



THE SHINING STARS

VOLUME 06

The Shining Stars, Volume 06

EDITORS

Brig. (Dr.) Rajiv Divekar

Dr. Jaya Chitranshi

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Neha Creations



THE SHINING STARS

VOLUME 06



SYMBIOSIS

SYMBIOSIS
INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES (SIMS)
(For Defence Personnel & Their Dependents)

Letter from the *Editor*



Brig. (Dr.) Rajiv Divekar is the Dean, Faculty of Management SIU, and Director at Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Pune.

Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Pune, is a distinguished B-school with a rich legacy spanning three decades. As a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), SIMS upholds the institution's commitment to academic excellence and international education, envisioned by its esteemed founder, Dr. S. B. Mujumdar. Established on February 8, 1993, SIMS was founded with the noble objective of serving defence personnel and their dependents.

Since its inception, the institute has steadfastly pursued its mission to 'Make a Difference,' demonstrating unwavering dedication to academic and professional excellence. SIMS stands as a unique and successful model of public-private partnership in higher education, a collaboration between Symbiosis International (Deemed University) and the Ministry of Defence.

Today, SIMS is recognized as one of the leading B-schools in the country. It is approved by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and certified under ISO 9001:2015. Symbiosis International (Deemed University) has been accredited with an A++ rating by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

At SIMS, we remain deeply committed to our core purpose—transforming the lives of our students through a holistic approach to education. By fostering academic rigor, professional development, and ethical leadership, we strive to nurture future leaders who will make a meaningful impact in the world.

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A JOURNEY OF GRIT AND EXCELLENCE

AVANTIKA SUSAN NIGAM

MBA Batch 2000-02



Chief People Officer at Atria Convergence Technologies

Avantika, Chief People Officer at Atria Convergence Technologies, is an experienced HR leader with 20+ years of experience in talent and transformation. Previously worked at PepsiCo and Aon Hewitt, she is passionate about CSR, inclusion, and empowering women in STEM.

A Trailblazer in HR Leadership

Avantika Susan Nigam's remarkable journey from a bright student at Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Pune, to a distinguished HR leader is a story of passion, perseverance, and excellence. Her career, marked by strategic acumen and transformative leadership, has not only elevated organizations but also set a benchmark in the HR industry.

Laying the Foundation at SIMS

Avantika's academic journey began at SIMS, where she pursued an MBA in Marketing and Finance. Her time at the institute was nothing short of transformative, instilling in her the critical skills of analytical thinking, resilience, and adaptability. The vibrant academic environment and diverse peer interactions laid a strong foundation for her future successes, both as a strategist and a leader.

Building Expertise: From Consulting to Corporate Leadership

Avantika embarked on her professional journey in HR with early roles at Dr. Reddy's Laboratories and NIIT Limited. These positions provided her with invaluable insights into HR business partnering and talent strategy, shaping her approach to leadership and execution.

Her transition to Aon Hewitt as a Senior Consultant was a defining phase of her career. Avantika partnered with leading organizations across Consumer, Pharma, and Retail sectors for more than six years. She honed her expertise in Total Rewards, Performance Management, and HR Strategy, building a strong reputation for delivering impactful solutions.

A Decade of Growth at PepsiCo

Avantika's tenure at PepsiCo stands as a testament to her leadership and strategic prowess. Over more than a decade, she made significant contributions as Senior Director HR, leading Total Rewards for Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa, collaborating with the Food Sales team in India, and driving HR Strategy & Transformation.

Her work in talent transformation, leadership development, and organizational strategy not only enhanced business outcomes but also fostered a culture of empathy and excellence. Avantika's legacy at PepsiCo is not just her impressive achievements but also the deep and lasting relationships she built along the way.

Leading People Strategy at ACT Fibernet

Currently, as the Chief People Officer at Atria Convergence Technologies (ACT Fibernet), Avantika continues to shape organizational culture and strategy with her visionary leadership. In a rapidly evolving industry, she focuses on building high-impact teams, nurturing innovation, and promoting an inclusive workplace where talent thrives.

Championing Diversity, Inclusion and Empowerment

Beyond her professional roles, Avantika is a passionate advocate for Corporate Social Responsibility, Diversity & Inclusion, and Women Empowerment in STEM. Her commitment to creating equitable opportunities has earned her several industry accolades, including:

Most Iconic HR Leader - 2023 by World HRD Congress

Top 5 DivHERsity Champions Award for Large Enterprises - 2023 by JobsForHer

A Journey of Inspiration

She remains a guiding light for those aspiring to make a mark in HR and leadership, inspiring others to embrace change, stay curious, and continually strive for excellence.

Her story is a proud chapter in the legacy of SIMS, showcasing how the institute's values and education can lead to extraordinary achievements.

A red semi-circular graphic with a flat bottom, positioned behind the text.

SECTION 1

MOMENTS of PRIDE



Dr. Jaya Chitranshi is a Professor at Symbiosis Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Pune, specializing in Human Resources. She also serves as the Faculty In-Charge of the Editorial and Media Relations Team, guiding initiatives that enhance the institute's outreach and engagement.

It is with immense pride that I present The Shining Stars-volume 6, a tribute to the outstanding achievements of our alumni over the past year. SIMS alumni continue to soar high in their respective sectors, making a mark in diverse industries with their expertise, leadership, and commitment to excellence.

This book not only highlights their professional milestones but also features selected alumni who have shared deeply personal insights into their journeys, offering inspiration to the entire SIMS community.

