

Viswanath Gopalakrishnan

Viswanath (Vish) is the Founder Director of Organisations & Alternatives Consulting – a 23 year old OD consulting firm - based in Bangalore, India. A significant aspect of OAC's work is in partnering with other consultants in order to deliver high quality interventions to customers. Partnering is a core belief at OAC and the firm thrives on this philosophy.

Prior to his consulting work, he spent the first 7 years in a flourishing Corporate career - starting off as a Software developer / System designer, then moving to Customer support and finally to becoming a Product manager (hardware manufacturer).

Vish's theme in life has been to take *seemingly* uncalculated and ever-newer risks, rather in the fashion of diving backwards, without worrying about the consequences. The urge to give up a flourishing corporate career and start his own consulting firm arose from a desire to follow his heart, learn, grow and help create new realities. The next stage brought on a new journey as an HR manager for the following 6 years where he learnt all about Operational HR ground up as he had to formulate from scratch numerous policies which were not only robust but also fair.

13 years in 3 organisations (the last with DEC - the world's No. 2 computer manufacturing firm at that time) left Vish reasonably convinced that change could only be brought about from the outside as organisations were too inward focused to allow the inertia to shift. This shift was the most significant turning point for Vish – leaving behind a comfortable environment.

Vish has always enjoyed his work as an OD consultant, Coach and Learning facilitator. His core purpose at work is to help people realise their true potential - or at the very least acknowledge that there are umpteen ways in which this can happen, provided they are willing to experiment. His beliefs are founded on his own personal experience of change, as well as his interactions with over 11,000 participants over his lifetime.

Vish works with Top and Senior management from large MNCs to Start-ups. The firm's clients range from all sectors in the Corporate world to institutions which are International NGOs to Educational institutions.

Having facilitated over **550 workshops in different settings, sectors and 8 countries** (*Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Dubai, Myanmar, the Phillipines and USA*), Viswanath brings with him eternal optimism, and at the same time deep empathy for his participants / coaches - always acknowledging that change takes time, conviction and patience.

The cutting edge: Vish has pursued his passion of constantly thinking, innovating and bringing to his clients workshops and other developmental initiatives that are pioneering. The first of these was the use of a deep understanding of group dynamics (experiential learning) with the use of the wilderness in bringing Outward bound learning initiatives in the mid 90s. In more recent times, Vish has also brought the

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principles of Positive Psychology alive in his workshops – an emerging and critical arena of work in human development in a conflict ridden world full of negativities.

His belief that the methodology one adopts has to be relevant to the context allows him to create semi-structured learning environments which use the power of Open Space, Future Search, and Appreciative Inquiry as well as other methods.

His areas of professional interest other than OD and Culture building (including Vision, Mission, Values and Strategy) are Leadership Development, Building high performance teams, Performance and Life Coaching, and Personal and Team effectiveness through leveraging Strengths. As a Gallup certified Strengths Coach, Vish conducts workshops which focus specifically on this subject.

Viswanath is also deeply committed to the Development sector. He is a Trustee with Makkala Jagriti (an NGO that works with children from under privileged backgrounds – <http://makkalajagriti.org/>) and a Board member of Saahas (www.saahas.org) – an NGO working in the arena of Solid waste management. Both are Bangalore based.

Viswanath was also actively involved in the environmental and greening space - in particular setting up an organization (*GiFT- Green Innovation for Transformation*) that promoted the use of composting as the best way of dealing with organic bio-degradable waste. At present, he advises individuals, apartment residents and institutions on possible solutions for organic waste management.

Apart from his professional pursuits, Viswanath is a member of Matibhadrasagara - a Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism centre based in Bangalore which works towards sustaining, reviving and promoting the complete teachings of the Buddha.

Experience of 36 years:

OD Consulting

Founder Director of Organisations & Alternatives Consulting (since 1994)

Corporate (1979 – 1994)

- ✓ Corporate Manager - Human Resources, Digital Equipment Corporation (**now HP**), Bangalore, 1992-94
- ✓ Manager - Personnel, PSI Data Systems Ltd. (**now Aditya Birla group**), Bangalore, 1988 - 92
- ✓ Product Manager, PSI Data Systems Ltd., Bangalore, 1984 - 88
- ✓ Asst. Manager - EDP, Vispro Foundry Engineers, (**now Rane group**), Madras, 1979 - 82

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Board Positions:

- ✓ Advisory Board, Centre for Montessori Training, Chennai, 1998 - 2009
- ✓ Trustee, Makkala Jagriti (Education – children from economically under-privileged backgrounds), Bangalore, 2003
- ✓ Advisory Board, Saahas, (Solid waste management), Bangalore 2009

Management Education

- ✓ Visiting faculty – S.P.Jain Center for Management, Dubai
- ✓ Visiting faculty – SDM Institute, Mysore
- ✓ Visiting Faculty - Essae TAPMI Institute, Bangalore, 1999-2003
- ✓ Visiting Faculty – Symbiosis Centre for Management and HRD, Pune

Academic Background

- ❖ Post Graduate Diploma in Management, IIM Bangalore, 1982 - 84
- ❖ Bachelors in Physics, Vivekananda College, University of Madras, 1976 - 79

Professional memberships

- Professional member of the Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science (ISABS), 1996
- MBTI Qualified, APT Qualifying Training Program, 1998
- NHRD Network, Bangalore, Life member
- The Appreciative Inquirers' Network, Life member
- Indian Montessori Centre, Tamil Nadu, Life member

Professional/ Personal Development

- ❖ Certified Gallup Strengths Coach, 2015
- ❖ TAPIN – Confluence, Aug 2012, Bangalore
- ❖ TAPIN – Confluence, Nov 2011, Bangalore
- ❖ Appreciative Inquiry Foundations course, Lincolnshire, UK, Sept 2011
- ❖ TAPIN – Confluence, Feb 2011
- ❖ Appreciative Inquiry for Organisational Change, Jan 2009
- ❖ MBTI, Step II, 2007
- ❖ Future Search Conference, 2005
- ❖ Group Relations Conference, 2004
- ❖ Neuro Linguistic Programming, 2000
- ❖ MBTI Qualifying workshop, 1998
- ❖ The Values laboratory, 1994

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- ❖ Intensive human process laboratories (18 #) with the Indian Society for Applied Behavioral Sciences (ISABS) between 1988 and 1996
- ❖ HRD and OD Facilitators' Laboratory, 1988

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