

**Session**

**With**

**Akshat Verma,**

**Script Writer and Associate Director of Delhi Belly**

**4:30 pm – 5:30 pm: August 16, 2011**

**WWF Auditorium, 172-B, Lodi Estate, New Delhi**

Following the success of the blockbuster hit movie 'Delhi Belly', Aspen Institute India organized a Session with Akshat Verma, the Script Writer and Associate Director, 'Delhi Belly' and Mr. Anuj Poddar, Head, Strategy & Business Development, Viacom TV 18 Motion Pictures who moderated the session. Mr. Akshat Verma, among other things, shared his experiences being a Delhiite and how that experience inspired him into writing 'Delhi Belly' and scripting the characters of the film. A literature graduate from Delhi University, Mr. Verma, did his MFA in screen writing from UCLA, where he wrote the film in a creative workshop.



In a very candid conversation, he told the audience about how he adopted a novel called 'Ode to Lata' which was transformed into a film but it never found distribution. This was technically his first film before he got his big break with 'Delhi Belly'.

When asked about the kind of genre that he likes to write on and the genre which he finds difficult to write, he said-**'As a creative person you have to keep challenging yourself to write in every genre'**. Focusing on the importance of a writer he said **'A story is very important since it is the foundation for a film'**. He emphasised on the point that it is very important to nurture creative writers especially in television writing where the biggest investment needs to be done in writing.

He also spoke about the film culture in India and how today it has started to open up in terms of language, nudity etc. As a creative writer he feels that there shouldn't be any kind of censorship. He **said 'Being a democracy, in India, there should not be a Censor Board.'** For him, information should be free of censorship.

Speaking on his perspective of the youth in India today he said **'Today's youth is more confident and feel that they can compete at a global level'**. According to Mr. Verma, the biggest advantage today for the youth is that they can connect to the rest of the world easily.

The conversation was concluded by opening the floor for questions and when he was asked can an Indian film become a global film, he categorically answered "Absolutely Yes". The session also included a rapid fire round which can be watched here:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/aspeninstituteindia#p/u/38/gwOKG7OFogA>