mother helping community. I used to accompany her during her visits. During one visit in 2014, I was so touched by witnessing the issues women were facing. In every women I saw their hope and earnest request for help from me. They were holding my hands and asking me to do something to make their life better. This incident touched me and inspired me to do something for these women. I did not know how then but slowly I found a way with my determination.



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

Devika: Initially I faced challenges in supporting people in need. We were able to provide shelter but daily operations and fulfilling needs of people was challenging. I reached out to community, family and friends. Thanks to support of people I was able to overcome the challenge. At every stage, we face different challenges - from taking care of old people and kids, finding the right team in our mission, getting financial support. We keep on working every challenge by trying to be resourceful and seek help from the community. For example - our school kids had difficulty in getting the academic books. We did not have enough funds. So we requested community to offer used books of their children. This has helped us to support our school.

Uday: Has your engagement in your NGO work impacted your married life, especially with frequent postings of your husband? What support and contribution of your husband has been there in this work of yours?

Devika: Our NGO work affected little when we were having postings in different cities as my mother was taking care of NGO. Even during army posting I have supported other army wives in Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA). I have helped more than 150 women during these times. Since, becoming army wife, I have improved my social and communication skills. This has helped me to become a better person. My husband has inspired me for the social work and always encouraged me to do great work. My in laws too supported me mentally and emotionally when my husband had field postings. I feel very fortunate to have such supportive family. I am also very grateful to my two sons who understand my mission and give me space to focus on NGO work.



Uday: What is your team like, and how did you build it? What are your products and services?

Devika: I believe in good karma. Do good and other will do good to you. While building team, I used one strategy which has helped me a lot and has been my guiding light. Whenever I need help in particular area or location, I look for social workers in there. After few interactions, it help me to understand whether our values and vision match. Whenever I feel synergies, I ask them for other people who can help us in our mission. This has helped us to build a great supportive team who contribute in all our projects.

Uday: Are you restricted to only the State of Maharashtra or are you venturing into other States as well?

Devika: For now we are focused on the State of Maharashtra. However, during my husband's field postings I have development my network in other states. If we see an opportunity and support network in other states, we will expand. We are aiming to work in cities like Latur, Renapur, Ausa, Pune, and Nashik. We have started focusing more on tribal areas.

Uday: How did you go about expanding your reach?

Devika: Currently, we have very limited budget for marketing. So we rely on word of mouth and network of community members. We also reach out to different companies through our network for CSR initiative support. We also offer volunteer positions to college students from India and abroad.



Uday: Where do you operate from, what is your reach, and how do you tackle the logistic challenges usually associated with this community work?

Devika: I work primarily from Pune. Our reach is currently in three districts - Pune, Latur, and Nashik. We have appointed leaders in each area who coordinate all the operations. I visit these areas periodically.

Uday: Any other organisational challenges have you faced so far, on the way to establishing yourself?

Devika: When we started tribal school in Nashik. It was very challenging to establish trust and rapport with their parents. They were not ready to send their kids to school. They felt that schooling is useless. Their children are better off with them working. It was very difficult to convince them.

Uday: And, how did you overcome these challenges?

Devika: I visited every home in the tribal area with our team and local social worker. Having local social worker with us provided some credibility. It helped parents to trust us and listen to us. We understood them and discussed with them the values of education. How educating their kids is the investment for family's better future. Slowly they accepted us and started sending their kids to school. We started with 5 students under a tree and now we 180 students in three classrooms



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

Devika: I have experienced that when you do such work you get good as well as bad people. People who were good and helped me are still with me and contributing to our mission. All the bad experiences taught me lessons. I have learned that you need to keep on moving towards your goal. We face all kinds of issues and problems. If we keep having faith and do hard work, we eventually get through the difficult times.

Uday: What are your future plans?

Devika: Train more women to become independent earners and build more shelters for old age people who are rejected by their families. We realized that tribal areas are facing very difficult situation even in these times. They do not have basic infrastructure such as school and hospital. We want to develop school and hospitals in these areas.

