

Reminiscences of a Teacher

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It has been more than six years since I started teaching at Dibrugarh University and am today a 31 year old senior teacher at its Centre for Management Studies. I had not even in my wildest dreams thought about being a teacher. But today, I can't think about switching to another profession. May be, it was in my destiny to be in this noble profession. Over the years, I've myself grown as a teacher and it's a really tough job to do justice to this profession. I have tried my best though. Looking back, I must confess that it gives me a sense of joy and achievement with my students starting to make a mark in their careers as well as their life. It is a nostalgic feeling to see my students coming to meet me, making a call or sending a mail to let me know about their career and life progress. Some of my ex- students are now my colleagues and it makes me really proud to introduce them to others as my students who have now become my colleagues. I've a no-nonsense image at the University and am seen as somebody who is very close to his students. I've myself always felt that my job as a teacher is to mentor my students and make them ready to face the journey of life. I keep telling my students that my job is to produce good citizens and human beings and not MBAs! I don't know how successful I've been, but the incidents given below give me enough reasons to feel that my efforts have not been completely wasted.

This story I have repeated many a times to many a people including my students. Kang Kan Das, a lanky bespectacled fellow of the MBA (FT) 2005 Batch is your average guy – decent and respectful. Our students organize a mega annual intellectual convergence called sanMilan every year and I've been at its helm since 2006 when the batch to which Kang Kan belonged organized the convergence. The batch, for the record had organized it very well. A few days after the convergence, Kang Kan came to me and said, "I'm sorry, Sir! Please forgive me. I had kicked your bike the night before sanMilan as you had scolded us for failing to do some work as per your instruction. I was very angry with you and after you had left the venue, I directed my anger at your bike (I had to leave my bike that night at the venue itself as it had refused to start!)". I was completely unprepared for the confession and somehow just made myself comfortable to answer him. In a lighter vein, I replied that fortunately, he didn't kick me and kicked only my bike. But, I commended him for his apology and made him know how happy I was at his apology. Somewhere, inside, I felt real joy at having made a difference to a student and how he looks at things by my teaching! For the record again, Kang Kan, now works for SBI as a CCE and is at present posted at Shillong. I do keep meeting him at our Alumni Meets whenever he comes.

Another incident that I remember vividly concerns a girl student of the MBA (FT) 2006 Batch. Her name is Parul Bukalsaria. She had got a placement at Reliance Telecom and was posted at Guwahati. After she had joined, one evening she called me up and talked with me about her new job and environment for a considerable time. Towards the end of the conversation, I jokingly asked her, "You have called me from your personal number (BSNL) but you could have called me from your official (Reliance) number which is free...". I could not complete my sentence as she interrupted and said, "Sir, this is a personal call and you only had taught us that we should not be using official facilities for our personal use...". There was some silence after that and the call ended thereafter with the customary exchange of pleasantries. I was really happy that my words were being followed by her in letter and spirit. Just to share with the readers, she worked at Reliance Telecom with distinction before being forced to leave her job due to some family emergencies.

I will wind up with another of the instances. This is again about a girl named Kiranjit Kaur, a MBA (FT) 2007 Batch student. Not very bright in her studies, she always put in her effort. Whenever I would admonish her, she would start with "nehi Sir! (No Sir!)". After her final semester exams and before leaving, she came to my Office and said, "Sir, aap se ek baath kehni thi (I had to say you something)". I replied, "Haan, bolo! (yes, tell!)". She then said, "Sir, aapke painr choone the... (I have to touch your feet...)" and saying so, she touched my feet. I could say her nothing and only wished her well for the future. She now works as an Operations personnel with Reliance Capital at Dehradun.

There are so many other experiences which continue to give me hope that I can make a difference to the society by working with my students and imbibing in them some good qualities and this is what continues to drive me.