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- Riding the IT bandwagon

Handling a spectrum of busy training programmes in IT and supporting areas, SEED Infotech Chief Narendra Barhate still finds time to uncoil and reflect upon life. Subroto Roy finds out how.

- What impelled you towards the IT education market?

When we looked at the university education and the needs of the IT industry, we could see a clear gap between the two. There was a necessity for someone to take on the role to bridge the gap between industry and academia, and produce graduates who could become productive with very little training.

- But you also had a passion for training?

Without the passion we could not have achieved so much. From a humble beginning, and with initial employee strength of only five, we today employ over 550 professionals. The management of our company has a techno-commercial lineage since I myself am an engineer. The company has grown consistently and added new products and services to its portfolio as it grew. Located in the Pune, we today possess over 40,000 sq. ft. land at various locations and are equipped with state-of-the-art computing facilities.

- Anything other than IT training is on your menu?

We have a strong presence in training per se, but have also diversified into software development, software testing, staffing solutions and software value-added sales and services. We've also ventured into foreign language and culture training given the impact of globalisation. Numerous students who have taken our training have been able to secure jobs in some of these countries.

- But a large number of software companies possess inhouse training facilities. Then how did you see a business opportunity here?

We have conducted training even for large services companies that have their own training setups. That is because training is our core competence, We invest a lot in keeping our trainers up-to-date with the latest in technology This ensures we are a step ahead of all and companies benefit from our expertise. A trainer was recently been trained by Microsoft at SEED'S US unit in a latest technology release from the company

- How many of your pass outs are now ready for the industry?

This year 15000 students will get ready from our retail training service. Our modular training through part times courses for students and professionals range from CC++ to advanced Java to .Net, Job oriented courses for mainly engineering and science graduates with Java and .Net specialization are our strongholds. Our post - graduate diploma in embedded technology is providing jobs and career enhancement for hundreds of students and professionals. Each year 400 students and professionals gain from these courses.

- What do you see as your corporate social responsibilities?

'Sparsh', our teacher empowerment programme is part of our joint initiative with Wipro 'Wipro applying thought in Schools'. We have applied this to a rural school in village Nande, 15 km from Pune. The attempt is to completely transform this school in terms of infrastructure, teaching quality and delivery strategies.

- What are your main HR philosophies?

We believe in the culture of logical argument and encourage the same at all levels of management. We don't force our philosophies down the throats of our staff; we allow them to reason out things. We follow the book 'Execution' by Ram Charan & Larry Bossidy rather strictly for organization improvement. Jim Collins' Good to Great and Built to Last, are other works we refer to, which makes our enterprise essentially intellectual and not mercenary.

- How do you uncoil?

Working hours are long, but Vedanta and spirituality are the real healers. In today's life full of riddles, I find answers in Mother Nature by indulging in long treks and trails with my friends and family.

