

Case 7: Motivation and Self-determination for a Change



Renji George Amballoor

1 The Journey Towards a White Revolution

*Shivananth Bakre
Dairy Farming,
Sanquelim, Goa.*

Failures and challenges are the part of the life and without them there is no learning and the life will be boring.

1.1 Formal and Informal Knowledge Gathering

Graduating with a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering, Shivanath Bakre joined the Indian arm of the international brand for oral hygiene, Colgate, in its engineering section. This was Shivanath's first employment and to test the waters he worked for about six months, realizing that working for others was not quite his cup of tea. After quitting the salaried job, he partnered with his friend and started a small ice cream parlour business which also provided photocopying facilities and a telephone booth. Four years later, he came to the conclusion that a partnership business was not really compatible with his highly independent streak and self-belief, and he opted out. At that time, he was also a collection agent for a local cooperative bank, an assignment which he continues even today.

Shivanath was born in an ordinary family. His father was the local priest performing rituals at the local temple. He was educated in the local Marathi medium school. As is the case of many rural households, his family owned some agricultural land and a few buffaloes. Being unemployed but with a keen desire to be independent and self-reliant for work, Bakre was just waiting for an opportunity to kindle his

R. G. Amballoor (✉)
Deputy Director, Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Goa, Porvorim, Goa, India

venturing imagination for a start-up business. Sagar Jawadekar, his brother-in-law who was also the chief reporter for Marathi daily, *Tarun Bharat*, told him that the state agricultural department had many schemes for dairy farming. Having some basic knowledge of farming, Bakre found the impetus to achieve something of his own when Jawadekar introduced him to Dr. Dattaraj Naik Parikkar who was the surgeon at the nearby veterinary hospital.

An intense personal dialogue with Dr. Parikkar proved to be a turning point in the life of Bakre. Shivanath recalls that the interaction was motivational and inspirational making him consider the different perspectives of looking at entrepreneurial business opportunities. Another individual, Rajesh Kenny, a veterinary officer, also played a vital role in lighting the spark of entrepreneurship in Bakre.

In order to establish a successful dairy unit, Dr. Parikkar enumerated and shared important trade secrets with Bakre. The dairy sector is a $24 \times 7 \times 365$ business and he had to be ready to put in dedicated hard work underpinned by an enthusiasm for such endeavour. The business has to be run for a minimum incubation period of five years, after which a decision could be taken to either shut shop or to continue. Systematic record-keeping of every rupee which comes and goes out his dairy business had to be kept. If the outflows were more than the inflow at the end of the fifth year, the doctor promised to compensate him for his earlier losses. Knowing that running a new dairy venture was going to be a back breaking job, Bakre had many questions to be answered. He was advised to document every question as and when it arises and to diligently go back to the doctor after five years for optimal solutions. Dr. Parikkar was instrumental in helping Shivanath imbibe the values of dignity of labour as an essential condition of venturing, and seeing a successful, salaried friend from the corporate world should not be a de-motivating factor. The early years, especially in a dairy industry, meant literally dirtying one's hands and foregoing the promise of a regular ride in a luxurious car. Humility was, therefore, another essential quality for a rookie entrepreneur.

1.2 Diving into Mud and Milk

Being new to business, Shivanath had no qualms to respect the mentorship of somebody who was well versed with the sector. After many deliberations and meetings, Bakre, a young boy from a traditional and conservative background, decided to jump into the dairy bandwagon. Calves can be reared into high productivity cows only if they are fed with four litres of milk every day for two years. This proved to be a very costly proposition for Bakre who started his business on borrowed funds. When he went back to the doctor with this feasibility issue, he was instructed to park his concerns and challenges until the end of the fifth year.

Bakre was a voracious reader, a typical passionate cricket lover, like many in the subcontinent of India, and used every moment to enjoy the natural beauties of life. So despite the valuable mentoring lessons and owning only a few buffaloes, he was unaware of their total count, because as a young boy, he had never stepped into the

cow barn or soiled his hands doing the menial tasks. What was missing from his search for venturing opportunities was any kind of felt experience of being a dairy farmer.

Due to the inadequacy of funds, Bakre decided to ask for a bank loan, but he required somebody with regular income or property ownership to stand as a guarantor. Fearing just a whim of immaturity and on the pretext that his son had neither real exposure nor seriousness to handle the new business, his father initially declined to counter sign the loan papers. It was only because of the direct intervention of Shivanath's mother that his father agreed to provide him with that surety.

