

Young Leaders at Startups Bond With Employees Beyond Workplace

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Bengaluru: Friday evenings take on a whole new meaning at the office of Bengaluru-based Trebo Hotels. More than the excitement over the upcoming weekend, it's the prospect of playing poker with cofounder Sidharth Gupta that never fails to create a buzz.

"There are never any formal invitations made for our Friday night poker games, we make spontaneous plans. Often it's my house that's the venue, but we all take turns hosting," said Gupta. "It's a casual and fun way to spend an evening. We simply set up two tables and play some quality poker. I would do the same with my college friends."

For fellow cofounder Rahul Chaudhary, the football ground is the venue of choice, and some Sunday mornings he can be seen heading to a nearby play arena with employees. Clearly, Gupta and Chaudhary have a different leadership style — one that draws on bonding with employees beyond the confines of the workplace. And they're not alone in doing so.

Geetansh Bamania, CEO at Rentomojo, takes part in regular jam sessions with musically-inclined team members. "There are about 15 of us in the music club, which I've found is a great platform to just let loose and

Forging Personal Connections With Staff

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

YOUNG LEADERS

- Trebo Hotels, cofounder SIDHARTH GUPTA** often makes spontaneous plans with employees to play poker on Friday nights. Fellow cofounder Rahul Chaudhary takes to the football pitch on some Sunday mornings with team members.
- GEETANSH BAMANIA, CEO at Rentomojo**, takes part in regular jam sessions with fellow musically-inclined team members. He also attends regular book club meetings with about 25-30 others.
- Droom, cofounder RISHAB MALIK** zooms away on Sunday morning rides with a group of employees, who all share a passion for motorcycles.
- GAURAV CHOPRA & MAYANK KACHHWAHA, cofounders at IndiaLends**, play chess, darts, and FIFA with employees.
- AT JOBBAY, EMPLOYEES INDULGE** in online shopping sessions with cofounder Mohit Gundecha. Food is also a big part of the company culture, with outings to neighbouring restaurants a regular part of the agenda.
- AT GRABHOUSE, EMPLOYEES** join in karaoke nights with CMO Pankhuri Shrivastava, who is an active participant. Cofounder Prateek Shukla plays table tennis with co-workers.

play some quality music," he said. A self-confessed bibliophile, he also attends regular book club meetings with about 25-30 others.

And at Droom, cofounder Rishab Malik often zooms away on Sunday morning rides with a group of co-workers, all sharing a passion for motorcycles. About a month ago, he was part of a group of Droom employees who rode down to neighbouring city Sirohi. "Next year, we want to ride down to India Bike Week in Goa," he said.

Startups have mushroomed around the country and brought with them a spirit of innovation, but they've also heralded a change in leadership styles. The image of the intimidating boss keeping a strictly professional relationship with employees is now passe. Now, young and dynamic leaders at these new-age companies thrive on building common interests and forging personal connections with coworkers.

"It's a new age, one that is characterized by leaders wanting to be friends with employees and keeping in touch on issues not related to work. For startups with small to moderate staff strength, it's definitely possible for founders and/or CEOs to make personal associations," said Anish Sarkar, country leader, Mercer India.

At online house rental startup Grabhouse, employees participate in karaoke nights with CMO Pankhuri Shrivastava, and table tennis games with cofounder Prateek Shukla. At Delhi-based fintech startup IndiaLends, cofounders Gaurav Chopra and Mayank Kachhwha play chess, darts, and sometimes even FIFA with team members. In fact, a new hire in the branding and marketing team has induced Chopra to start working out with him, and a few times a week, the two of them head to the gym together.

At talent assessment and analytics startup Jombay, employees indulge in online shopping sessions with cofounder Mohit Gundecha. "Once a week, a bunch of us sit together with our laptops, look at online shopping sites, check out deals, and make purchases. We decide our themes in advance, one we

hate to buy, and one we love to buy," said Gundecha. "Food is also a big part of the company culture, with outings to neighbouring restaurants a regular part of the agenda."

Food is also a big part of the culture at Jombay, with outings to neighbouring restaurants a regular part of the agenda. "All of us love exploring new cuisines, and there aren't too many restaurants in Pune which we haven't been to," Gundecha said.

With startup leaders becoming more approachable to employees and going all out to disrupt authority structures, there is always a risk that some employees may make the mistake of thinking they deserve special treatment. "It's important for young leaders to be friendly and share personal connections with employees, but a balance needs to be struck for smooth functioning of the organisation," said Mercer's Anish Sarkar.

