

Entrepreneurs and their journey



The stuff that entrepreneurial dreams are made of

Walter Elias Disney, an American entrepreneur, animator, voice actor and film producer, once said, "All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. If you can dream it, you can do it. It's kind of fun to do the impossible." This perhaps is the dictum that makes a successful entrepreneur.

And while the common belief is that entrepreneurs are born and cannot be made - some of the most successful entrepreneurs that we know: Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Larry Page, Sergey Brin, and Jan Koum, didn't come from entrepreneurial families!

So, what goes to make an entrepreneur? A strong desire to control his own destinies; the inability to work for someone else; a belief in his gut instinct; the courage to take calculated risks and many other qualities. And if truth be told there is no 'one-size-fits-all' blueprint to achieve entrepreneurial greatness.

Various surveys and research studies have shown that successful entrepreneurs share some but not all personality traits. The most important of these is the determination to succeed,

a passion for what they are doing, the ability to learn from their mistakes and take failure on the chin and the ability to think out of the box.

Take the case of Howard Schultz then a young marketer working for a Seattle coffee bean roaster. It was simply a trip to Milan that gave him the idea of starting an upscale espresso coffee café. Schultz persuaded his employer to finance his endeavour and Starbucks was born! In 2016, *Forbes* magazine ranked Schultz as the 232nd richest person in the United States, with a net worth of \$2.9 billion! Today, he is Executive Chairman with Kevin Johnson taking over as the new CEO.

Yet another inspirational story is that of Konosuke Matsushita. The story began in Japan in 1917. Matsushita was just 23 and an apprentice at the Osaka Electric Light Company. He had no formal education but showed the ability to learn and invent on the job. Matsushita came up with an improved light socket that his boss at the Osaka Electric Light Company showed no interest in. Undeterred, Matsushita began making samples of the socket in his basement, later

expanding into battery-powered bicycle lamps and other electronic products. Matsushita Electric was born after years of hard work and in 2008 the company officially changed its name to Panasonic!

As of May 2017, Panasonic had a market cap of \$26.2 billion and appeared in *Forbes'* first-ever Top Regarded Companies list. This list that is based on *Forbes'* 2017 Global 2000 rankings, features public companies from 58 countries that together account for \$35.3 trillion in revenue.

These stories just go to emphasise the points made by an analysis of 23 research studies published under the title *The Big Five Personality Dimensions and Entrepreneurial Status*, by Hao Zhao from the University of Illinois at Chicago and Scott E Seibert from the Melbourne Business School. Zhao and Seibert found that "entrepreneurs have different personality traits than corporate managers, scoring far higher on traits such as openness to experience (curiosity, innovation) and conscientiousness (self-discipline, motivation) and considerably lower on neuroticism, which allows them to better tolerate stress."

Similarly, a survey in 2013 by Ross Levine of the University of California, Berkeley, and Yona Rubinstein of the London School of Economics found that "among incorporated entrepreneurs, a combination of 'smarts' and 'aggressive, risk-taking activities' is a characteristic mix."

Standing tall in the realty segment in Bengal

The Saltee Group's quality consciousness and attention to detail in its construction stand out in the concrete jungle that marks most sectors of the real estate market

Every successful enterprise is driven by the spirit of the person behind it. Chairman and Managing Director Surya Prakash Bagla, the man behind the Saltee Group, comes from a traditional family in Kolkata engaged in the business of timber. Gifted with a sharp business brain, Bagla went on to realise his dream of becoming a successful entrepreneur after he graduated with a degree in commerce. And his vision has paid dividends! His philosophy of ethical dealing, fair play and punctual delivery has enabled the Saltee Group to stand out in the crowd of real estate players in Bengal.



SURYA PRAKASH BAGLA, Chairman and Managing Director, Saltee Group

Iconic buildings and exemplary construction

At 52, Bagla has the energy and passion of someone half his age - a quality he successfully injected into the organisation he leads. Consequently the Saltee Group has become a force to reckon with in Bengal's realty segment. Landmark buildings in Salt Lake and a residential enclave in Kolkata that is now ready for delivery, only go to showcase the Group's dedication to quality. Its residential projects have already become icons in the various blocks

in Salt Lake that is easily one of the most aesthetic townships in Bengal. Having unveiled a super-luxury complex in Dum Dum Nagerbazar and an apartment at an MIG priceline, the Saltee Group's quality consciousness and attention to detail in its construction stand out in the concrete jungle that marks most sectors of the real estate market. Amenities such as a community hall, garden, expansive swimming pool and a gym are part of every residential project undertaken.

The Group has already completed a number of projects like the Saltee Spacio,

Saltee Vision, Saltee TechPark, Saltee Emerald, Saltee Itch, Saltee Chrome, Saltee Corporate and its ongoing ones - Saltee Plaza, Saltee Courtyard, Saltee Splendor, Saltee Palatial - will only serve to carry the Saltee Group's tradition of excellence forward. Havelli, an ethnic vegetarian restaurant, built by the Group, practically monopolised various awards in recent years - winning the Times Food and Nightlife Award in the Best Vegetarian (Standalone) category between 2008 and 2015, as many as six times. Conceived by Bagla, Havelli reflects his belief that "God lies in the details." Other noteworthy constructions include the Ice Lounge—Minus 6 Degrees, Kiva Banquets, Guest

Suites and Hotel and more. While Bronze, a lounge run by the Group, is well known for its ambience, décor, kebabs and an astounding variety of drinks, Minus 6 Degrees, is Kolkata's only authentic Ice Bar and Ice Lounge that is not only a landmark in the city but one that also has a high top-of-the-mind recall. The latest offering from the Group is The Dark Barrel, a rooftop Karaoke Lounge Bar in Salt Lake.

Dedication and a quest for perfection

In keeping with the best Marwari values Bagla is also associated with several social and philanthropic organisations. He has



been involved in cancer awareness camps, distribution of clothes to the poor, flood relief efforts, children's book fairs, free eye camps, geriatric welfare camps, free yoga camps and has even sponsored young footballers.

Surya Prakash Bagla's dedication to the realty sector and his quest for perfection has seen quite a few awards coming his way. He was awarded the Hello Kolkata Excellence Award 2012 for Excellence in Real Estate and the Hospitality Business; the Indian Achievers Award for Real Estate and Infrastructure by the Indian Achievers Forum and the Udyog Bharti Award from the All India Business and Community Foundation.