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

Devika: Wherever you are, start exploring issues in the underdeveloped areas. Choose your mission. Engage with local social workers. They will guide you to right people and support you through difficult times. I will be available to guide anyone who is willing work for improving the community.



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

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Knowledge Bytes

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM:

BY DHIRAJ BHIMWAL

(This is going to be a Four article series, starting Feb 2024.

This is the third part of the Article in the series by the Author)

"THE ENDURING INFLUENCE OF OUR CHILDHOOD SCHOOL ON PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ODYSSEY"

In the symphony of our lives, one enduring melody plays softly in the background, resonating with the laughter, friendships, and invaluable lessons learned within the hallowed halls of our childhood school. It is not just a physical space; it is a repository of memories that transcend time, shaping the contours of our personal and professional journeys. As we navigate the complexities of adulthood, the impact of our formative years becomes increasingly evident, and our childhood school emerges as a pivotal force in the tapestry of our existence.

"Embarking on the rollercoaster of adulthood, we often realize that our childhood school experiences were the crash course we never knew we signed up for - a curriculum in resilience, a masterclass in creativity, and a survival guide to navigating the treacherous terrain of life's quizzes. Forget algebra or trigonometry; it turns out the real



equations we learned in school were human relations or behaviour, which is still helping us even today. Little did we know that those early years of dodging strict teachers and perfecting the art of passing notes were shaping us into the uniquely skilled individuals we are today, armed with the wisdom that sometimes the best answers come from the back of the class." In the grand narrative of our lives, few institutions wield as much influence as our educational journey, particularly the formative years spent within the walls of school. It is where we first learn to wield a pencil with authority, to decode the mysteries of multiplication tables, and to navigate the labyrinth of friendships and social dynamics.

Dear readers, in our journey together, this article is the third in the series of articles. (In the first article **"Pehla Hamesha Pehla"**, published in Feb 2024 issue we spoke about the unique place the first of each life experience holds for us and in the second article **"Hometown Is Where the Heart Is"** featured in Mar 2024 issue we delved into the reasons behind the universal sentiment of love and nostalgia for one's hometown, examining the emotional ties that bind individuals to the landscapes of their formative years.

At this stage of life whether as a serving uniformed personal or a veteran you will agree with me that every parent desires the best education for their children because they understand that it lays the foundation for their future success and happiness. They recognize that a quality education opens doors to opportunities and equips their children with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate an increasingly complex world. Parents often go beyond their means to ensure this by sacrificing their own comforts, working extra hours, or investing in expensive educational resources. Their dedication stems from a deep-seated belief in the transformative power of education and a fierce commitment to providing their children with the best possible start in life. After all, for parents, the investment in their children's education is an investment in their future and today once we see things from a perspective of a parent our respect for our own parents increases manifold.



We as defence personnel, dedicated to serving the nation, often face the daunting task of relocating to different places on postings across the country. With such frequent transitions, one pressing concern for many officers and their families is the quality of education available for their children in the new location. First thing we enquire about new place of posting is availability of educational institutions. The defence services have a robust system to support the educational needs of children, including Kendriya Vidyalayas (Central Schools) and Army Public Schools. However, the availability and standard of these institutions vary from one posting to another, leading to apprehension among many of us about the educational opportunities awaiting their children in the next location. Some parents deliberately ask for field postings just to ensure continuity of education for their wards at a particular station.

Yet, beyond the mere imparting of facts and figures, school education serves as the cornerstone of our development, shaping not just our intellect, but our character, aspirations, and ultimately, our place in the world. In this article, we delve into the profound importance of school education and the enduring impact it has on our lives, illuminating the multifaceted roles it plays in shaping the individuals we become. The same can be as under: -Top of Form

The Foundation of Learning and Growth:

Our childhood school is more than a mere institution; it is a crucible where curiosity is kindled, and the foundations of knowledge are laid. The teachers who guided us, the classmates who shared our triumphs and tribulations, and the academic challenges we faced collectively contribute to our intellectual



DNA. The discipline, work ethic, and inquisitiveness instilled within those walls become the bedrock of our approach to learning, influencing our personal and professional growth.

