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PERSONALITY DIVERSITY

**A STRATEGIC
ADVANTAGE**

Paul Grant



LEARN HOW TO LEAD LIKE A WOMAN

3rd LEADHERSHIP RETREAT

Paving the Way: Women, Power, and Possibility

15th - 17th January 2026, Hotel Radisson Blu, Udaipur

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The AIMA LeadHERship Retreat is a three-day offsite programme offering a unique opportunity for learning, growth, and development. With just 20 to 25 delegates, the format allows for in-depth discussions with speakers and the chance to build meaningful connections throughout the Retreat. Designed to empower women professionals with the knowledge, skills, and insights needed to thrive in today's evolving business landscape, the programme includes interactive sessions, workshops, and talks by inspirational leaders.

SPEAKERS



Sundari Nanda
Former Special Secretary
Ministry of Home Affairs



TV Narendran
Senior Vice President, AIMA
CEO & MD, Tata Steel Ltd



Vikas Swarup
Retired Indian Diplomat
and writer



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Who Should Attend

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- Procurement professionals from PSUs and private sector
- International development agencies and donor organisations
- Academicians and researchers in procurement and supply chain management
- Consultants, contractors, and suppliers in infrastructure, manufacturing, IT, pharma, energy, telecom, and allied industries

Fees

INR 5000 + taxes (Indian Delegates)

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The Art of Necessary Discord: Building Teams That Think in Counterpoint

T V Narendran is CEO & Managing Director, Tata Steel.

What often makes the biggest difference in an organisation is not just the plans we make, but the conversations we enable, the space for people to think differently, and still move forward together.

The ability to listen to diverse views, to make room for dissent, and to draw strength from it is what keeps an organisation alive, curious, and capable of renewal.

Whether in a plant, a project room, or a board meeting, what shapes outcomes most is how openly people can express diverse perspectives and how deeply we listen when they do.

Too often, we mistake agreement for alignment. We take comfort in smooth meetings where everyone nods in unison and ideas flow without debate. But nature reminds us that monocultures are fragile. A forest of identical trees can be wiped out by one disease; an ecosystem thrives because of its diversity. The same is true of human systems. When we surround ourselves only with people who think like us, we amplify our blind spots. We stop asking questions that challenge our own assumptions.

The ability to listen to diverse views, to make room for dissent, and to draw strength from it is what keeps an organisation alive, curious, and capable of renewal.

Some of the valuable decisions I have been part of were born from disagreement—from the courage of someone in the room to say, “I don’t think this will work.” I have also seen how easily organisations fall into the trap of rewarding conformity. But the true test of leadership is not how smoothly we can secure consensus, but how thoughtfully we can hold space for difference. Dissent, after all, is not disloyalty. It is an expression of care—a sign that people are thinking deeply enough to challenge what seems convenient or comfortable.

At the same time, diversity of thought must not paralyse action. The purpose of dissent is not endless debate, but better decisions. Leaders have to strike the right balance as too much alignment can breed complacency, but too much divergence can slow the organisation down. The art lies in knowing when discussion must give way to direction.

I have always believed that diversity in teams is not just about gender, geography, or background. It is about personality—about how people think, decide, and interpret the world. Some are dreamers, others are realists. Some prefer to plan meticulously; others improvise. Some rely on logic; others on intuition. When these different temperaments come together and learn to respect one another, the team gains perspective. The visionary’s imagination needs the financial mind’s prudence. The innovator’s excitement needs the process owner’s discipline. The idealist’s conscience

Teams that debate, challenge, and learn from disagreement grow stronger and more adaptable and what matters is the intent—to learn, not to win the argument; to build understanding, not to prove a point.

keeps the ambitious grounded. Each one strengthens the other.

I recall a conversation with a young colleague during one of my open interactions who quite candidly said that Tata Steel had pioneered several progressive HR policies in the past but asked, “What are we doing now that’s truly path-breaking?” We had in fact been working on new frontiers but the progress was very slow. Since then, we have come a long way in our diversity and inclusion journey including making three-shift operations for women a reality. What stayed with me was not just the question but the fact the someone felt confident

enough to ask that question. Every leader needs such voices around people who think deeply about the organisation and every organisation needs leaders who have the humility to listen when challenged and the courage to grow through dialogue.

Teams that never argue may look harmonious, but like a muscle that never meets resistance, they eventually weaken. Teams that debate, challenge, and learn from disagreement grow stronger and more adaptable and what matters is the intent—to learn, not to win the argument; to build understanding, not to prove a point.

Personality diversity, then, is not a soft

ideal. It is a strategic necessity in a world defined by complexity and change. The organisations that will endure are those that can think in multiple directions at once—that can hold competing truths and still move forward with balance.

In the end, what defines a great team is not how smoothly it agrees, but how gracefully it disagrees. The art of necessary discord—the ability to think in counterpoint rather than unison—is not chaos. It is the rhythm of progress. It is how good teams become great ones, and how great institutions continue to renew themselves, generation after generation. 

The opinion expressed is personal.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

We live and operate in rapidly-evolving global economy, where businesses must go beyond conventional team-building practices to remain competitive and innovative. One powerful, yet often underutilised strategy, is fostering personality diversity within teams and organisations.

Fostering personality diversity entails not only acknowledging the variety of personality styles in an organisation but also intentionally leveraging those differences to strengthen collaboration and problem-solving. When teams are composed of individuals with varying communication styles, thinking patterns, and approaches to decision-making, they become more resilient and adaptable.

Diverse personalities encourage a broader range of perspectives, which fuels innovation and helps businesses navigate complex challenges more effectively. Moreover, understanding personality differences fosters empathy, reduces internal conflict, and improves team cohesion. Leaders who prioritise personality diversity create environments where individuals feel valued for who they are, leading to higher engagement, productivity, and satisfaction.

In a world where agility and creativity are key to success, embracing personality diversity is not just a progressive idea—it's a business imperative. As Paul Grant, co-author, *Personalities Remixed*, writes in the cover story of this issue, "Personality diversity is not a buzzword—it is a strategic advantage. By embracing this revolutionary school of thought, businesses can unlock the full potential of their people."

Do write in with your views to imeditorial@spentamultimedia.com

Maneck Davar
Maneck Davar

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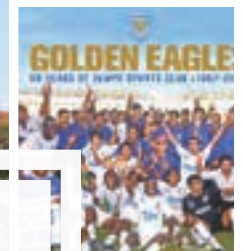
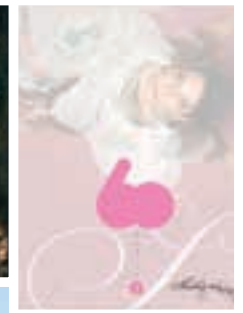
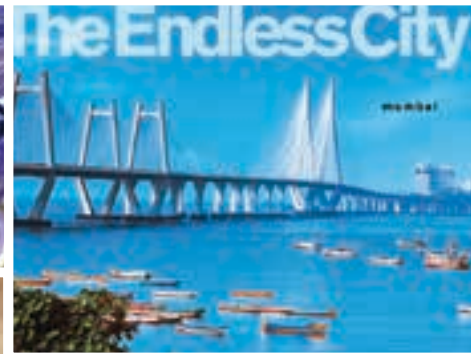
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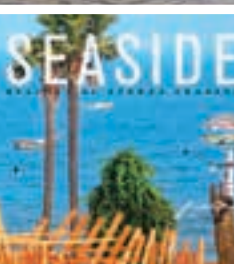
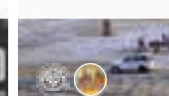
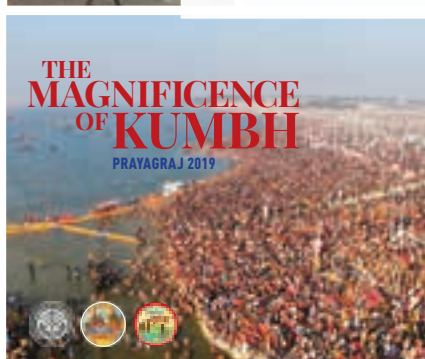
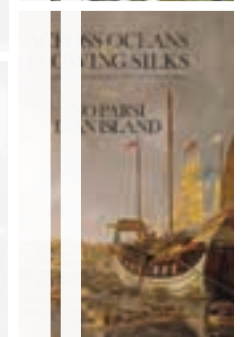
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THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE





Armaan Hoyvov

A strategic advantage

Harness the power of personality diversity to boost performance, build stronger teams, and create a culture of psychological safety.

