

Leader of the Month

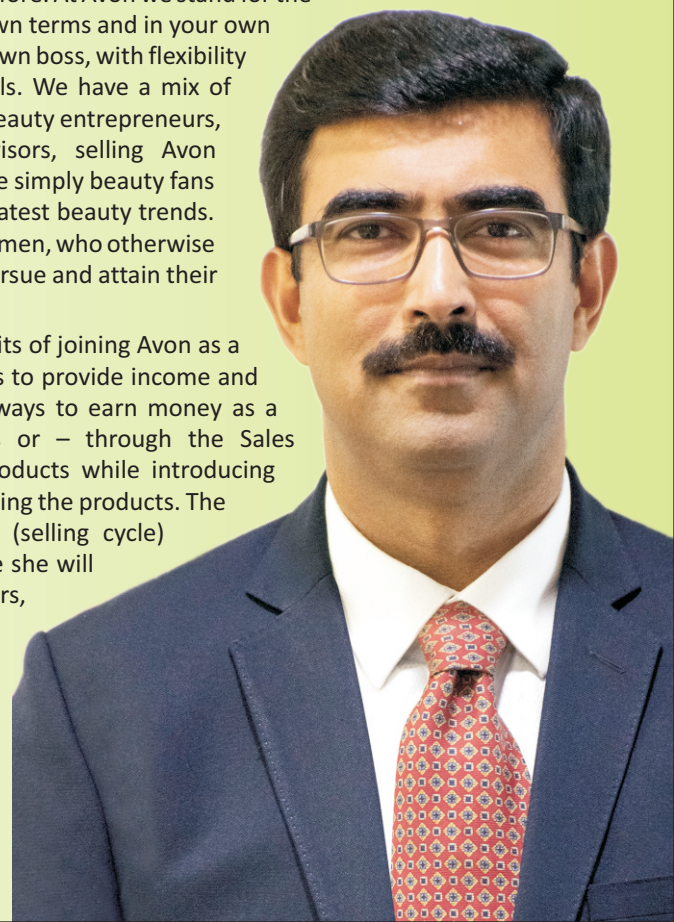
Dronacharya Chakraborty

Managing Director, Avon Beauty Products

Avon has always been one of the renowned names in the Direct Selling business. The Managing Director of Avon, Mr. Dronacharya Chakraborty points out the advantages of working in the Direct Selling industry being a woman. He says, "Direct selling offers important benefits to people who want an opportunity to earn income and build a business of their own, to consumers as an alternative to retail stores, and a cost-effective way for business to bring products to market. Today, consumers want to interact with the brand and the product directly. In direct selling, people get to know the product range at a personal level and understand what the brand stands for. In direct selling, you have the same strategy that e-commerce is doing, you are making your own choice based on your own visuals but at the same time, there's a human touch. Direct selling helps Avon talk to consumers directly. It helps build the brand. Avon wants their representatives to succeed by offering a no-barrier earnings opportunity to support themselves and their families. We support each representative in her efforts to achieve success and empower her to be self-sufficient by earning an income."

He further discusses Avon's working model, he adds "The company's direct-selling model offers a low-cost entry, a wide range of training and development opportunities, management support, and digital direct selling tools that enable Representatives to manage and grow their businesses as never before. At Avon we stand for the freedom to earn and learn on your own terms and in your own way. Our Avon Representative is her own boss, with flexibility over her schedule and business goals. We have a mix of representatives, some are full-time beauty entrepreneurs, others are part time beauty advisors, selling Avon alongside a full-time job and some are simply beauty fans who want direct access to all of the latest beauty trends. Our business model enables many women, who otherwise might not have access to credit, to pursue and attain their personal financial goals."

Mr. Chakraborty highlights the benefits of joining Avon as a Direct Seller. He shares, "Avon stands to provide income and training to its reps. There are two ways to earn money as a representative: by selling products or – through the Sales Leadership program – by selling products while introducing others who might be interested in selling the products. The higher a representative's campaign (selling cycle) sales are, the greater the percentage she will earn on those sales. Sales Leaders, representatives who both sell and introduce new representatives, earn money based on their personal sales plus their representative' sales, with a similar progressive earnings structure applied. In addition, Avon focus is to have all our representatives adequately trained on product and business."



