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NURTURING WEALTH CREATOR SERIES

Rejuvenate Your Professional Life - Teach!

By Raghunath Rudran

Professionals today have to keep finding ways of coping with the high velocity of change at the work place. The professional qualifications that were acquired at the onset of one's career have a decreasing half-life and cannot be counted upon as permanent assets with lasting value. Knowledge and skills are becoming redundant at a faster pace. These assets require constant maintenance, nurturing and upgradation. The individual professional needs to consciously invest time to do this. All too often, he tends to get caught in the need to attend to the daily fires that keep breaking out all over. He needs to achieve moving targets, pacify irate clients and come up with smart reflexes to survive and move on to another day. The professional keeps postponing his need to retreat and gain a long-term perspective about his life and career. It is more important to catch up with the email that keeps flooding one's laptop and keep on top of the action at the office, or else one may be left behind in the race. As a result, the stress levels that today's professionals have to cope with have also increased manifold. One's personal life gets subsumed by the organisation. The work place increasingly provides more facilities that encourages the individual to stay back. With such imbalances in one's personal life, and to sustain one's pace at the work place, one seeks out stress reduction methodologies. He starts looking to systems like, yoga, vipasana and 'The Art of Living' for answers.

Teaching is a good stress-reliever and a great alternative to the above. There is a growing dearth of qualified teachers in different professional areas like Engineering and Management. Teaching is viewed as monetarily non-rewarding. It is therefore an under-explored career and never a "top of the mind" choice for most professionals. As the career progresses, many fall into the rut of the routine and keep doing the same things for years without any

new learning taking place. Their knowledge base is constantly eroded and becomes obsolete. Getting into the habit of teaching is a sure way of rejuvenation. A conscientious teacher has to prepare himself thoroughly, understand all concepts clearly and be able to communicate effectively. The young students often have the ability to look at old concepts differently and bring in fresh insights. An unprepared teacher can get thrown off his feet. For the mid-career professional, teaching can be one of the most rejuvenating of professions. By constantly exposing oneself to young people, one comes across creative ways of looking at the same set of issues and the learning can be immense. In spite of having achieved so much in life, Dr Kalam, our scientist-President still seeks out, the company of the young to nourish his thoughts.

There is an increasing lag between knowledge and practice in industry and what is taught at professional colleges. Mid-career professionals can play a very useful role by bridging such gaps in current knowledge. This can result in a better-

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prepared potential work force of the future. The corporate sector needs to appreciate the tremendous synergies that can be achieved by encouraging its mid-career and senior professionals to teach. They can provide the necessary financial umbilical cord and the time out to employees who have an orientation for academia. An opportunity for nurturing and satisfying others is sure to result in self-development and consequently, better output from individuals. Useful research can also be the result of interface with academic institutions. Medium term arrangements for such professionals can be worked out in tie-ups with educational institutions. The corporate sector can also gain tremendously in terms of increased societal goodwill.

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