♦ PAUL GRANT, CO-AUTHOR, *PERSONALITIES REMIXED*



In today's fast-paced and increasingly interconnected global economy, businesses must go beyond traditional methods of team building and leadership development to stay competitive.

One of the most effective yet often overlooked strategies is fostering personality diversity—the recognition, understanding, and intentional leveraging of different personality styles within a team or organisation.

Tools like the E-Colours and Personal Intervention methodology are revolutionising how businesses approach this concept. These frameworks not only help individuals understand themselves and others better but also drive performance, reduce conflict, and promote psychological safety within organisations.

Understanding E-Colours and Personal Intervention

The E-Colours framework is a simple yet powerful tool that categorises individuals into four primary personality styles—Red, Yellow, Green, and Blue. Each of these colours reflects unique strengths and potential limiters:

- **Red (Doer):** Action-oriented, decisive, and fast paced.
- **Yellow (Socialiser):** Outgoing, optimistic, and persuasive.
- **Green (Thinker):** Analytical, detail-oriented, and systematic.
- **Blue (Relator):** Supportive, loyal, and patient.

Most people have a dominant and secondary colour, creating 12 unique personality combinations. This model provides a clear, common language to describe behaviour and understand what drives us and those around us.

Personal Intervention, on the other hand, is a practice of self-awareness and self-management. It's a tool for pausing before reacting, especially in emotionally charged or high-stakes situations. By learning to intervene in our own behaviour, we can make more conscious, productive choices that align with our values and goals.

Together, E-Colours and Personal Intervention offer a powerful toolkit for enhancing communication, collaboration, and leadership in business settings.

Why personality diversity matters in business

■ Enhances team performance and innovation.

Diverse teams—comprising different personality styles—bring a variety of perspectives and approaches to problem-solving. A Yellow personality might dream big and generate ideas, while a Green personality ensures those ideas are realistic and backed by data. A Red pushes the team toward execution, and a Blue ensures the group maintains harmony and inclusivity.

When businesses consciously harness these different approaches, they benefit from well-rounded decision-

making. Innovation thrives when people challenge each other's thinking, ask different types of questions, and approach problems from multiple angles. Teams with diverse personality styles – or the ability to manage their tendencies – tend to be more creative and effective because they have built-in checks and balances

■ Improves communication and reduces conflict

Many workplaces' conflicts stem from misunderstandings—people interpreting others' actions through the lens of their own personality. For example, a Red might perceive a Green as overly cautious or slow, while the Greens sees themselves as thorough and responsible. Without a common language, these

differences can become sources of friction.

Great leaders aren't just results-driven—they are self-aware, emotionally intelligent, and adaptable

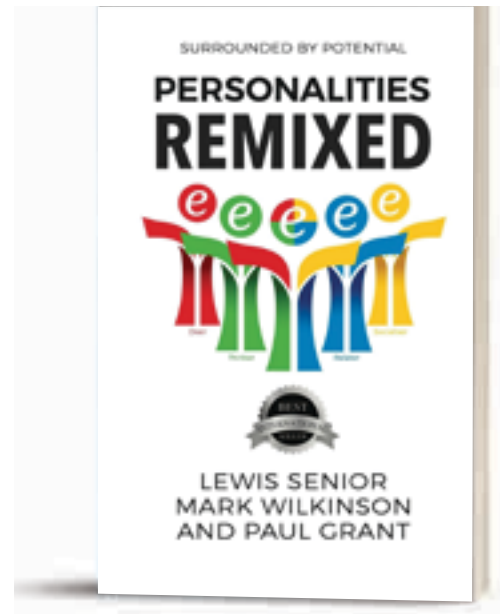
The lens of personality diversity helps individuals reframe differences as strengths. By recognising that people communicate and process information differently, teams

can shift from judgment to curiosity. This reduces unnecessary conflict and fosters more constructive dialogue.

Personal Intervention takes this a step further by empowering individuals to pause before reacting. Instead of snapping back in frustration or withdrawing, people can consider their own personality tendencies and choose a more effective response.

■ Builds psychological safety

Psychological safety—the belief that one can speak up, ask questions, or admit mistakes without fear of embarrassment or punishment—is a cornerstone of high-performing teams. However, achieving



it requires more than policies or mission statements. It demands genuine understanding and respect for individual differences.

When personality diversity is embraced and supported through tools like E-Colours, employees feel seen and valued for who they are. This inclusive environment encourages participation from all personality types:

- Reds feel empowered to lead.
- Yellows feel free to contribute ideas.
- Blues feel comfortable offering support.
- Greens feel safe raising concerns or asking questions.

Personal Intervention helps individuals take ownership of creating psychological safety by managing their impulses and being mindful of how their behaviour impacts others.

■ Develops more effective leaders

Great leaders aren't just results-driven—they are self-aware, emotionally intelligent, and adaptable. Exploring personality diversity gives leaders knowledge into their natural leadership style, along with its strengths and potential blind spots.



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For example, a Red/Yellow leader may be inspiring and action-oriented but might overlook details or dominate conversations. Recognising this, they can learn to lean on team members with Blue or Green strengths to create balance or dip into these tendencies to better manage themselves.

Personal Intervention allows leaders to pause and choose how they show up, especially under pressure. This intentionality is what separates reactive managers from proactive, empathetic leaders. In high-stress environments, the ability to pause, reflect, and respond thoughtfully is a game-changer.

■ Boosts employee engagement and retention

Employees are more likely to stay in organisations where they feel understood, respected, and appreciated. Recognising personality diversity helps managers tailor their leadership approach to the unique needs of each team member.

- Some employees (like Greens and Blues) may need time and space to process information before responding.
- Others (like Reds and Yellows) may thrive on fast-paced decision-making and visible recognition.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Grant is
co-author,
Personalities Remixed.

By understanding and respecting these differences, managers can motivate their teams more effectively and reduce disengagement or burnout. When people feel that their personalities are not just tolerated but celebrated, they are more committed to the organisation.

Challenges and considerations

While tools such as E-Colours and Personal Intervention offer many benefits, their effectiveness depends on consistent application and cultural buy-in. Businesses must:

- Avoid stereotyping or pigeonholing individuals based on their tendencies – personality diversity is about awareness and not about boxing people in.
- Encourage ongoing conversations about personality and behaviour.
- Integrate these tools into broader leadership, DEI – diversity, equity and inclusion - and performance initiatives.

It is also important to remember that personality is just one aspect of human diversity. It should be considered alongside factors like cultural background, lived experience, and values and character.

Conclusion

Personality diversity is not a buzzword—it is a strategic advantage. By embracing this revolutionary school of thought, businesses can unlock the full potential of their people. Tools such as the E-Colours framework, and Personal Intervention, empower individuals to understand themselves and others, create psychologically safe teams, reduce conflict, and drive better results.

In an era where collaboration, innovation, and adaptability are more important than ever, investing in personality diversity is not just beneficial, it is essential. **IM**

Disclaimer: Nothing in this article should be interpreted as coaching, financial, investment, or legal advice. These are the thoughts of the author.



♦ SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE, AGNIM MITRA, AND DR SUMANTA DUTTA, ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), KOLKATA

The digital drift

In the early 2000s a digital revolution was about to change the way how people interact and engage in their social lives. As social media platforms like Friendster emerged, a company named Facebook started to gain momentum with the potential of starting a new era of social transformation. It marked the beginning of the war amongst big corporates fighting for user attention using complex algorithms and urgency cues in the digital world. This resulted in development of manipulative dark patterns embedded within the platforms that seeks to gain one's attention and increase user engagement. Its effect was far reaching and was observed in the daily lives of users with decreased productivity and an adverse effect on mental health. The impact of this phenomenon also started appearing in workplaces around the world and it quickly turned into one of the major challenges in modern human resource management: 'The problem of cyberloafing.'