Food For Thought

Rajat Banerji
Secretary, IDSA

Policy Advocacy in India

To say that the Indian market is diverse, would be an understatement. Policy Advocacy demands that companies explain their positions about the current government policy and contribute to the decision-making in a positive and collaborative manner. They need to know and appreciate how the Indian government works so that, they can partner business and development opportunities.

Policy advocacy requires one to engage with India's many different central and state ministries, institutions and regulations. This remains a significant challenge as India is not a small country. At the same time, competition between states to attract investments ensure that bureaucrats and political decision-makers are interested in harnessing the problem-solving abilities of the private sector and are open to new suggestions, solutions and initiatives.

India's federal structure often necessitates large differences in regulatory environments. The regulatory mindset is partly influenced by the colonial or the socialist past. For business houses and multinationals, India remains the final frontier, as dazzling as it is frustrating. When dealing with local conditions, dependable on-ground intelligence can ensure that concerns are addressed appropriately. One of the few global economies that remains strong, India has been waiting on the wings, seemingly for an eternity.

Building a winning business in India requires an in-depth understanding of its politics, dynamic market and socio-cultural fabric. It requires an understanding of a wide range of complex and continuously evolving regulatory and policy issues that are an active part of a democratic set-up. The Indian bureaucracy plays a key role in the conceptualization, change and reform of policy and regulation. At the same time, civil society plays a strong role in shaping the country's business environment

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate: Companies need to establish regular contacts with concerned legislators and officials at the central, state and local level and provide them with an update on their business plans and corporate direction. It is important for businesses to understand government requirements and, accordingly, fine-tune its products and service strategies for the Indian marketplace. Influence cannot be achieved from a distance and the scope of the communications challenges especially in a country like India requires local knowledge.

India today is a trillion-dollar market with an enviable rate of GDP growth. India plays an increasingly important role in global geopolitics – not only as the world's largest democracy, but also as an economic powerhouse that is coming into its own. India is one of the most important markets for multinational companies and increasingly Indian organizations are going global.

There is a strong business case to make, however, for companies in India to improve their government outreach and communications and to ensure that regulators and government leadership understand the company, its practices and how it is contributing to the local economy. Whilst in recent years India has adopted reforms to improve its regulatory environment, there remain significant challenges, such as stringent government regulation and haphazard implementation, which often remains in the ill-famed inspector-raj era.

Yet, policy advocacy has undergone a sea-change over the past decade or so. The economic landscape has been jolted into transparency, from time-to-time, as and when stark irregularities have emerged. Experts opine that this is part of the growth curve and most evolved economies – the Robber Baron Economy of the US comes to mind – went through such a phase, before matters improved. We are at the cusp. For just how long, it anyone's guess!



Planning & Foresight Leads to Triumph

Direct Selling as a business model might sound easy for someone researching about it. But, does it mean that being a direct seller is as painless and effortless as it sounds? Like any other business, there's no prediction whether the business would be successful or not. There are certain factors that an individual can take special care of, while starting up in a direct selling business.

Running any business can be a bit of a hassle, and Direct Selling is no different. Even the slightest of misstep can land the business right to the ground. The virtue of continuous success for a direct seller is 'Research', which is also a step towards boom of the industry.

Career in Direct Selling takes time. Anyone who uses the phrase "get rich in a night" would not be able to help you succeed in legal ways, probably introducing a Ponzi/Pyramid Scheme. Direct Selling takes its own sweet time and gives out the sweetest fruit an individual can only dream of. A strong system support and structures are the most essential part of running a direct selling business. Patience is the key right here. Giving up on your business at the onset will only lead towards a failure. Whereas, being determined, patient and hard working can help boost your firm towards high skies.

No product could be perfect enough to be selling itself.

An individual should take the initiative to practice innovative sales and marketing methods. The trainings provided by any direct selling entity will not be enough for any individual who is determined towards their goals and achievements. A direct seller should be updated with the latest strategies and trends of the industry.



There is always only so much that an entity can do for boosting an individual's growth, but in the end it all depends upon their personal growth. The initiative taken by an individual to invest time on their personal

trainings, attending relevant conferences and seminars, reading books, etc. can assist shoot up your direct selling business. From social media to sales strategies, there will always be something new to learn.

