



Attreyaji - A fast Wind back.

It was in 1960, that we hit it off in our very first meeting in New Delhi and our association still continues. Most interestingly, even during our business association days in 1960s, we were working only on a personal understanding and at no time even thought of having any formal or written understanding. In my subsequent tumbings in life, I have often reflected on how great a part Attreyaji played in shaping me during that period.

I was a fresher in the fields of Training, Education and Consultancy when I joined him and I owe my later professional successes to the grounding I got in my association with you let me recollect a few of the major lessons I learnt.

He is a charismatic speaker and there was no way I could emulate him; but his motto has guided me in my later communications - 'What is important is not just what you say, but more important is how you say it. (I learnt about body language from you long before it made its appearance in later communications)

However, I have been influenced by him on occasions in cases of written communication. Having a terse style, I could manage to cut down on length. Publishing is a craze with him and when he exceeded the length available on a printed page (he ran two periodical publications then) he would refer the matter to me, referring to me as 'Vetter Rao' (There is a pun on this word. It can be taken as whet of English or a similarly pronounced word of Tamil meaning to cut.)

Being Technology oriented, I never made a good marketing man. However, what he instituted in me about selling has helped me negotiate many situations which I would not have otherwise been able to do. It is with further later experience that I fully understood his stand that 'selling' is inevitable in the course of any profession; and the importance of the key requirement - **Tell the customer what he wants to know; what you know can wait.**

I am a great admirer of his disciplined life. He leads a Spartan life personally in his food habits. The concentration he brings to his work and the long periods he



can hold his concentration (despite the 'small talk' going on around him) are amazing. I also envy his professional discipline of disappearing as soon as the job is done instead of drifting around and diluting the effect of his sale.

Attfreyaji is a great counselor both professionally and personally. It was essentially due to his counseling and support that I could make the fellowship for Industrial Engineering under the then US=AID programme. Later, I had also to undertake counseling and his advice to the jobseekers has been a good beacon. He always used to proclaim that a person grows by building first on his strengths and then correcting his weaknesses. He used to jocularly chirp- Tell the interviewer, what you know and what you can do. Let him, if he wants, find out what you don't know and what you cannot do.

His great composure can best be illustrated by an example. We were travelling by a car on the Western Express Highway and the roads were wet. The car suddenly skidded cut across two lanes and landed in the lane for the opposite direction. Brakes scratched, horns hooted and the drivers cursed but no damage had been done. Traffic came to a temporary halt and some drivers jumped out of their seats and rushed to the driver of our car. It was necessary to handle the situation with great composure and Attfreyaji did it. Everything cooled down in a minute, smiles came back, no fights had taken place and we proceeded smoothly on our journey. I have yet to personally witness such a cool handling of a situation, which could have easily lead to all round confusion and heat.

I have always argued with him that he under rates technology and overates Human Resources Development. This is a never ending argument but always proves fruitful. Synergy results when persons have the same objectives and values but differ in methodology and timing that they advocate. Even now, in our brief meetings the sparks fly but always results in synergy.

May God bless him with a long and active life so that we can continue to have synergetic encounters, in addition to enjoying the company of his all-round personality.

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