Interestingly though, not one of these young leaders has found, in the course of their personal interactions, that employees try to get over-friendly or cross the line between friendly and awkward. "Everyone is mature enough to realise that work needs to get done no matter what, and being friendly with the boss won't get one out of delivering on KRAs," said Grabhouse's Shrivastava.

"Employees understand without having to be told that there are boundaries between fun and work. It gets lonely at the top, and having friends at the workplace alleviates that to a very large extent," said Gundecha.

ET CASES
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Career Management at ABC Autos Pvt Ltd

ABC Auto Pvt. Ltd. (ABC Autos) is one of the top players in India manufacturing three-wheelers. With a 5,000+ strong workforce pan-India, it operates from multiple manufacturing plants to produce auto components, which are supplied to other OEMs too.

By 2020, ABC Autos wants to be among the top most admired brands in the country. The company believes that every organisation promises certain value propositions to its employees, and the difference between any company and a dream company that people aspire to work for, is the delivery of that promise that the employer makes.

One of its core philosophies is to provide abundant learning opportunities along with an empowering environment to its employees.

ABC Autos believes this will ultimately result in the top talent seeing a long-term career with the company.

Would designing a Career Management Framework, which would facilitate career conversations of employees leading to meaningful

job rotations, be in line with their career aspirations?

The management was in a dilemma — what would happen to the existing job rotation, and training and development practices? How to implement, if at all it decides to follow the same?

To create such a system is a big challenge, but a bigger concern is its sustenance once it becomes a reality. What could be the few possible enablers? What would be the key challenges that the system will face if it implements the recommendations? If all implemented, what would be the probable broad key performance indicators of the new system that would help decide if the implementation has any positive effect or not? What should be the further course of action?



Vasudevan L



Prof. M Srimannarayana

VASUDEVAN L, Student, XLRI Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur

PROF. M SRIMANNARAYANA, XLRI Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur

Lack of Oxygen

Founded in 1999, Kislorod Group was a local holding company situated in Nizhny Novgorod. To provide better conditions for independent growth in each business, the single-limited company had been restructured into nine separate legal entities including the Proprietary Company and the Management Company that owned seven subsidiary business units.

Producing and selling industrial gases had always been the main business for the company.

Like all big market players, Kislorod Group, too, had two ways of producing gases. The company had started selling used cryogenic equipment early in 2006 and through the year achieved a dominant position in the market. At the beginning of 2007, the business was extremely unstable: sales were occasional and unpredictable, the rate of operational return on sales differed from 10% to 90%, and there were neither guaranteed stock nor patrons.

A growing and diversified business was at crossroads. The board chairman was to choose one of the two suggested perspectives: either to focus on production or to develop a

multi-product trade chain. Both had certain evident merits and drawbacks. The company needed a clear vision, an elaborate strategy and strong leadership in order to stand against the profound threats and deal with the challenges.

Each of the two strategies presented challenges and significant risks.

However, the company seemed not to have any other alternative. Waiting and keeping things as they go was even more dangerous. Now it was important to think over all pros and cons in order to take the right decision, as the price of the mistake was too high.

What way was to be chosen? The chairman took a one-day period off to analyse the situation and take the right decision. He realised that the company, like never before, needed a clear vision that would unite people and lead them all to success.



Dr Mikhail V Plotnikov

DR MIKHAIL V PLOTNIKOV, Professor at National Research University Higher School of Economics,

Dean, Vadens Business School, Russia

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GLOBAL TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited only from manufacturers for following:

Tender No. / ITEM DESCRIPTION	Closing Date	Opening Date
Tender No. -TH/PUR/AN/50956 - Supply of HDS (unsliphided) Catalyst - Qty.: 16 M ³ at 14.00 hrs. IST	11.04.2016	11.04.2016
	at 14.00 hrs. IST	at 14.30 hrs. IST

For details, visit our web site www.rcfttd.com or Central Public Procurement Portal <http://eprocure.gov.in> Any change in above tender shall appear only on both the above web sites in future.

DY. GENERAL MANAGER (C)

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ESTATE-I DEPARTMENT NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PALIKA KENDRA: NEW DELHI

E-AUCTION OF NDMC TOURIST LODGE ON 19.3.2016

NDMC announce e-auctioning on licence fee basis of Tourist Lodge near Ashoka Road and Janpath Mantar Road Crossing, Janpath Lane behind Janpath Hotel, New Delhi-110001.