Cyberloafing and its impact

The boom of technology helped ease work but it carried along with its problems of distraction. The usage of non-work-related

websites as well as surfing through the social media during working hours was the cause of the phenomenon of distraction, which is termed as cyberloafing. It includes activities like online shopping, chatting, and gaming, etc. Any voluntary act of employees using their companies' internet access during office hours to surf non-job-related websites for personal purposes and to check (including receiving and sending) personal e-mail is misuse of the internet. Such activity is commonly known as cyberloafing (Lim, 2002).

Cyberloafing was perceived to have reduced employee productivity—studies suggested that it reduced 30–40 per cent of the productivity which resulted in economic losses for organisations. (Lim, 2002; Henle et al, 2009). Gradually, cyberloafing tends to become natural human behaviour in employees who access to various social media and e-commerce channels. It has to potential to turn into an addiction. Weatherbee (2010) described that with increase in this addiction it would lead to numerous problems—deviance from goals, loss of self-control of employee, and erosion of organisational discipline. This addiction and loss due to cyberloafing

The values of accepting no limitations, alternative thinking, and driving change in the 'Rise' manifesto were also a set of cultural values matching the needs of a decentralised organisation and management structure

creates a lethargy in employee which becomes a habit and erodes their discipline, promptness and active participation. But does only the pattern and emergence of lucrative from the social patterns are a reason why employees engage in cyberloafing? Well, there are various other things which have evolved this over the time.

One of the major reasons found in studies said that it is done by employees to reduce their stress factor and rejuvenate them from high pressure, demanding tasks. (Lim & Chen, 2012) described that employee used short breaks as a form of recovery That allows employees to get over their stress, recharge mentally and return to work with renewed focus. Sometimes, similar and repetitive, monotonous task often led employees to go for cyber loafing in view of some relief or recreation. The boredom was countered by employees with the help of seeking online surfing. (Shiekh *et al.*, 2015).

While some weak and unclear organisational policies with no strict monitoring and internet use guidelines become a reason for cyber loafing. (Henle *et al.*, 2009). Also, at times work extends beyond the official hours entering into

can lead to disengagement. (Young, 2004). This impact of cyberloafing leads to an attention problem, as employees are unable to withdraw from cyberloafing and concentrate to finish their work on time. Cyberloafing

the personal time of an employee. This basically makes them push for attending personal work during office hours. (Vitak *et al.*, 2011).

Some other reasons are that of social needs such as employees demanding social connection and derive emotional support at work to reduce stress. Sometimes these are due to perceived norms that if someone else is doing that means it's good so even, they should do. This draws away the fear and motivates more into Cyber loafing.

HR perspectives in managing cyberloafing

Being the human resource manager at this point is quite tough, as to how they should control this issue of cyberloafing. But before that there must be identification of the different forms of cyber loafing. Researchers have identified and classified cyber loafing into four major types - social, informational, leisure and virtual. (Van Doorn, 2011; Li and Chung, 2006)

Social cyberloafing includes chatting with friends and using social media while informational cyber loafing refers to gather news and learn new skills.

Leisure cyberloafing mainly includes activity such as online shopping etc. And Virtual cyberloafing includes gaming. Understanding these and ascertained the reason the HR manager has to react. The basic things which the HR can bring about in preventing Cyber loafing is the creation of a defined and transparent internet policy. Make the employee understand the need of concentrating on their work. Some of the popular practices nowadays is the restriction of access to various websites by the company. But this doesn't restrict the employee from surfing on their own devices. Thus, motivation must be drawn to get them back. As one of the probable causes



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that were identified were rejuvenation from work pressure, HR can create certain fun and Stress relieving activities with indoor games in office. Employees due to extension of the work hours tend to attend personal works, here HR can monitor by not letting them slog hours.

The peer effect of watching others doing can be countered by creating a holistic environment which promotes work building. Employees feel lonely, this can be mitigated through team activity, group engagement sessions and organised sessions for interactions.

They shouldn't look to punish; rather focus on making it constructive through the promotion of informational cyberloafing. Through channelling them towards professional learning platforms. Through holistic environment development and engagement, curb has to be put on cyber loafing. The internet should be used for

upskilling and knowledge enhancement. Studies suggest that doing informational browsing can enhance creativity and innovative work behaviour (Derin & Gökçe, 2016).

Modern workspace demands employee motivation and inspiration. Employees in this era due to stress and other demotivational factors often drift away where they try to find a place where they get relief. The internet is one medium; with emerging patterns of lucrativeness, they often tend to drift away. Here identifying the reasons and controlling them becomes essential.

Way forward

The problem of cyberloafing is projected to increase as the technology companies find new ways to increase user engagement on their platforms. It is thus essential for corporates and human resource managers to come up with innovative solutions to curb cyberloafing practices amongst employees. The element



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of mutual trust is the key to any potential strategy. Moreover, the strategies must focus on creating an environment where employees feel engaged and motivated. The first step towards handling this problem is to establish a clear and transparent policy that clearly defines acceptable and unacceptable digital behaviour. The consequences of unacceptable practices must also be communicated amongst the work force. The next crucial step is to setup a monitoring system and be transparent about the level of tracking with the stakeholders. The aim is to help employees increase their productivity and not to micro-manage them. Many studies suggest that cyberloafing is a symptom of deeper issues like low job satisfaction, heavy workloads, or a lack of autonomy. Thus, focusing on output and not working hours along with practices to increase employee engagement at work is essential. Ultimately, job satisfaction is the most crucial factor in motivating employees to resist the allure of dopamine hits and dark patterns and provides a powerful internal drive that offsets the external stimulation of cyberloafing. 



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Part 1 (published in the September 2025 issue of Indian Management) of this Series explored how leaders are building competitive advantage through co-creation with customers, cybersecurity executives face their unique trust-building challenge. Part 2 explores how cybersecurity leaders are redefining organisational resilience, moving from 'prevention-first' to 'resilience-ready' strategies that combine AI capabilities with human expertise to handle massive threat volumes while strengthening stakeholder confidence.

♦ VIKRAM RAMESH, N-ABLE AND IRENE YAM, IY MEDIA AND
[AUTHOR] BUILD A WORLD-CLASS CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

Trust-first leadership

When cyber criminals can infiltrate a company in under eight minutes, the old 'build bigger walls' approach to security becomes not just inadequate—but dangerous. As Accenture's Technology Vision 2025¹ reveals, 77 per cent of executives believe unlocking the actual benefits of AI will only be possible when it is built on a foundation of trust—and that foundation requires robust cybersecurity. For all managers in this rapidly digitalising economy, this is no longer just an IT problem. It is a fundamental leadership challenge that demands a complete rethinking of how organisations approach cybersecurity in an AI-driven world.

This article explores how forward-thinking leaders are redefining security from reactive defense to proactive resilience. By examining the evolution of Security Operations Centers (SOCs), the transformative power of AI-human partnerships, and real-world case studies of successful implementations, we will uncover why cybersecurity has become a C-suite imperative that can no longer be delegated solely to IT departments. Most

importantly, we will provide a practical framework for general managers to champion AI-driven security initiatives that protect their organisations while building stakeholder confidence in an uncertain threat landscape.

The security landscape every leader must understand

What is a SOC?

A Security Operations Center (SOC) is your organisation's nerve centre for cybersecurity—a centralised team of specialists who monitor, detect, and respond to cyber threats 24/7. Think of it as your digital immune system, constantly scanning for signs of intrusion and mobilising defenses when attacks occur. Traditional SOC's operated like fortress guards, watching for known threats and following predetermined playbooks. Still, in today's landscape, where threats can move from initial breach to complete system compromise in minutes, this reactive approach has become a liability. A SOC can be internal or external, with many organisations opting to use managed service vendors to operate their SOC capabilities.

