

Insight

A clarion call



A social entrepreneur uses the same creative resources as any other entrepreneur, but applies them to social issues for positive results, says Sandeep Singh

This is the age of 'Dangerous Optimism.' Our opportunities today are not limited by our resources but by our imagination. We are moving towards an "enclave" economy, where we have nearly 200 million, well-educated, well-to-do Indians participating in the march towards globalisation, while the remaining 800 million are illiterate. In order to improve their lot, we urgently require a new cadre of "social entrepreneurs."

All leading universities in the US offer programmes in social entrepreneurship, where they teach students how to apply their business and managerial skills to solve social problems. Social entrepreneurs identify new processes, services and products and combine proven processes to address a complex set of social problems. They are thus the ultimate scenario planners of our time.

They use the same creative resources as any other entrepreneur, but instead of applying these problem-

solving skills to a business situation, they apply them to social issues and the results are often very encouraging. We need to follow the same pattern in India.

Meanwhile, we also need to confront ourselves, with the following set of questions:

- Do I, as a representative of a billion people, feel an obligation to influence the pattern of development in my country?
- Do I, accept the responsibility of changing the social structure in my country to promote common good for the masses? And, if I do, then how can I increase my involvement in grassroots issues?

Here, let's remember the words of N.R. Narayana Murthy, who said, "Attracting the best talent to this profession is essential to change our world." ■

This article is an extract from a speech delivered by the author to students of the Graphic Era Institute of Technology, Dehradun on their Convocation Day