Hot Seat

The key to motivation

Kamesh Ramamoorthy, Chief Operating Officer-Global Operations, Ramco Systems, tells Vinita Gupta how the right kind of motivation from the right people, and a bit of hard work, always fetches better results

Kamesh Ramamoorthy,
Chief Operating Officer,
Global operations,
Ramco Systems

Kamesh Ramamoorthy was born in Ooty, and grew up in Mumbai. He considers himself fortunate to have a wonderful childhood. He was the last child born, that too late to his parents, and hence all his sisters and elder brother used to dote on him. Ramamoorthy still feels like a small prince in his family.

While sharing his childhood memories, he stated, "I remember, I used to shuttle between Mumbai and Ooty during my summer vacations. As my maternal parents are from Ooty, the whole family including all my cousins, used to meet there. It was pure fun," said Ramamoorthy.

He further added, "I used to look upon my father from a young age. The amount of struggle he underwent to establish his family and educate all his children is something beyond imagination. Apart from my father, my biggest inspiration while growing up was my brother. He used to be a brilliant student and was the first to be professionally qualified in my family. He is an engineer, very successful in his career too."

Ramamoorthy's parents never pressurized him and they always encouraged him to choose his life's options. His lower and higher school education was done in Mumbai. He did his engineering and advanced Computer Science from Birla Institute Technology (BIT) in Ranchi.

Never give up

As we grow, we face so many incidents which leave an indelible mark on our life. According to Ramamoorthy, there are many incidents which shaped him, both as a person and professional. He shared two such incidents.

He said, "I remember during my 10th standard board exam, one day I terribly fell sick. The next day was my Physics paper. I thought I am not going to make it and

probably a year would go waste. Luckily my friend Venky, who was one year senior to me, sat throughout the night, helped me go through the Physics paper, and also dropped me off to school the next day. He motivated me to give the exams when I had almost given up. I did very well and owe a lot to him. This incident taught me that never give up till you try your level best."

The other incident which he shared is related with his professional career. In his earlier days at Wipro, Ramamoorthy was supporting a customer based in South Bombay. Those days computers had AC Winchester drives with a belt. One day the belt snapped and the customer was very upset because he had to process payroll that day without fail. The belt was not available in Wipro's office as it was an imported item and everyone including the bosses threw up their arms.

The customer was raging mad and suddenly an ordinary peon suggested visiting a cobbler and getting the belt stitched. Everyone laughed at the idea, but Ramamoorthy did it as there was no other option, and it worked. At least for that day, they were able to satisfy the customer who could carry out the payroll processing without any further delay.

Ramamoorthy mentioned, "The lesson that I learned from this incident was that never reject any idea from anyone, including from the junior most people. Patiently listen, you may end up hearing the best option or an idea and also go by your inner sense, how much ridiculous it maybe. It works most of the time."

Career path

Ramamoorthy's career path was by design. While he was doing his Electronics and Communication Engineering, he was one of the early students in his institute who got the opportunity to get trained on the first computer (PDP-11). He was good at it and immediately started getting interested in software development. After the completion of his degree, he was hired by Wipro as a software engineer.

Till date, he had worked only with two companies—Wipro and Ramco Systems. He revealed that his dream was of creating software intellectual property and competing with the best in the world. Ramco was unlike most other Indian organizations, which were only doing services around other branded products. He looked at Ramco as an organization through which they can harness the talent available in the country and create great products. He was happy to join Ramco and here he had established Ramco's European operations with significant wins from two of the largest organizations in Switzerland, and had also established business in the US from scratch.

Belief in team work

It was a challenge for him to move from software development to sales in Wipro. Initially he found it to be tough but was able to adapt within a few months.

Establishing and handling maiden markets, including Swiss and US country operations in those days in Ramco was pretty challenging for him.

According to him, his greatest motivating factor is appreciation by customers. He wants Ramco to be recognized as a leader in the business it operates in and achieve a billion mark in the next few years.

"My biggest strength is to believe in team work as only cohesive teams can deliver outstanding results and hence I spend a lot of time listening to people, deliberating and building teams. I believe that life is short and everyone is created for a purpose and hence let us try to live in harmony," said Ramamoorthy.

His hobbies include listening to old Hindi songs, western symphonies and watching classic movies, cricket and tennis. His wife Ajita is a language specialist and his only son, Arav, is six years old.

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