The AI paradox

This is where things get complex for business

leaders. While 66 per cent of organisations expect AI to have a significant impact on cybersecurity in 2025, only 37 per cent report having processes in place to assess the security of AI tools before deployment.² We are simultaneously using AI to defend ourselves while potentially exposing ourselves through poorly secured AI implementations.

To navigate this landscape effectively, leaders need to understand the fundamental concepts that drive modern cybersecurity operations.

Key terms decoded

- **Threat hunting:** Proactive searching for hidden threats that have bypassed automated defenses.
- **Incident response:** The structured approach to addressing and managing security breaches.
- **SOAR playbooks:** Security Orchestration, Automation, and Response—pre-programmed workflows that automatically execute security actions.
- **Dwell time:** How long attackers remain undetected in your systems (industry average: 16 days).

The business impact

Consider this: a modern enterprise SOC processes nearly 500,000 security alerts in just three months. Without AI assistance, human analysts would be overwhelmed by this volume, missing critical threats while chasing false alarms. Alert fatigue is not just an IT problem—it's a business continuity risk that can result in millions of dollars' worth of missed threats and wasted resources.

The leadership mindset revolution

The most successful security leaders today are not promising their stakeholders that attacks won't happen—they are building confidence that when attacks do occur, their organisations will respond swiftly and effectively.

This shift from 'prevention-first' to 'resilience-ready' thinking represents a fundamental change in how leaders communicate about risk. Instead of selling invulnerability, they are advocating for preparedness. Instead of building higher walls, they are building faster response capabilities.

As Accenture notes, "If trust defines the limits of AI's possibilities, then ensuring



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security is crucial.” This creates a leadership challenge: How do you build organisational confidence in AI-powered security systems while acknowledging that no system is perfect?

The answer lies in transparency about capabilities and limitations, combined with demonstrable results. When leaders can demonstrate to their teams that AI systems successfully stopped 95% of threats, while human experts handled the remaining 5 per cent of complex cases, they build trust in the hybrid approach rather than relying solely on faith in any single solution.

Case Study- N-able's two-year AI Transformation

N-able, a global software company delivering a unified cyber-resiliency platform, operates one of the industry's most advanced Security Operations Centers.

2023: When traditional security tools hit their limits

Two years ago, N-able's security team faced a problem familiar to many organisations: their traditional AI-powered security tools could correlate known indicators of compromise with threat intelligence databases, but when those searches returned zero results, analysts were left to investigate manually. This 'enrichment AI' approach was becoming obsolete as threats grew more sophisticated.

“We realised that static intelligence retrieval wasn't enough,” explains Vikram Ramesh, N-able's Chief Marketing Officer (CMO). “When an indicator returns zero hits, that's often when you need intelligence most—because you might be looking at something completely new,” he adds.

The transition: From basic automation to cognitive security

N-able began incorporating large language

models (LLMs) into their SOC workflow, enabling dynamic, real-world threat investigation training based on live telemetry. By 2024, they had implemented deep learning AI and neural networks that could return indicators of compromise in seconds rather than the minutes or hours required for human analysis.

This wasn't just a technology upgrade—it was an operational transformation that required careful change management and stakeholder communication.

Results that matter to business

The numbers tell a compelling story:

- **70 per cent automation** of incident investigations and threat remediation activities.
- **153x increase** in threat hunting capabilities.
- **Sub-20-minute** threat resolution (compared to industry averages of hours or days).
- **490,270 alerts** processed in just three months, with only 963 requiring senior analyst intervention⁵.

CMO perspective: Communicating technical transformation

The key to successful stakeholder buy-in was positioning the transformation as 'augmenting talent' rather than 'replacing workers'. This messaging resonated because it acknowledged the continued importance of human expertise while demonstrating clear efficiency gains.

“We focused on outcomes that business leaders care about—faster response times, reduced risk exposure, and more strategic use of our security talent,” the leadership team noted. “The technology was impressive, but the business impact was what mattered to stakeholders,” Vikram Ramesh, CMO, N-able.

The human element

Despite 70 per cent automation, human analysts remain central to N-able's security operations. They handle complex investigations, develop new threat hunting strategies, and provide the



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contextual judgment that AI cannot replicate. AI doesn't replace human expertise—it amplifies it.

Building organisational resilience through AI-human partnership

Modern SOC's demonstrate what successful AI-human collaboration looks like in high-stakes environments. This involves addressing the complexity challenge: moving from traditional instruction-driven technology stacks to intention-based systems powered by AI.

The most effective approach combines three elements:

Speed through automation: AI handles routine tasks like alert triage, evidence gathering, and initial threat assessment. This allows human analysts to focus on complex problem-solving and strategic thinking.

Precision through human judgment:

Complex investigations, threat attribution, and response strategy development require the expertise of human judgment. AI provides the data; humans provide the wisdom.

Scale through hybrid operations:

Organisations can handle massive alert volumes (500,000+ per quarter) with smaller teams by leveraging AI to filter and prioritise, while humans focus on high-value activities.⁶

This model provides a blueprint for other business functions to consider when integrating AI. It demonstrates how to maintain quality and trust while dramatically improving efficiency and scale.

The executive imperative- Why this cannot be delegated

A call to action

With the cyber skills gap increasing by 8 per cent since 2024, and only 14 per cent of organisations confident they have the people and skills needed today, waiting for the IT department to solve cybersecurity challenges is no longer viable.⁷ Security has become a strategic business capability that requires leadership from the C-Suite.

Managers can no longer treat cybersecurity as a technical issue to be delegated. In an era where a single breach can compromise customer trust, disrupt operations, and lead to regulatory penalties, security is a business-critical competency that demands executive attention.



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Action framework for general managers

1. Champion AI-driven security initiatives

- Allocate budget for AI security tools and training.
- Set expectations for measurable improvements in response times.
- Ensure security metrics are included in business performance reviews.

2. Build the business case

- Focus on RoI metrics: reduced dwell time, faster incident resolution, improved threat detection rates.
- Calculate the cost of the security analyst's time saved through automation.
- Measure business continuity improvements and reduced risk exposure.

3. Lead organisational change

- Communicate the 'augmentation, not replacement' message to reduce employee anxiety
- Invest in upskilling existing security staff on AI tools.
- Create career development paths that leverage AI capabilities.

4. Establish trust through transparency

- Regularly review and understand the AI security system performance.
- Ensure human oversight mechanisms are in place.
- Communicate security capabilities and limitations honestly to stakeholders.

Leading the charge

The organisations that thrive in the next decade will be those whose leaders recognise that cybersecurity is not a technology problem—it is a business transformation challenge. Success requires combining cutting-edge AI capabilities with human expertise, wrapped in a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Irene Yam is founder, IY Media. Irene is also, author, *Build a World-Class Customer Advisory Board*.

As cyber threats continue to evolve and AI becomes more central to business operations, the question isn't whether your organisation will face sophisticated attacks—it is whether your leadership team is prepared to respond with the speed, precision, and confidence that modern threats demand.

The SOC's leading this transformation today are showing the way forward: not by building higher walls, but by building faster, innovative, resilient response capabilities. For leaders, the message is clear: the future of cybersecurity is too important to be left to chance. It's time to lead.

Next month, Part 3 of this series will demonstrate how sales and customer success leaders are building a systematic trust architecture through aligned intentions and structured advisory relationships, revealing how the fundamental elements of trust can be systematically cultivated to create the human intelligence layer that guides AI-driven business decisions. 

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The views expressed in this article are based on publicly available research and case studies. Organisations should conduct their own security assessments and consult with cybersecurity professionals before implementing new security strategies.



Dr Amy Osmond Cook, co-founder; CMO, Fullcast; and co-author, *The RevOps Advantage* tackles five common myths about RevOps, explaining why it is more important than ever to get it right.

The RevOps wake-up call

While Revenue Operations (RevOps) is becoming a fixture in many global organisations, from tech unicorns to multinational enterprises, many companies are still trying to separate the signal from the noise.