Life's First Lessons in Social Dynamics:

Within the microcosm of our childhood school, we experienced the delicate dance of social dynamics. The friendships formed and the conflicts navigated were our initial forays into the intricate art of human relationships. These early interactions laid the groundwork for our interpersonal skills, shaping the way we collaborate, communicate, and build connections in our personal and professional lives.



Cultural and Social Exposure: Schools are vibrant ecosystems where cultural diversity and social exposure flourish. From shared celebrations of festivals to group projects that demanded cooperation, our childhood school introduced us to a mosaic of perspectives and backgrounds. This exposure becomes a cornerstone of our ability to navigate diverse professional environments, fostering adaptability and an appreciation for the richness of different perspectives.

Leadership and Teamwork: Whether through participating in sports, student government, or group projects, our childhood school provided a fertile ground for the development of leadership and teamwork skills. The ability to lead, inspire, and collaborate with others is not only a fundamental aspect of personal growth but is also a crucial factor in professional success.



The lessons learned about teamwork and leadership in our youth continue to echo in our professional endeavours.

Nurturing Creativity and Critical Thinking: Beyond textbooks and exams, our childhood school nurtured creativity and critical thinking. From art projects to science experiments, we were encouraged to explore, question, and think outside the box. These skills, honed in the classrooms of our youth, are invaluable assets in the professional realm, where innovation and problem-solving often define success.

Emotional Resilience and Coping Mechanisms: Adolescence is a time of emotional turbulence, and our childhood school served as a testing ground for resilience and coping mechanisms. From facing the fear of failure to navigating social challenges, the emotional roller coaster of school life prepared us for the unpredictable twists and turns of adulthood. The emotional intelligence cultivated during those years equips us with the ability to navigate professional challenges with grace and composure.



Sense of Belonging and Identity: Our childhood school is not just a physical space; it is a cocoon that shapes our sense of belonging and identity. The school uniform, the alma mater song, and the shared traditions create a sense of continuity and belonging that transcends time. This sense of identity becomes a touchstone in our personal and professional lives, grounding us in moments of uncertainty and reminding us of the resilient individuals we became within those familiar walls. Ask any alumni from Sainik School, Rashtriya Military School or that matter any educational institute, a mere mention of the name takes us back to yesteryears and we still proudly flaunt the name of respective institute and take pride in being part of it.

Professional Networks and Lifelong Connections: The relationships forged in our childhood school often extend far beyond the classroom. Alumni networks and lifelong friendships formed during those impressionable years become an invaluable asset in our professional journey. Whether seeking mentorship, job opportunities, or collaborative ventures, the network of individuals connected by a shared educational history serves as a bridge between our past and present, influencing our professional trajectory.

The Everlasting Impact: In essence, our childhood school is a compass that guides us through the labyrinth of life. Its influence extends far beyond the academic realm, shaping our character, influencing our choices, and defining our professional paths. As we reminisce about the days of backpacks and recess bells, let us recognize the profound impact our childhood school has had on the canvas of our lives. It is a tribute to the enduring power of education, friendship, and the indomitable spirit that emerges from the crucible of youthful dreams. So, let us celebrate the memories of our childhood school, for in doing so, we acknowledge the timeless influence that continues to shape our personal and professional odyssey.



LT COL DHIRAJ BHIMWAL is a serving Army officer, commissioned from Officers Training Academy Chennai in Regt of Artillery in Mar 1999. Having served the nation in various sectors and roles the officer is presently on study leave pursuing a Master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication from Pune University.

PHOTO SOURCE: GOOGLE OPEN SOURCE

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Faith and perseverance is the
key to overcoming obstacles.