A heartfelt thank-you to our alumni for taking the time to share their experiences. Your stories are a testament to resilience, dedication, and the impact of SIMS education, serving as a guiding light for current and future students.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Brig (Dr.) Rajiv Divekar, Dean, Faculty of Management & Director, SIMS Pune, for his unwavering support and vision, which have been instrumental in bringing this magazine to life. I also deeply appreciate Ms. Shweta Mehrotra, Head of Placements, for her valuable support and guidance throughout this process.

This magazine is a celebration of the incredible SIMS alumni network, and I hope it continues to inspire many more success stories in the years to come.

ALUMNI

Achievements



Sumit Kapoor

Mr. Sumit Kapoor has been promoted to Associate Partner at KPMG India. With a robust background in the armed forces and management consulting, he has demonstrated expertise in strategy, operational advisory, and risk management across industries such as telecom, banking, and hospitality. He has led key initiatives that have driven impactful business outcomes, showcasing his leadership and strategic acumen.



Jaideep Singh Dhanoa

Jaideep Singh Dhanoa has been promoted to Director - Client Engagement at Deloitte India. His career exemplifies dedication and excellence, contributing significantly to Deloitte's success. With a focus on client engagement and strategic initiatives, he has played a pivotal role in delivering impactful results and driving business growth.



Varsha Belagavi

Varsha Belagavi has been promoted to Director at Deloitte India. Her career reflects strategic thinking, exceptional leadership, and a consistent commitment to driving impactful business initiatives. She has successfully led teams and delivered innovative solutions, achieving significant milestones in her role.



Rohini Christina Williams

Rohini Christina Williams has been promoted to Managing Director at EY. With expertise in managed services and exceptional leadership skills, she has consistently delivered transformative results. Her strategic approach and commitment to excellence have been instrumental in achieving organizational success.



Saurabh Mital

Saurabh Mital has been appointed General Manager - Innovation at Diageo. Transitioning from a marketing specialist to a leader in global innovation, his career showcases creativity, dedication, and a focus on impactful business strategies. His contributions have been key in driving innovation and achieving long-term success.



Kinjal Pande

Kinjal Pande serves as the CEO of DB Schenker, with a distinguished career in the shipping and logistics industry. Her journey is marked by visionary leadership, resilience, and excellence, setting a benchmark for success. She continues to lead transformational initiatives in her field.



Geetanjali Malshe

Geetanjali Malshe is the Learning and Development Manager at Eaton Technologies. Her professional journey highlights resilience and determination, exemplified by her return to full-time work after a career hiatus. She has successfully driven learning initiatives, demonstrating a passion for growth and excellence.



Rajat Jain

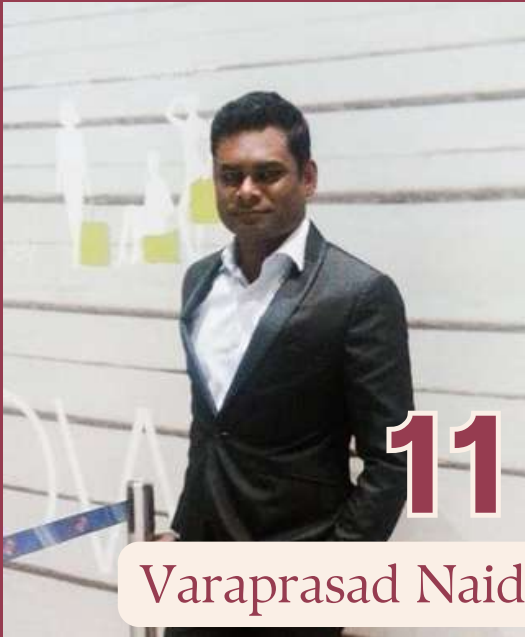
Rajat Jain has been promoted to Assistant Vice President - Wholesale Credit Risk at Barclays. With 16 years of experience in the banking sector, his expertise in credit risk management has been instrumental in achieving business objectives. He continues to lead key risk management initiatives.



Gautam Suri has been appointed as Managing Director - Asia at iNova Pharmaceuticals. With expertise in marketing, strategic management, and innovation, he continues to achieve outstanding results in his leadership role. His strategic vision has been instrumental in driving growth and operational excellence.



Dinkar Devgan is the Recruiting Lead at Google. His career, transitioning from a junior executive to a global leadership role, exemplifies adaptability, hard work, and a commitment to excellence in talent acquisition and management. His contributions continue to shape the recruitment landscape.



Varaprasad Naidu

Varaprasad Naidu serves as Senior HR Manager at FIS. His professional journey spans multiple sectors, showcasing a commitment to HR excellence and the ability to drive innovative practices in human resource management. He continues to influence organizational growth through strategic HR interventions.



Gurtej Singh Vaid

Gurtej Singh Vaid has been promoted to Vice President of Sales at Mastek. His strategic vision and dedication to fostering innovation have been critical in achieving success within the organization. He has consistently delivered impactful results in sales and business development.



Naina S. has been promoted to Assistant Vice President - Total Rewards, Accenture. Her innovative strategies and expertise in HR have significantly contributed to organizational success, establishing her as a key player in her field. Her leadership continues to shape the organization's reward practices.



Sitaram Kandi has been appointed CHRO of Tata Motors. His extensive global experience in employee relations and skill development strengthens Tata Motors' people strategy and growth trajectory. He continues to drive excellence in human resource management.



