



Job creators, not job seekers

Len A Schlesinger, president, Babson College, US, shares his views on the importance of entrepreneurship education in India

Vatsala Shringi/TNN

The world needs new ideas, innovative solutions, and visionary leaders who can make it happen are entrepreneurs. Today's most successful entrepreneurs are those who pursue both economic and social value — who create not only wealth, but also a wealth of opportunities for others.

According to Len A Schlesinger, president, Babson College, entrepreneurship education in India, where a lot of people from the middle class are becoming entrepreneurs, can be a game-changer. Founded in 1919, Babson College's key focus is to be the educator, convener and thought leader for entrepreneurship of all kinds and educate leaders who create economic and social value — everywhere.

Schlesinger feels entrepreneurial activity is the most

powerful tool to bring about social and economic change, and, hence, its relevance in the present world. "However, what is important is how we support and sustain the growth of budding entrepreneurs. We are actively involved in various parts of the world from the Middle East to India, in building a robust environment for supporting the new creed of job creators by providing them the basic education of creating their own ventures despite factors like limited capital, the prevailing market and tax conditions, etc," he adds.

Job creation is a problem everywhere in the world, including the West. Says Schlesinger, "India has a huge potential for entrepreneurial ac-

tivity given its sheer demography. Entrepreneurship education here can be used as a tool to channel the untapped human resources and produce a large number of job creators rather than job seekers."

In India there is a lot of emphasis on building family enterprise. "New jobs can be created through growing family businesses. This will be a solution for some of the problems being faced by society." While we can offer support through academic shaping and training, external factors like local community leaders and the government have to play a major role in fostering entrepreneurial activity, he further adds.

Babson College is partnering with Noida-based Shiv Nadar

University (SNU) to provide three entrepreneurship-focused management programmes so that students are trained to start their own ventures right at the stage of learning.

The three programmes include a four-year undergraduate programme in business administration (BBA), a two-year MBA programme and a one-year MS programme. Students pursuing BBA and MBA will get an option to study one of the semesters at Babson College, while those pursuing MS will spend the summer semester at Babson College.

Babson College will help SNU with curriculum design, selection of students, faculty training and student exchanges.

The entrepreneurship programmes at SNU will begin from the new academic year in 2013. Students completing the programmes will get a degree issued by the university and a certificate from Babson College.



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