LORNA JACKIE WILSON

CAREER COUNSELING AND MENTORING

HOW YOUR CHILD BENEFITS

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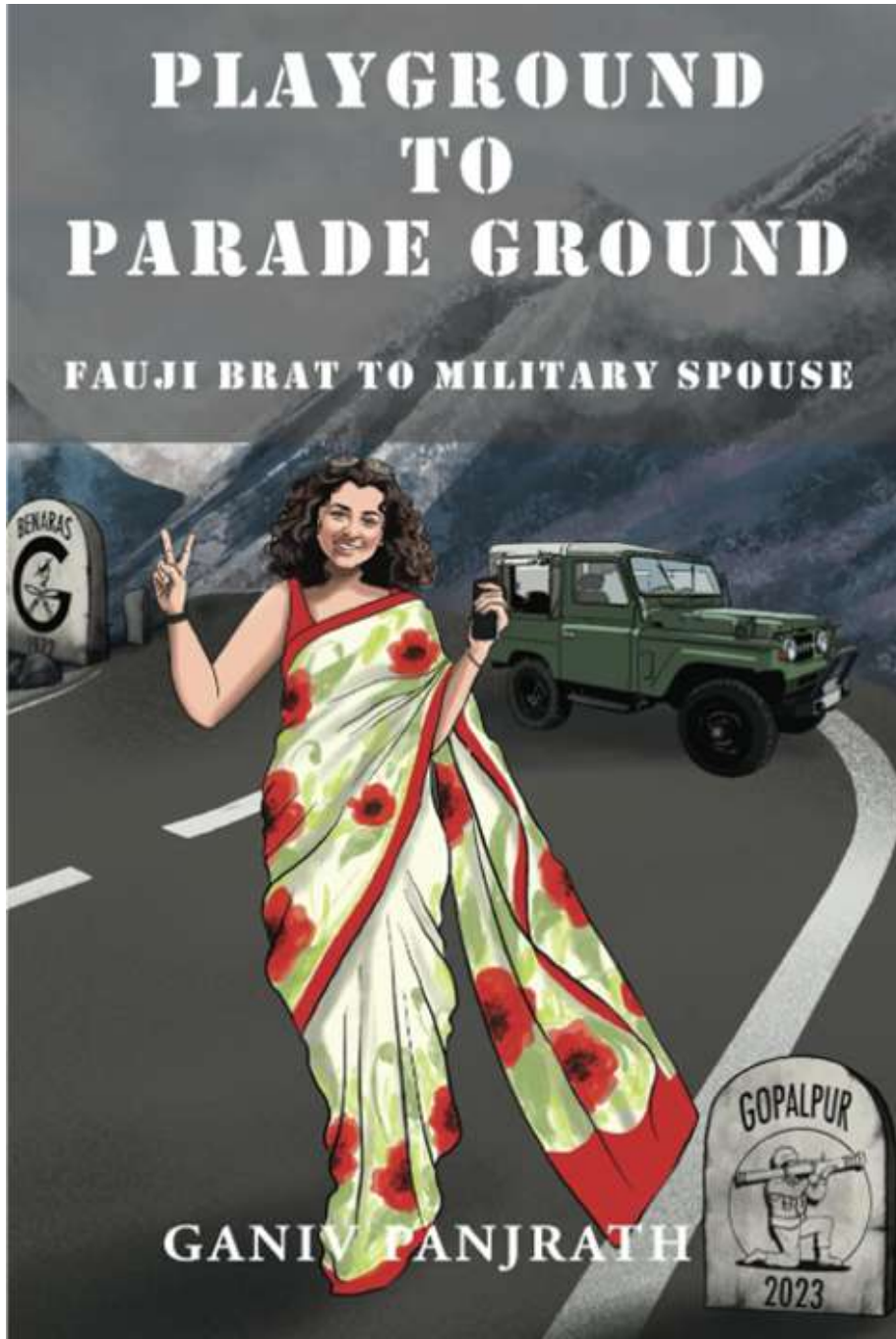
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Book Review