Buoyed with a loan of Rs 60,000/-, he purchased five expecting cows from Kolhapur district, and within 8–10 days, these cows started milking adding five female calves in the process to the extended family. Gradually, his business prospered with the milk output increasing from 40 to 150 L per day. He initially started with one employee but ended with three with the labour being supplemented with new technology. As of now, he has reared and sold 40 cows from his farm, a source for additional income generation.

At any point of time, he has 25 milking cows in his farm, a figure which he does not want to alter. According to Bakre, 25 cows are sufficient to generate income for a decent living for his family with six members and to maintain a high happiness quotient. He does not aspire to be super rich, hence decided against expansion.

About 5–6 years back, labour shortage created a severe setback for his business and he was almost on the verge of closing down the business. The timely intervention of his friend Ajay Dessai who arranging the introduction of a milking machine helped Bakre to stem the downturn and work towards revival.

Once upon a time, green fodder was a constraint for the dairy farmers. With new technological development, the regular supply of green fodder is not an issue of concern any more. Similarly, with the availability of milking parlours—automated milking facilities, the challenges posed due to non-availability of skilled labour, issues of hygiene and sanitation, are no longer the bottlenecks for the industry. Shivanth opines that if Israel can emerge as one of the largest milk producer, Goa with better agro-climatic conditions can surely go a step further.

Impressed with the small achievements of Bakre's model, the local Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA), Pramod Sawant, has roped him to share his expertise for setting up the community dairy farming unit for local youth under the cooperative sector. The society has received state government permission for rearing 100 cross bred cows with a one-time subsidy of Rs. 1 crore. Once the unit is operational, they propose to replicate this model in other parts of the state as well.

1.3 Spreading the Good Muck!

Bakre goes out of the way to encourage local boys to take up dairy business, because Goa is the only state which on an average provides about 80% subsidy on feed, shed, and dairy equipments. Further, the daily production of milk in Goa is about 1.5 lakh

litres but the requirement is nearly 4 lakh litres per day. The huge mismatch between demand and supply should provide for considerable opportunities for dairy business.

Young Bakre continuously updates his knowledge capital by reading books and visiting other farms. Even today, he devotes about 3–4 h for reading and has a good collection of reference books on dairy farming. He is very keen about training youth groups in dairy farming. At present, he is mentoring about 4–5 dairy groups from different parts of Goa. He has interacted with 50 group of farmers from different parts of the state with a view to inculcating an interest in dairy farming.

Bakre is also a great champion for knowledge capital sharing. He believes that there are wonderful entrepreneurship opportunities in Goa and that the youth need a helping hand in understanding the numerous schemes and programmes offered by the government. He mourns that even in the present knowledge economy, the knowledge capital is concentrated in the hands of few and that those with the know-how are too reluctant to share it. In his own small way, as a part of giving back to society, he shares his experience and expertise with youth groups for setting up dairy farms whenever and wherever possible.

Smart work, commitment and consistency have been the driving forces behind the success of the dairy industry. For Bakre, the quality of his work triumphs over its quantity. It is one industry which is tough on holidays and breaks. Looking back upon the road he travelled, he does not regret his decision to enter dairy business. For him, the venture guarantees cent percent peace of mind, mental satisfaction, and happiness to boot, especially when he refers to witnessing the show of gratitude the animals which he cares for and rears.

Bakre is of the opinion that the youth need not queue in front of government offices, industrial estates, and foreign embassies for obtaining a satisfying job to manage a happy family. The youth should explore the entrepreneurship opportunities available in every region, identify the suitable one, and work forward with self-belief, determination, and consistency. If Goa has to emerge as the entrepreneurship capital of India, Bakre feels that the seeds of entrepreneurship should be sown when the child is in the high school itself. In this endeavour, parents and teachers have to play a major role. According to him, if 15–20 youth groups can come forward to take up dairy industry, Goa can easily replicate a white revolution.

Acknowledgements The author, Dr. Renji Amballoor wishes to acknowledge Springer and the esteemed editor for the seven cases published in this book. All cases have been revised to meet the requirements of this volume. He would also like to convey his sincere gratitude to all the inspiring entrepreneurs whose beautiful journeys are described in the cases and the unwavering support of his family & friends.