

## Yash.ca: Passion makes things happen

He is the epitome of entrepreneurial success. Back in July 2001, despite the downturn phase of the technology industry, Isopia, a company he co-founded was acquired by Sun Microsystems Inc., USA for USD \$100 Million. Yes, he is a South Asian living in Toronto and if you haven't heard about him yet, it's time you did ...

When it comes to success mantras, any talk about passion seems clichéd. However, when you hear him talk about it, you start to get a real sense of what it means. Continue listening to him and you can now start to feel it. As his talk reaches a crescendo, exactly as in music performance, it becomes so palpable that you can almost touch it! The reason? It comes from none other than Mr. Aditya Jha, the well known entrepreneur, whose incredible success has made South Asians proud not only in Canada, but in the entire world.

Mr. Jha became a superstar of the software industry when the company he co-founded, Isopia Inc., was acquired by Sun Microsystems for a cool USD \$ 100 Million back in June, 2001 -- an outstanding success for a software startup. It was even more stupendous as it came during the downturn phase of the technology industry. He now runs a company called Osellus Inc., based in downtown Toronto, and works tirelessly for the community. Despite his busy schedule, he takes the time to share what he has learned along this exciting journey.

Mr. Jha co-founded Isopia Inc. in 1999 after having a very successful career at Bell Canada as General Manager, eBusiness and General Manager, Product Marketing. "Those were the days when we had started doing things in a different manner very successfully at Bell", he says and adds, "That gave us the confidence to start out on our own. Why work for somebody else, we asked ourselves," he says describing his mindset during those early days when they set out on the path to make it big.

"It was also to find out whether we can do it. We asked ourselves- Is our success due to the environment we are working in or can we create success?," he says, clearly demonstrating his thirst for excellence, and the innate desire to constantly challenge himself.

Any new entrepreneurial venture is bound to be riddled with challenges and obstacles. What were they and how did he approach them? Listen to his reply and you will get the first glimpse of his intense personality. "I never thought about it this way," he quips. In other words, it wasn't about formal approaches or bombastic theories of success. It was a simple one-question approach that did it all for him. "I always asked myself, what can I do in this situation," he says, stressing heavily on the "I".

Needless to add that when one asks oneself such a question what follows is tireless hard work. He was totally prepared for it. He was more than convinced that "smart hard work takes you further than just being smart." Besides, when you have passion for something, you do it all with a smile on your face and probably with a spring in your step too. "There were times when I would work all through the night and walk out of the office in the morning as if I had slept well," he says.

According to Mr Jha, passion is so important that it is the key factor in deciding whether you want to start a business. "Don't start a business only because you have a great idea. Ask yourself if you have the passion to work on it. Passion will make things happen for you," he suggests.

What about the luck factor? "Yes luck plays a role, but you should be ready to reap the benefits of luck," says Mr. Jha clearly hinting at the preparedness and ground work needed before you set on sail for your adventure.

As he continues to talk with all his intensity, the conversation moves on to success secrets. Are they just passion and hard work? The question evokes a seemingly simple-on-the-face, but deep-in-its-meaning reply: "The desire to be there is so strong that it almost verges on becoming a need," he says. "Do whatever it takes to succeed," is a mantra he recommends, which ties in perfectly with what he said when he began, "You should want it badly."

It is this "do-whatever-it-takes" attitude alone that helps you overcome every obstacle successfully, he says. In fact, he takes it to the extreme when he says, "you never plan for failure," alluding to the Navy Seals, who live and fight with this attitude. He says this with such a genuine, and deep intensity that you can't help brooding over it, and internalizing it.

As one profound statement flows after the other, one naturally asks what the other ingredients of success are. "Three things: Passion, necessary skills and a good team. The biggest problem is keeping your team intact in tough times, and during good times when you are successful," he says.

This is the first part of Mr. Jha's exclusive interview to YASH.CA. In the series that follows, read about his thoughts on work-life balance and how each person's definition of success differs from the other. What's more is that you will also find out how his presentation to a major multi-national on "why you should not hire me" actually ended up getting him his first job in Canada! Stay tuned.

(Stay tuned for part -two of the interview)

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