PLAY GROUND TO PARADE GROUND: FAUJI BRAT TO MILITARY SPOUSE

BY GANIV CHADHA PANJRATH



About the Author

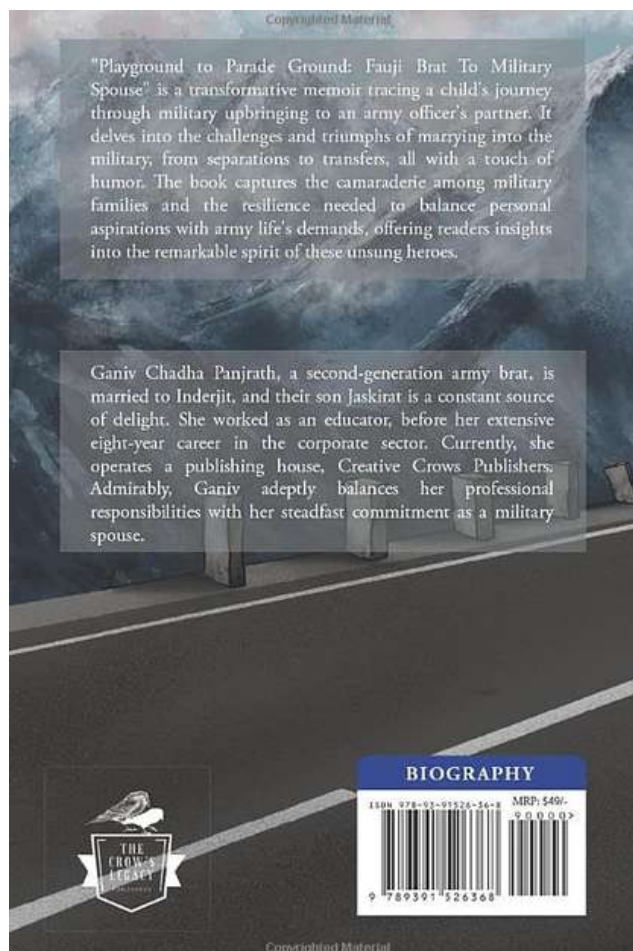
Mrs Ganiv Panjrath daughter of Late Col (Retd) Mahip Chadha is married to an officer in the Armed Forces she has been a hands-on mother and has carved out a career for herself as an Educator and later as a Marketing professional at several organisations including Fab India.

I received this 260 page book from Amazon and I read it in two sittings..... Unputdownable it was as I was eager to learn more and more about this fauji spouse and her adventures.

Ganiv has narrated her life incidents in a fluid simple style that captures your rapt attention. It just transports you back to your fauji days, your own life and the twists and turns in your own unit, courses, postings, wedding, travels, kids, friends, course mates, field postings and what not. Each chapter reflects our own fauji life, and so it rings a bell every time you go through the various anecdotes and is all so very relatable.

- If you want to relive your childhood in the 80s and teenage in 90s, this book is for you.
- If you are a Fauji kid, this book is for you.
- If you are / were a serving officer or his/ her spouse, this book is for you.
- If you are planning a career in Armed Forces, this book is for you.
- If you are newlywed into Armed Forces, then this book is a must for you.

It has lots of memories..... of Trials and Tribulations, simple joys and palpable fears, loads of travels, of yesteryears about Cantt life, Fauji life, Officers Mess life, Unit Life all beautifully interwoven and brought to life in this simple wonderful story that spans nearly half a century from Vespas to Lambrettas, Chetaks to Kawasaki and now Creta's and Hectors.