The details of property are as under:

Reserve price Rs. 28.73 lacs per month. Enhancement @ 10% after every 3 years. Period of Licence 30 months.

- Total area of property is 17,000 sq. ft. including basement.
- 32 rooms with attached toilets - 132 sq. ft. each.
- 2 spacious restaurants with kitchens - 427 & 175 sq. ft. each.
- 2 dormitories with attached toilets - 450 sq. ft. each.
- 4 large shops (i) 2 shops 326 sq. ft. each (ii) 2 shops 252 sq. ft. each.

The detailed terms and conditions and other information are available on NDMC (www.ndmc.gov.in) and MSTC (www.mstcecommerce.com) websites. To participate in the auction, prospective bidders have to register with MSTC. The e-auction will take place on MSTC platform (website) on 19.3.2016.

Jt. Director (Estate-I)

सोन्टल माईन प्लानिंग एण्ड डिजाईन इन्स्टीट्यूट लिमिटेड CENTRAL MINE PLANNING & DESIGN INSTITUTE LIMITED

(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
Gondwana Place, Kanke Road, Ranchi-834031, Jharkhand, India

e-TENDER NOTICE

For the work Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Testing of Solar Based LED Street light at different drilling camps of RI-III, CMPDIL.

Tender Notice No. : CMPDI/RI-3/E&M/2016/84 Date : 05.03.2016. Tenders are invited on-line on the website <https://coalindiatenders.gov.in> from the eligible bidders having Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) issued from any agency authorized by Controller of Certifying Authority (CCA), Govt. of India and which can be traced up to the chain of trust to the Root Certificate of CCA for the following work : **Description of work :** Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Testing of stand-alone type Solar Based minimum 28W LED Street Light for different Drilling camps of RI-III, CMPDIL consisting of all Civil, Structural, Electrical and Mechanical Works and all other accessories and facilities required to make it complete in all respects, 48 Nos. **Estimated Cost of Work (in Rs.) :** Rs. 27,67,440.00. **Earnest Money (in Rs.) :** Rs. 27,700.00. **Application Fee (in Rs.) :** Rs. Nil. **Period of Completion (in days) :** 60 days. For details of qualification requirements, bid security and complete tender document, visit our website <https://coalindiatenders.gov.in>. Detailed tender notice is available at www.cmpdi.co.in or <http://eprocure.gov.in> on 05.03.2016. Important Note to all prospective bidders : For ON-LINE bidding, the bidders should possess class II/III Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and enroll themselves at <https://coalindiatenders.gov.in>. For any query, Contact HOD (E&M), RI-3, CMPDI, Ranchi at P & T Telephone No. 0651-2231487 (10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on working days), email : ri3@cmpdi.co.in

RD, RI-III

INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION AND INVESTMENT CORPORATION OF ODISHA LIMITED

(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
(An ISO 9001:2008 Certified State Level Nodal Agency)
IPICOL HOUSE, JANPATH, BHUBANESWAR - 751022, ODISHA, INDIA.

Expression of Interest (EOI) invited for setting up Packaging Industries

Odisha is emerging as a manufacturing hub in the East and to facilitate the process, government is developing a packaging cluster, Ac 33.075 of land has been earmarked at Mouza-Bisapada, Tehsil-Jatni, Dist-Khurda, for this purpose. The proposed site is located in close proximity to Bhubaneswar and the International Airport which is shortly coming up with a cargo terminal.

We invite Expression of Interest (EOI) from packaging Industries to set up their Industrial units in the Packaging Cluster. The EOI documents can be downloaded from our website : www.ipicolodisha.com

Address for communication
General Manager (SLNA),
IPICOL, IPICOL House, Janpath,
Bhubaneswar, Phone : 0674-2542607
Email Id : kalyancmohanty@investodisha.org

IN THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF M.P., INDORE BENCH ORIGINAL JURISDICTION IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 1956 THE COMPANIES ACT 2013, AND IN THE MATTER OF:- M/S. DECORA TUBES LTD. (IN.LIQU.) Company Petition No. 05/2004 E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Pursuant to the orders dated 29/02/2016 of the Hon'ble High Court of M.P., Indore Bench, e-Tenders are invited in respect of sale of the following assets/properties of the company (In-Liq.) on "AS IS WHERE IS AND WHATSOEVER THERE IS BASIS" from the prospective buyers :- 1. Lot No. 1-Leasehold Industrial Land admeasuring 24,408 Sq. Mtr. situated at Plot No. 36, 53, 55 & 56, Sector-I, Industrial Area, Pithampur (M.P.).