RevOps is the strategic engine that unifies sales, marketing, customer success, and operational functions to align the entire go-to-market (GTM) engine. In short, RevOps makes sure every customer-facing team is rowing in the same direction. And the results speak for themselves. Companies that implemented a unified GTM strategy across sales and marketing achieved 36 per cent higher revenue growth and up to 28 per cent greater profitability, according to Forrester.

In this article, we take on five common myths about RevOps, using real-world examples, to help business leaders understand why getting this right matters now more than ever

MYTH 1: REVOPS IS JUST SALES OPERATIONS WITH A NEW NAME

Even though the term 'RevOps' was coined in

2016, RevOps has been around for thousands of years. At its core, revenue operations is the process of aligning teams, processes, and tools across an organization's revenue-generating departments. As long as there has been revenue, there has been RevOps.

Sales operations is a critical discipline, but it typically focuses on pipeline management, forecasting, and supporting reps with tools and processes. RevOps, on the other hand, operates at a broader, more strategic level, bringing together sales, marketing, and customer success to work toward shared revenue goals.

When these teams operate in silos, the results are damaging. HubSpot reports that B2B companies with poor alignment between these functions lose more than 10 per cent of their revenue annually.

The RevOps model eliminates these problems by introducing a shared language, centralized data, and a unified view of the customer journey.

MYTH 2: HIERARCHY = LEADERSHIP

Your organisational chart is lying to you. It shows boxes and lines, implying leadership flows downward from titles. Meanwhile, your real leaders—the ones actually driving

results—are scattered across every level, often without formal authority.

I have seen team players, trapped between hierarchies and silos, transform the performance of entire divisions. No changes to titles or reporting lines were needed. Just clarity about what needed to happen and the courage to make it happen. That's distributed leadership—ownership everywhere, not just in corner offices.

Traditional hierarchy creates leadership scarcity. You get ten leaders for 1,000 people. Distributed leadership creates leadership abundance. You get 1,000 leaders, period.

The shift requires killing three sacred cows: First, stop hoarding decision rights at the top. Second, stop confusing position with capability. Third, stop protecting people from the responsibility they are hungry for.

When you distribute leadership, you don't lose control—you multiply it. Every person becomes a sensor, a decision-maker, and a driver of results. Your organisation stops waiting for permission and starts creating value.

MYTH 2: REVOPS SLOWS TEAMS DOWN

In reality, RevOps removes friction and accelerates decisions by bringing clarity to chaos.

Change is always met with skepticism, especially when it appears to introduce new layers of process. When implemented well, it enables faster decision-making and clearer execution by replacing disjointed workflows and conflicting priorities with coordinated strategy.

The secret is alignment and access. When sales, marketing, and customer success teams work from the same metrics and systems, they don't have to slow down to reconcile different definitions or dashboards.

According to our survey results from the 2025 State of RevOps survey, which collected



responses from more than 100 top RevOps leaders at some of the world's most successful businesses, nearly all business leaders consider RevOps important for revenue outcomes, with 70 per cent rating it very important and 98 per cent rating it at least somewhat important.

Instead of adding bureaucracy, RevOps unlocks speed through structure.

MYTH 3: SOME COMPANIES ARE TOO SMALL FOR REVOPS.

It is tempting to think of RevOps as a function for large enterprises. But in reality, smaller companies stand to benefit the most from early adoption. Without a foundational RevOps structure, growing companies accumulate 'technical debt' — fragmented tools, disconnected workflows, and inconsistent reporting — that becomes increasingly difficult (and costly) to fix as the company scales.

According to Gartner, 75 per cent of the highest-growth companies will adopt a RevOps model by 2026. This includes

Companies that postpone RevOps until they're already big enough find themselves scrambling to untangle complexity later. The earlier you adopt the principles of RevOps, the smoother your growth trajectory will be

the smaller companies hoping to break into the market and make an impact.

Ryan Westwood, co-author of *The RevOps Advantage* and

CEO of Fullcast, witnessed this firsthand. Before launching Fullcast, Ryan and his team grew Simplus from startup to \$250 million acquisition by Infosys by staying laser-focused on scalable RevOps practices from the start. Instead of overextending into multiple services, they first built deep expertise in Salesforce Quote-to-Cash, laying the operational foundation before expanding into broader digital transformation.

This incremental, disciplined growth approach allowed Simplus to remain nimble while attracting high-value clients. It also ensured that as the company grew, its systems, processes, and data models scaled with it without breaking under pressure.

In contrast, companies that postpone RevOps until they're already big enough find themselves scrambling to untangle complexity later. The earlier you adopt the principles of RevOps, the smoother your growth trajectory will be.

MYTH 4: REVOPS IS JUST ABOUT DATA AND DASHBOARDS

RevOps does indeed depend on data—good data. But without thoughtful access controls, shared governance, and a strong cultural foundation, even the best dashboards are useless.

Data fragmentation is a massive challenge. According to Gartner, poor data quality costs

businesses an average of \$15 million per year. Each department often works in different systems with different numbers, and no one knows which data to trust. No wonder the CRO and CFO don't trust the numbers when there are conflicting versions of reality (like marketing math, sales math, and investor math).

RevOps solves this by creating a single source of truth (SSOT), a centralised, real-time view of all revenue metrics that all teams can rely on. But the reality is that data doesn't always flow cleanly. Additionally, RevOps enforces role-based access, ensuring that the right people have the right data at the right time. This protects sensitive information while empowering teams to make faster, better decisions. So while dashboards are a tool, RevOps is the operating system behind them.

MYTH 5: OUR TEAM WILL NEVER EMBRACE REVOPS. IT'S TOO BIG A CHANGE.

Change is definitely hard, but it is definitely possible when driven by clear leadership and the right incentives. RevOps transformations often fail not because the strategy is flawed, but because organizations underestimate the emotional and cultural resistance to change.

People cling to familiar ways of working. Among the RevOps leaders who participated in our survey, 93 per cent say their job encompasses sales operations, 66 per cent say their job encompasses customer success ops, and 64% say it encompasses marketing ops. These are roles that likely already exist at your organization. Why not put them together under the umbrella of RevOps?

The real power of RevOps lies in its ability to connect the dots between teams, tools, and goals, so companies can grow with clarity instead of chaos. Understanding and embracing this approach is essential for any organisation ready to scale effectively and sustainably. 



♦ PANKAJ KUMAR DETWALA AND PROFESSOR RAJAT AGRAWAL, IIT ROORKEE

India on the move

India is currently witnessing a significant change in its logistics ecosystem, transitioning from the conventional use of unimodal transport systems to a more efficient and interconnected multimodal system. Historically, goods used to be transported through a single mode, typically road or rail, for the entire journey. Today, the focus has shifted towards multimodal logistics systems. These systems involve the integration of various modes of transportation—such as road, rail, air, and waterways—all managed under one contract by a Multimodal Transport Operator (MTO).

This shift is indispensable for advancing the country's development goals under the 'Viksit Bharat' initiative and establishing its global logistics competitiveness. Spurred by developments in technology, better infrastructure, public-private partnership, and policy-driven reforms, logistics isn't a background function anymore but as a pivotal enabler of the nation's \$5 trillion economy vision.

Economic significance of logistics sector

- **Cost to GDP:** India's logistics sector, despite its high cost to GDP (13 per cent compared to global 8–9 per cent), is a vital

economic growth engine. It's estimated to reach ₹35.3 trillion by FY2029, growing 11 per cent annually.

- **Employment generation:** The sector provides jobs to over 22 million workers across warehousing, transport, and logistics technologies. Recent governance reforms like GST and digitalisation have formalised jobs and endorsed skill development.
- **Support for manufacturing and trade:** Furthermore, efficient logistics complements manufacturing and trade, supporting initiatives like 'Make in India' and Production Linked Incentive schemes by reducing costs, improving turnaround times, and enhancing export competitiveness.

