

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Can entrepreneurs be created? What needs to be done to encourage entrepreneurship in Singapore?

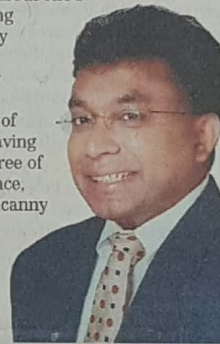
THE MAKING OF ENTREPRENEURS

BT CEOs e-Club

Members of the BT CEOs e-Club are Singapore's top corporate leaders whom BT editors would like to interact with in an atmosphere of informality and trust. This 'club' is a virtual one, with interaction mainly via e-mail. Each week, we will invite comments from these top executives on various economic and corporate issues. Their views will then be published in this weekly section, Views from the Top.

THERE is some evidence that the entrepreneurial instinct is in one's chromosomes. Our DNA controls everything from eye and hair colour to our risks of having diseases such as cancer and diabetes. The success of the Human Genome project has now enabled us to begin to connect as to how genes define our predisposition to certain behaviour.

How one instinctively spots and seizes an opportunity, being relentless about one's vision, being instinctively curious, continually innovate regardless of failures, having a high degree of perseverance, and the uncanny ability to convince others of the value of your idea are some of the traits of an entrepreneur. However, even if it's in our genes, the traits can be blocked if we fail to identify, cultivate and use it strategically.



There is also some evidence that being exposed to entrepreneurial environment early in life is clearly important. Life, career and entrepreneurship – it is all about its evolution. To succeed, an entrepreneur should have a good understanding of his genetic inventory – natural abilities and limitations and the ability to learn and evolve. It's a fine mix of inherited and learned ability (nature together with nurture).

In my view, Singapore has been increasingly making the environment conducive to drive intellectual curiosity, the freedom to explore and innovate and has been encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit and business initiatives far and wide.

As in evolution, it takes time to develop and inherit these traits, and I don't think there is any revolutionary approach out there that can jump-start an entrepreneurial mindset overnight.

– J Anton Ravindran
Group CEO & Co-Founder,
Genovate Pte Ltd