Priyanka Bhatnagar

Priyanka Bhatnagar, a seasoned HR leader with over 23 years of experience, exemplifies growth and dedication. Her career reflects a strong commitment to HR excellence, making her a respected leader in the industry. She continues to drive impactful talent strategies.



Rajesh Chakraborty

Rajesh Chakraborty leads FP&A for Barclays Treasury, with a distinguished career in the manufacturing and banking sectors. His expertise and leadership continue to drive significant contributions to organizational success. He is known for his strategic approach to financial planning.



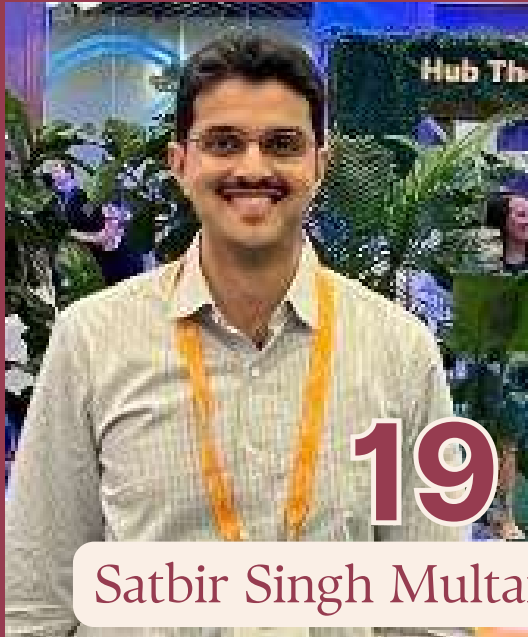
Amol Gupta

Amol Gupta's diverse career spans banking, biotech, and IT. Currently leading HR functions in Florida, he demonstrates a passion for innovation and a commitment to excellence in human resource management. His contributions continue to influence organizational effectiveness globally.



Prasanna Kumar

Prasanna Kumar has been appointed as Sr. EVP & Head of Financial Services at Aon. His visionary leadership and strategic problem-solving continue to foster growth and excellence in the financial services sector. His expertise drives impactful financial strategies.



Satbir Singh Multani

Satbir Singh Multani serves as Senior Manager at PwC. His career encompasses functional consultancy, project management, and industry leadership, reflecting a commitment to continuous learning and impactful contributions. He has consistently delivered innovative solutions in his roles.



Vasundhara Pande

Vasundhara Pande has been promoted to Consultant at Aon. Her dedication and consistent delivery of exceptional results have made significant contributions to the organization's success. She continues to excel in delivering strategic solutions.



Umesh Wason

Umesh Wason is the co-founder and CEO of NuaaV. His entrepreneurial vision and leadership have driven the venture's success, positioning it as a dynamic player in the industry. He continues to innovate and lead impactful initiatives.



Ashok Kumar

The career journey of Ashok Kumar (Chief Strategy Officer, Marsh India) showcases excellence in engineering, finance, and strategic planning. Transitioning from a mining engineer to leadership roles, he exemplifies dedication and expertise. His contributions continue to influence organizational growth and innovation.



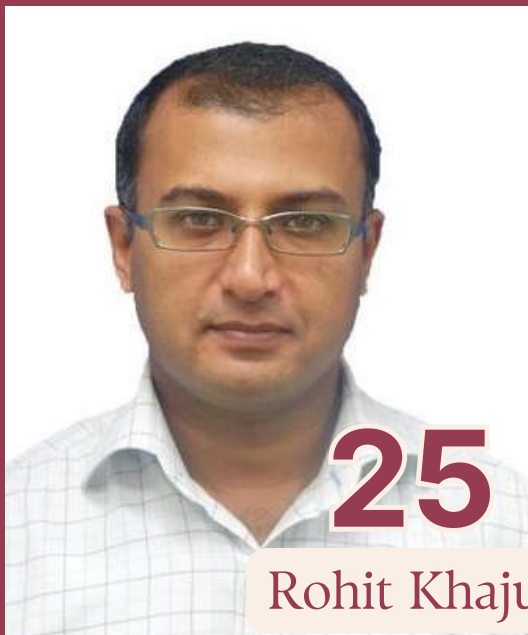
Karishma Prabhakar Woodman serves as Managing Director & Head of HR at JPMorgan Chase. With two decades of HR experience, she has established herself as a leader in talent management and strategic initiatives. Her impact on organizational culture is noteworthy.

Karishma Prabhakar Woodman



Deepti Mohan has been appointed Head of Resourcing for Standard Chartered India & South Asia. Her expertise in talent acquisition and HR strategy positions her to shape the future talent landscape effectively. She continues to deliver innovative talent solutions.

Deepti Mohan



Rohit Khajuria

Rohit Khajuria has been promoted to Director, People Business Partnering - APAC Revenue & Marketing. His extensive HR expertise and strategic vision continue to align HR strategies with business goals effectively. He plays a key role in driving organizational success.



Navneet Pal

Navneet Pal has been promoted to Director at UBS, overseeing Equity Derivatives in US Product Control. His expertise in finance and leadership continues to drive organizational success. He has played a pivotal role in achieving key financial milestones.



Anupama Lal

Anupama Lal has been appointed Director - Learning and Culture at KPMG ASPAC. With over 17 years of experience, she consistently fosters talent and enhances organizational culture through her leadership. Her contributions remain instrumental in driving growth.