Understanding multimodal logistics: Strategies and advantages

- **Road–Rail–Road:** A truck picks up the goods (first mile), then transported long distances by rail (long haul), and finally delivered by truck to the destination (last mile). This strategy utilises rail's cost-effectiveness for bulk and distance, while utilizing road's flexibility for pickup and drop-off.
- **Road–Air–Road:** Suitable for high-value, time-sensitive items (e.g., electronics, pharmaceuticals). Goods move by truck to an airport, are flown quickly to another city

or country, and delivered by truck to the destination in the end. This leverages air's speed for the critical leg of journey with road's convenience.

- Road–Sea–Rail–Road: Employed for long-haul domestic or complex



Figure1 Key Strategies of Multimodal Systems

international shipments. Goods are moved by truck to a port, shipped via sea to another port, transferred to rail for inland movement, and finally sent by road to the destination. This reduces cost and improves efficiency over long distances.

Multimodal transportation strategies, as depicted in Figure 1, offer significant advantages over unimodal systems. It reduces transit times by leveraging each mode's strengths. This approach also leads to cost savings through optimized routing and economies of scale. Reliability and predictability are improved in integrated systems through digital tracking. Environmentally, it reduces emissions and promotes sustainability by shifting freight to cleaner modes like rail and water.

Multimodal strategies also enable enhanced scalability through digital tools, simplified administration and MMLPs, with a single point of contact for shippers.

The government's multimodal push

The Government of India is spearheading a transformative push in logistics through several integrated initiatives:

- Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs), stretching 2,843 km, have already cut transit times by up to 50 per cent, boosting reliability by separating freight from passenger lines. However, integrating with existing infrastructure and digital systems remains a key operational challenge.
- The Sagarmala Initiative focuses on port-led development, having completed over 270 projects that have reduced port turnaround times by 20 per cent, directly enhancing logistics efficiency and promoting coastal shipping. Efforts to revive India's extensive 14,500 km of navigable inland waterways are underway, offering a cost-effective and low-emission alternative for bulk cargo, though its modal share currently remains minimal.
- Multimodal Logistics Parks (MMLPs), integrated freight-handling hubs of 100 acres or more, are a core component. 35 MMLPs are under development with a significant investment of ₹50,000 crore, aiming to reduce freight costs, turnaround times, and carbon emissions.
- The National Logistics Policy (NLP), launched in 2022, provides a cross-sectoral framework for a unified, cost-efficient, and sustainable logistics ecosystem.
- The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan is the enabling engine, using a GIS-based digital platform to align infrastructure planning and execution across 16+ ministries and departments, ensuring faster clearances and optimal resource utilization.
- The Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) acts as a digital nervous system, integrating over 614 stakeholders for real-time digital documentation, cargo tracking,

With transportation accounting for 13.5 per cent of India's total carbon emissions, green logistics initiatives are gaining momentum

delays, and created a single national market, significantly streamlining goods flow across India.

Innovation and sustainability: Pillars of future

The future of India's multimodal ecosystem is being shaped by rapid technological advancements and a growing emphasis on green logistics:

- Smart warehousing is becoming prevalent, employing automation, robotics, and AI-driven inventory management for faster order processing and optimised space utilisation.

and seamless inter-agency coordination.

- Goods and Services Tax (GST) has eliminated interstate checkpoints, reduced transit

- Leading organisations like Mahindra Logistics, Delhivery, and Indospace are driving innovation by investing in advanced fleet technology, integrated logistics parks, and customised, end-to-end solutions. The timely adoption of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain is enabling accurate demand forecasting, predictive analytics, and secure, tamper-proof data sharing.
- Sustainability is another crucial dimension. With transportation accounting for 13.5 per cent of India's total carbon emissions, green logistics initiatives are gaining momentum. These include the implementation of solar-powered warehouses and the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) for last-mile delivery.
- Furthermore, many logistics parks are incorporating circular economy practices, such as, water conservation, waste recycling and resource optimisation, into their operations.



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Key challenges

- The logistics industry faces numerous challenges. Operational inefficiencies arise from delays at transfer points, outdated manual procedures, and a lack of digital integration among stakeholders. The market is highly fragmented, with many small, informal service providers. This leads to efficiency and inconsistent quality.
- There are infrastructure related gaps, including inadequate rural connectivity and growing urban traffic congestion that hamper freight movement. Behavioral and coordination issues, such as lack of trust among stakeholders and isolated mindsets, impede effective multimodal operations.
- Further, there's a distinct shortage of skilled workers, particularly in specialized areas like supply chain analytics and advanced logistics technology, affecting both innovation and productivity. Finally, industry faces environmental challenges due to its

heavy reliance on fossil fuels, contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and pollution.

Successful case studies

There are some real-world instances which demonstrate the benefits and viability of multimodal logistics:

- Quick Commerce Companies (like Blinkit, Zepto, etc.) have implemented multimodal logistics in congested cities. They make use of motorbikes/scooters for hyper-local collection, micro-fulfillment centers, and optimized van routes for slightly longer distances. All the stages are managed via real-time digital tracking and dynamic routing algorithms, allowing them to achieve sub-30 or sub-60 minute deliveries.
- Integrated multimodal network between Delhi and Ahmedabad have resulted in significant reductions in operational costs and transit times, serving as replicable



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The e-commerce sector, which is projected to hit \$299 billion by 2029, is a tremendous growth opportunity, demanding faster, highly responsive and tech-driven multimodal services

models for other urban logistics hubs.

- Companies such as Adani Ports & SEZ and Mahindra Logistics have started developing logistics parks

and multimodal hubs, demonstrating efficiency in rail, road, and port integration.

- Post-harvest losses have decreased due to Investments in cold chain and agri-logistics, enhancing food security and improving farmer incomes.

Multimodal logistics: Future research opportunities

- India's logistics sector is witnessing significant formalisation and capital inflows, driven by investments in integrated logistics parks and modern warehousing. The e-commerce sector, which is projected to hit \$299 billion by 2029, is a tremendous growth opportunity, demanding faster, highly responsive and tech-driven multimodal services.
- To realise full potential of multimodal logistics, further research is needed. This includes building optimisation models for selecting the optimal mode and terminal to ensure efficient transport and developing advanced coordination mechanisms to promote collaboration and trust among diverse stakeholders. Deep digital integration is vital for real-time, seamless data exchange across different platforms, breaking down existing silos. Finally, benchmarking and establishing sustainability indicators is essential to precisely measure environmental impact and endorse 'green logistics'.



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Conclusion

Logistics is central to India's \$5 trillion economy and Viksit Bharat goals, driven by multimodal infrastructure initiatives such as Dedicated Freight Corridors, Sagarmala, Bharatmala and Multimodal Logistics Parks, all backed by reform-driven policies.

There are challenges in the sector such as market fragmentation, workforce skill shortages, infrastructure gap (especially last-mile and rural), and environmental footprint. Addressing these is critical to fully leverage multimodal systems, empowering farmers, MSMEs and improving export competitiveness.

India's future logistics leadership relies on scaling green initiatives (EVs, circular economy), digital integration (AI, blockchain), and plugging skill gaps. With e-commerce fuelling demand and strategic infrastructure improving LPI rankings, India is set to become a world leader in efficient, transparent and sustainable logistics. **IM**

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India's meteoric rise on the global stage over the past decade is undeniable—but beneath the dazzling numbers lies an urgent need to confront the softer, systemic challenges that will define whether we truly become a developed nation by 2047.

STRATEGY

♦ KRISHAN KALRA

India Rising: The second innings

India has made unprecedented progress in the last decade—huge gains on the economic front, infrastructure build-up, strategic business & tax reforms, science & technology, unbelievable digitisation, and the country's place on the Global High Table.

In our amazing progress, there are indeed areas that have become the envy of even the developed world. Just look at how our digitisation has spread its wings—₹44 lakh crore transferred directly to the poor under DBT, almost 1,000 crore documents uploaded on more than 50 crore Digi-lockers, UPI transactions worth ₹24 lakh crore in just the month of April 2025—“every second global real-time digital transaction happens in India” screamed a newspaper headlines recently. It is incredible that the cost of data transfer in India is perhaps the lowest in the world - ‘a mere ₹10 per GB’. Our super-efficient election management continues to baffle the world. We are making inroads into indigenous defense equipment manufacture; we have made the world's tallest rail bridge; our highways are increasing at a rapid clip...just to mention a few things.

