

AJAY S. SHRIRAM

Chairman and Senior Managing Director, DCM Shriram



PHOTOGRAPH BY SHEKHAR GHOSH

Q. The biggest challenge you faced in your career

A. DCM Ltd was split in 1990, and my brother Vikram and I were responsible for the chloro-vinyl and fertiliser complex at Kota and Swatantra Bharat Mills in Delhi, all in bad shape. Our biggest challenge was to know our people, interact with them and turn around the businesses. It was done with support from people who had been with us for over 10 years.

Q. Your best teacher in business

A. The person I had always admired was Dharma Vira (former Cabinet Secretary) from whom I learnt the value of relationships, fair play, helping others and showing respect. I have tried to imbibe these values in my day-to-day life.

Q. One management lesson for young people

A. There are many intelligent and practical people, but one grows by having an open mind. The biggest negative is to think one has a monopoly on brains. What's most important is working with people and building a team of competent people to achieve goals.

Q. Three essential qualities a leader must have

A. Leaders must create an ethos where teams can work for the common good of an organisation. They should handle difficult situations with optimism. They must infuse trust and build a strong value system where there will be mutual respect and understanding. **BT**

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