



January 2015 Alumnus of the Month

In this edition of the Alumnus of the Month, we had the privilege of interviewing Mr. Pradeep Rathnam. Mr. Pradeep started his career at Citicorp Securities and Investment Limited after completing his PGDM from LIBA. He worked in the operations division and was part of the start-up team that set up CSIL. Mr. Pradeep then moved to Citibank to build distribution for unsecured lending. This helped him explore the product development function of building the SME business across India.

After spending around 9 years with Citigroup, in 2008 he joined AEGON Religare, a new Life Insurance company, as a founding member and part of the Executive Committee. He was initially responsible for CVP and CRM, after completing the set up phase, he moved to build agency distribution as VP Sales. With 14 years of exposure in operations, technology interface, distribution, marketing and product development across established companies and start-ups, in late 2012 he moved to Rupeezone. Currently he is the CEO of 'Rupeezone', one of the largest Financial Superstore in India.

When asked about LIBA's role in his journey, he said the 2 years at LIBA was a life changing experience for him. The fine balance of academics and overall personality development was something that helped him to learn multitasking and become a team player. The transformation that he went through at LIBA had a tremendous impact in his approach to life. He says, "I realized the inherent strength every individual has if he overcomes his inhibitions and not allow himself to get intimidated by the fear of unknown".

Elaborating on the evolving role of the

manager in current business scenario he pointed out the importance of a manager being able to get the best out of every team member. He highlighted four key aspects for this.

1. Motivating them to give their best.
2. Effectively communicate what is expected from team members.
3. Constant feedback on what they need to a) Continue doing, b) Start doing & c) Stop doing .



4. Personal feedback on how their performance in their current role can help them achieve their long term professional objectives.

He highlighted that a manager must constantly explore opportunities to equip themselves on new market trends. He also emphasized the balance of IQ & EQ, a manager must have, the importance of grooming themselves as leaders.

As his biggest takeaway he recollected his experience in the 'Management Ethics' class. His initial belief was that 'ends justify the means' which contradicted what was taught in class. However, his long personal conversation with a retired IPS officer who was a guest lecturer for the subject, changed his views. The ethical values got ingrained in him and has stayed with him in his 16 yearlong corporate career.

Mr. Pradeep turned nostalgic as he shared with us his memories of the placement season of his batch and his

role as a placecom member. The experience of marketing the college and students to the corporate world was a memorable experience for him, and coming back to LIBA, the very next year, representing Citigroup, to recruit students from the subsequent year was his most memorable moment.

Talking about his Alma Mater, Mr. Pradeep said, "LIBA truly liberates people". He gave the 5 Cs that LIBA imbibes in its students making them emerge successful in the corporate world. These 5 Cs being Confidence, Credibility, Competence, Culture and Courage, influence the sixth C, Compensation.

As a piece of advice to the current batch of students, he emphasized on the importance of staying inquisitive and continuing to learn. He mentioned that it is important to expertise in every domain of business rather than concentrating on your specializations alone. He encouraged the students to take up cross specialization roles as they move up the corporate ladder and highlighted the fact that students should not give up their passion for a field of work because their first job is in a different field. Lastly, he encouraged the budding entrepreneurs to get started immediately. According to him there are no perfect solutions to some problems, but you are more likely to find a solution on the field than in a board room. He also reminded that great ideas are important, but to build a successful business model 'execution is the key'.

Mr. Pradeep is truly an inspiration and leader with a deep sense of ethics and humility. He has lifted the banners of LIBA very high and his Alma mater is proud of him.