Ekta Singh

Ekta Singh has been promoted to Director at UBS. Her analytical abilities and leadership in finance have made a significant impact, reflecting her expertise and dedication. She continues to deliver exceptional results in her role.



Vishal Chordia

Vishal Chordia has been recognized as Lokmat Maharashtra of the Year in the Industry and Business category. His contributions to boosting Maharashtra's economy and promoting rural artisans and Indian cuisine globally are exemplary. His visionary efforts continue to inspire.



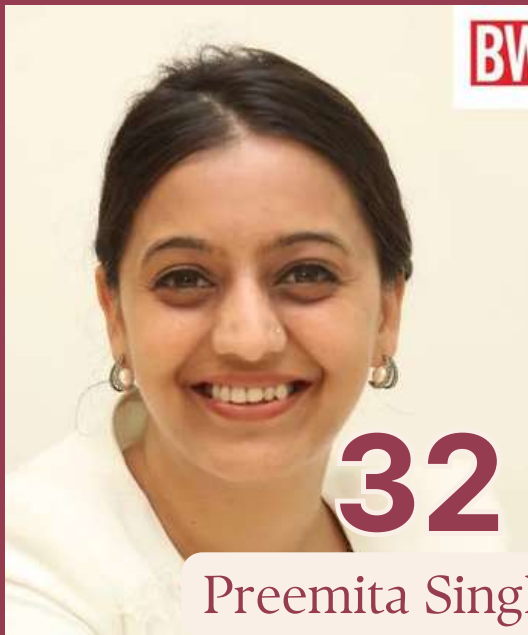
Saasha Jethwani

Saasha Jethwani has been included in the prestigious Jombay HR 30 under 30 awards. Her dynamic contributions to HR, particularly in recruitment and inclusion advocacy, set her apart as a forward-thinking leader. Her passion drives impactful HR practices.



Sakshi Sharma

Sakshi Sharma has been promoted to Senior Partner Development Manager at Microsoft. Her expertise in cloud business and strategic partnerships has driven exceptional outcomes, reflecting her commitment to excellence. She continues to lead key initiatives in her field.



Preemita Singh

Preemita Singh, EVP & CHRO of Havells India Ltd, has been elected as a jury member for ETHRWorld. With over two decades of HR leadership, she continues to influence talent strategy and organizational design significantly. Her contributions to HR remain impactful.

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SECTION 2

THE INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

SHWETA MEHROTRA
HEAD PLACEMENTS, SIMS



Ms. Shweta Mehrotra is the Head of Placements at SIMS, Pune, managing MBA placements and corporate relations. She has also led branding and promotions for SIMS, enhancing its industry presence and reputation.

On behalf of SIMS and our Director, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the alumni who contributed their inspiring stories to the institute's magazine, The Shining Stars Volume 06.

Your journeys stand as a testament to the diverse and impactful paths you have carved over the years. The depth of your experiences and the sincerity with which you shared them will undoubtedly resonate with readers, serving as a source of motivation for current and future members of the SIMS community. Your willingness to contribute reflects not only your commitment to your alma mater but also your belief in the power of shared narratives to connect and inspire. Each story adds a unique and invaluable dimension to the book, showcasing the remarkable achievements of our alumni.

Additionally, we deeply appreciate your unwavering support for the institute's corporate engagement and placement activities over the years. Your continued involvement plays a vital role in shaping the success of our students, and we look forward to your ongoing support and guidance.

Thank you once again for sharing your journeys and enriching the legacy of SIMS. Your contributions strengthen the bonds within our community and celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our graduates.

SAIKAT RAY

Marketing & Finance

2003-2005



VELBIOM PROBIOTICS PRIVATE LIMITED
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*"The best of man is he who puts a mind of action
to the path of action"*

-Swami Vivekananda

What motivated you to choose SIMS for your MBA, and how did it shape your journey?

01

When I was considering B-schools for my MBA, I had three key expectations: credibility, discipline, and holistic exposure. Coming from a defense background, I knew that an institute with a structured, disciplined ethos would provide the right environment for my growth. From my research, SIMS stood out as a place that not only upheld these values but also had a strong academic reputation, a promising alumni network, and a student body that was making its mark in the industry.

Even in its early years, SIMS had built a culture of excellence, and its graduates were going on to do meaningful work in various sectors. The students I interacted with seemed smart, driven, and ambitious, which reassured me that this was the right peer group to challenge and inspire me.

One of the major factors that attracted me was the dual specialization program, something unique in the market at the time. The opportunity to gain expertise in both Marketing and Finance provided a broader perspective and skill set, which was rare to find elsewhere. While placements were not my primary concern, I knew that SIMS had a strong industry presence and corporate connect that would ensure good opportunities.

How did you balance your professional and personal commitments during your early career?

02

In my early professional years, my primary focus was on learning and adapting. While SIMS gave me great exposure, stepping into the real world was a completely different challenge. My first role at Satyam was as a business analyst, which required understanding customer needs and aligning software solutions accordingly—a far cry from the more strategic marketing roles I had imagined. I quickly realized that fancy campaigns and leadership roles don't come immediately; instead, success depended on understanding the fundamentals, breaking down problems, and building expertise from the ground up.

At the same time, I had personal commitments—getting married early meant work had to take priority initially as I focused on scaling up as quickly as possible. However, one mistake I made was not prioritizing my health early on. Like many, I assumed it could be addressed later, but I now realize that maintaining a healthy lifestyle from the start is just as important as career growth.

