



Innovation & R&D are key growth driver

When I was starting out in the mid-1980s in J K Paper Mills, modern paper production technology was taking its baby steps as well. All I had to do then was make sure that not only the product that was going out was top-notch, but also to make sure that the raw materials coming in did not hinder that process. Being a core member of Copier paper development for the first time in India was also a matter of pride for me. I also played my part in building Management systems for a little over 8 years, before I got another breakthrough.

Working under Chinese bosses at Sinarmas (I) Ltd from 1996 was a revelation of sorts for me because that was one of the first times I ever worked on developing Coated Papers (off machine coating) for high-grade magazine printing. Working with brand new technology and aiming for a world class product was not a cake walk. Working with a team of professionals from across the country and some parts of the world (most of them were Chinese) have made it successful with lot of efforts. Working on the development of copier paper is always a unique experience, and it was at Sinarmas that I understood the tricks and minutiae of producing high-quality Coated Papers and value added papers for various applications.

But, it was at Khanna Paper Mills in Amritsar that showed me what a full-fledged Research and Development (R&D) team has the ability to use enzymes. My team and I developed special grades like Spectralight board, which was well accepted in the market. Not only that, but we also conceived a project on usage of residual waste plastic coming out of waste paper processing Under Wealth Out of Waste Project), which was an environmental hazard for the residents nearby.

BILT (Unit- Ashti) reunited me with the art of producing Copier paper, but it wasn't the main reason I made the switch to Ashti. It was the first Indian paper mill to introduce ASA sizing on a continuous basis with a minimum cost and the fact that copier papers were produced with wet end Calcium Carbonate to improve quality, got me excited. It was also at Ashti that I was appointed as the lead auditor of OHSAS 18001 and became a management representative for ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 quality systems. But the memory that takes the cake is the fact that we manufactured Matrix Copier grade papers, which won Paper Of The Year in 2009!

Then I turned my gaze to paper produced from bagasse and wheat straws, and I got a chance to work on these methods at Bindal Papers Ltd., Muzaffarnagar, and Century Pulp and Paper, Lalkuan. The world was changing too, and a lot of emphases were being placed on

environmental awareness, so I also made sure that my contribution to saving the environment was no less than my contribution to the paper industry, something that I am still proud of.

It was at ITC PSPD, Bhadrachalam that I learnt about the small details that go into managing vendors. ITC has always been known for its revolutionary approach towards manufacturing niche quality high end paper boards and it introduced me to a lot of new process technologies, new products and new process developments for paper and board manufacturing. Absolutely remarkable.

Now that I'm back at JK Paper Mills, Jaykaypur, it feels like life has come to a full circle. It's been 35 years since I first stepped into a paper mill, full of awe. I have learnt a lot of new processes and technological details over the course of time, but there's one thing that has never changed, and never will. The will to make sure that the quality of the product never suffers because of new production techniques.



Gouri Shankar Patnaik

General Manager (QA & TS)

JK Paper Mills, Rayagada

Mobile: 91-8188194994, 91-9849496016

E-mail: gs.patnaik@jkpm.jkmail.com