Buildings:- Unit-I (SS Tubes) Main block consisting of tubemill, generator, boiler, slitting line shed, picking line, sub-station (Roofing in steel truss made out of sections steel & steel frame with glass panels, roofing in ACC sheet), Parking office, ACC, Security, Car parking etc., **Unit-II (WTP)** Buildings-structure in RCC Frame with col. & beams supporting 3MT Overhead EOT Crane, frame with brick work, Floor(PCC) or stone tiles, Roof-AC sheets (with few fibres glass sheets) on MS Truss made out of Section Steel, Window in MS Frame with glass pan. AC sheet clad building, Truss roofing, DP (Double Pole) with platform, etc. **Unit-III (Aluminium Tubes) Buildings** - structure in RCC Frame with col. & beams supporting 3MT Overhead EOT Crane, Frame with brick work and strong steel structure, truss provided pipe drain at roofing height, Floor-PCC or stone tiles, toilet with ceramic tiles, Roof-AC Sheets (with few fibreglass sheets) on MS Truss made out of Section Steel, Security Block in RCC Roof, Windows in MS frame with glass pan, Doors-Rolling shutters etc.

2. Lot No. 2 - Plant & Machineries in Unit-I (SS Tubes division)-Slitting line, MS construction, Tubemill for rolls with roll stands inlet and outlet m/c, TG welding units 1200 amps, Roll Sets in MS Construction (frame only), Welding Transformer, Grinder, Furnace (without moving part), Pickling and acid treatment tank, Draw bar tester in ms., Tube straightening m/c ms construction, moving part m/c, Hydro tester, Overhead crane 3mt each, supported by rail on both sides, Tube cutting m/c, Compressor with motor, Lathe m/c, Bench grinder, Abrasive cutter, End facing m/c, Polishing m/c W/ motor & starter, Hydraulic test pump, Mini-tube mill with pipe in mild steel w/o driving mechanism, (without any roll sets, HFW, or cooling mechanism), Wyro hoist, Shaping m/c, Pointing m/c, End facing m/c, Tools and cutter, Drawbench, Debarring, Rolls sets, Hydro testing m/c, Pickling tank w/o material handling mechanism, Tube mill (only frame fixed to ground, skeleton roll sets, w/o motors and starter, HFW and cooling mechanism), Tube straightening machine no moving part, Helical gear box, Tube mill assembly, Roller leveller, Furnace (chamber) pressure gauge and dial thermometer (without driving mechanism, refractories, ducting), Overhead crane 3mt each, High pressure washing m/c, Pipe cutting m/c, Hy press, water softening plant, Burring m/c in MS W/o driving mechanism, High frequency tube mill with roll stand only, (no moving parts & hfW with coolant supply system roll sets, But welding m/c, Feeding mechanism, Die end mandril, compressor recip rime make with motor and static converter, Elec. Substation and DG set, etc., **Office Equipments, Stocks, Vehicles & other Miscellaneous items etc.:-** Gas cylinder (21 nos.), Cables, motors (56 nos.), chairs (15 nos.), almira (11 nos.), tables (14 nos.), photocopy m/c (01 no.), monitor (1 no.), CPU tower model (1 no.), printer Dot matrix (4 nos.), AC window (6 nos.), room cooler (01 no.), Vehicles:-Staff van (1No.), Maruti Car-1No., Scooter-1No., Toyota Car-1No., Stocks:-exhaust pipe & assembly, Copper strips, Aluminium coils/rolls (pipes, etc. **Plant & Machineries Unit-II (WTP):** Coiling m/c, Tube mill, Cutting m/c, Twisting m/c, Profile m/c, Decorative Tube mill, Rope Deslign Tube m/c, Tube cutting m/c, Flaring m/c, Bench Grinder, Hand cutter, Buffing m/c, Lathe m/c (Frame only), Hy. Press, Crane 3 MT, Transformer (1No.), DG Set, Air Compressor, Roll Set, Small Miscellaneous items etc. **Plant & Machineries at Unit-III (Aluminium Ext.):** 1500mt Extrusion Press (3 nos.), Beltling Furnace Oil, Billet OSTIBG Unit, Villet Cutting Saw, EOT Crane, Weighing Scale 1000, Elect. Operated Oven, EOT Crane, Induction billet heater for 1250 MT press, Cooling Tower, Overhead Water Tank, Furnace Oil Tank, Hy. Oil Filtering Unit, Various Die Sets, Workshop Machines like Lathe/ Milling/ Drilling etc.