However, it is time to launch another set of reforms to tackle the softer and societal issues and bolster our crumbling moral fabric—crucial for meeting our target of becoming a developed country by 2047. Such a transformation requires tough decision-making ability, some of which can be contrary to the usual political pitch for appeasing vote banks. Here are 12 issues we need to address.

1. Wealth distribution and inclusivity.

India is among the top five largest economies in the world, having crossed the \$4 trillion threshold. However, when we look at the ‘per capita’ figure, it is still a low <\$4,000, ranked 141 out of 196 countries in an IMF report. Even more important is the distribution of wealth within the country. If we just remove the top 5 per cent richest from the population, the rest 95 per cent share the pie of only \$1.5 trillion—a mere \$1,094 per head. Within this too, there are distortions and the poorest at bottom of the pyramid—perhaps the 5 per cent below poverty line—may be surviving on about \$0.5 per day. We need to strengthen our efforts on this crucial lack of inclusivity. A pleasant surprise is the recent World Bank report (5 July) according to which we have

achieved a 'Gini Index' of 25.5 which places us at 'rank 4 among most equal nations' ahead of many G7 and G20 countries.

2. Primary education. The 2023 ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) came up with damning findings like '14 to 18 year-olds not able to read class 2 texts fluently' and 'We don't see much improvement in the last 10 years'. Dastardly crimes against minors certainly have a connection with poor quality education at the primary level. We should be proud of our IITs, IIMs, and other places of higher learning but we cannot afford to leave our Primary Education System at the present pathetic level. We have to treat 'Foundational Literacy & Numeracy' as non-negotiable and tackle it in mission mode.

3. Water availability and quality. Civic bodies and industries discharge untreated sewage and highly toxic effluents into rivers with impunity, putting the nation's health at grave risk. I am tempted to mention here an incident, way back in the year 2000, when an engineer—taking us around the Dow Chemicals' plant in Germany—filled up a cup of water at the end of the affluent treatment channel and drank it in front of us, just to make the point about the standard of their affluent treatment. Presently, I guess, our only solution is strict implementation of rules and very heavy exemplary fines, including cancellation of factory licenses and summary dismissal of the concerned civic staff.

4. Air pollution. Our Achilles heel for the last decade, air pollution definitely has a connection with the declining forest cover, industrial and vehicular emissions, etc. But, as a recent study has shown, greater blame

seems to lie with C&D (construction & demolition) waste in large, rapidly growing cities like Gurugram and Faridabad in the NCR—surely a low-hanging-fruit for the authorities to control. The funny ritual of GRAP is clearly a failure and pointless. While cities like Beijing and London have got rid of their pollution, we continue to count good, satisfactory, moderate, bad, severe, and critical 'bad-air' days and celebrate when there are more than five good ones in a year. I refuse to believe our scientists and administrators cannot solve this issue.

5. Solid waste management. We don't compost our household waste, we don't segregate it before dumping into the collectors' cart, no one does the segregation even at the collection centres, and the ugly urban mountains at landfills near all big cities just keep growing higher, causing stench, mosquito breeding, and leachate seeping into the underground water aquifers. Whereas only 10 per cent of the waste should reach landfills, we keep dumping anywhere between 70 to 80 per cent and there just isn't adequate treatment capacity! Cities like Indore & Surat have done it, why not NCR?

6. Public healthcare system. While this has improved, statistically, there have been disturbing reports of malfunctioning Primary Health Centres due to lack of doctors, nurses, and equipment; corruption in the newly launched Arogya mission; and the never-ending queues at hospitals, indicating that all is not well with our public healthcare system. We already have the dubious distinction of being the 'Diabetes Capital of the World' and are now hurtling towards becoming the 'cancer capital' and



‘obesity capital’. One in four tuberculosis cases in the world are in India!

7. Gender parity. We were all delighted to see the names of 11 girls amongst the top 25 in the 2025 Civil Services Exam; many outstanding Indian women have occupied of the corner offices, in India as well as globally; we have women officers with permanent commissions in the defense forces...Nari Shakti is making waves everywhere. However, on a broader canvas, our Parliament is still stuck at a low 13 per cent women even though constituting 48 per cent to the voters list; state legislatures are stuck at an even lower 8 per cent; the elite IAS had just 12.3 per cent women as per 2020 figures; even corporate sector—leading in the domain—could boast of only 26 per cent. Our largest private airline Indigo has a very creditable 800 women pilots, albeit in a total strength of 5,000! Sadly, the same WB report (mentioned in point number 1) mentions about our fall to rank 131 among 148 nations, on the

‘Gender Inequality’ Index. So, it seems, true gender parity is still a long way off.

8. Gig jobs. A gift of the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic, gig is a good employment opportunity, and reportedly, there are 25 million youngsters whizzing around on their two wheelers delivering food, groceries, veggies, fruits; driving ride-sharing vehicles, providing home services, online teaching, writing, graphic designing, programming.... so many things. Great; but most don’t have a safety net. Besides risking their life—and that of others—on the senseless ‘10-minute-delivery’ binge, it is well-known that most are paid poorly, have no PF/gratuity/leave benefits, etc. Another area needing stronger governance & legislation.

9. Research & development (R&D). Despite R&D being the biggest propeller of economic growth, we are just not investing enough in this area and both the government and the industry are guilty. As a percentage

of GDP, we are spending hardly 2/3rds of one per cent on R&D. I believe China does 2.4 per cent of its much larger GDP and USA 3.5 per cent of an even larger basket. Even in the pharma industry—our pride as the top global supplier—we seem to be content with pushing ‘generic drugs’ that do not need R&D.

10. Renewable energy. Notwithstanding our leadership role on the International Solar Alliance front, we appear to be losing our ‘solar goldmine’. Against China’s generation through solar PVs at 390 GW, our figure is only 60 GW, behind USA (110) and Japan (90).

11. Food security. Whereas we have done well on the cereals front (production of 42 MT in 1950-51 to 308 MT in 2022-23) there’s a huge gap in the case of pulses, edible oils, and oilseeds. Climate change can cause havoc to the production and the nutrient content of cereals. Pulses, edible oils & oilseeds need a lot more intensive work to reduce dependence on imports. With an under 3x increase in domestic production of pulses over 50-51 to 22-23, our import bill in 22-23 was a whopping \$3.75 B for 4.65 MT of pulses. Similarly, our edible oils import bill stood at about \$17B for nearly 16MT in 2023-24. Due to a major drop in domestic production, 2024 saw an alarming surge of 84 per cent in imports of both pulses and edible oils. Another subject well within the capability of our highly acclaimed agro scientists.



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12. Law and order. National dailies, on any day, carry reports of ghastly rapes, murders on flimsy grounds, people forever on a short fuse, blatantly speeding vehicles on the wrong side of the road, killing/

injuring pedestrians, cyclists, neighbours ready to kill each other on a parking issue or an old enmity or the so called ‘honour killings’. We are losing our moral fabric. A cricket team celebrates its victory in the ‘Silicon Valley of India’ and 11 people lose their lives in the presence of many big politicians and administrators. How cheap is human life in our country? Helmet manufacturers sell nearly 75 per cent defective pieces and the vulnerable buy these as ‘safety gear’. In our national capital people don’t bother about fire safety NoCs despite over 20,000 incidents in just 2024. A recent report brought out the shocking fact that, in a period of three days, on the Delhi-Gurgaon & Dwarka e-ways, out of the total vehicle count of 8.63 lakh, 1.09 lakh were two- and three-wheelers, which are prohibited on these roads! We blame the authorities for everything wrong that happens but how do we explain this? Plain stupidity or dare-devilry? I can only think of ‘lack of foundational education’ for such blatant disregard of the laws. Then there are ‘doctors’ practising with fake degrees, kidnapping of children for begging & trafficking, and other heinous crimes, probably all related to lack of education.