Management of time, management of financials, management of people and the list goes on and on. It's up to you to not only sell and motivate yourself but manage everything properly. One has to master the art of time management, relationship management, people management and business management. Sometimes you'll feel like you're being pulled at from all angles. But the most successful people in this world have a fantastic hold on management. Become a 'Master of Management' and you'll be unstoppable.

Setup a budget for yourself. At the onset of every month, ensure to set up a budget that would come in handy throughout. The need of more products from the consumers can increase in no time. Hence, it is always advisable to have a flexible budget to meet sudden requirements of consumer demands. In order to avoid miscalculations, ensure to set the budget in such a manner, where inclusion of travel expenses, holding a session with downline and other necessities is taken into consideration.

Running a successful Direct Selling business takes resources, time, energy, focus and some amount of investment to lay your foundation down. Learn to build success on your own terms with the help of direct selling. Set a goal, stay focused and achieve your business goals!



International Updates

- ◎ On **February 21st**, HKDSA President Danny Luk along with several key DSA officers met with top officials from the Hong Kong Consumer Council. Discussion focused on such topics as the importance of consumer rights protection, product claims among other things. The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Consumer Council Gilly Wong was invited to speak at the upcoming HKDSA 40th Anniversary Luncheon which will be held on November 25th.



- ◎ In **April 2019**, WFDSA supported the seventh French DSA (FVD) Academic Seminar which focused on omnichannel experiences at the EMLYON Business School. Attendees included academics, students, direct selling executives and other participants who discussed various omnichannel strategies in order to optimize and streamline the user experience and attract customers.



Direct Selling: Developing & Value-adding Skills to Lives

Sheela Bansal, 37, is a Gurugram based homemaker who wanted to do something to utilize her free time, post completing household chores. She was determined to indulge in some productive activity, something that can yield her some money, making her financially independent. On suggestion from her close friend, Sheela joined one of the leading Direct Selling companies and has not looked back since then. Her life has been a roller-coaster ride as she has become one of the top distributors of the company. Sheela is a simple graduate, having no professional degree. She had reluctantly joined the business having no skill-set and being short of confidence. However, today she is mentoring scores of people like her, being ranked as top business-owner in her locality. So, how did this transformation happen?

“It is the beauty of Direct Selling Industry, which apart from availing business opportunity also impartstraining and knowledge to its distributors. When I joined this company as a distributor, I could hardly speak to people, forget about handling business. My leaders and mentors have played an important part in infusing confidence in me. By attending the training programs of my company, not only I have developed skillset but have also mastered the art of selling. Today, I am a successful business-woman, leading a financially independent life and helping others too in the process,” said Sheela Bansal. Sheela is just one of millions of people who have gained skill-set and knowledge after joining Direct Selling and leading a better life.

It is the passion of the Direct Sellers that has stood apart in the recent years, placing Indian economy as one of the most booming economies on the global stage. Direct Selling gives entrepreneurial opportunity to everyone and prepares them for a career in business. There are no fixed criteria to join Direct Selling; anyone above the age of 18 can join and become successful. The mantra of success is simple- hard-work combined with skills. And, Direct Selling plays a huge role in developing skill-set for its sales-force. All Direct Selling companies conduct a lot of training sessions for its



Direct Sellers. These sessions include soft-skills, products and leadership training. Clearly, these company prepares its sales force for bigger challenges.

Direct Selling Industry is playing a vital role in empowering millions in India by transforming unskilled people to skilled work-force and the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

One of the biggest contribution of Direct Selling to Indians is the training imparted towards developing inter-personal relations. Being a people's business, it becomes all the more important for a person to have excellent inter-personal relations to be able to do successful business and Direct Selling gives an apt platform for the same.

Apart from inter-personal skills, all the Direct Selling companies gives in-depth product training to its sales force for demonstration. This not only enhances the product knowledge of the sellers, also prepares them to address public gathering. Needless to say, Direct Selling infuses public speaking skills to its Direct Sellers.