3. Lot No. 3 - Leasehold Industrial Land admeasuring 8129 Sq.Mtr situated at Plot No.54-B & 55-A. Buildings:-Admin. Building & Store, Beam & Column in RCC G+1, Cabins alongside corridor, etc.

4. Lot No.4 - Composite Lot:- All Assets/ properties mentioned in Lot No. 1, 2 & 3.

The details of Reserve Price and EMD are as under:-

Lot Nos.	Description of Lots	Reserve Price (Rs. in Lacs)	EMD (Rs. in Lacs)
Lot No.1	Leasehold Industrial Land admeasuring 24408 Sq.Mtrs. (Plot No.36, 53, 55 & 56) situated at Sector-I, Industrial Area, Pithampur (M.P.), Buildings & Sheds	315.46	47.32
Lot No.2	Plant & Machineries, Stocks including stores & spares, Vehicles and other Miscellaneous items etc.	206.45	30.97
Lot No.3	Leasehold Industrial Land admeasuring 8129 Sq.Mtr (Plot No. 54-B & 55-A) & Buildings situated at Sector-I, Industrial Area, Pithampur (M.P.)	96.03	14.40
Lot No.4 Composite Lot	All Assets mentioned in lot No.1, 2 & 3. *5% of above total Reserve Price of Rs.617.94 of Lot No.1,2,3 as extra incentive)	587.04	88.05

Note:-

- Inspection of the above assets/properties will be held on 29/03/2016 between 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. The tenders should submit their online offer through the website <https://olmp.auctiontigger.net>
- The EMD amount (Interest free) should be deposited by way of NEFT/RTGS in the account of "e-Auction of Assets by the Official Liquidator", Current Account No.0212002100247959, Punjab National Bank, Sitlamata Bazar Branch, Indore, Branch Code-021200, RTGS/NEFT/IFS Code PUNB0021200. The last date for submission of online offer along with EMD is 14/04/2016 upto 3.30 P.M.
- The e-auction will be conducted through the website <https://olmp.auctiontigger.net> on 18/04/2016 between 11.30 A.M to 2.30 P.M. with auto time extension of 10 minutes each time if the bid is made in the Last minutes before close of e-auction till sale is concluded.
- This Sale is subject to confirmation by the Hon'ble High Court of M.P., Indore Bench.
- This Sale Notice be treated as notice to the secured creditors/ unsecured creditors/ contributors and all other parties having interest in the matter of company (In-Liq.).
- The other details of above e-auction along with terms and conditions of sale are available in the website <https://olmp.auctiontigger.net>

Date : 15.03.2016 HIGH COURT OF MADHYA PRADESH INDORE
Place : INDORE 1st Floor, Old CIA Building, Opp. GPO,
Residency Area, Indore (M.P.)
Phone : 0731-2710568, 2710051

Sapient India Enhances Benefits for New Parents

Sreeradha.DBasu@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Sapient India has rolled out a new parental policy aimed at providing greater flexibility to its employees so as to enable them to balance work and family life.

The Indian unit of the US headquartered marketing and consulting company, as per its revised policy put in place this month, allows women employees to take 26 weeks of maternity leave instead of 12 weeks permitted earlier. The company has also doubled the paternity leave allowed to new fathers to 10 days.

In addition, both women and men employees will be allowed to avail themselves of work-from-home and flexible or part-time working options to ease their transition back to work after the leave period. "Besides the leaves, what makes this programme unique is our integration and 'return back' programme," said Kameshwari Rao, vice president-people strategy at Sapient India. "Through this, expecting women will be assigned an office buddy to help them hand over their work and on their return, go through an orientation programme to ease them back into the work environment," she said.

By Invite

Time to Add New Skilling Chapter to Apprenticeship

Manish Sabharwal & Sumit Kumar

New Delhi: India today has about 20 million students in physical higher education classrooms, 3 million in distance education classrooms and 3 lakh in apprenticeship classroom. The need to count apprenticeships as classrooms rather than jobs became obvious to us at a job fair in Gwalior. Tired at the end of the day one of us began telling job seekers that if they didn't have work experience we couldn't hire them.

