

Indianpreneur



AKSHAY CHOPRA,
FOUNDER,
WE R STUPID

CHANDRA GUPTA,
FOUNDER,
CSPRO TECHNOLOGIES

ARUL BALAN R,
FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN
AND MANAGING
DIRECTOR,
CALS RENEWABLE
ENERGY INDIA

SUNDARARAMAN
SEETHARAMAN,
FOUNDER,
GOWORKZONE

**INFLUENTIAL
INDIANPRENEURS
TO WATCH IN
STARTUPS 2023**

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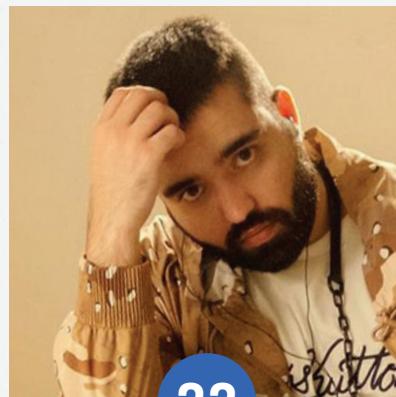
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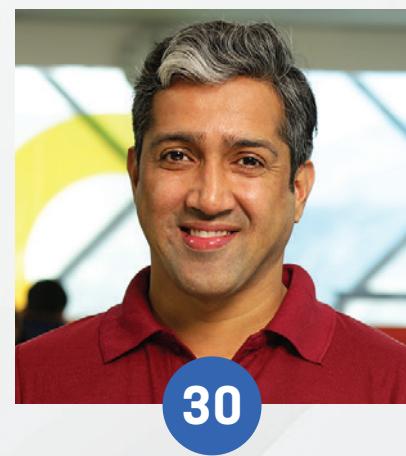
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INDIAN STARTUPS ENTREPRENURS CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITY

A startup or start-up is a company or project undertaken by an entrepreneur to seek, develop, and validate a scalable business model.

India has emerged as the 3rd largest ecosystem for startups globally. We all can see a new trend or culture in India as startup founders, this is growing tremendously. From having an idea to executing it, the investment is required to support the startup. As we know the Indian government is supporting, the Make in India concept is there and other facilities and platforms are there which helps any startup to boost like angel investors, VCs.

The funding helps any startups to grow them, it elevates the business to the next level. The founders can utilize the financial resources for their business expansion, manpower hiring, branding & marketing etc. Definitely the journey of any founder is not easy, a lot of hurdles must have come but breaking out those barriers is the part of startups.

This issue “Influential Indianpreneurs to Watch in Startups 2023” is to provide an insight of some Indian founders/ co-founders/ entrepreneur’s story who is inspiring and influencing other upcoming startups & entrepreneurs while making decisions in their entrepreneurial journey. When and how they started, what challenges faced by them, products & services, future goals, seeking investments or not, adoption of advanced technology and many more. We have also listed some Angel Investors and VCs as we all know

Idea & Investment connect together.



INFLUENTIAL INDIANPRENEURS TO WATCH IN STARTUPS 2023

Mr. Chandra Gupta

Founder

CSPRO Technologies

csprotechnology.com

New Delhi

CSPRO Technologies stands out for its personalized approach, data-driven decision-making, and commitment to client success. Chandra Gupta founded CSPRO Technologies in 2019.

Mr. Arul Balan R

Founder Chairman & Managing Director

Cals Renewable Energy

calsindia.com

Tamil Nadu

Mr. Balan is the Founder Chairman & Managing Director of CALS Renewable Energy India Private Limited, including group companies of SML Energy and SML Travels. He has a bachelor's degree in Electrical & Electronics Engineering and holds a master's degree in Business Administration.

Mr. Sahil Nandal

Co-Founder

Free Society

freesociety.in

Mumbai

Free Society is India's first globally curated multi-brand streetwear, sneaker and vintage store.

Mr. AJ Jindal

Co-Founder & CEO

Fulcrum

getfulcrum.io

USA

Fulcrum is a self-driving expansion, adoption and churn engine for product teams that automatically identifies key customers to grow business outcomes, and helps you create adaptable product experiences in minutes.

**Mr. Sundararaman Seetharama**

Founder

GoWork Zonegoworkzone.in

Bangalore

Goworkzone is a coworking space provider, started by Mr.Sundararaman, a mechanical engineer by profession, specialized in manufacturing, supply chain, logistics and business excellence.

**Mr. Deepak Bhuvneshwari Uniyal**

Co-founder & CEO

Insurance Samadhaninsurancesamadhan.com

Noida

Deepak comes with 17 years of insurance expertise out of 26 years of work experience. He is dedicated to enhancing transparency and improving customer experience in the Indian insurance industry by leveraging his robust connections and adept problem-solving skills.

