

**Book Launch and Panel Discussion
On
"Employees First, Customers Second"
A Book by
Vineet Nayar, CEO, HCL Technologies
1800hrs, 15th July 2010
Shah Jehan Hall, Taj Palace Hotel
New Delhi**



(L-R: Karan Thapar, Vineet Nayar, Sachin Pilot, Krishnamachari Srikanth, Tarun Das)

Aspen Institute India, in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry and Harvard Business Review organized a book launch of 'Employees First, Customers Second' on July 15 2010 in New Delhi. The book written by Vineet Nayar, CEO, HCL Technologies, is based on a unique management theory that turns conventional thought completely upside down. The launch was preceded by a panel discussion on "Leadership Imperatives in India: Role of New Leaders". Speakers included Krishnamachari Srikanth,

Former Indian Cricket Captain, Tarun Das, President, Aspen Institute India, Karan Thapar, Anchor, CNBC, Vinay Hebbar, Head, Harvard Business Review and Sachin Pilot, Minister of State, Communications and Information Technology, who formally released the book.

Mr. Nayar, CEO HCL Technologies described the journey of understanding and writing the book, saying “Ideas find Authors and Ideas through the author, find books”. In his remarks, Mr. Nayar illustrated the journey that he and his employees at HCL took to change the conventional methods of management. He outlined three steps which an organization can take to transform itself—the first, to look at itself in the mirror and be extremely uncomfortable with it. By looking at the present situation and understanding the ground realities and knowing that they can be better. Secondly by creating a Vision for tomorrow, outlining where the organization wants to be and working towards it. Third, starting small catalyst actions which help to move in the direction of the goal.

Mr. Nayar stressed that creating value for employees was paramount in achieving progress with customers. He further argued that the book should not be treated as a text book on a new management theory but rather a guide towards building leaders. Mr. Krishnamachari Srikanth, former captain of the Indian Cricket Team who was the Guest of Honour at the session said that leadership was important for any team to function as a unit. A leader is one who should be able to lead by example and instil belief within the team and thus be the guiding light for the entire team. Citing India’s 1983 World Cup victory under the Leadership of Kapil Dev, he pointed out that Kapil Dev truly led the team by example and was able to instil the belief that they could be successful at the tournament.

Mr. Sachin Pilot, Minister of State for Communication and Information Technology stressed that the leadership needed for steering India, is a role that does not fall on the shoulders on any one party but on all. He was of the view, that it is important to be transparent. He stressed that “Leaders are not born, they are made over time”. He said that society needs to identify leaders who are able to demonstrate leadership skills early on.

Mr. Tarun Das, President, Aspen Institute India pointed out that recruitment of young people is necessary because they have three assets: energy, enthusiasm and excitement, which are important for an organization to succeed. Ordinary people are capable of achieving extraordinary feats, if they feel that they are trusted. It multiplies the sense of responsibility and motivation levels, thus making people feel secure.

Karan Thapar, who moderated the discussion, said that to try and fail is not a problem, but not to try due to the fear of failure is a mistake in itself. “If we don’t fail we probably won’t succeed at all”. He said that the highly competitive environment in India does not allow failure and thus creates the fear surrounding it. He stressed that good leadership and leaders balance two factors well, (1) learning from failure and (2) the capacity to overcome failure and succeed thereafter.



(L-R: Vineet Nayar, Sachin Pilot, Krishnamachari Srikanth, Tarun Das)