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AMMARUN VISVANATHAN: AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH CREATIVE CONTENTMENT

Prepared by: Mr.Sundarapandiyan Natarajan, Associate Professor, VIMS, Coimbatore

SUCCESS STORY AND CASE RESEARCH

India ranks second among the Nations and produces 7.44 million metric tons of various grades of casting as per international standards. There are approximately 4500 foundry units in India, of which 80% are in small scale sector.

Coimbatore is a home of foundry industry and a well known foundry cluster of India. Which has the rare distinction of having produced the first pump and motor in India. This sector has immensely contributed to the industrialization of Coimbatore. The various types of casting which are produced by the foundries such as ferrous, non –ferrous, aluminum alloys, cast iron and steel have a variety of application in different manufacturing sectors such as motor pump industry, automobiles, textiles, compressors and valves, diesel engines etc.

Ammarun foundries is one among the high capacity units in Coimbatore. Established in 1991 with 100tons capacity, it has reached 2000 tons capacity at present, a phenomenal growth in a decade's time. It is adopting latest technology with 'clean industry image'. Its turnover has crossed 120 crores. Ammarun has a range of products in its product line.

The man behind the magic-Mr.Visvanathan

N.Visvanathan, Managing Partner of M/s.Amman Foundries, Coimbatore was born on 15th may 1953 in Kavilipalayam village,near Sathyamangalam, Erode District. He passed out DEE in the year 1972 from PSG Polytechnic college, Coimbatore and completed BE(EEE) course from PSG College of Technology in the year 1983.

He started his Career as a trainee in the electrical assembly section of M/s.PSG Industrial Institute, Coimbatore. After one year, he was transferred to P.S.G and sons Charities Metallurgy and Foundry Division, Neelambur. After serving for about 3 years, he joined M/s.Premier Castings Limited, Hosur as head of the melting Department. He became the head of Production Department within a span of 3½ years and then he joined V.R.Foundries, Coimbatore in the year 1979 and served till march 2000 as General Manager. He also served as the Chief Executive Officer of M/s.Ranbacastings ltd., a sister concern of M/s.V.R.Foundries, till 2000.

After more than 22 years of arduous journey from trainee to CEO in the Industry, in the year 1991, he established his own foundry M/s.Ammarun Foundries in Coimbatore. He resigned his post from M/s.V.R.Foundries and Ranba castings Ltd, in the year 2000 and since then he is managing M/s.Ammarun Foundries which is manufacturing grey and ductile iron castings catering to domestic and overseas industries.He is currently having more than 45 years experience in foundry field.

The Credentials of Mr.Visvanathan

Mr.Viswanathan is the past vice president of Tamil Nadu Electricity Consumers' Association, past President of Coimbatore Industrial Infrastructure Association and also the past Chairman of the Institute of Indian Foundry men, Coimbatore Chapter and past vice president of Coimbatore district small industries Association.

He has received “Outstanding Entrepreneur Award” from the Government of Tamil Nadu for the year 1997 and 1998.Also he was recipient of best Entrepreneur award from Coimbatore Management Association affiliated to All India Management Association in the year 2007 and outstanding alumni award from PSG College of Technology in the year 2009.Added to all these, Ammarun foundries promoted by him also received several awards like best foundry of the region for productivity, quality and for good environment and labour welfare from Institute of Indian Foundry men. Also Ammarun Foundries has received safety awards from Government of Tamil Nadu for the years 2002,2003 and 2004.Added to all these achievements, Ammarun Foundries was adjudged as the green foundry of the year 2007 and was awarded for this recognition during the concurrent summit of 68th world foundry congress/56th Indian Foundry Congress held at Chennai February 2008. He was also the recipient of two National awards for the year 2008 from Govt of India for effective entrepreneurship and quality products

and subsequently received again a National award termed SURAKSHA PURASKAR AWARD from NSCI (National Safety Council) year 2010 for his commitment on environment and safety aspects practiced in his foundry and also received Rajiv Gandhi National Quality award for the year 2013 from the Government of India.

Year 2011 saw Ammarun Foundries receiving the Corporate Social Responsibility award from Business world-FICCI, for its outstanding work on waste foundry sand reclamation/reuse which is useful to the entire foundry industry .The above award was followed with a similar CSR award from Residents Awareness Association of Coimbatore for the contribution Ammarun Foundries made in the area of waste sand reclamation and converting the same to useful material.

He established a sister concern by name Ammarun Enviroguard Industries Pvt Ltd., to reclaim the used CO2 silica moulds by using his own innovative washing technology with a capacity of 10,000 tons per month and serving many steel foundries along with a couple of cast iron foundries in Coimbatore from September 2015.

Business philosophy of Mr.Visvanathan

Mr.Visvanathan is a down of earth realist and an entrepreneur with passion for performance and quality. 'Quality is the way of life' for Mr.Visvanathan. According to him Quality has always been a key differentiator and hence the need for continuous quality improvement. All the processes are subject to stringent quality tests. To achieve competitive edge, the quality improvement should be completed with cost reduction.

Innovative Spirit is another quality of Mr.Visvanathan. He is a born innovator and a perfectionist .He has created an innovation prone system. According to him innovation is a prerequisite for sustainability. A few significant innovations of Mr.Visvanathan are as below;

In 2008, A pilot project was developed using new technology of wet reclamation process ideally suited to small units. The reclaimed silica sand is 95.5 pure which can be recycled.

More than once Technology for dust pollution reduction and assisting the pollution control measures of

State Pollution Control Board.

Modernizing production line through labour saving, automation technology.

All these indicate that Mr. Visvanathan is an environmentally sensitive entrepreneur a desirable attribute of a socially responsible person.

As a reflection of its concern for carbon emission, two green source windmill of 850kw each and 1no of 2,000 kw have been installed in 2006 and 2015 respectively, which saves 30 percent of power consumption. With green belt initiative in the factory premises 1/3rd of the land area is made green by planting fruit bearing trees and the fruits are distributed to employees at free of cost. Recycled waste water from sewage plant and water collected through rain water harvesting are used for irrigation.

The signal achievement of Ammarun Foundry is in the field of CSR. Thus Ammarun has made a mark in reclaiming silica sand and recycle the same for use in foundry industry. He has established an independent production unit namely “Ammarun Enviroguard” which extends its service to more than 30 industries in this region.

The CSR initiative of Ammarun is Technology induced. The silica sand which is a precious natural resource is fast depleting. The used silica sand is foundry waste, when thrown out in the open is environmentally hazardous. Foundry industry being classified under red category, waste disposal is a perennial problem. This resulted in improvising a new technology suitable for wet reclamation process of used silica sand instead of thermal reclamation or mechanical reclamation which are expensive and are beyond the affordability of small-scale units. A pilot project was developed in 2004 to perfect this technology.

Reclaiming the precious mineral resource, namely sand from the industrial waste and recycle the same for building construction work is perhaps the single most and first of its kind CSR activity of Ammarun Foundry.

Mr. Visvanathan has been amply recognized for this outstanding contribution and has been bestowed with prestigious awards by different government and Non-Government Agencies.

As an entrepreneur Mr.Visvanathan has two striking qualities which are so the say, rarely found in a successful entrepreneur.

- He is a man of creative contentment and consolidation rather than aspiration for expansion is his character.
- His entrepreneurial pursuit was born out of community pressure rather than passion as is the case with most of the entrepreneurs.

By his vast experience in foundry industry Mr.Visvanathan suggests that the existing crisis in foundry industry can be overcome by cost cutting and reduction in rejection rate.

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