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'Professional World Too Requires Careful Preparation'

Basu says his book is a guide with practical stories and examples simply to prepare young executives to be successful in their chosen path



You have written two corporate fictions earlier. Why non-fiction now?

Make It Or Break It is one book which was always in my mind. I wanted to write it for a long time, since I always felt the need for such a book. And frankly, I did not completely move away from fiction. It is a 'Miction' — Management Fiction. It has 53 short near life stories drawn from the corporate world. Thus, my fictional bend of mind helped to give this book a shape.

How did the idea of writing this book come to you?

Every year in the corporate world, several thousands of new entrants join the millions of already existing bright young professionals. All of them thrive to make it 'large' in their career. They all want to become 'successful', to build a 'name', to leave behind a 'mark'. They quest for personal, professional and economic success for themselves. The goal to make it big often makes them confused ...many questions about how, why, what, where, when don their mind and they struggle to get an answer. The fault is not theirs. The problem is most of them do not have mentors to guide them; who help them navigate through corporate world.

Let us take a step back. We all prepare ourselves for our board exams, and then for the graduation, for our post-graduation entrance, etc. And then comes a time when we move ahead and join the professional world. But frankly how many us actually sit down and prepare for it carefully? It's a new life, much away from the campus life. It requires careful preparation. Many like us have struggled as we walked into the corporate world. Hence I thought of creating a guide with practical stories / examples that would help our young generation as they take their first step to conquer this world.

Considering there are several corporate life examples in the book, how difficult was it to put the book together?

It was not easy since many years of experience and observation was put together as I wrote this book. The first challenge was to pin down the topics. During that period, I spoke to many youngsters asked them what they would wish to know as they walk into the professional world. I spoke to many senior executives as well asking them what guidance they have missed during the early part of their career, if they are forced to look

back. That research helped zero down on the topics.

As I looked back into my own professional journey, I observed many situations and sometimes noted them down carefully. When I started penning down Make It Or Break It, I actually went back to my notes and worked with them. When I now look back and read the book, I feel happy that those little notes were of such great use.

You are currently working with AkzoNobel and have earlier worked SpiceJet, Whirlpool among other companies in India. What according to you are the top three qualities an employer looks in a newbie?

The top three qualities that I look at in a newbie are

1. Having an open mind to learn, unlearn and relearn
2. Having the zeal to live with positive and never-give-up attitude
3. Impeccable integrity including remaining apolitical

Tell us about your writing habits. When and where do you write?

Like everybody, I too have a busy schedule. Hence I write whenever I get time. No pre-fixed schedule, or need for silence all around. Writing is easy, putting thoughts together is difficult. More time is spent on the later part. I travel, hence many a times I write in a flight, at airports, when I am in a hotel. At home, my family is very supportive, and thus I write whenever I get free time as well.

To manage both worlds, the most important trait is to manage time. To take out time from a busy schedule is an art. It helps in two ways, one: you finish your job on time that makes you more efficient, leaves little scope for procrastination and two: you direct your energy to do what you love to do.

Where all did this book take you?

The book is a culmination of many years of experience and observation. During my corporate career I have travelled to many countries, lived in many locations, was lucky to have worked with many leading companies. All these helped me gather experience with different people, different cultures, and different situations. When now read the book, and I read those 53 near life stories, it reminds me of many past instances.

What's your energy drink?

There are many energy drinksThe top most energy drink is when a reader appreciates my work saying that he or she has been benefitted from it or when critics advise me on how to be better when I write the next.

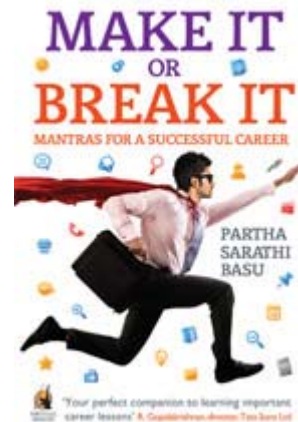
What makes a book a really good read or a bestseller?

I think an author puts in all his effort when he or she writes a book and the publisher definitely think it to be 'good' and hence it gets published. Thus I do not term any book as 'bad', it may not be to my liking, that's fine.

In my mind a good book is when it resonates with the reader. It can happen in many ways ...when a reader relates to the story or can find him or her somewhere in the story, or may be a theme he or she always wanted to write on, or may a story which he or she could never have imagined to be there.

What's the hardest thing about being a writer?

The hardest thing about being a writer is not about not being able to hit the bestseller list week after week or being criticised or momentarily not been able come out with the right story or the right word.



Make It Or Break It: Mantras For A Successful Career By Partha Sarathi Basu; Publisher: Penguin Portfolio; Pages: 232; Price: 250

To me, the hardest part of being a writer is all about keeping the belief in yourself in spite of many odds and able to continue writing day after day.

How did you find a publisher for your book and the current one?

I wrote *Make It Or Break It* in 2010, and submitted my manuscript to Penguin in February 2011. I was confident of my work and hence waited for a 'yes'. I still remember, I was in Goa on a holiday when I got a call from Penguin informing me that they would like to go ahead.

What are you reading now?

I am reading *Five People That You Meet In Heaven* by Mitch Albom.

E-books or Paper format?

Paper format. I still like the smell of a new book. It's stimulating.

So, what's next?

I have two books in mind — a non-fiction management book and a collection of short stories. In fact, I have progressed a lot on both. The management book is almost complete. I wish to publish that first, may be early 2014.

Compiled by Sanjitha Rao Chaini