



Report on Alumni Talk on Leadership Skills (12th November 2020)

PSG Institute of Technology and Applied Research (PSG iTech) organized an interesting and insightful session on **Leadership Skills** during the **First Year Induction Programme 2020-2021** held on 12th Nov. 2020. **Mr.K.Annamalai**, Former IPS Officer and Founder, We the Leaders Foundation, enlightened about the importance of enhancing leadership skills with the budding engineers. Earlier, Dr.P.V.Mohanram, Principal, welcomed his former student and offered his felicitations. Especially, he briefed about his transformation from a learner to a leader.

His commenced his speech with a detailed explanation on one of the popular leadership theories of Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus: **Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA)** and appealed the students to be witnessing actors, whose outcomes cannot be controlled. Also, he spoke about the influence of one idea over another idea to implicate the world of uncertainty. Mr.K.Annamalai defined leadership as a continuous learning process and stressed on the importance of life-long learning through an interesting anecdote. Then, he requested the young students **to observe their immediate environment and identify a societal problem, which is bigger than their life**, and immerse into it for uprooting the problem. **Especially, he spoke about how overcoming one's ego facilitates in setting higher goals and committing oneself towards great things in life.** He also cited the case of Mr.Rana Kapoor and many other business tycoons, who have faced miserable end in their professional lives due to their egoistic nature.

The hardships faced by their parents in the bygone days were explained briefly to make the students realize the philosophy of leading a simple life and high thinking. He also spoke about detrimental effects of pampering made by their parents and its impact on their adaptability skills. It was also pointed out that sense of competition leads only to create poor and ineffective leaders.

Students were explained how the trails and tribulations faced by Steve Jobs in the competitive world, which kicked him out of the job, had made him stronger with more clarity and overcome selfishness. They were explained how **Steve Job's obsession for perfection led him to become a successful technocrat** in the later part of his life.



He **appealed the students to kill their egos by self-realization, reading books, and spiritual enlightenment.** Mr Annamalai also explained how he is striving to overcome his ego by committing himself to doing service for others in ashrams and derives satisfaction. He had a natural calling to devote to society's upliftment.

Learnings from the life of Mahatma Gandhi

Besides, students were narrated some testing time from Gandhiji's life, especially how he was initially driven by selfishness in making money. He also explained the kind of significant transformation underwent by Mahatma Gandhi, when he was racially discriminated and terminated from the first class compartment, during his train journey in South Africa. Students were explained how Gandhi took 55 years to fulfill his dream after encountering various hardships in life. He also insisted that people, who want to revolutionize their field, must have a vision for future and have big picture thinking.

Inspiration from the distinguished Alumni of PSG Tech

At the same time, he explained how he was inspired by the distinguished alumni of PSG Tech like Shiv Nadar, Mayilsamy Annadurai, and Shammugam Nagarajan and their cornerstones for success: no sense of ego, life-long learning, and moving ahead with bigger picture in life.

Facing Failures

Furthermore, it was instilled that failures are the stepping stones to reach success. He described how continuous failures led to the success of the president-elect Joe Bides at the age of 78 with all his health problems. He also insisted that the younger generations must not only see the success-side of the leaders but also learn how they emerged from those failures. It was affirmed that there is no success without failures and requested the students to embrace failures and learn from failures, which is the real test for aspiring leaders.

Learnings from Academic Pursuits

Later, he recollected how fate driven him to PSG Tech, where he met the finest teachers and people with great ideals in life. He acknowledged that technical things were not his cup of tea, so refused his offer from TCS and took a break to join MBA in IIM Lucknow, where he got an opportunity to work with Melinda Gates and the life-changing experience. He also



detailed about the work he has been doing through the foundation *We the Leaders* and how he embraced failures to reach the pinnacle of success. Also, he suggested students to have faith in destiny and not to control their life. He requested the students to see the positivity in everything and recognize the play of totality. It was also emphasized that students need to maintain a cheerful disposition irrespective of the situations that unfold as comic events.

Role of Library

At the same time, Mr Annamalai requested the students to stay in constant touch with gurus and shared how reading magazines like *Malayala Manorama*, newspapers, and books on international and Indian politics in library, helped him to get a global perspective and understand the need for service for the society. It was strongly recommended that students need to work on their strengths and treat success and failure equally. Dr.G.Chandramohan, Vice-Principal, offered felicitations to Mr.K.Annamalai. Finally, Dr.N.Saravanakumar, Professor and Head, Dept. of Mechanical Engineering proposed the vote of thanks.



Mr.K.Annamalai, Former IPS Officer and Founder, We the Leaders Foundation, addressing the First Year Students during the First Year Induction Programme-2020 held on 12th November 2020.



PSG INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND APPLIED RESEARCH
(Approved by AICTE and Affiliated to Anna University)
Neelambur, Coimbatore - 641062



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