Looking back, balancing personal and professional life wasn't about achieving perfection—it was about adapting, learning, and making small but meaningful course corrections along the way.

What is your biggest fear, and how have you faced or overcome it?

03

Fear is not a constant—it evolves with different phases of life and the challenges that come with them. For me, one of the recurring fears has always been about whether I am truly fit for the new roles or responsibilities I take on.

Throughout my career, I have constantly changed industries and roles, each time stepping into something unfamiliar. I started in IT as a business analyst, then moved into program management and account management. Later, I ventured into entrepreneurship, launching startups in the food and beverages space and even a hyperlocal delivery business. Eventually, I made a complete shift into pharmaceuticals, an industry where most professionals have deep technical expertise built over years. Given that I didn't come from a pharma background, I often questioned—will I be able to succeed in this space?

This fear of stepping into the unknown is something I have faced at multiple points. But over time, I've realized that every industry, every role, and every challenge is built on fundamental building blocks. If you can understand the core principles—whether it's how a business operates, where the pain points are, or how to structure solutions—you can adapt, learn, and grow into any role.

Even today, when I take on something entirely new, the initial uncertainty still exists. But I have learned to trust the process—to break down the problem, understand its key components, and build from there. The fear never truly disappears, but it becomes a motivator rather than a roadblock.

This mindset has helped me navigate career transitions, build businesses, and lead in industries where I was once an outsider. Fear, when approached the right way, is simply the mind's way of telling you that you are about to grow.

Reflecting on your career, what is the one thing you would do differently if given a chance?

04

If I had to do one thing differently in my career, I would have jumped into entrepreneurship much earlier.

I spent a significant amount of time working in different roles in Satyam and Accenture and only after 10-15 years got into active startup mode. While each of these experiences taught me something valuable, I now realize that waiting to gain experience before starting on my own was not entirely necessary. The world is evolving so rapidly that the skills required to succeed in a corporate job don't always translate to building a business from scratch.

Many believe that working in a large organization first will equip them with the right skills for entrepreneurship, but the reality is different. The challenges, decision-making processes, and speed of execution in a startup are vastly different from those in a big company. If entrepreneurship is the goal, it's better to start early, learn on the go, and adapt rather than wait for the 'right time'.

That said, for those who aspire to build a corporate career, my advice would be different. Jumping jobs too frequently in the early years can be counterproductive. Many young professionals today switch companies every two years, chasing better pay or titles. While mobility has its advantages, stability in the first few years helps build depth, credibility, and a strong foundation. If a corporate career is the goal, spending at least 3-4 years in one place early on provides much more value than rapid job-hopping.

Finally, on the personal front, one thing I would have changed is prioritizing health earlier. While career growth took center stage in my early years, I now understand that maintaining physical and mental well-being is essential for sustained success. Fortunately, I've made that shift now, but it's something I wish I had been mindful of from the start.

Looking back, I wouldn't change the essence of my journey, but I would have taken calculated risks sooner and embraced entrepreneurship earlier.

What is your biggest dream for the future, and how are you working towards it?

05

My biggest dream is to create an enterprise of value and being able to provide for livelihood for 1000 families. On the social front I would like to go and do more grassroots work like I did in SIMS through Pranay.

In what ways have you contributed to your community or society, and what impact has it had?

06

One of the most fulfilling contributions I have made is founding Pranay at SIMS, which continues to thrive years after my graduation. Seeing it become a lasting part of the SIMS culture and impact new batches of students has been incredibly rewarding. On the entrepreneurial side, my contribution has been through bringing the best of healthcare practices to society. At Velbiom Probiotics, we focus on creating awareness within the doctor community about simple, effective solutions that positively impact health—something that is often overlooked in traditional medical practice. We also work on introducing clinically tested, high-value healthcare solutions that cater to real-world patient needs. A key part of my work has been developing products specifically designed for Indians, rather than repurposing solutions made for the Western world. To deepen this effort, we are actively engaged in research collaborations with Manipal Academy of Higher Education, studying the impact of different bacteria on human health from an Indian perspective. This work is especially meaningful to me, as it allows us to shape healthcare solutions that are relevant, effective, and accessible to our own people.

Looking back, what was a defining moment during your SIMS journey that shaped your career or personal growth?

07

One of the most defining experiences of my time at SIMS was being part of the Student Council, where I had the opportunity to work closely with the college administration and my peers to organize large-scale events and initiatives.

The sheer scale of responsibility—managing budgets, coordinating logistics, handling stakeholders, and ensuring smooth execution—was my first real taste of what leadership and problem-solving looked like in a high-pressure environment. It wasn't just about execution; it was about collaboration, decision-making, and learning to navigate challenges on the go.

Another pivotal moment was founding Pranay, an initiative that started as a vision to bridge social work and student engagement but has now become a lasting part of the SIMS culture. Seeing it continue to grow even years after my graduation is something I take immense pride in. It reinforced my belief that when you build something with purpose, it can create a lasting impact.

These experiences at SIMS shaped my career by instilling a strong sense of leadership, adaptability, and execution—skills that have been invaluable in my entrepreneurial journey. Whether it's leading a business, launching a new initiative, or navigating complex markets, the foundation of structured thinking and teamwork that I built at SIMS continues to guide me even today.

Do you have any final thoughts or reflections?