The book also gives us a message as to how we can make the best of what we have. It is not the resources that count but how resourceful we are and how we can face each unsurmountable task if we look at it from a positive resourceful state. From a girl who knew no cooking to one who was training her chefs, from just a graduate to educator to living her best in the corporate to being a publisher, Ganiv has donned many hats while being a fauji daughter, granddaughter, a fauji bride, wife, mother, friend and now a senior serving officers wife. It teaches us about the importance of relations, friends, and parents in our life and how beautiful all of them enrich us in so many ways.

Extremely well written, light-hearted, fun filled, memory rekindling, this is a must read book for all. My role in their life figures somewhere in page 66. Laughing at that even now.

A must read for everyone. I am sure all faujis and their families will love this one esp this fraternity at Forces Network. You can order at Amazon here: <https://www.amazon.in/Playground-Parade-Ground-Military-Spouse/dp/9391526365/>



Col Sajjan is an experienced International Trainer, Consultant, and a certified Career Coach. Currently he is a Principal Consultant at Renergetics Consulting.

Commissioned into the Corps of Army Air Defence in 1991, he is an alumnus of NDA, DSSC, and Army AD College. After a remarkable career of 22 years he stepped out to the world outside. He has been regularly guiding students and officers transitioning out, through Psychometric Assessments based Career Counseling. He also writes a popular blog www.sajanspeaks.com

You can catch Sajjan at www.renergetics.com/careercounselling or <https://in.linkedin.com/in/sajanmoideen>

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

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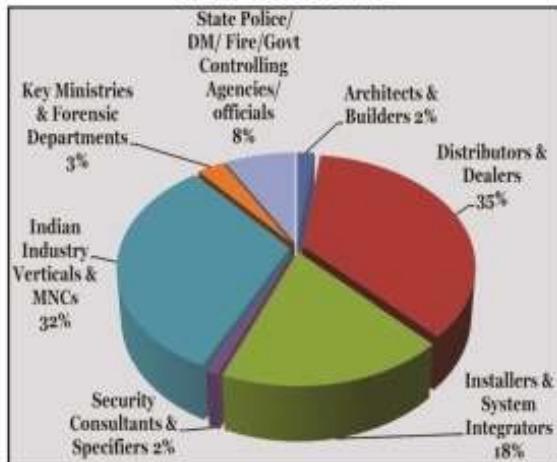
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Leisure

A Tribute: To my Daughter's Holi Biryani

Ah, what tales this tongue could tell! It's waltzed across continents, savoured delights from fiery Thai curries to melt-in-your-mouth French macaroons. Yet, most dishes are fleeting whispers in a crowded marketplace, forgotten as quickly as they're devoured. But then there are the illuminations, the ones that explode like a supernova on your taste buds and leave you yearning for an encore. These, my friends, are the chosen few, the meals that etch themselves onto your soul, becoming cherished chapters in your life's culinary autobiography.

Today, on this vibrant Holi, destiny (& a daughter with a talent for the culinary arts) presented me with a dish worthy of a Mughal emperor. Tamanna, bless her innovative spirit, decided to grace us with her signature **Chicken Biryani**. Now, I've been a pilgrim on the biryani trail, from the legendary kitchens of Lucknow to the aromatic streets of Hyderabad. **But this, this** was an experience orchestrated by the celestial chefs themselves.



