Acknowledging Sachin Ghaisas, an Exponent of Empathy

Description

Pragati Leadership has made its mark in developing leaders who can adopt Purpose, People, Planet, and Profit into their organizational philosophy. For us, this formulation reflects a broader-than-business sensibility and an understanding of social and ecological responsibilities. Through the Pragati Leadership Inspiring & Successful Leadership Awards 2022, we seek to establish exemplars of inspirational leadership, to encourage other leaders to embrace the same philosophy.

The jury that identified the award winners comprised established industry leaders like **Tarun Sharma** (Founder, Yodda, Former CEO BMC Software India, Board Member, Global Logic India), **Dr. Shikha Jain** (Director – IMDR), **Vibhas Joshi** (Author, Coach, Facilitator, and Former Board Member, SAS Research & Development, India), and **Dr. Ganesh Natarajan** (Chairman, 5F World, Lighthouse Communities & Honeywell Automation India Ltd.).

Among the IT Industry leaders felicitated this year is Mr. Sachin Ghaisas, chosen "for leading his company, his people, and the community towards a greater future". Thanking Pragati Leadership for the acknowledgment, Mr. Ghaisas said that his leadership perspective drew on his engagement with the Pragati team as well. He added that, since the (COVID-19) pandemic, the definition of a leader, and leadership qualities, have evolved quite a bit towards not just possessing motivational skills in leadership but also retaining the motivating qualities. More importantly, in his view, a workforce torn equally between home and office has forced IT leadership to think of various aspects that they likely have either not thought about or not acted on.

He believes IT industry leaders need to shed their "typical engineering mindset of managing teams and people". As an engineer, he had always assumed that "two plus two should always be four". Over the past few years, however, he has not felt tied together with his colleagues through organizational culture, with many of them working remotely. Especially in the last three years, during which his organization has more than tripled its team size, he had not seen many of his colleagues' faces.

He recollected the time when he used to conduct the final interview when hiring candidates, which contrasts with how he has probably not met most such new hires. He emphasized that, within an organization, cultural bonding is crucial to its success in continuing to perform and deliver for its clients.

Growing beyond being "just a bunch of individuals" working together on a contract, according to him, requires a focus on empathy – on EQ as well as IQ.

He thanked the leadership team at Emtec for ensuring a collective team effort imbued with the spirit of co-creation and keeping leadership from becoming a single person's job. "It all boils down to the fact that you cannot just micromanage people", he mused, adding that "people cannot see somebody in action, take them as a role model, follow, and become a leader by just virtue of spending years with them in the organization or the field". This understanding helped him frame the single most challenging aspect of leadership: *how do we make our teams and our leaders think?*

Again, thinking, for him, needs to come from within – one cannot force somebody to think from all different perspectives and deliver value in whatever they are doing. Knowing this makes having empathy and respect for others more critical, especially in today's times. However, he noted that expectations from clients and business partners have not changed because of the pandemic. On the contrary, they have increased – for instance, Indian teams moving up in the value chain and becoming more critical towards their clients' successes. Given this, making people think, and making them realize that the organization's culture is its differentiator, is a valuable motivational leadership style.

At one point, his organization struggled to see the kind of growth they desired as their internal team could not focus on the necessary aspects. He is glad they decided to partner with somebody, although they were unsure even when assessing probable partners whether someone coming from outside could understand how they delivered value, in terms of the technology and other aspects. He observed that when "you come from a completely different perspective of the people, culture, leadership qualities", things can feel entirely different. While his organization had always appreciated value, they had, in his opinion, never truly realized its need and importance until recent times.

He recalled his first interaction with Pragati Leadership which also involved his entire leadership team when he wondered "do I need this 4-hour workshop?" In hindsight, that workshop helped his team fine-tune their courses of action, figure challenges they are still trying to address in continuing their growth. He realized that operating in a knowledge economy and seeing people as key elements, profitability would follow from taking care of people, who may appreciate help in terms of thinking in the right direction and balancing their different daily stresses at home and work. Today, he concluded, it was all about creating the next level of inspiring leaders who can not only tackle their challenges but also help others tackle their difficulties too.

Sachin Ghaisas is the Managing Partner of Emtec Digital Services and the Head of Emtec's Global Delivery Centers. His business unit is dedicated to providing innovative and end-to-end transformational services to their marquee clients to achieve their business objectives and remain ahead of their competition. He also carries the mandate to increase the Global Delivery footprint across Emtec's entire service portfolio. Before Emtec, Mr. Ghaisas was Director of Services at Saba Software where he led a Professional Services team that supported Saba's consulting practice. His rich global experience spans 25 years in the IT services industry including various delivery management and pre-sales solution architect roles at Accenture.

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