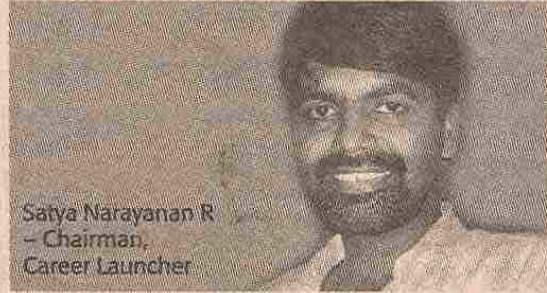


**A**FTER doing his MBA at IIM Bangalore, he started his career with Ranbaxy. It was during this job that Satya Narayanan R, Chairman, Career Launcher truly realised his passion towards training and entrepreneurship. Recalling those days, he says, "I felt that I am cut out to be a teacher. Entrepreneurship (chasing freedom to do things) occurred to me as my calling!" So within two years of his joining the corporate world, he started his training institution called Career Launcher in 1995.

Career Launcher basically provides guidance and test prep services to students aspiring to take up graduate professional courses (through CAT, MAT, GMAT, GRE) as well as to those aspiring to take up undergraduate professional courses (BBA, engineering, etc). Choosing this line of profession was a well thought out decision for Mr Narayanan. Having graduated through an IIM, he truly understood the journey that these students dream about. "I felt my experience and insights would be valued by students who aspire to get into an IIM or a top B-school," he says.

Today, with over 125 centres across 80 locations in India, Career Launcher caters to more than 50,000 students every year. It has been an interesting journey of growth for an institution that began with a capital of Rs 17,000, two employees and one vision – to enable individuals realise their potential & make their dreams come true. "The journey has been phenomenally rich in terms of entrepreneurial learnings and personal growth," says Mr Narayanan. Of course, there have



Satya Narayanan R  
- Chairman,  
Career Launcher

## Chasing Freedom To Do Things Entrepreneur Born Out Of Love For Teaching

been several challenges. "Most challenges have been of doing it without being there before," he says. And how did he deal with them? The answer comes from an individual who has tremendous self-belief and one who also understands the significance of team-work. He says, "My ability to deal with unstructuredness and a fantastic team that joined me in the early years helped me (us) overcome the challenges of the unknown!"

It is often believed (wrongly) that the journey of entrepreneurship is all about doing it alone without friends and family. Mr Narayanan's story proves that it isn't! "The entire journey has been filled with fun and freedom. Family pitched in and supported wholeheartedly – parents, siblings, wife (later on, when I got married)," he says. In fact, in the initial years, Career Launcher was supported by more than a dozen friends. "I hold their contribution invaluable to our success," remarks Mr Narayanan.

Entrepreneurship can indeed be a very fulfilling journey. But are entrepreneurs born or can they be created? As an entrepreneur and as somebody who is into mentoring and training the managers and leaders of tomorrow, Mr Narayanan offers an interesting insight. He does believe that some entrepreneurial traits are in-born. But he also adds that inherent traits contribute only 1% of the success. "Ninety nine per cent, in my view is learnt or acquired," he says.

Mr Narayanan wants to see Career Launcher 'as the most respected company in the educational space known for values, for leadership, for innovation and for the large social good that it contributes'. And his success mantras? "Hunger to become big, an action oriented thinking team and being sure about the core values and core purpose is very essential," he says. On the concluding note, he has a tip for the budding entrepreneurs. He says, "Enjoy the process, the outcomes would just be round the corner!"

– NIRANJAN MUDHOLKAR