08

I am a hardcore supporter of SIMS and the values it instills in its students. SIMS is more than just a management institute—it's a family. Most of us come from defense backgrounds, which gives us a shared sense of discipline, adaptability, and camaraderie. This common foundation makes networking within the SIMS community seamless—whether it's with batchmates, seniors, or juniors, there is an instant connection and understanding. However, I feel that as a collective, we haven't fully leveraged this powerful network, and that's something we all need to work on. One of the strongest aspects of SIMS is its ability to produce well-rounded professionals. I see a lot of young graduates coming out with a strong entrepreneurial mindset, ready to take on new challenges. What truly sets SIMS students apart is their adaptability—they don't shy away from tough situations, and they know how to grind, learn, and grow in any environment. This resilience is what makes them succeed across industries. However, one area where we can improve is bridging the gap between students and alumni. Those still in college often have a different perception of the corporate world, and it's only when they start working that they realize the real challenges. More alumni should actively engage with current students—sharing experiences, mentoring, and providing insights into the realities of different industries. This will better prepare students for the world beyond SIMS and strengthen our community further. SIMS has always been about discipline, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging—values that continue to shape us long after we graduate. It's a place that doesn't just create managers but leaders who know how to thrive in any situation.

VIVEK SHARMA

Marketing & Operations
2006-2008



JAYANTI HERBS & SPICES
BUSINESS HEAD

“When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough get Going.”

What motivated you to choose SIMS for your MBA, and how did it shape your journey?

01

I chose to join SIMS because of its strong reputation, rigorous academic curriculum, and opportunities for networking and personal development. I was looking for a place that would push me to think critically, challenge myself, and connect with like-minded, driven individuals. Majority of us at SIMS are from Defence forces background and thus a perfect fit. What shaped me the most was not only the exceptional faculty and diverse peer group but also the emphasis on leadership, strategic thinking, and real-world business exposure.

How did you balance your professional and personal commitments during your early career?

02

To be honest, I am still trying to find that balance. Over the years, I have come to realize that work life balance is ever evolving with your personal and professional growth. For me balance is not about time but being involved in the moment and not letting home come to work and vice a versa.

What is your biggest fear, and how have you faced or overcome it?

03

The biggest fear which still lurks around everyday is getting something wrong. Every business call comes with its chances of failure and brings the fear of failure along with it. Overtime I have come to realize that have an equally good plan B and then commit 100% to Plan A.

Reflecting on your career, what is the one thing you would do differently if given a chance?

04

I was hasty in my earlier years and hunger to climb the ladder fast, has made me take decisions which should have been avoided. I was part of some great organizations where the opportunity to learn was good. If given the chance I would like to give me more time to learn over picking opportunities to move up the chain.

What is your biggest dream for the future, and how are you working towards it?

05

Dream has always been to create something which will outlast me in this world. As a professional we can build products, business, brands etc. which will stand the test of time. We are currently building a brand which will be India's first Food Super Brand. In last three years we have taken this brand from 7 Crores to 100 Crores.

On the personal front, my focus is to grow the school which my parents started few years ago. I want it to become a institution of world class education and accessible to every child.

In what ways have you contributed to your community or society, and what impact has it had?

06

Professionally I try to give opportunities to two things I care for the most which are my alma mater SIMS and other failed cricketers like me :). We have created one of the best Management Trainee programs and we hire exclusively from SIMS for that.

On the personal front and in a more meaningful way, my family runs a school in Himachal where we try give access to good education to underprivileged kids.

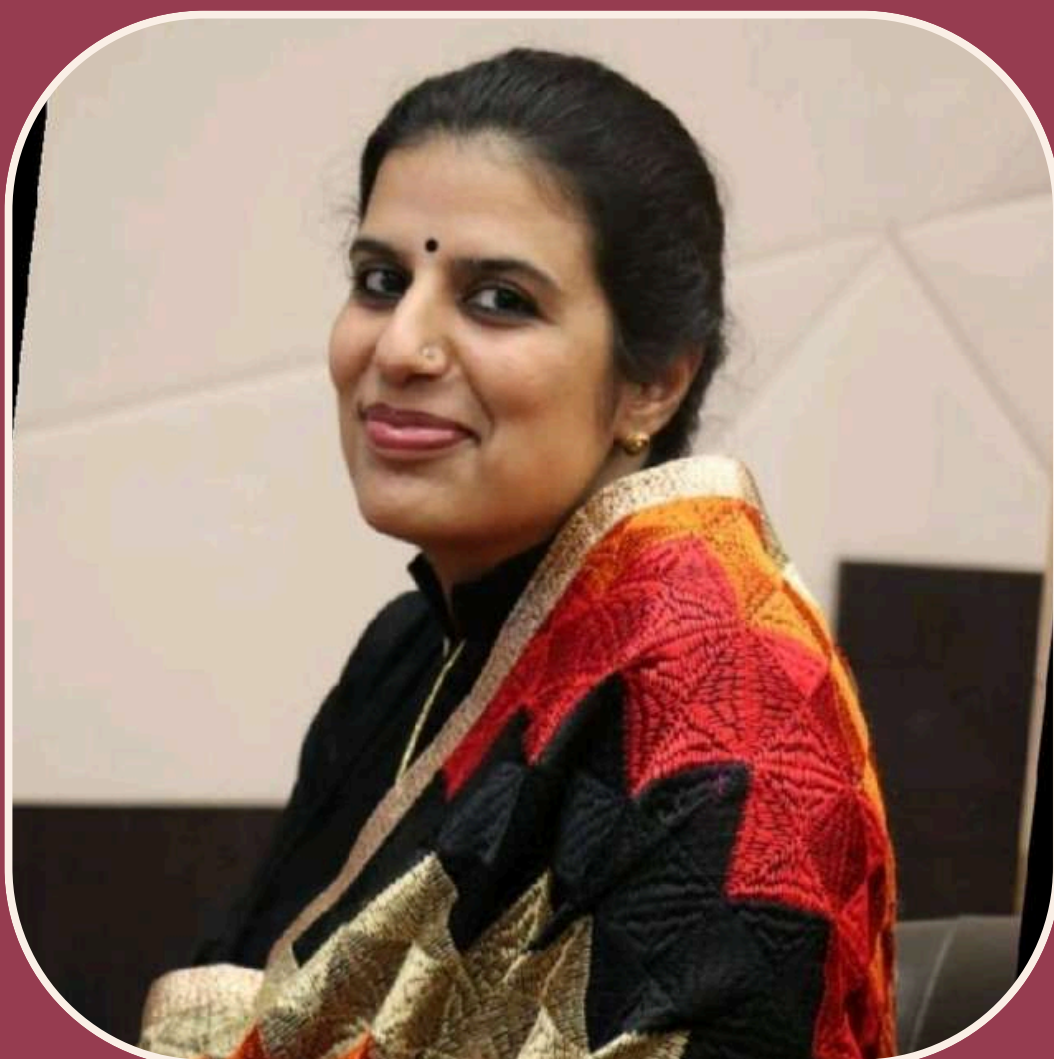
Looking back, what was a defining moment during your SIMS journey that shaped your career or personal growth?

