

BALANCING PROFIT AND VALUES

Asian Foundation for Philanthropy, in association with ABi associates, was proud to host a



series of talks by the world renowned Mrs Jaya Row, organised at Ernst and Young in London on the 18th of June 2009, and in Leicester at the New Walk Museum on the 19th of June 2009. Part of our Jagruti and Sudarshan programme, the talks raised awareness of how an individual, through global partnerships, can contribute to making the world a more equitable and just place.

Jaya Row (left) has dedicated more than thirty five years towards researching and studying the ancient Indian philosophy of Vedanta, and has received recognition at several corporate powerhouses and institutions such as Shell UK, World Bank Washington DC, Washington University St Louis, Purdue University, JM Morgan Stanley, Southern

California Edison, World Economic Forum Davos, ABN Amro Bank and Deutsche Bank.

Focussing on corporate and personal responsibility, the talks centred on inspirational management, and using ethics for excellence in everyday life.

The starting point was 'Today.' Most of us, in both our professional and personal lives have a tendency to only look at the present. The result is that we overlook the future and as a consequence we limit our ultimate potential.

Consider our incentives to work. By focusing solely on monetary incentives employers are often encouraging individuals to 'shirk rather than work'. With the continual focus on rewards it mitigates what individual's *real* needs are.

Incentivising individuals with objects, such as a bonus, is not a sustainable strategy. Eventually, the bonus loses its value and the additional income serves no purpose in incentivising people to be creative. By using a single method to incentivise, organisations are merely creating robots who respond solely to this.

This hampers the initiative to work and stifles the individuals own personality and creativity within the workplace. Her message was that it is more important to have loyal staff that feel motivated to work, rather than simply responding to pay rises.



Jaya Row's talk then focused on managers. There is an all-important issue of building character and integrity in managers. Lack of values and work ethics eventually impacts on performance and results in long-term losses for all parties concerned.

Take the example of Ratan Tata who developed the first affordable car at \$2500. What motivated this man, whose company do not even make automobiles as their primary business any longer? Simple – he wanted to serve his customers and their families. Those who struggled with their 2 wheelers with families of 4 or 5 now have a means. By removing the profit motive, Ratan Tata was able to tap into an innate source of inspiration. Businesses and individuals can do the same.



The overall message was to be aware of all the factors that have contributed to the success of our work, be it staff, the environment, the consumers or the communities we work within. We should recognise there are many stakeholders who have contributed to our success, and when we have wealth, this should also be shared with others be it through time, skills or monetarily.

Jayaji's final words vibrated through the auditorium, leaving everyone with food for thought 'Once we find our inspiration we have the potential to become towering personalities armed with the ability to fulfil our destinies. By living inspired lives we can change the world we live in for the better'.

AFP's Sudarshan programme works with businesses to ensure their impacts are felt in a positive manner, and to channel the goodwill for a greater good. For more information email Sheetal.shah@affp.org.uk

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