

venture



the magazine
for business
management

DISCUSSING THE FUTURE

Call centres are moving to India - there are many considerations but do the benefits outweigh the costs?

**PREM RAWAT: THE
WEALTH WITHIN**

THE WEALTH WITHIN

In a world of accelerating change and turmoil, management theories have become increasingly complex. Bookshelves creak under the weight of books written by business gurus on how to manage a company, how to increase personal potential and to achieve success

In stark contrast, Prem Rawat has a remarkably simple message for business leaders: "The peace that you are looking for is within you, and I can help you find it." Many listeners say they experience a deep sense of calm and greater clarity by merely listening to him express his vision of life.

Over the last 30 years, Prem Rawat has addressed more than 4.5 million people in 250 cities in 50 countries. Thousands who are receptive to his message are prepared to explain how sometimes a single meeting with him has transformed their view of life and its purpose. For those who choose to make peace and inner contentment a reality in their lives, he offers a practical pathway in the form of techniques called 'Self-Knowledge.' His message is fundamental and crosses all cultural, social, educational, economic, religious, and political boundaries.

Prem Rawat is also known as Maharaji, an honorary title given to him in India where he began his work. He was born in a small city in the northern India to a family where Self-Knowledge was a way of life. As a child, he travelled throughout India with his father who spoke on the same topic. When his father passed away, Prem Rawat was only eight years old, but decided that his path in life would be to continue his father's work. Soon he was attracting audiences sometimes in the tens of thousands.

When he was only thirteen, Prem Rawat was invited to bring his message to Europe and North America marking the beginning of a journey that still continues. In 1974, he settled in the United States, but he spends only a small percentage of his time at home.

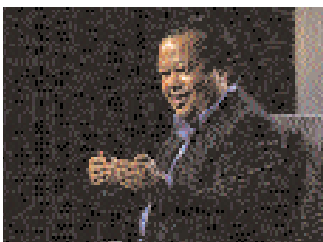
Venture caught up with Prem Rawat during a recent return to India. "I'm here for another two and half weeks," he told us. "Every weekend, there is an event in a different place and sometimes also in the middle of the week. I have just been to eight cities, and there are a few more to go before I return home for Christmas and my son's birthday. In February, I will come back out to India to visit another 10 or 11 cities; then on to the Pacific, Europe, the United States, maybe South America, Africa and round the world again."

His schedule seems gruelling, but Prem Rawat's own inner strength must drive him forward. "I travel around the world, meeting people face to face and presenting them with the possibility that, within them, lies a resource which can really fulfil their life, if they can tap into it. For me, it's just a question of presenting a possibility. Every living human being has something wonderful happening inside. Within each person is a supreme beauty. Within each person is peace, joy, the feeling of the heart. My work involves reaching people and trying to introduce them to the possibility that, if they can look within to that resource, it will certainly have an incredible impact on their life."

Due to social and technological advances, the majority of people in developed countries enjoy an unprecedented standard of living. However, there is no evidence that these advances have contributed to greater inner contentment. In fact, in many cases, material wealth seems to correlate more with heightened stress.

"Whatever we try to accomplish on the outside is a reflection of something that we also want to accomplish on the inside," says Prem Rawat. "Many strides have been made in this world and many things have been accomplished on the outside - houses, cars, telephones, televisions and on and on it goes. But when it comes to the person - the person who came into this world, the person who takes a breath, who feels pain and joy, the person who aspires to grow, to be fulfilled - that person is looking for something, and what they are looking for is within. If they can turn inside and feel that, you have a person who is much more centred, who is much more at peace with themselves."

Hundreds of thousands of people attend Prem Rawat's meetings each year and, after an initial ▷





▷ introduction, many decide they want to know more. "People are very receptive and yet it is completely up to them. Some people are too busy with their business or too busy with their life and they say, 'This all makes sense but I don't have the time right now', and, of course, I give them the space that they need.

"First of all you need to be introduced to this possibility. What is fascinating is that, whenever I introduce this possibility, even though a person may never have even heard me before, they say, 'Well, I think I already knew about this; I have always felt this'. Regardless of which country you go to, regardless of whom you approach or what they do, somewhere deep inside all of us we know that what we are looking for is within us. If people are interested, they can listen to more of my lectures. If they are still interested, then I offer four very practical techniques which can take a person inside and connect them to that feeling."

More than a few business and lifestyle gurus claim to offer hope and inspiration, or at least a guide towards beneficial change or success. Prem Rawat's approach differs in several key respects. "Firstly, mine isn't just a theory; I don't just say, 'Sit down and think nice thoughts'. My approach is much more practical: to actually go within, to take the senses inside and discover that feeling. People have to judge for themselves if they have actually felt it, and that's what is very, very important here. I offer inspiration, reminding people of the beauty of existence; I remind people that life itself is a gift. I encourage people to know that this is possible and to open windows of understanding, so that they can be fulfilled. I see each human being as complete. Within each one shines a sun so bright that it can make ignorance go away."