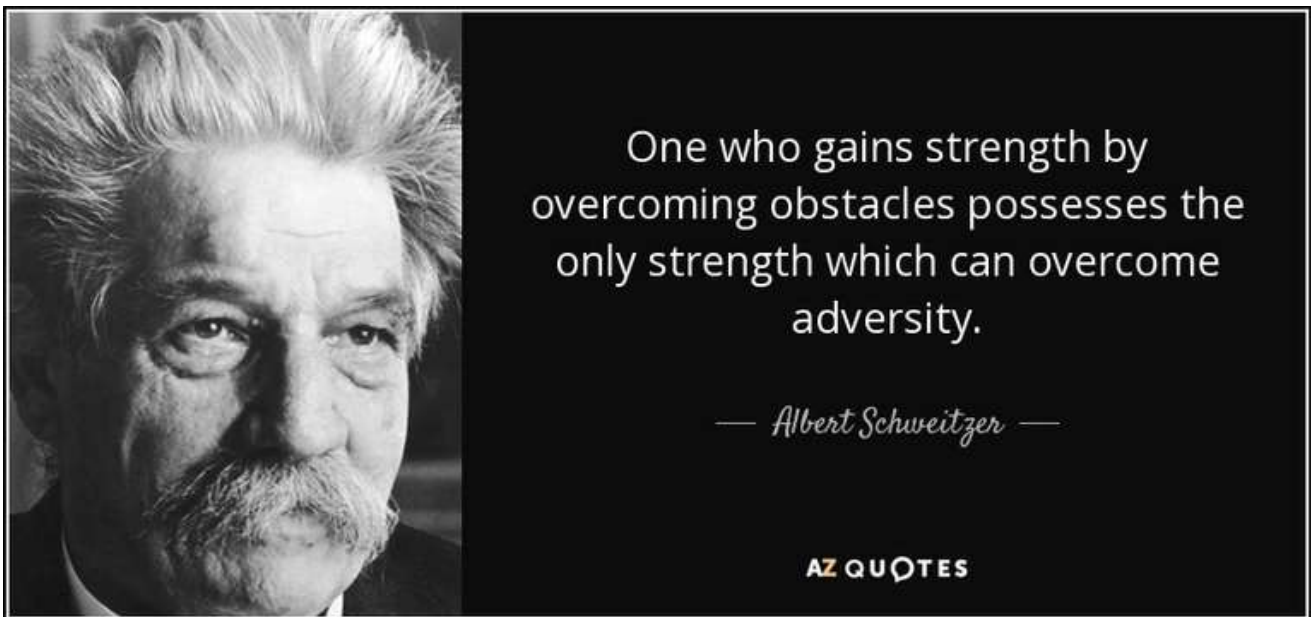
The first whiff was a spiritual awakening – a warm embrace of spices that kissed the soul, the regal touch of saffron that whispered of royalty & the earthy murmur of rice simmered with saintly patience. Each morsel that followed was a fiesta on the tongue. The chicken, as tender as a marigold petal yielding to the morning dew, released a symphony of flavours that spoke of a secret recipe, a melody passed down thru generations. The rice, each perfectly cooked grain a canvas for the explosion of flavours – fragrant, ever-so-slightly al dente, an invitation for another blissful mouthful.

Ah, **The Raita! The Kachumber**, or the trinity of Pyaaz-Tamatar-Kheera in fresh curd, a cool & refreshing counterpoint to the biryani's warmth. A tangy, creamy dance on the palate, a much-needed sitar interlude before diving back into the spicy depths of the biryani. It was pure nirvana, a culinary pilgrimage that left me wanting to genuflect at the altar of Tamanna's talent.

By the time the last morsel was savoured, a contented sigh escaped my lips. This, my friends, is what food aspires to be – an experience that transcends mere sustenance. It's a celebration of life, of family & of the incredible legacy passed down thru loving hands. It's a testament to the vibrancy of Indian flavours, a love letter to the art of cooking & a reminder that some meals leave an indelible mark on your memory, a permanent resident in your own personal Holi of flavours.

So, here's to my darling daughter **Tamanna**, the culinary maestro who turned Holi into a full-blown food festival! Here's to the ever-evolving mélange of Indian cuisine & here's to the fickle feast of memory, where only a select few dishes ascend to legendary status. May our encounters with such culinary creations continue to be as colourful and life-affirming as this spectacular **ChickenBiryani by Tamanna!!!**

Commander V Srivatsan
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Book Review