07

Had always dreamt of being part of the FMCG industry when I was pursuing my MBA. Have loved every day of the last 17 years in the industry. This was made possible through my summer internship which led me to my first job through a Pre Placement Offer.

SHAAN VATS

HR-Marketing
2008-10



INFOSYS LTD.
SENIOR PRACTICE LEAD

“When your passion is aligned to your profession, success is guaranteed.”

What motivated you to choose SIMS for your MBA, and how did it shape your journey?

01

SIMS has a great brand name, good exposure, multicultural environment, professors with corporate experience and an amazing ROI which is what made me choose it. The skills and learning I have had both through hands on assignments and group work has helped me throughout my professional journey. The importance of "Jugaad" that was taught to us on day one of Business Exercise, has stayed with me and has helped me in thinking out of the box for quick problem solving with minimal resources.

How did you balance your professional and personal commitments during your early career?

02

You have to build the right support system both at home and work place to balance things. Following a schedule and planning things also helps. There will be days where work will take priority and vice versa, so take one day at a time and ask for help when required.

What is your biggest fear, and how have you faced or overcome it?

03

Professionally my biggest fear will be to become outdated and irrelevant. I believe in being a Life Long Learner, hence it is imperative for me to keep upgrading my knowledge and keep a close watch on the industry trends. I learn from everyone ...my seniors, my peers, my juniors & even my kids 😊.

Reflecting on your career, what is the one thing you would do differently if given a chance?

04

I am very satisfied with my career trajectory, there is nothing that I would want to change.

What is your biggest dream for the future, and how are you working towards it?

05

My dream is to contribute towards nation building by reworking on our education system which will directly shape the future of the country. I was fortunate to have been instrumental in helping several universities redesign their curriculum to make it more in line with the industry requirement, there by bridging the industry-academia gap and making students future ready. We should get back the glory of Nalanda & Takshashila to India. We should recreate world class universities in India.

In what ways have you contributed to your community or society, and what impact has it had?

06

I love guiding people in finding their passion and help them align it with their profession. I am fortunate to be in a role that helps me touch hundreds of lives in a life changing way and being instrumental in guiding them to build a career of their dream.

Looking back, what was a defining moment during your SIMS journey that shaped your career or personal growth?

07

SIMS had been fantastic journey for me where I not only gained knowledge, but also made great friends for life. One of the life defining moment at SIMS for me was when I won 100% scholarship from SIU to do my second masters in International Business from Leeds, United Kingdom. That international exposure was an eye opener to a global perspective. I had some tremendous learnings both professionally and personally that have stayed with me till date. SIMS has a lot of opportunities to offer, it is upto you to make most of them !

Do you have any final thoughts or reflections?

08

Every SIMSite is a Brand Ambassador for SIMS, unless we take pride in our own Brand, nobody else will. Let's all keep upholding SIMS identity and SIMS flag flying high.

SUMIT KAPOOR

Marketing
2011-2013



KPMG

ASSOCIATE PARTNER, CHIEF OF STAFF TO CEO & HEAD OF IMPACT PLAN

“Excuses don't give any thrills neither do they pay any bills!”

What motivated you to choose SIMS for your MBA, and how did it shape your journey?

01

After finishing high school, I joined the National Defence Academy. Unfortunately, due to an accident, I was medically discharged from the academy. Following this, I pursued my graduation from Fergusson College in Pune, where I learned about the MBA program at SIMS. The program greatly intrigued and motivated me to join SIMS. Looking back, it was one of the best decisions I ever made, as those two years at SIMS were incredibly fulfilling and enriching.

How did you balance your professional and personal commitments during your early career?

