

"Know Your Market & Your Audience"

With a restless mind and an ambitious heart, he started his career with a job that paid him a paltry salary of Rs 300. He had a humble upbringing in a village called Paravadi in Gujarat. He started his entrepreneurial journey with his first oil shop, and after achieving success in it, he ventured into textile industry. This is the story of Jayesh Desai, the chairman of Surat, Gujarat-based Rajhans (Desai-Jain) Group.

With timely success followed by distinctive milestones, Mr Desai soon entered the thriving business of real estate. Having achieved tremendous success in realty, he further envisioned enormous scope in the hospitality Industry. With success in his stride, he was fascinated by the chocolate industry that led him to explore the confectionery segment, set up an international-standard chocolate factory and roll out brand Schmitten.

A first-generation entrepreneur, exemplary leader and driving force behind the success of his business conglomerate, Mr Desai recently ventured into the B2B e-commerce segment with Shareconomy. With this new platform, the Rajhans chief wants to change the way people do business.

Mr Desai's winning strategies have turned the Rajhans (Desai-Jain) Group into a whopping Rs 4,500-crore business conglomerate with more than 7,000 employees working directly and indirectly across various verticals. **Sharmila Chand** meets Mr Desai to understand his management principles and practices that have made Rajhans a vibrant business conglomerate.

Your five management mantras

- **Eye for detail:** As a businessman, you must have an eye for detailing. Success comes with detailed insights and thorough understanding of your market.
- **Future farsightedness:** To run a successful business, one must have future farsightedness and a long-term goal.
- **Strategy:** You need to make strategic decisions to keep focus on the important aspects of your business.
- **Leadership:** Leadership is not just leading from the front, you should keep your team close to you and involve them in decision-making.
- **Handling failure:** Business involves both profit and loss, and one

should always learn from failures and not get demotivated by them.

Any game that helps your career

Well, I usually play golf to relieve myself from the routine. I think playing this gentleman's game is the best outdoor treat that keeps my brain fit and enhances my vision, which, in turn, adds values to my work.

Turning point in your career life

Surat, the land of opportunities, is the turning point for my success. Ever since the day I landed in this auspicious land, I've been bestowed upon with good luck. Technically, the turning point is my first quest in the field of edible oil business which had given





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JAYESH B DESAI

Founder & Chairman,
Shareconomy, & Group
Chairman, Rajhans Group

me unprecedented returns, leading me towards more opportunities as well as challenges. I therefore give full credit to my edible oil adventure which encouraged me to turn my aspirations to a good account.

Secret of your success

There is no short-cut to success, and hard work is the only secret. Hard work with honesty and a vision make you successful. If you have a strong determination and ability to work hard, I think that nothing can stop you from being a successful entrepreneur.

Your philosophy of work

My philosophy of work is to provide the best services and products which will keep my customers happy. Stay optimistic and true to your work, and move ahead with enthusiasm to drive every new opportunity in your way.

A person you admire

Well, it's the one and only Dhirubhai Ambani. His immense struggle and incredible ideologies have always inspired me. His early days before becoming a successful businessman surely remind of mine. In fact, I see myself in him, and this is the reason I always admire him.

Your favourite books

Every book on my role model Dhirubhai Ambani is my favourite. I really love to read about how he transformed himself into a business tycoon despite being a teacher's son. I am always encouraged by his firm determination and confidence which can be seen in all the books written on him. His each struggle mentioned in words encourages me to learn more about him. I therefore express my gratitude to those who have written about him so that I can connect more with him. To some extent, his books truly are my own representation that gives me more and more impetus to adopt his brilliant ideologies.

Your fitness regime

I work out for five days in a week, and I also like to conduct small meetings while walking. Talking while walking

is an amazing way to stay healthy. Every day morning, I make it a point to meditate for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Meditation helps me concentrate while working and taking major decisions.

Your five business mantras

● **Hard work with smart work:** To run a successful business, you need to do smart work as well as hard work. A perfect balance of the two helps you to be at the top of your game. Smart work reduces time consumption, and there is no alternative to hard work.

● **Hire the best people:** Employing motivated and dedicated staff is the prerequisite for your success. It is because of their immense support that accelerates your business objectives. Remember, you can't single handedly lead the whole empire as you need their driving force behind you. Since employees are the backbone, their problems should be yours. There should be a transparent and professional yet friendly work environment so that employees can make the most of their duties. Besides, they should be treated no less than a family.

● **Know your market and your audience:** You cannot run a business without knowing who your target audience is and what your market is. Customer satisfaction is the most important aspect if you want to have a stable and successful business of your own.

● **Passion:** That zeal to achieve your target should always be inside you, and love and passion for your work are what that take it forward. Many hurdles come in your way, but one should be strong enough to cross them and move ahead.

● **Zero-compromise on quality:** Provide quality without compromising. Be the one synonymous with quality products and services. Let the customers have faith in you, and never ever hurt their expectations. Be honest to everyone when it comes to your business ethics. ■