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BE THE CHANGE

Developing business ideas to bring about a meaningful change in society

All of us want to do something meaningful with our lives, don't we? The core of our dreams is to have a career, which makes us passionate and gives us a sense of purpose. For some, it is about imparting education, working with marginalised children, helping differently abled people or working for women's empowerment. I always assumed it is difficult to make two things happen at the same time—social impact and money.

Most of us are puzzled because on one hand we want the security of a decent pay but also want the satisfaction of a job that really gets us going. So, we wonder whether our contribution at the workplace really makes any difference to society. *How can I contribute to make the world a better place?*

A social entrepreneur is someone who is highly driven and committed to impact society; who can sniff out opportunities and pursues them in an innovative and resourceful way, without conventional boundaries and is willing to use business tools. Entrepreneurship lies in behaviour, how innovative and resourceful people are, their willingness to do what it takes to make the impact and their determination to make it happen. This kind of behaviour can happen in many venues and on many levels, on a small or a large scale.

The entrepreneurial attitude is picking up in India at present. One such example is Better Future India, which connects leaders from Europe and India to work together with community leaders of NGOs and real life

projects affecting our society to find sustainable solutions. Working on personal, authentic and entrepreneurial leadership makes the entire process meaningful for participants from both worlds. Of course, this is not done free of charge, thus, being both entrepreneurial in nature and impacting society.

The essence of being a social enterprise is to make profit but not exist only to make profit. It is to sustain the organisation and cover all the costs without having to be dependent on grants or support systems. So, one needs to innovate and come up with ideas to follow a passion but also build a meaningful career.

Another example is one of our partners *Grameen Koota*, which through the model of social entrepreneurship, is reaching more than four lakh villagers through micro credit by creating access to finance. Changing lives at the base of the pyramid is not an easy task and *Grameen Koota* supports villagers in solving problems such as health and education.

As Muhammad Yunus says, "Social entrepreneurship is the future to solve world's problems". I am in complete agreement as the charity mode is not sustainable and it widens the gap between the have and have not's. We need to break the donor-receiver relationship and create the sense of ownership through entrepreneurship. I encourage the minds bubbling with simple but innovative ideas to tackle the social problems, to look at them from an entrepreneurial lens and look at how opportunities can be translated into a business idea.