02

Admittedly, the early years in consulting were quite challenging, especially since the demands of the profession and the travel involved were significantly higher twelve years ago. Achieving a work-life balance was virtually impossible. However, the culture at KPMG was a motivating factor that sustained me. Over time, as I became more accustomed to the firm, the work and life aspects began to blend seamlessly and became enjoyable. Ultimately, it boils down to one's personal efficiency and determination; if you are truly committed to achieving something, you will find the time for it.

What is your biggest fear, and how have you faced or overcome it?

03

My greatest fear was the feeling of vulnerability. In the early stages of my career, I coped with this fear by overworking, trying to mask my insecurities with relentless effort. However, as time passed, I came to understand that vulnerability is actually a testament to one's authenticity. Embracing this realization, I now prioritize being more genuine and true to myself, recognizing that authenticity fosters deeper connections and enhances personal growth.

Reflecting on your career, what is the one thing you would do differently if given a chance?

04

Not fall down from the horse at NDA.
Jokes apart, I truly believe in destiny and would not really want to change anything.

What is your biggest dream for the future, and how are you working towards it?

05

My dream is perpetually a decade ahead of me, much like Matthew McConaughey's Academy Award speech - always have something to look up to, something to look forward to, and someone to chase. For me, I look up to the formless God (Spirituality), I look forward to being in a position where I can make a significant impact on the world, and I am constantly chasing my better self, who is always ten years ahead of me.

In what ways have you contributed to your community or society, and what impact has it had?

06

I am a firm advocate of micro-charity, which means I don't seek a grand purpose or agenda to contribute to my community. Instead, I strive to make a difference wherever possible, taking on challenges and tasks within my limited capacity. In my professional role, I lead the Impact Plan (ESG reporting and assurance) for KPMG in India. Through this, we aim to address environmental and societal challenges, with a particular focus on education and employment.

Looking back, what was a defining moment during your SIMS journey that shaped your career or personal growth?

07

As a student manager at SIMS, I quickly realized that practical learning holds greater value than purely academic education. Participating in various 'Best Manager' competitions across the country, I managed to perform exceptionally well on numerous occasions including winning 'Barcode' and being runner-up for 'Arjuna' at SIMS. This experience was immensely valuable. SIMS provided the essential platform for me to excel and acquire the precise knowledge and skills I sought at that time.

Do you have any final thoughts or reflections?

08

For any student manager, the two years of an MBA program are always memorable. However, if you are from SIMS, those years are uniquely special. The reason lies in the shared backgrounds and experiences of the students, which foster lifelong bonds. This strong alumni network and enduring friendships are treasures I always hold dear.

SONAL PANDEY

Human Resources & Marketing
2012-2014



DELOITTE US-INDIA OFFICES

EXECUTIVE MANAGER – NATIONAL CAMPUS RECRUITING STRATEGY

“Winners don't do different things, they do things differently”.

-Shiv Khera

What motivated you to choose SIMS for your MBA, and how did it shape your journey?

01

SIMS came highly recommended by multiple alumni, and it is renowned for its unique environment, predominantly composed of military children. This distinctive setting aligns perfectly with the values of the Cantt and Services, offering a community of peers who share similar principles. This alignment with my values was a significant factor in my decision to choose this institute.

How did you balance your professional and personal commitments during your early career?

02

Recognizing the importance of personal well-being, including mental and physical health, was an essential realization in my professional journey, I wasn't very good at it early on but came in about five years in. I believe that without a strong foundation in these areas, success remains elusive, no matter how many leadership resources you may read or watch. This value is very close to my self-belief & I ensure I carve out time for any of those personal commitments I have made for myself. I believe in almost 11 years of my career, this has guided me towards resilience and building further on my foundation.

What is your biggest fear, and how have you faced or overcome it?

03

My biggest fear is "unpreparedness". As you grow professionally, it's impossible to anticipate every challenge, but what I've learnt over the years is being adaptable and resourceful is what helps one overcome this. Also, some basic discipline and habits do help adapt and overcome this.

Reflecting on your career, what is the one thing you would do differently if given a chance?

04

I would probably take more risks, when early in my career newer challenges had come my way.

What is your biggest dream for the future, and how are you working towards it?

05

I'm not so sure if I can call it a dream, but my future vision is to be a mentor and a leader whom those shaping their careers can aspire to look up to, especially women who hesitate to continue their journey in workforce. I hope to inspire and empower professionals who are uncertain about their career choices by offering support and mentorship in any way I can. Throughout my journey, I have met leaders who have truly impacted me with their inspiring paths. If I can come close to having that kind of impact, I will feel that I have accomplished my future vision.

In what ways have you contributed to your community or society, and what impact has it had?

06

Through my role at my firm, I work in a space where I engage with campus students through various platforms. I am proud to have built one specific platform, where we invited students to share their stories of community and societal impact, on a national platform. I feel giving voices and platform to students, to inspire larger audiences is something which was impactful and much needed as our world saw some tough times during post-pandemic times.

Looking back, what was a defining moment during your SIMS journey that shaped your career or personal growth?

07

The group projects, outbound activities and orientation is truly something that added to my personal growth.

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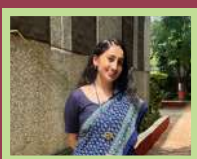
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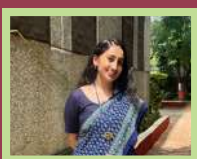
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