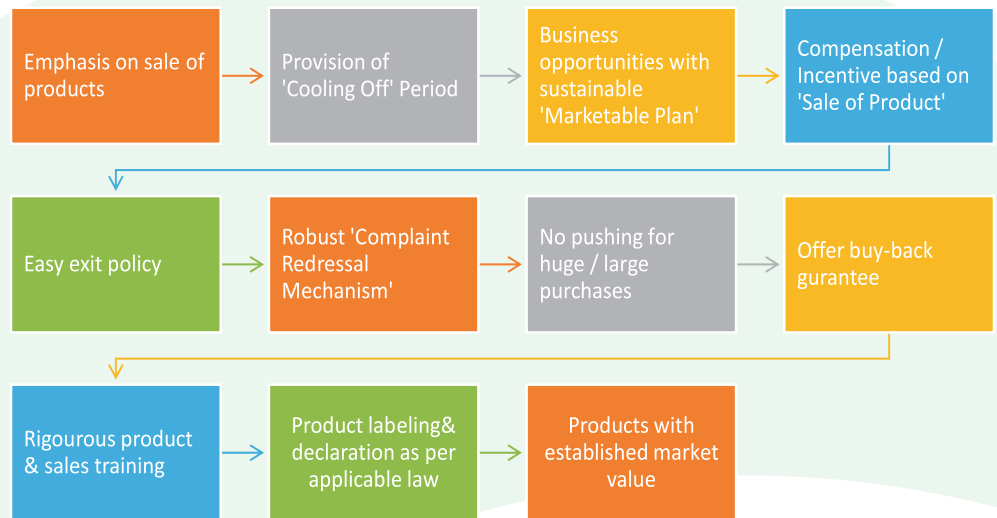
These Direct Selling companies run extensive training programs at different level depending upon the level/hierarchy of the Direct Sellers. Hence, the learning and training in Direct Selling in a never ending process. Conclusion of one training gives way to beginning of another one. That is not all, as these companies also provides certification to its Direct Sellers, giving them all the more reasons to be proud of themselves. The certification also helps the Direct Sellers getting their due recognition.

Today, Direct Selling is boosting the confidence of millions of Indians to reach, fulfilling their dreams. Most of the Direct Sellers become entrepreneurs within a few years of joining the business. But, it doesn't come easy- they put in a lot of hard work to make every sale. 'Harder you work, better you get' is the mantra of success in Direct Selling Industry; something that all the Direct Sellers learn while going through the training sessions.

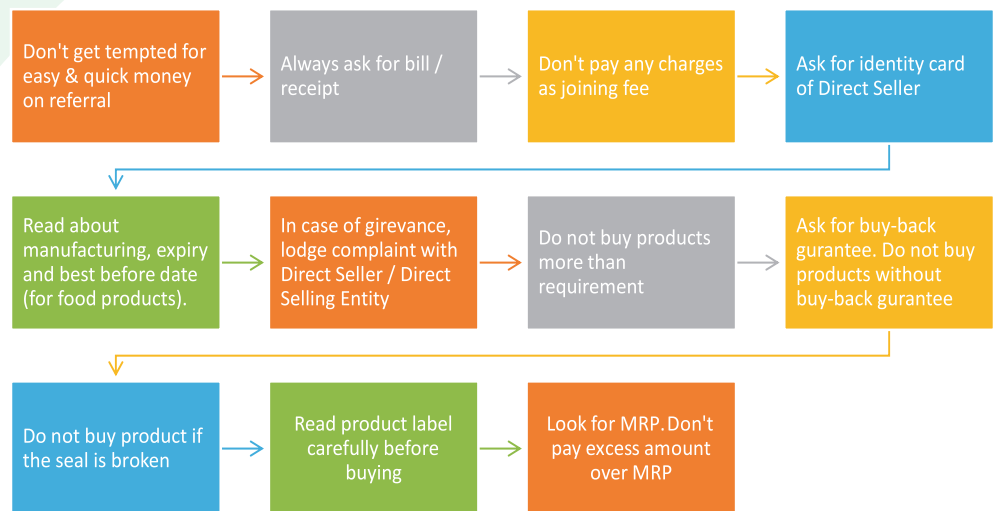
Direct Selling Industry can easily be called the 'skill' factory churning out the 'skilled' workforce. The industry not only creates employment; it also creates the leaders!



Good Practices: Direct Selling Entities & Direct Sellers



Rights & Responsibilities of Consumers



IDSA attends Consumer Mela'19 at Krishi Bhawan on the World Consumer Rights Day



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