

Mentors and Team Leaders join the Mentors' Programme 2021

Sixteen Tata Leaders who are Mentors and TBEM Team Leaders in the BE Assessment attended the Mentors' Programme organised by Tata Business Excellence Group (TBExG) on June 25, 2021. The programme was organised to discuss key changes to the Business Excellence Assessment process and share experiences of CEOs of companies participating in the process, Mentors and Team Leaders. The session was also attended by S Padmanabhan, Executive Chairman, TBExG, and Process Consultants from the organisation.

Deepak Deshpande, VP, TBExG, who hosted the session, welcomed all the participants. A special welcome was extended to the new Mentors and Team Leaders. This year, new Mentors who are engaging with the BE Assessment process include A S Lakshminarayanan, MD & CEO, Tata Communications; Krishnan Ramanujam, President - Service Lines, TCS; Sandeep Kumar, MD, Tata Metaliks; Sanjiv Lal, MD & CEO, Rallis India; and Zarir Langrana, Executive Director, Tata Chemicals. New Team Leaders are Jaldeep Virani, General Manager - Oman Operations, Voltas; Jitendra Manghnani, Head - Sales and Marketing, Solubles, Tata Coffee; and Pranab Ghosh, Chief Executive Officer, Tata Motors South Africa.

The first session of the day was by Sanjeev Singh, VP, TBExG, on 'Stepping stones to deliver Customised, Collaborative, Celebrated Assessments'. Mr Singh elaborated on the key process changes in the BE Assessments, which were made on the basis of the feedback received on the previous year's cycle. These changes were around the dimensions of Customisation, Collaboration and Value Enablers. He emphasised the importance of the application plus approach which encourages assessment teams to understand conversations beyond the application document. He highlighted how the team formation was carried out collaboratively with the key stakeholders in the process. Mr Singh also talked about how the domain experts/SMEs and analysts add value to the assessment outcomes.

Then, Abraham Stephanos, MD, Tata Steel Downstream Products, gave the perspective of a CEO through his session on 'How I gain value from the assessment process'. Mr Stephanos laid out some key expectations that he, as a CEO, had from the BE Assessment process, which included feedback that is relevant for business, insights about business from an outside perspective, inputs for business improvement, blind spots, culture readiness etc. He also gave his thoughts on the importance of a Mentor in the team and the specific value that s/he brings for the CEO.

Ratul Neogi, Head - Internal Audit and Business Excellence, Trent, who is an experienced Team Leader, talked about the value which the team derives from Mentors. He said that during the BE Assessment, the Mentor provides a strategic understanding of the industry to the team and keeps the team's focus on the big picture. Mentors also engage with the MD/CEO of the company and play a key role in communicating the key issues to the Chairman or the Board of the company.

Dr Henrik Adam, CEO, Tata Steel Europe, then shared his experience as a Mentor, a role that he has played since 2017. According to Dr Adam, a Mentor is a connector and a balancer within the team. The Mentor not only augments the team's knowledge during the process, but also leverages the Team Leaders knowledge during the final presentation. He mentioned that for him personally, the engagement in an assessment process has been more than an MBA experience, which he cherished over these years.

Mr Padmanabhan then talked about how the teams had gone about assessing businesses in the FY20-21 pandemic conditions, including factors like business model changes, ecosystem management, workforce management and more. He highlighted some focal points around how companies have responded to their stakeholders for the Mentors and Team Leaders for this year's assessment. The session ended with an engaging open house with Mr Padmanabhan, wherein participants posed questions as well as gave suggestions for the upcoming BE Assessment cycle.