



“CREATING A HIGH-CALIBRE ECOSYSTEM WHICH NURTURES THE EMPLOYABILITY OF ITS GRADUATES

SUNEEL GALGOTIA is the scion of the family which established the book retail business of E.D. Galgotia and Sons in the 1930s—which eventually went on to become one of India’s top publishers of computer and tech books. Galgotias University in the NCR has been richly rewarded for its trail-blazing industry-driven template for education excellence with record recruitments by industry leaders

How long has your institution been operational and what have been your achievements in this spectrum of time?

We have been operational since 2000 and in these fifteen years we have seen many changes in education. From a situation where there was a huge demand and supply gap, where there were very few institutions compared to the huge number of students seeking admission. At that period of time, quality was not even a consideration, for the simple reason it was more about getting the numbers in that you had room for, in order to cover that gap between the demand and the supply. We, at that point of time, were very conscious about 'quality' because we had a name to protect, having been in publishing for over three decades. We were very clear that if we were to do education we would be very focused on quality. It is a quality that can't change. You can't say I'll have quality after 10 years, it had to be from day one. Quality is not just about a good building or faculty. It is like a

jigsaw puzzle... it's about putting together a whole lot of components to produce an institute of high repute. It's about starting with a good faculty, about the quality of the curriculum. Is it in sync with the industry? What are the objectives and outcome of that learning? Education here is all outcome-based. Introducing and promoting a pedagogical change was an imperative to our plans for creating an institute which would be industry relevant.

It's about industry picking up all our students... not just a few— And if they don't. Where is the gap? Infosys, for example, used to come to the campuses to take students but not all would get picked up. We had to address that lack. From the tests that they conducted on students we realized the gap was in English Proficiency and Aptitude—and the latest technical skills and knowledge of advances in processes.

You can't change a person's thinking or approach to spoken English in three months or even in six months for that matter... it has to be inculcated over a period of time. So instead of just



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giving them a crash course a couple of months ahead of placements, we built in these factors in our curriculum from the start. So we hired 30 faculty, which is huge in terms of expenditure, to address this. We integrated it into the syllabi. Not only that, we made it a credit course. So it was not an option but it was to the curriculum. The same thing applied to Aptitude. After the first year of inducting this in the curriculum we were visited by Wipro, Cognizant and Infosys all in one week—and our placements doubled. We saw there was a greater demand for students from our institute because of the pedagogical reforms we had introduced after studying the needs of the market. And that was just the beginning.

In what other manner is teaching different at your institute?

The other thing we addressed was the relevance of our curriculum to the needs of the industry. The curriculum was designed by bringing together the minds of the top academicians and industry to formulate the various syllabi on offer. Another thing, by the time a student passes out, it is not about theory, or what he has mugged up. It was about the mode of delivery of education he has been exposed to by the time he passes out of the institute. With our inquiry-based learning the student's thought processes are geared for analysis and problem-solving on his own. It's all measurable, outcome-based teaching, which helps

him think on his feet. The system of teaching at Galgotias is such that there is very little gap (if) between industry requirement and what we teach them.

How have you managed to bridge the gap between the theoretical-mugging form of the teaching process, so common...and the realistic demands of industry from the passouts?

A new way of thinking does not mean it has to be a difficult way of thinking. The effort lies with the teacher not the student. It is a challenge for the teacher to generate an inquiring mind, and we have shown that it can be done, this turnaround.

How did you choose faculty which would adhere to this new process of addressing education to dovetail with the higher employability factor?

Learning objectives and outcomes, these are quantifiable. We are not a teachers training institute. We have a faculty who is familiar with the practical methodology of teaching for applicability and objectives of learning. We sourced our faculty from a system which was already doing this. Earlier on our Vice-Chancellor, Ashok Saxena, was from Georgia Tech University, it was he who technically trained the deans of the institute to carry forward the hands-on methodology of teaching that would synchronize with the needs of the industry and enhance the em-