I am sure our brilliant industrialists and CEOs—with the help of equally great scientists and engineers—can resolve these issues. But the nation’s political leadership have to chalk out a blue print and kick start the campaign.

‘Developed country by 2047’ is a wonderful goal, and governments at the center and in states, industry, intelligentsia, civil society, indeed every citizen should work towards the same. We may achieve a high per capita GDP, but will that really make us a developed country unless we address our core issues? **IM**

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AI can play a huge role in building an ethical governance system by enhancing transparency and accountability.

TECHNOLOGY

♦ DR DEBASISH SUR, THE UNIVERSITY OF BURDWAN, BURDWAN, DR SUMIT KUMAR MAJI; THE UNIVERSITY OF BURDWAN, BURDWAN; AND ANIKET CHATTOPADHYAY, TEZPUR UNIVERSITY, TEZPUR

AI to ‘clean the system’

Corruption remains a formidable challenge in India’s journey toward equitable development. According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2024, India ranks 96th out of 180 countries, with a score of 38 out of 100, reflecting persistent concerns about public sector integrity. In this context, Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a potent tool—not a panacea, but a significant enabler—in promoting transparent and accountable governance.

The persistent cost of corruption

Corruption continues to be a deeply entrenched issue in India, imposing both financial and social costs on its citizens. A study by the Centre for Media Studies estimated that nearly ₹20,000 crore was paid in bribes by Indian citizens just to access basic public services that are legally meant to be free. Services such as police, municipal bodies, and land records remain among the most affected, with citizens often left with no choice but to pay for what should be their entitlements. The problem is not merely economic—it is profoundly personal

and systemic. Nearly 51 per cent of urban households surveyed admitted to paying a bribe in the past 12 months, highlighting how corruption continues to be a normalised part of everyday interactions with the state.

In rural areas, the situation is often worse due to weaker institutional oversight and lack of awareness of rights. Further compounding the issue is the loss of trust in public institutions. According to Transparency International, perceptions of government inefficiency and lack of accountability continue to drive low public confidence. This erosion of trust not only weakens citizen engagement but also undermines the legitimacy of governance structures. Moreover, corruption disproportionately impacts the poor and marginalised, who often lack the resources, connections, or knowledge to navigate bureaucratic hurdles without resorting to bribery. As a result, inequality is exacerbated, and access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and welfare becomes increasingly uneven.

In this context, addressing corruption is not just a matter of reform—it is a prerequisite for inclusive development and social justice.



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Leveraging AI for transparency

AI is increasingly being recognised as a powerful tool to enhance transparency and accountability in governance. With its advanced capabilities in data analysis, pattern recognition, and predictive analytics, AI is uniquely positioned to identify systemic inefficiencies and curb malpractices across various sectors. One notable example is the Income Tax Department's initiative, Project Insight. This programme leverages AI to scrutinise financial transactions and social media activity, with the primary goal of detecting tax evasion. While specific data for the 2022–23 period have not been publicly released, Project Insight marks a transformative step towards data-driven compliance enforcement, highlighting how technology can strengthen regulatory oversight.

In the state of Andhra Pradesh, AI is playing a key role in improving governance through the Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS). This system monitors over 900 government services and uses AI-powered analytics to identify delays and irregularities in service delivery. The results have been impressive—recent reports indicate that the grievance redressal mechanism managed through RTGS has

achieved a resolution rate of over 93 per cent, placing it among the most effective systems in the country.

These initiatives underscore the growing role of AI in promoting transparency, improving service delivery, and fostering trust in public institutions.

Automating processes to reduce human discretion

Corruption often finds fertile ground in systems that rely heavily on manual processes and lack transparency. In such environments, human discretion and opaque procedures create ample opportunities for graft. AI offers a powerful solution by automating and streamlining these processes, thereby minimising human intervention and significantly reducing the scope for corruption.

A prime example of this transformation can be seen in Karnataka's Bhoomi project—one of the earliest digital initiatives aimed at land record reform in India. By fully digitising land records and creating a centralised, state-level database, the project has greatly reduced instances of fraudulent land transfers. The system not only ensures easier online access



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AI systems are inherently dependent on the data they are trained on. If the input data are inaccurate, incomplete, or biased, the resulting decisions and predictions can be flawed

to land records for citizens but also alleviates the workload on revenue offices, making the entire process more transparent and efficient. Another compelling case is the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system implemented across India. Designed to deliver subsidies and welfare benefits directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries, the DBT system has significantly curtailed the misuse of public funds. By eliminating middlemen and reducing manual handling, the initiative has reportedly saved a cumulative ₹3.48 lakh crore. This massive saving underscores how AI and digital governance tools can effectively plug leakages in welfare delivery, ensuring that resources reach the intended recipients without diversion or delay.

These examples highlight how AI and digital technologies are being harnessed to build more transparent, efficient, and corruption-resistant governance systems.

Challenges and considerations

Despite the significant promise that AI holds for transforming governance, several challenges must be addressed to ensure its responsible and equitable deployment. A major concern lies in the quality and bias of data. AI systems are inherently dependent on the data they are trained on. If the input data are inaccurate, incomplete, or biased, the resulting decisions and predictions can be flawed. This not only hampers the effectiveness of AI applications but also risks deepening existing social and economic inequalities, particularly if marginalised communities are under-represented or misrepresented in the

data. Another critical issue is the digital divide, especially between urban and rural populations. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), conducted between 2019 and 2021, only 37 per cent of the India's rural households have access to the internet. This limited connectivity poses a significant barrier to the widespread adoption and effectiveness of AI-driven initiatives in these areas.

Without inclusive digital infrastructure, large segments of the population may be excluded from the benefits of AI-enabled governance. Equally important is the need for accountability and transparency in the use of AI. As decision-making processes become increasingly automated, it is essential to establish clear regulatory frameworks and oversight mechanisms. These measures are crucial not only to prevent misuse or unintended consequences but also to build and maintain public trust in AI systems.

Citizens must have the right to understand how decisions affecting them are made, and there should be mechanisms for redress in cases of error or bias. In fact, while AI offers transformative potential for improving governance, these technological advancements must be guided by ethical practices, inclusive



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policies, and robust accountability structures to ensure that the benefits are both effective and equitably distributed.

The path forward

For AI to serve as an effective tool in combating corruption in India, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach is essential—one that goes beyond mere technological adoption and addresses the broader ecosystem in which AI operates. First and foremost, robust policy and regulatory frameworks must be established to guide the ethical use of AI in public services. Clear standards around data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and accountability are critical to prevent misuse and to ensure that AI technologies serve the public good without infringing on individual rights.

Equally important is capacity building within government institutions. Training officials and stakeholders to understand, implement, and manage AI tools effectively is key to their successful integration into administrative processes. Without the necessary technical expertise, even the most advanced systems can falter, leading to inefficiencies or unintended consequences. Another crucial element is public engagement. Involving citizens in the design, implementation, and monitoring of AI systems not only enhances transparency but also fosters trust. When people have a voice in how these technologies are used—especially in areas that directly affect their lives—they are more likely to support and engage with digital governance initiatives.

Finally, investment in digital infrastructure is vital to bridge the persistent urban-rural divide. Without reliable internet access and technological infrastructure in rural areas, the benefits of AI will remain out of reach for a significant portion of the population. Equitable access must be a cornerstone of any AI-driven governance strategy to ensure that no



community is left behind. In essence, leveraging AI to combat corruption in India requires more than just deploying smart tools—it demands a well-rounded approach that incorporates ethical governance, institutional readiness, citizen participation, and inclusive infrastructure development.

Conclusion

AI holds significant potential to enhance transparency and reduce corruption in India. However, its success depends on thoughtful implementation, inclusive access, and robust governance frameworks. By addressing these challenges, India can harness AI not only as a technological advancement but as a catalyst for ethical and transparent governance. **IM**

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