It is a well-known theory that, to succeed in business, executives must fix on an ideal future state and use this vision as an anchor to move forward. "You have to have a vision," says Prem Rawat. "Vision is a wonderful thing. The vision should be very broad and as wonderful as you can make it. And in that vision you have to see the manifestation of your life, to see that the fulfilment of your life is there alongside the fulfilment of your career. If we were to say that all we need to do is x, y and z out there in this world, and we did not address anything about our own self, then it doesn't matter what we have accomplished; something would always be going to feel empty inside of ourselves."

Adapting the accelerating pace of change has become one of most difficult factors in business management. "You know things will change," says Prem Rawat. "The world situation changes, politics changes, business practices will change, everything will change. But within you, there is a stability, a thirst waiting to be fulfilled. It has never really changed; it has been the same ever since you were young and it stays the same. So, while you cope with a lot of changes on the outside, on the inside there is something that is much more stable. You can tap into this inner resource wherever you go. It's a bit like being in a boat which is going to protect you from getting wet, protect you from the storm. If it is a sound boat, it can do ▷

- ▷ that. Outside it is rough and the boat is going up and down, but at least it is keeping you from those elements that might make you vulnerable."

In such a climate of constant change, advance planning for most executives becomes increasingly difficult, yet Prem Rawat recommends planning for an entire lifetime. "The simple principle of planning for a lifetime is that whatever will happen in my life, wherever I will end up, wherever I will go, it is in the future. And when I have to experience it, it will come to me as the present. I can plan ahead and I can say, 'Yes, I am going to do something tomorrow, but until that tomorrow becomes today, and that today becomes now, I cannot do anything. I could plan for a year from now and the amazing thing is that, when that year comes along, everything will be very different. Planning for a lifetime really becomes simple if you also look at yourself and say, 'Come what may, I remain me; I remain as I am. I can understand that, I can be in that peace; and if I can feel that peace within me, then I am ready to take on any challenge'."

To cope with change and the turbulent world of business, executives have to draw on many personal resources to survive. "The real resource is your own commitment and persistence," says Prem Rawat. "Water is a lot more supple than rock, but water has persistence. It takes on the rock and, eventually, it will carve itself a groove; it will take the rock and turn it into sand."

"The water has persistence and we also need to have persistence. Not only persistence in our business, not only persistence with our family, not only persistence for what we want to do on the outside, but the same persistence needs to be applied to the inside as well."

Prem Rawat travels across cultures and addresses a diverse range of audiences, but his core message doesn't change, and addresses the universal human condition. "What I say does not vary. At any particular event, I may be standing behind a podium or sitting on a chair. The staging and clothing may change, but the message remains the same. As people, we are very similar. Some would like us to believe that we are very different but, although the word for water may be different in different languages, the water itself is the same. Even though so many focus on the differences between people, I try to look at the similarities. When it comes to similarities, I do not think there is a person on the face of this earth who does not want peace in their lives."

Speaking to 4.5 million people in 50 countries over three decades requires unusual stamina and effort. When we asked where he found those resources, Prem Rawat said, "The effort has always been supported by the interest of people. People who discover that peace in their lives would like for me to offer this possibility to more people. In terms of personal stamina, I started travelling when I was very young and I have learned to cope with the time differences and the challenges of going from country to country. This has been made possible by my own commitment. If I did not have this commitment, I would feel extremely tired."

He went on to explain that the long years of travelling, although arduous, have brought many rewards. "When a person comes to me and says, 'Thank you for what you have shown me; thank you for what you have given me', then that makes me the most proud. I feel that I have touched someone's life and that, to me, is an incredible accomplishment."

The dissemination of Prem Rawat's message is supported entirely by voluntary contributions and by the sale of related materials. He personally receives no remuneration for speaking engagements or for the sale of materials, and the techniques of Self-Knowledge are taught free of charge. He supports himself and his family through independent means.

To further his work, The Prem Rawat Foundation, dedicated to promoting and disseminating the lectures, speeches, art, music, and public forums of Prem Rawat, has been established in Los Angeles. The Foundation presents his message in print, audio, video, and across the internet to a broad spectrum of audiences in over 80 countries, and in over 60 languages. In addition, the Foundation assists other organisations which support charitable, social, or philanthropic programmes and services consistent with Prem Rawat's message of peace. "I have very high hopes for the Prem Rawat Foundation," says Prem Rawat, "that not only will it facilitate the carrying of this message and facilitate people finding the peace within them but that, one day, the Foundation will actually be able to help to alleviate some of the physical needs of people, whether it is hunger or supporting other charities or directly interacting with people."

Rather than developing a membership or representing the interests of a single community of people, the Foundation's focus is on facilitating, funding, and publishing materials that allow for the widest possible individual access to the message. The efforts of the Foundation are funded by the generosity of appreciative individuals throughout the world.