Amongst the Believers

BY KOCHERY C SHIBU

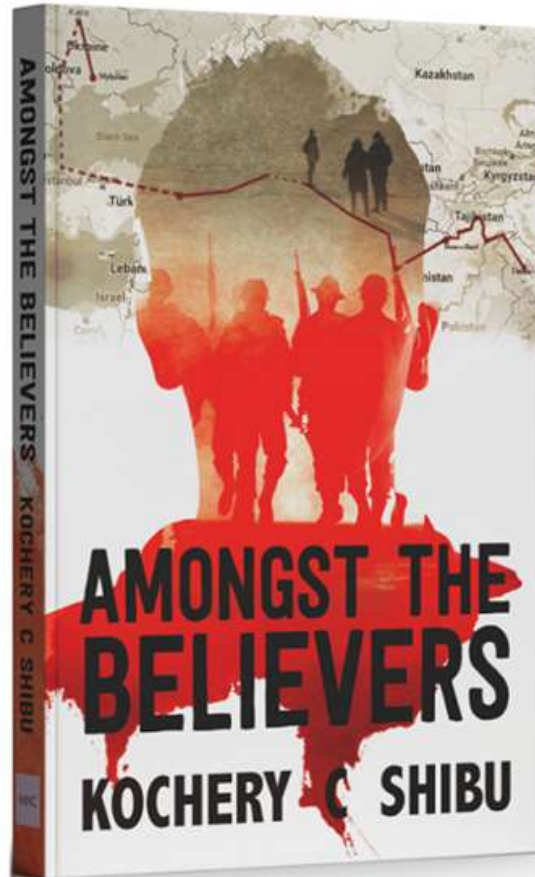


About the Author

KOCHERY C SHIBU, the bestselling and award-winning author of 'Men and Dreams in the Dhauladhar, and 'Faith and the Beloved', is a graduate of the prestigious National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla. He has served in the Indian Navy and commanded two warships.

Post his retirement, he has executed hydro-electric projects in the Cauvery River basin in Karnataka, Beas River basin in Himachal and Teesta River basin in Sikkim. He holds a postgraduate degree in Defence Studies from Chennai University, and an MA English Literature from Pune University.

Shibu has changed tack from the snow-clad mountains to the blue oceans, and has been associated with the setting up of a shipping company in India. 'Amongst the Believers', a suspense thriller, is his third book. A passionate and committed writer, Shibu creates a magical world of fiction built around a well-researched background. Kochery C Shibu was born in Kochi, Kangarapady and now lives in Bangalore with his wife and daughter.



THE SUSPENSE THRILLER NOVEL IS A SAGA OF LOVE, SET IN THE BACK DROP OF WAR-TORN AFGHANISTAN AND UKRAINE. THIS IS THE THIRD BOOK BY KOCHERY C SHIBU

New Delhi, India, 4 March - Amongst the Believers, another master piece from the Best-selling and Award -winning author of "Men and Dreams in the Dhauladhar" and "Faith and the Beloved."

The novel is a saga of love, set in the back drop of war-torn Afghanistan and Ukraine. Nanda is an accused in a murder case and the lives of his dear ones are in danger. He is given an option to join RAW on a mysterious mission, and penetrate the elite society of Pakistan. A choice that forces him to create a family only to destroy it. Khusru is a terrorist who has fallen out with his handlers, the ISI, and is on the run. Caught in the vicious gang wars of Karachi, he is to escort the warlord's daughter Miriam, to Bosnia. A journey that takes him to Iran, Armenia and to the prisons of Russia. Rekha has choreographed her life in the captivity of a terrorist as a dance drama. Even after marriage and two children, her obsession with Khusru knows no bounds.

She is kidnapped and ends up as a sex slave to the teenage terrorists in war-torn Afghanistan. A ruse that lead America to invade Iraq and a mysterious video of an Army officer directing the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks that could change the course of history, is being chased by the ISI, Mossad, CIA, Russians and the RAW. The lives of Nanda, Khusru and Rekha are entangled in this international web of espionage. A journey through the unknown, a saga of love, espionage and suspense that will keep you riveted.



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