

In conversation with Mr. Makarand Teje
Executive VP & Applications Leader - HCL Technologies
SIMSR Alum Batch 1987-89



- Q. With such a rich industrial experience of over 25 years, what has been your most cherishable moment so far?**
- A. There are two, first one is winning one of the largest system integration deals in those times for Wipro in 1993, second is being chosen as CEO to run a private equity-backed largest independence software testing company in 2008.
- Q. Do you think in the wake of recent developments in the US and the world in general moving towards de-globalization, Indian IT industry needs to reinvent itself?**
- A. Indian IT industry will need to shift rapidly from experience-based delivery to expertise-based delivery, build stronger industry knowledge and strive to understand 'unstated' customer expectations better.
- Q. With the emergence of AI in the last few years many IT professionals fear of layoffs due to automation, what are your thoughts on the same?**
- A. The Emergence of AI should be seen as a complementary development to workforce evolution. This will require the focus on building more 'thinking' skills. AI is a revolution which will significantly change the cost base of many industries and will allow them the re-invest savings in innovation in customer-facing areas of their businesses.
- Q. Can you please enlighten us on the roles and responsibilities of an EVP in an MNC like HCL and how do you prepare yourself for the challenges that come with a leadership role?**
- A. I am responsible for global delivery of applications business in consumer services sector for North America. In my role, I drive profitable growth and customer satisfaction. Adapting to customer expectations, managing efficient talent, hire to retire cycle and leadership development are key challenges in this role.
- Q. Every accomplished person has a source of motivation or inspiration, where do you find yours?**
- A. I derive it mostly from my customer interactions and my team.

Q. In such a long career, there must have been a few setbacks as well, how did you handle and overcome them?

A. I am thankful for the boundless support from my family to deal with few setbacks, particularly my wife Bharati whom I met at SIMSR. Her selfless love for family and resilience to keep her head high with courage with all the career and location changes that we have done in last 28+ years of our marriage, has backed me all the way along.

Q. How do you unwind yourself after a hectic day or week or whenever you manage to find the time, off office?

A. 30 minutes of cardio activity at fitness center while on road, discussing technology trends with my 14-year-old son and coaching my daughter to help her deal with idiosyncrasies of corporate life as she has just started working, helps me unwind well.

Q. If you had to relive your SIMSR life all over again, would you do anything differently?

A. I wish I could have gained few years of work experience before joining SIMSR, that way I could have got more out the course.

Q. What are the significant learnings you had at your two years with SIMSR?

- a. Teamwork is equally or even more important than individual brilliance
- b. Most well-planned projects will have surprises, plan for additional time in the project plan
- c. MMS is just an entry ticket to corporate world or entrepreneurship, learning never stops

Q. What would be your advice for the students/young alumni who are starting their careers?

- a. It's OK not to find your 'true calling' in first few assignments
- b. Plan your career only for next 2 years, compare with peers once every 6 years
- c. Focus on building soft skills, travel extensively, and learn about other cultures

Rapid fire questions

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| a. A mantra that you go by – 'Be content, not satisfied' | f. Favorite City - Mumbai |
| b. Role Model – My mother | g. Favorite hangout spot in college - DP (not sure whether it is still there!) |
| c. A social cause close to your heart or you are associated with – Encourage gender diversity in leadership roles | h. A subject you loved the most in MBA - Operations Research |
| d. Favorite Holiday destination - London | i. A subject you hated the most in MBA - Econometrics |
| e. Favorite TV show - Seinfeld | |

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