

THE TURNAROUND MAN

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In a time where we hear about institutional profligacy, one institution that has emerged as an exceptional institution while managing its resources optimally is Indian Institute of Management Rohtak. Since, early 2000s government has started dozens of IIMs, IITs, and AIIMs most of them struggling to attain some importance and many languishing in rented buildings. IIM Rohtak is only institution which is fully functioning out of its beautiful 200 acre campus with increased capacity of nearly 300% in last three years while enjoying 100% placement for its graduates. Also, IIM Rohtak is now amongst the top management research institutions in the country. IIM Rohtak was struggling like many new institution with a downward trajectory when its turnaround started three years ago. The man behind all of this Prof Dheeraj Sharma. Prof Sharma was a Professor in IIM Ahmedabad before joining IIM Rohtak where he was also responsible for managing the Armed Forces Program (AFP). In 2017, IIM Ahmedabad's AFP program experienced one of the biggest growth in its placement statistics with majority of the candidates finding jobs to their satisfaction. Lt Cmdr Raj Kumar (Retd) who was the coordinator of the placement committee says "Armed Forces Program at IIMA is for resettling retired or retiring defence officers where placement was minimal. However, in 2016-17 the armed forces batch was not only expanded but also we had the best placement results ever. Prof Sharma was instrumental in projecting the Program to the industry and for our placement success." Besides, Prof Sharma also provided an important report to ministry of defence on review of officer selection process in armed forces of India which is likely to further strengthen quality of officer intake in defence services. Lt General Sanjeev Anand (former commandant of Indian Military Academy) says "Prof Dheeraj Sharma carried out a very insightful Study on Selection of Officers for the defence forces in 2014, which benchmarked major areas of concern. The study was aimed at streamlining and strengthening the selection process while reducing time lines for the selection process, itself."

In 2017, Prof Sharma was also appointed to the board of IRCTC (Indian Railway) where financial health of the organization had immediately taken a beating due to removal of booking surcharge which was a major source of revenue for the company. The company had a major turnaround and is now amongst

the Fortune 200 companies. "Prof Sharma provided most valuable inputs in marketing our offering, selling insurance during ticketing, and expanding our operations which was a key factor in us achieving one of the best IPO success in India" says Shri MP Mall, CMD, IRCTC. Another organization which benefitted from Prof Sharma's expertise is Punjab Milkfed. "Prof Sharma's guidance as a board member was the critical reason for us in improved branding, distribution, and appropriate human resource management at Milkfed. Our brand Verka and Pio has grown in stature and the company has improved in financial strength from 2015 onwards" Say Former MD of Punjab Milkfed Sh. MS Brar (IAS). Dr. Vikram Shah (MD Shalby Hospital Ltd) say "Prof Sharma provided us excellent guidance for our international expansion and we also had an excellent IPO which resulted in our company growing from strength to strength". The comments are echoed by Sh. Rajesh Dubey, President of Alkem Laboratories "Prof Sharma was key person on our board who helped us in turnaround our strategic focus during demonetization and subsequent marketing of our products both in India and abroad."

Prof Sharma's turnaround work is not limited to corporations. He has worked in modernization of jails and industry inside jails for various states. Sh. Neeraj Kumar (Former DG, Tihar) says "Prof Sharma provided excellent inputs during his work in Tihar Prisons' Factories to provide renewed focus on branding, distribution, and rehabilitation of inmates". This view is supported by Sh. PC Thakur (Former DG Gujarat Jail Dept) who said "Prof Dheeraj Sharma provided much need impetus to industry in Gujarat jail and helped create a brand for Jail made products". Further former ADG Prisons of Punjab Jail Dept, Sh. Rajpal Meena says, "Prof Sharma has done extraordinary work in the modernization of Punjab Prisons department and his work will result in excellent outcomes for the prisons department of Punjab".

In 2011, it was evident that large numbers of personnel in CAPF were demotivated, stressed, and burdened. Prof Sharma's report was key input to Ministry of Home Affairs in improving the morale and reduction in stress in CAPE. Dr. N S Kalsi (IAS, Former Joint Secretary-Police in MHA) says "Prof Dheeraj Sharma visited almost all challenging location where CAPF was stationed including international borders, insurgency and LWE affected areas



Prof. Dheeraj Sharma
Director Indian Institute of Management Rohtak and full professor on leave from IIM Ahmedabad

even at a grave threat to life. He provided a very practical and valuable report to MHA. Implementation of the recommendations of this report has helped in addressing some of the important issues in the CAPFs and turning around the motivation level, and stress levels in CAPFs." Prof Sharma also helped JK Police deal with the issue of public confidence in Law and Order agencies. Mr. V K Singh (IPS and ADG JK police) says "Prof Sharma visited almost all areas in South Central KASHMIR and his inputs were valuable in perception management and contributed to various steps that were taken to enhanced public confidence in police."

Now at IIM Rohtak one can witness first hand that not only has the institution growing stature but continue to expand in terms of number of student and number of programs. While several institutions are complaining about the impact of economic condition on student placements, IIM Rohtak has yet again done 100% placement with even opted out students getting more than 10 interview opportunities. IIM Rohtak is operating efficiently and effectively with no financial support from MHRD for last two years and now IIM Rohtak is planning to open an extension campus in Gurgaon to have a larger footprint in the management world. When asked about his future plans for IIM Rohtak, Prof Sharma said "I hope IIM Rohtak will become the largest, most diverse, and most impactful management institution in next few years."