

Experiential learning engages, inspires, and challenges.

Dr. Shahid Amin FDP- 2023



At IIM Ahmedabad, where innovation is the norm, our 43rd Faculty Development Program (FDP) in 2023, unfolded with a distinct flair for experiential learning. Amidst the array of unique activities, a standout feature was the field visit incorporated into our 'Qualitative Research subject.' It was a strategic initiative aimed at fostering a more profound understanding of challenging scenarios and honing our ability to procure high-quality inputs for research.

Our visit to the 'Vision in the Dark', a technology museum, run by Blind People's Association in Vastrapur, Ahmedabad resulted in some of the significant learning outcomes. 'Vision in the Dark,' a brainchild of Dr. Bhushan Punani, an alumnus of the IIMA, is spread over a pitch dark area of about 2,000 square yards, and only one of its kind in the country. The credit goes to Prof. Rajesh Chandwani, an esteemed Professor at IIM Ahmedabad, for affording us the invaluable opportunity of engaging in experiential learning. The skilful management of darkness within the museum's confines offers an array of insights for visitors. This experience fundamentally transformed our perception of how the visually impaired adeptly navigate life through alternative senses. The lessons gleaned from our museum exploration can be applied in diverse managerial contexts.

Firstly, the realm of business education can effectively impart the principles of employee commitment and engagement through this experience. In the contemporary corporate landscape, an organization's survival and prosperity hinge upon the commitment and dedication of its workforce. Examples such as Mr. Jaydev, who, despite partial impairment, possess immeasurable value to an organization, shatter preconceived notions. He is an employee at the Technology Museum, and he acted as a guide to all the visitors while they were exploring the dark Museum. Organizations should stand as pillars of

support, fostering belief in each employee's potential and should invest in their continual growth like Jaydev's. Jaydev embodies the quintessential employee with unparalleled vigor, commitment, and engagement. He emerges as a guiding light in adversity, a source of support and direction even for those with sight.

Secondly, the lesson of collaborative synergy and unity can be gleaned from our foray into the museum. Within the museum's confines, visitors grapple with unforeseen challenges amid complete darkness, traversing uneven paths and encountering barriers. Yet, bolstered by their team's unwavering support, they confront the daunting experience with resilience, humorously embracing the fear it incites, and ultimately conquering their destination. This mirrors the organizational sphere, rife with uncertainties. The clarion call for seamless teamwork and unity resonates, enabling organizations to unearth optimal solutions and achieve their goals.

The importance of effective communication, particularly the art of attentive listening, also emerges as a salient lesson. Preceding entry into the museum, adherence to authority's instructions is paramount. As one traverses the exhibit, an attentive ear to the guide's directions and fellow team members' cues is crucial. Neglecting this aspect can lead to disorientation or even harm. In a professional milieu, honing one's listening skills is equally vital, as its absence consumes time and energy.



Moreover, the visit to this museum can teach many more significant lessons. Academic institutions, too, can glean valuable insights from this outing, recognizing the potency of experiential learning. This engagement underscores the effectiveness of hands-on experiences in fortifying participants' grasp of key concepts. The visit serves as a blueprint for designing analogous activities or games, fostering a profound understanding of group dynamics and cohesiveness.

This exploration of 'Vision in the Dark' museum has bestowed us with a trove of lessons. These lessons transcend the academic realm, penetrating the layers of business, teamwork, communication, and educational methodology. Our experiential odyssey remains an indelible marker of growth and enlightenment.

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