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SPRINGBOARDS, NEW AND ANCIENT

The four books on this page have all been written with the benevolent aim of bettering our lot, whether in private life or in business and management. *Zen Garden* by Subroto Bagchi is wisdom from people who have made it big by stepping off the beaten path. *Take Me Home* by Rashmi Bansal highlights twenty of such people who have made it big in their little hometowns. *The Yogic Manager* by Avinash B. Sharma delves into the Mahabharata and provides counsel to tackle corporate problems. *Two Birds in a Tree* by Ram Nidumolu dredges classic wisdom from the Upanishads to ensure that business is headed by enlightened leaders.

Everyone has a valuable story to tell

SUBROTO BAGCHI



Zen Garden (Conversations with Pathmakers) by Subroto Bagchi provides some startling insights into the minds of a whole bunch of notable people, professed by them during their interactions with the author. *Zen Garden* was a popular column in *Forbes India* magazine which featured some really interesting game changers who divulged what inspired made them to think out of the box, and then muster the courage to follow up and act on what they had envisioned. The author has selected what he thought were the best of these conversa-

tions from *Zen Garden*, so you have the Dalai Lama, renowned mystic Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev who has his path-breaking Isha Foundation, the famous Nandan Nilekani of the Aadhaar Card fame, Aamir Khan who has always displayed time and again that his heart is in the right place, Ekta Kapoor who is a revolution herself as far as television is concerned. There is Captain G.R. Gopinath who was ahead of his time when he launched Air Deccan, one of India's first large-scale private low-cost airlines, but unable to handle bureaucratic red-tape and poor logistics, sold it off to a certain Vijay Malya. There is also Cherie Blair, mother of four kids, the wife, some better half, we mean the literally, of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is a high-profile human rights lawyer, and runs a foundation under her own name for women. She is startlingly intelligent. When asked are we seeing the end of capitalism and the emergence of a more just order? she responded, 'I think we all hope for a fairer, better, more just order... Capitalism - like the common law system - has been endlessly adaptive.'

Zen Garden
by Subroto Bagchi
Penguin Books India
Rs. 499

Great business is not limited by location

RASHMI BANSAL

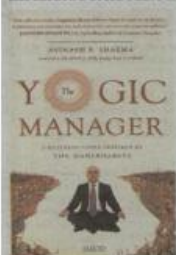


Take Me Home by Rashmi Bansal is an inspiring documentation along the lines of her earlier books, of success at a super level by ordinary people who had the unique trait of vision backed by perseverance. In this book, however, the stars are small-town entrepreneurs who dream big and used local resources and manpower to attain world-class standing from their hometowns. These stories are heartwarming and inspiring, and are true instances of the triumph of the spirit. *Baaji Waters* is the

story of Chandrabhai Virani of Rajkot. The Rs.20,000 given by the Virani brothers by their father in 1972 was lost when they got cheated in their fertilizer and farm implements business. Their boarding and lodging venture too failed and, in 1974, they became employees in a canteen at Astron cinema in Rajkot. They soon began to manage it on a profit sharing basis and Chandrabhai was just a helper. Seeing that most patrons were fond of wafers, they started buying the product loose and retailing it after repackaging. In 1982, they began preparing wafers on a tawa at home and distributing packets by bicycle. The rest is history, a savoury one at that. Jagjit Singh Kapoor started with just 10 boxes of bees, and Kashmiri Aparies from Derahs in Punjab is today the largest exporter of honey from India with revenues surpassing Rs.100 crore. Vivek Deshpande and Kirti Joshi of Spacewood Furnishers pioneered the concept of modular kitchens, after doing job-work for VIP and later Godrej, before launching exclusive showrooms in Nagpur of all the places.

Take Me Home
by Rashmi Bansal
Westland Ltd
Rs.200

Kurukshetra doesn't have to be a battlefield



The Yogic Manager (A Business Novel Inspired by the Mahabharata) by Avinash B. Sharma is another attempt at letting ancient Indian wisdom impact modern day management, to the benefit on one and all in society. It is a modern retelling of the epic, the Mahabharata. As the author retires, this book is intended to be more than a business novel and self-improvement guide. It was written to be a bridge. He believes that there are concepts from Yoga-Vedanta (the union of practice (yoga) and theory (vedanta)

that managers can apply and gain fulfillment from their work, become more holistic in their thinking and contribute toward the betterment of society, and even the environment. Hence, the union of Management and Yoga-Vedanta is termed as Yogic Management. There is a charming notion that the author subscribes to as his own mantra: From performing work as war, lead me to performing work as worship; from practicing the art of war, lead me to practicing Yoga, the art of work. An Arjun Atmanand is struggling to cope with a conscience that clashes with what his boss, Raja Sahankar, expects him to do. Lord Krishna in this story is Yogi, a being with supernatural powers who teaches and guides. Arjun uses this knowledge to build a bridge between Yoga-Vedanta and Management. Those who even half-try to gain benefits from this book are likely to gain physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual strength. This can come about since one learns how to control and channelise the most powerful instrument of knowledge - the mind.

The Yogic Manager
by Avinash B. Sharma
Jukoo Publishing House
Rs.225

Investing in the supremely spiritual



Two Birds in a Tree (Timeless Indian Wisdom for Business Leaders) by Ram Nidumolu dredges into ancient Indian texts - the Upanishads - in an attempt to offer a very human and holistic pathway to progress in business, and by extension, in life. Society as a whole will definitely see a pleasant change if the philosophy contained in these master works are imbibed and adopted by those who are at the helm of business affairs and also in other walks of life. According to the Upanishads, that which is real, is also

true. For the sages, reality was truth. There is *REAL* road map to a Being-centered leadership - recognise a higher reality (sat), or the larger context of business, as connected to the higher bird (atman) which is Being. Experience this recognition through consciousness (chi) in a way that recognition is deepened and made more lasting. Anchor this experience in a mind-set that promotes joy (ananda) so that it deepens your recognition and becomes the basis for your thoughts and actions. Lead by example from this place of anchoring so that you become a Being-centered leader (atmanal) in thought, word and deed. The author quotes from the Chandogya Upanishad: The one who knows the best and the great, becomes the best and the great. The one who knows the foundation, stands firm in the world. The one who knows that which gives shelter, becomes a shelter for others. There is every chance that a leader who undertakes to adopt such principles will definitely wish to give back to this world, and thereby to society and mankind, what he has gained from it, or at least a part thereof.

Two Birds in a Tree
by Ram Nidumolu
HarperCollins Publishers
Rs.199