

Amit Bhalla

Manav Rachna Educational Institutions

I have completed my Graduation, Post-Graduation and Doctoral Degree in Management and have been taking care of the internal environment and administrative tasks across the schools and universities under Manav Rachna Educational Institutions (MREI). I also look after the Group's sports development initiatives. As an avid sportsperson, and as the Vice President of MREI, I have been actively engaged in development activities for the Youth as well as the Society by organizing and sponsoring various Sports and Cultural Events. I have been the convener of the organizing committees of various International Shooting events (organized by the National Rifle Association of India) and have the privilege to be leading the Faridabad District Badminton Association as its President; Haryana Badminton Association as its Patron, and the Haryana Football Association as its Chief Patron. I wish to get an Olympic medal for the country through a Manav Rachna student.

promoting an entrepreneurial eco-system and mentoring students are close to my heart. Over the years, more than 70 companies have been incubated at our campuses and we have plans to increase the scope of our Incubation and Excellence Center in a big way.

Q. When did you start your journey as an educator and how many years have you dedicated to this industry?

My association with the education sector goes back to my formative years, having observed the passion and dedication of my father towards making a difference in the lives of people and communities. However, it is for the past 16 years that I have been associated closely with the sector.

Q. What was your vision & motivation behind starting your educational institute?

Manav Rachna Educational Institutions are the brainchild of our father, late Dr. O P Bhalla, an educationist and a philanthropist. He believed in the importance of providing quality education and insisted on developing a student's all-round personality. We thus established a project named 'Manav Rachna' that focuses on the creation

of better human beings through sports, academics, people skills and other extra-curricular activities.

We also very strongly believe that education is the only way through which we can bring about a change in the nation. Education, alone can change the lives of generations.

Q. How would you describe your journey as an educator and a visionary?

As an educator, you learn every day and no day is the same. There are no boundaries in education. It is like a clean canvas where you can paint whatever you think is possible.



Q. Who has been your inspiration during this journey?

My father was not only my mentor, but also a friend, philosopher and guide. We strive to keep up to his legacy.

I have also learnt a lot from my family, friends, son and daughter. Understanding their needs and requirements as young learners has been instrumental in giving shapes and colors to the education that we provide across our campuses.

Q. What are the greatest challenges you faced during your journey? How did you overcome these obstacles?

One of the greatest challenges has been to find the right team and the right people and inculcating in them the 'Manav Rachna' way of life. We have been able to address this through a very strong hiring mechanism, structured orientation, and training programs.

The second challenge was to understand the expectations of the industry and evolve a robust industry connect. In a way, we have come a long way forward through an effective communication with various stakeholders. We have on our Board eminent industry leaders, academic collaborations with some of the best corporate houses, industry-integrated courses, and joint R&D initiatives.

Q. Describe one instance that led you to step into the education sector.

The prime factor that drove my father to establish an engineering institute was their paucity in Northern India. At a time when my elder brother Prashant was looking to pursue a degree in engineering, only a handful of institutes in Western and Southern India offered the course. Hence, in 1997, we established an engineering institute which was only the fifth or sixth institute offering degrees in the same in North India. The MREI group gradually added other disciplines and established a dental institution, schools, Deemed University and a State Private University.

Q. What are the ways in which your school has reached out and connected with its neighboring community?

Our students are working with the community to register a meaningful contribution towards betterment of society. We have succeeded in making our students capable to work for the common good. This, in essence, is 'Manav Rachna' for us. At the Dr. O P Bhalla Foundation, instituted in the memory of my father; we have adopted a village and are working for skill development and school education in rural areas. The Foundation undertakes various initiatives to feed the hungry, provides free education and serves senior citizens.

Q. How would you encourage developing leadership capacity in your students?

We have been striving to and succeeded in creating a global level institution. Strong academics, research, employability, skill

development, value system, community connect and collaboration — everything has to go hand in hand. With start-ups being encouraged, we are helping students become job creators. Students are enabled to come up with a great idea to drive a start-up. Sustainability is another key focus area for us. We offer a very unique skill development program at our schools – encouraging innovation from a very young age.

Students are given exposure to organize and participate in events, festivals, Model United Nations to develop their organizing skills. Under the Manav Rachna Life Skills Program, we have assigned a CLAN to each student. This enables them to take responsibility of projects, demonstrate their capabilities of managing and bringing big projects to successful completion. Healthy rivalry is also important to enhance and set benchmark for performance levels.

All these, together, go a long way in building and honing leadership skills among students.

Q. What are your expectations from the teachers in your school and how do you help them work towards achieving the organization's vision?

At the higher education level, among our faculty are professionals from the industry, bureaucracy, defense as well as other experts who are passionate being a teacher and play a critical mentorship role at Manav Rachna.

Schools have a major role to play in increasing the Happiness Index of our future citizens. At our schools, cultivating an environment which maximizes both development and delight among students is the overarching learning outcome. This is only possible in a system where every child is felt valued. Child-centered learning, the cultural ethos that the school follows, the conduct and behavior of the teachers and a stress-free learning environment encourages joyful learning. Our teachers are regularly oriented towards this concept of happiness. That apart, we have an Academic Excellence Team that undertakes the responsibility of professional development on an ongoing basis and also ensures that quality norms of various affiliating bodies are being met.

Q. What are the values you wish to inculcate in your students?

Students need to be equipped to be great performers, creative thinkers, team workers, team builders and team leaders true to themselves and their organizations. Aptitude is important but even more important is attitude, integrity and engaging well with the environment.



Q. If you could bring a change in India's education system, what would that be?

Being a professional Institution, research and innovation are very important for us. Contrary to the accepted archaic model of education system, MREI has developed an education system, which is more process driven, practical oriented and meets the requirement in the present context of globalization. Our first and foremost focus is to bring best education practices from all over the world along with the best people from the Industry. The effort is not only to make our youth more employable, well equipped with necessary knowledge but to also develop necessary skills of entrepreneurship so that they can contribute to the growth story of India through skill and project-based learning.

Whether we talk about updated curriculum, delivery model of a course or a particular skill set required for a sector, there should be perfect synergy with the industry.