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# VERBAlm

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## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Convocation



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THIS ISSUE**

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## LEADER SPEAKS

**DR. RAJIV R THAKUR, DIRECTOR, JAIPURIA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, NOIDA, TALKS ABOUT WHY STUDYING AT JAIPURIA NOIDA HAS BECOME SUCH A HIT WITH THE CURRENT GENERATION**

Dr. Rajiv R Thakur took over as Director of Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida, in March this year. Having now settled well into his new role (prior to this he was the Director of Jaipuria Jaipur), Dr. Thakur has put in place a number of 'Gen Y'-compliant initiatives. A PhD in Economics and an MBA from IIT-Delhi, before shifting to academia Dr. Thakur worked with the media industry for over 10 years and was associated with one of India's leading media conglomerates at a senior managerial position. As an academican, Dr. Thakur has held prestigious appointments in the education industry. He has been actively involved in MDPs and research, and has published research papers in international/national journals, as well as presented them at international conferences.

The Media Relations Club of Jaipuria Noida talks to Dr. Thakur about what makes 'brand Jaipuria' click and what his thrust areas as Director will be.

MRC- Thank you for your time, Sir. Every leader has a short-term and a long-term vision for the organisation. Can you share some of the goals that you are working towards?

Dr. Thakur- Anything we do in the short term or medium term has to be aligned with the long-term vision of the institute. We are strongly guided by the vision of the Chairman, that in the next five years we should be among the top three institutes in northern India. In order to achieve this, our focus is on delivering value to our students and industry, in sync with the higher standards of these testing times. This we successfully do by closely interacting with our partners in industry and understanding their needs. This understanding leads us to look into our curriculum, delivery and engagement with the students. Due to this, the learning outcome is purely skill-based and in keeping with industry standards and requirements. Of course, the behavioural aspects of this generation and new technological tools play a big role in deciding what we deliver and how we deliver it. Increasing complexities, pace and dynamism in the environment, society and the market – which all have global dimensions – also require the learning to be researched based. We also have to ensure that students develop the aptitude to think, analyse and come to their own conclusions and inferences about problems and situations. This is something that leads to innovation through the value chain, which is key to the success of business today.

MRC- How has your industry experience helped you in academics and administration? Are there any particular experiences you would like to share?

Dr. Thakur- Luckily, time and success has made me believe that this combination did provide me with an edge in managing things better. While academics have been a passion - and one enjoys growing as an

academican - industry experience did help me to bring in a result-oriented approach to academic administration.

Having an approach that is outward-looking and reaches out to industry and society has helped me to build institutions that are responsive to the needs of the time. It helps me in taking initiatives that are of high impact for the outer world and not simply confined to the boundaries of the institution.

MRC- You have now been the Director of two Jaipuria campuses – Jaipur and Noida. In your opinion, what makes Jaipuria different from other institutes? What has been your experience of working with both these campuses?

Dr. Thakur - Engagement with students and the effort to provide real value to students are the two areas in which 'brand Jaipuria' would surpass even the IIMs today. Much of this is because of the commitment levels. Right from the top management to the support staff or security staff, everybody gives his or her best. The role of the faculty as mentors to each student is something unique about Jaipuria.

Regarding the difference between the Noida and Jaipur campuses, both these institutes, though woven commonly in terms of their basic ethos and values, are at different stages of their life cycles. Jaipur, being a relatively new campus, has priority areas requiring a very different strategy than what would be required here at Noida, which is well established. Building, or rather rejuvenating the Jaipuria Jaipur brand was a memorable experience, where each and every member contributed day in and day out. At Noida, our focus is more on research, industry interface and preparing our students to scale great heights and set industry standards. This is very much in keeping with our vision of being among the top three B-schools in north India in the next five years.

MRC- Jaipuria keeps organising seminars and workshops for students. What should they take away from these forums? How can they benefit most?

Dr. Thakur- Besides the learning and exposure they get from the sessions and talks on contemporary and relevant topics, students gain a lot in terms of organisational skills and leadership skills. They should look to building on their confidence by interacting with participants who are from various strata of the corporate world, industry and society at large. Further, there are always opportunities for a select few students to directly participate in researching and making presentations on the subject. My advice to students is to grab these opportunities with both hands, as they are rich learning experiences. These conferences and seminars also spread a positive account of Jaipuria through word of mouth, which enhances brand value and ultimately benefits the students' association with Jaipuria.

MRC- Away from your responsibilities, what do you enjoy most in your spare time?

Dr. Thakur- (smiles) Quite frankly, there is very little spare time available. Most of it goes into contemplating the pros and cons, thinking things through, and yes - watching TV talk shows. Of course, spending quality time with family is what I like.

MRC- Would you like to share your success mantra with us?

Dr. Thakur- At your stage, what matters most is confidence. And confidence can only come with knowledge and abilities that you develop. So be honest to your work and make hard work second nature.