Most went away, but one smart student refused to leave and said, "Do you guys in suits leave your brains behind? I already have a degree but you tell me that I can't get a job without work experience. How am I supposed to get work experience without a job?" The only way to solve a chicken and egg problem is to become vegetarian i.e. do something completely different.

We'd like to make the case that taking apprenticeships to a higher level by offering online training would not only accelerate skill development but also help tackle the wicked problem of unemployment.

The learning-by-doing and learning-while-earning programme of apprenticeship is gaining prominence as a global policy tool. The UK achieved its target of 2 million apprentices and has set a goal of 3 million apprentices by the end of next Parliament session. Research suggests that British businesses gain about £26 for every £1 of government investment, encouraging thousands of companies to hire young learners.

During the academic years 2014 and 2015, over 872,000 people were working as apprentice. The US celebrated the first National Apprenticeship Week earlier in November to make millions of Americans employable which is required to give a fillip to the economy. It is estimated that apprenticeship programmes in the US gain as much as \$3 to every \$1 invested from improved safety, elimination of re-work and increased productivity. Similarly, those completing an apprenticeship earn substantially more during their career than an average college graduate.

India's apprenticeship regime is anaemic — we only have 4 lakh apprentices and only 28,500 of our 6.3 crore enterprises engage formal apprentices. But if we had the same proportion of our labour force in apprenticeships as Germany (3.7%) then the 4 lakh would



ANIRBAN BORA

be more than 1 crore. Employees have stayed away because the Apprenticeship Act of 1961 was written for the industrial era and amendments in 1973, 1986 and 1997 made are progressively painful and prescriptive.

Obviously, the stick of a mandatory legislative requirement that every employer should have apprentices did not work. We should have either had 15 million apprentices or 15,000 CEOs in jail but we had neither. However, amendments to the Act made in 2014 create an enabling environment. They make employer volunteers rather than hostages, they allow customised programmes, and considerably reduce the licence raj. We anticipate that these changes could increase India's apprenticeship by at least 500% over the next few years.

We believe that further momentum for apprenticeships can be created by innovating and creating new connectivity to higher and online education. Michael Spence got his Nobel Prize for his work on signalling value of higher education i.e. ITs and IIMs are good places to be at but better places to be froms.

We need to harness the obsession with degrees via policy changes that will allow universities to give academic credit for apprenticeships — a form of recognition of prior learning — and increase pull for apprentices by allowing their lateral entry into degree programmes. This change should be

accompanied by ending the current regulatory restrictions on universities that prevent offering national online education. These restrictions are particularly toxic because they handicap Indian universities relative to international online providers such as Coursera, Udacity, etc, which are free to enroll Indian students. Online classrooms are low cost, personalised, flexible, and much more scalable than physical classrooms.

Employers need policy to recognise apprenticeship as practical education, shop floors as classrooms, and assigned tasks as curriculum and many of them such as Pizza Hut, RBS, Whirlpool, Rolls Royce, etc, are working with universities to design apprenticeship programmes specific to their needs.

Our skill university in Gujarat recently crossed 10,000 apprentices in our flagship NETAP (National Employability through Apprenticeship Programme). We could have rapidly reached the one-lakh-mark without any government funding if we were allowed to operate online nationally and seamlessly offer academic credit with apprenticeships.

India's higher education system needs to reverse the current over-regulation and under-supervision. It needs to focus less on inputs and more on outcomes (the current infitafada by UGC against off campus centres and deemed universities is comical if not tragic). It needs to recognise that consumer protection in a world of near perfect information and social media allows more room for innovation. An innovation comes from a number of genetically diverse and statistically independent systems with different operating models.

China's farm to non-farm transition helped manufacturing. In the case of India, it was transition from sales that gave way to customer service and logistics. A new ministry for skills was an innovation that finally gave us one neck to catch and ended the dysfunctionality "anybody can say no and nobody can say yes". This needs to be complemented by a few policy changes by the HRD ministry that would make regulation agnostic to mode of delivery and end territorial restrictions for all universities. India's youth deserve 15 million apprenticeship opportunities and Corporate India is willing. All that is needed is the regulatory space.

(The writers are with TeamLease Services and TeamLease Skill University, respectively)