

SPEECH OF THE CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF GOVERNORS,  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, AHMEDABAD

AT THE 8TH ANNUAL CONVOCATION ON  
APRIL 21, 1973

Mr Dhar, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

May I welcome you all to the eighth annual convocation of this Institute. I am particularly happy that you, Sir, could spare your valuable time to come over here to bless the entry of our graduates into the world of practice. In a very real sense, your own altogether brilliant record of public service epitomizes the success of managerial acumen and skill. Your role as the Chairman of the Policy Planning Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs indicated how important it is to weave together loose and scattered forces in order to achieve well defined objectives. In your capacity as the Minister of Planning, you have injected a new sense of purpose and realism in the efforts for economic reconstruction to underline, as it were, that planning of any kind, at any level and in any kind of organization has to be in tune with broader environmental forces. In short, yours has been a managerial outlook towards the ministerial tasks--a phenomenon not very much common in our country. Thus it is but fitting that you should address these young men and women when they are at the threshold of their own managerial careers.

Sir, we have recently completed ten years of service to management education in this country, and our claim to a modest amount of success cannot be easily disputed. Through the Post-Graduate Programme, and the Programme for Management in Agriculture, we have tried to serve the needs of those who have yet to enter the operating systems and our executive development programmes have been of some use to practising managers irrespective of the form of ownership of their enterprises. We have organized several programmes for the university teachers to help them update their resources and have started a doctoral level programme in order to satisfy the growing needs of management teachers and researchers. There is legitimate room for bias in my judgement, but I do think that we have made some impact on the areas of our operation. We have contributed to the rising tempo of professionalization of Indian management, and have encouraged, both directly and indirectly, the growth of new institutions and university departments of management.

While these activities have attracted wide attention and admiration in the country, some of our internal organizational innovations are not so very well known. I would mention only one. When Professor Ravi Matthai decided last year to step down from the directorial responsibility but to continue as a faculty member after seven years

of meritorious and outstanding service, he created almost an organizational history because such acts of self negation are rather rare in our society. By doing so, he set up a healthy principle born out of his own conviction that change of leadership is necessary for the health and the élan of the organization. The procedure to select the new Director was as novel as the changeover was smooth. By giving suggestions on who should succeed Professor Matthai, the faculty influenced the Board's decision without dictating it. Professor Samuel Paul's appointment to this office proved that a good organization is capable of springing up internal leadership and that a community of peers is sagacious enough to discover and identify leadership talents from among its own members.

Sir, in many institutions including public sector enterprises the practice has been to develop the physical structures first and then to worry about delivering the goods and services for which they were set up. In the case of this Institute, the process has worked exactly in reverse. For the past seven years, we have been busy turning out the products expected of us, our young graduates, practitioners trained in our executive development programmes, research and consulting output. We have been busy increasing the quantum of our services and improving their quality while our physical facilities and investment in building lagged behind. It is only this year, after ten years of existence,