

# Restore culture of Innovation in every Indian, says Email Inventor



Image credit: Entrepreneur India



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*"My vision is to galvanize a new age of Indian Innovation the world has yet to see."* With this mission Dr V.A. Shiva Ayyadurai, Inventor of Email, Systems Scientist & Founder, Innovation Corps & CytoSolve, Inc.; wants to implant a unique seed of 'culture' in every Indian to enable them uncoil their DNA needed to reclaim their indisputable heritage of 'Innovation'.

The trailblazer's journey from east to west, from science and tradition to modern technology; holds clue for emerging young entrepreneurs to help build the ecosystem of Innovation in India and evolve the culture of

entrepreneurism unmatched in the world.

Dr Shiva is a polymath and holds four degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He is a recipient of many national and international awards. Recently, he has been awarded as Serial Entrepreneur of the Year. In an interaction with Entrepreneur, Dr Shiva shares his views about Culture, Innovation and maturing entrepreneurial ecosystem in India:

**Tell us about your major plans to spur entrepreneurial culture in India.**

I want to help emerging entrepreneurs in India to realise that 'Innovation' is in their DNA. When I invented e-mail as a 14 year old boy in 1978, that's not really about me, it's actually about the Indian people. It's very important that Indians understand, as a part of building an entrepreneurial culture, that something as big as e-mail was actually created by an Indian. This will help evolve the culture of entrepreneurship in the country because it encourages and boosts people motivation level in a great way. The history of Innovation actually belongs to India, which not only goes back to the invention of e-mail, but its goes back to the discovery of similar most important elements in areas like Mathematics, Architecture, Science and Medicine.

**Your vision is to galvanise new age of Innovation in India. How do you intend to do that?**

India has a historical era of Innovation. In today's modern age, we need to resuscitate the culture of Innovation in every Indian. We should not only share the stories of great innovators, but also educate Indians about building the ecosystem of Innovation, which is not really about having a lot of money, but actually comes from serving civilian problems. India can galvanise Innovation by simply looking back to its own history and its culture of collectivism, working together, and families supporting each other.

**So you are trying to say that we need to kill the Indian mentality of blindly coping whatever is being done.**

Exactly. Right now, there is thinking that whatever western civilization has done and produced is beneficial for the world. So every assumption that we are doing about the Innovation in United States is perceived as good. But if you actually look at it, you would realise that most of it came from war. So the western model is to kill things first, repurpose it, and then the secondary market will sell it you in name of civilian problems. In this process, we think we are getting Innovation, but these Innovations are done for killing people. Now you look at the eastern system, we had methods of healthcare, which were not based on killing people. For instance, Ayurveda was based on imbibing harmony with nature. So why are we following Innovation model that is based on death, when our culture is actually based on life?

### **Elaborate on your entrepreneurial ventures and how do you manage all the ventures together?**

I have various entrepreneurial ventures like e-mail, healthcare, non-profit, but at the end of the day, I come down to one word – “System”. If you see everything, e-mail is nothing but an interconnected system – it has interconnecting inbox, outbox, folders, and inter office mail system. So we have organised our companies in a way, where we have one core company, and we train one person to do ten different things. So we cross train people. My Sales guy can actually do a bit of Engineering; and my Head of Engineering, for example, was a Copy Writer for Ogilvy and Mather. Hence, I believe in training people in various fields.

### **How different is India from the US entrepreneurial ecosystem?**

The US entrepreneurial ecosystem is primarily driven by money. Though it's presented as something very romantic, but in reality it's a very narcissistic culture. Now, that culture is being transported to India, but it's not going to work here because it is not a part of Indian ethos. Indian ethos is about family and collectivism. It's all together a different culture. I can see that the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem is about to take off and the culture would be defined on 'cooperation'.

# FACTBOX

- >> **Dr. Shiva** moved to US in 1970, and later went on to invent e-mail in 1978 at New York University. In 1982, United States issued a Copyright Certificate to Dr. Shiva for inventing e-mail.
- >> **Birth Place and Year**  
Mumbai, December 2, 1963
- >> **Companies Owned**  
7 Companies - Systems Health, LLC; CytoSolve, Inc.; EchoMail, Inc.; General Interactive, LLC.; Millennium Productions, Pvt. Ltd. India; Innovation Corps; International Center for Integrative Systems
- >> **Life's mission**  
To inspire 1 billion youth that innovation can occur anytime, anyplace by anybody
- >> **Patents Owned**  
7 patents
- >> **Philanthropic view**  
There is only one purpose to life: Truth and Freedom for all

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