In the process of bringing the message to so many people in so many different cultures, Prem Rawat has deepened his own self-knowledge. "I have been through a lot of change myself in this life. Wherever you may end up, wherever you may go, just know that the best of the best is within you. It is a resource that you will never run out of, regardless of how you may feel, how exhausted you may be. If you can dig that treasure, it doesn't matter what comes your way, you will be a very wealthy person within."¹⁷



PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

ERWIN MARANDIUK, AUSTRIA

CEO and 50 per cent shareholder of the Kroneisl-Stahl steel trading company in Linz, Austria. Kroneisl-Stahl trades approximately 60,000 tonnes of steel each year to metal-processing firms which produce radiators, refrigerators and elevators.

I first heard about Prem Rawat through a good friend when I was 19. The message was very clear, straight and simple. As the years went on, listening to Prem Rawat increased my understanding of my inner self, helping me to see life as a real gift and increasing my appreciation, even of little things. I began to understand that life was not something to take for granted and that I didn't have to wait for something bad to happen to appreciate it. What I have learned from Prem Rawat has also affected my approach to business. I have developed a respect and acceptance for people no matter what their age, nationality or profession. In the 13 years that I have been CEO of my company, not one of our employees has resigned. They seem to value the respect they are afforded. Associates have asked how I manage to stay so steady during our negotiations, even when large amounts of money are at stake. I attribute that quality to the understandings I have gained from Prem Rawat. Through the years since I first encountered him, Prem Rawat has reminded me again and again that the fulfilment that I seek lies within me and is not dependent upon my achievements.

BILL COX, UK

People and Organisation Delivery Manager, British Airways, Gatwick and UK Regions.

Prem Rawat and his teachings have enabled me to take a balanced perspective on my life. This has genuinely helped to even out the peaks and troughs. I am better able to focus on the real priorities. Knowing I can be in touch with something constant within me, I am more open to the wonderful diversity of experience which life can bring. I became interested in Prem Rawat's message in 1974 and soon after, both my wife and I were imparted his techniques of self-knowledge. This was a beautiful, life changing experience for me and the seed that was planted at that time has continued to grow and mature. Prior to this time, I had become somewhat disillusioned with my life. I had a feeling of emptiness and that there must be something more to life than the daily routine. I had an inner yearning for something more. What Prem Rawat offers has worked for me in a very practical way and has given purpose and direction to my life. The biggest impact has been understanding that the source of satisfaction and contentment lies within me. I do not have an expectation that my job, my house, or the money that I earn will make me happy in themselves, and this allows me to be much better at my job and more supportive to others. What Prem Rawat offers really is the greatest of gifts: a simple, practical way to go inside myself to the source of joy and contentment.

JOSE MARIA PEREZ-FLOR, SPAIN

General manager of Techmolder Inc., a leading Spanish builder of prefabricated homes. The company currently has orders for more than 20,000 houses over the next five years.

I first became interested in Prem Rawat's teachings in the spring of 1973. I was in Seville when I met an old friend who seemed deeply changed for the better from his normal 'mode'. He seemed happier, more content, clearer. When I asked him about it, his answer was unexpected. It was not a new girl friend, or a new business or a new 'existential' theory he had just discovered. Instead, he spoke to me about Prem Rawat, and what he said touched me enough that I sought out more information for myself. I was immediately interested. I wanted to experience what my friend appeared to be experiencing. Although everything was going well in my life, I felt there was a lot more about life I could experience, and what my friend was talking about sounded like a good way for me to advance in this direction. As I pursued this, it felt more and more as though a stream of fresh air had come into my life and it was a wonderful feeling. I embarked on a process of self-discovery that, to this day, still keeps unfolding and bringing me great satisfaction. After 30 years, what I have learned from Prem Rawat continues to affect how I feel about myself and how I approach life situations, whether in business or in my personal life. It has been a valuable resource that has enabled me to keep growing and feel successful as a person. I feel very lucky to have encountered Prem Rawat early on in my life. It has helped me to be conscious and precise in the successful decisions I make as person and businessman. He has helped me make good, lasting choices. More than ever, I feel at peace with myself and my life and with others around me.

RALF FORD, UK

Business development director at NCR UK, a \$6 billion information technology company whose clients include most of the world's largest banks, airlines, telcos, and retailers. The company is the market leader in CRM, one of the fastest growing sectors of IT in the last five years.

I first became interested in Prem Rawat's teaching while I was studying maths at Manchester University in the early 1970s. I attended a talk one evening and was intrigued by what was being presented: the ability to know oneself, rather than a set of beliefs based on faith. After graduating, I taught maths for a few years and then decided on a career change. Moving into information technology, I joined the commercial division of Unisys. During this time, I also married and now have two boys aged 11 and 14. Prem Rawat has helped me to have a far better understanding of my life. He is the most insightful and perceptive person I have ever heard and can describe the human condition and the predicaments we create for ourselves with unparalleled insight and precision. I have learned a lot from him about the simple appreciation of life. From a practical point of view, I feel I have become better at making decisions based on what is important to me. I have come to think more independently and not feel quite so governed by other people's expectations and judgments. I also feel less constrained by workplace politics. Having more confidence and respect for oneself engenders having the same for others.

The Prem Rawat Foundation
www.tprf.org