**Ms. Meera Iyer**

Co-Founder & CEO

SkinQskinq.com

Bangalore

Meera Iyer, Co-Founder & CEO at SkinQ, has over 15 Years of experience in different leadership positions across multiple brands like Unilever, Medlife, BigBasket, Dr. Vaidya's (RPSG Group) and Director at Dharma Innovations PVT Ltd. Meera has completed her MBA from Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies

**Mr. Gyan Srivastava**

CEO

Taste2Platetastes2plate.com

Kolkata

A first-of-its kind inter-city food delivery platform. India's Most Trusted Intercity online Food Delivery App.

**Mr. Neeraj Tayal**

Co-Founder & CEO

Taxivaxitaxivaxi.com

Gurugram

TaxiVaxi offers complete ground transportation powered by SaaS-based technology, making travel cashless and paperless for corporate clients. The company has created a one-stop solution for corporates to take the hassle out of travelling, attending meetings, booking hotels, solving Logistics related issues, and hiring a foreign employee.

**Mr. Akshay Chopra**

Founder

WE R Stupidwerstupid.com

New Delhi

Akshay is the founder of WE R Stupid & Genesis and co-founder of Mango Herbs and Body Mechanics. He is the graduate of the prestigious National Defence Academy and the Air Force Academy. He is a former Indian Air Force pilot and has been the captain of the Air Force Bodybuilding team.

LIST OF INDIAN ANGEL INVESTORS FOR STARTUPS 2023

COMPANY	NAME	DESIGNATION
Sequoia Capital	Rajan Anandan	Managing Director
People Group	Anupam Mittal	Founder & CEO
FreshWorks	Girish Mathrubootham	CEO
MAIA Intelligence	Sanjay Mehta	Founder
Udaan	Sujeet Kumar	Co-Founder
Reflexical	Ajeet Khurana	Founder
Redcliff Capital	Dheeraj Jain	Director
Facebook	Anand Chandrasekaran	Director
The Derma Co.	Varun Alagh	CEO
Sequoia India	Sakshi Chopra	Managing Director



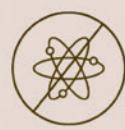
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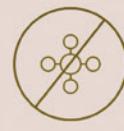


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Mr. Balan's Journey:

From a Small Village to
a Renewable Energy
Entrepreneur



www.calsindia.com

Mr. Arul Balan R is the Founder, Chairman and Managing Director of CALS Renewable Energy India Private Limited and its affiliated companies, SML Energy and SML Travels. He holds a bachelor's degree in Electrical & Electronics Engineering and a master's degree in Business Administration. With over 20 years in the Renewable Energy industry, he has held leadership roles in companies like Siemens Gamesa India, Vestas Wind Technology, and NEPC.

Driven by a strong belief in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, he founded his Infrastructure and Resources company in 2003. CALS Renewable Energy India Private Limited focuses on delivering high-quality, environmentally friendly projects for customers and the society, reflecting Mr. Balan's commitment to sustainable energy solutions.

CALS, with its seasoned management team, has introduced an innovative and sustainable approach to wind



We're proud to incorporate & utilize these cutting-edge technologies in equipment and software applications, resulting in cost reductions and higher efficiency. Ultimately, these advancements have left our investors delighted with the outcomes.

and solar projects, setting high industry standards. We provide top-notch technical guidance across all project phases, including regulatory insights into the renewable power sector, covering licensing, generation, transmission, distribution, supply, and trading regulations.

1. Tell us about your journey (personal & professional), when you started your journey in this industry and how it is going and what is the future plan.

Born in a middle-class family in a small village of Kanyakumari district in southern India, I was exposed to the sight of towering windmills in the Aralvoimozhi region while traveling between Nagercoil to Tirunelveli town during my school days. My interest in windmill power generation grew during my final year at Sree Krishna Polytechnic, where it was a subject of study. I began delving into books, both from my college's resources and the local library, to satisfy my curiosity.

My passion for windmills made me talk to my parents about taking up a part-time job at a windmill company. While they were initially concerned, I eventually persuaded them. During my last semester, I joined an Operation & Maintenance firm as a night shift operator. The experience was exhilarating, juggling daytime classes with nighttime work at the windmill site. I even studied in the security cabin by candlelight since electrical yard lights were scarce.

With determination, I completed my Diploma in Electrical course and immediately embarked on a career in the renewable energy industry. I made a conscious decision to pursue my dream, ready to make sacrifices to achieve it. Today, I am an entrepreneur heading an EPC company dedicated to serving renewable energy projects.

I am inspired by the many achievers who have contributed significantly to India's economic growth and development. I aspire to excel in the renewable energy sector, contributing to the nation's long-term economic growth and creating employment opportunities for young talent.

► Education:

DEEE, BE (CSE)

► b. Awards or recognitions received:

'10 Best Green Energy Start-ups – 2023' recognised by Siliconindia.

► Most Loved:

Book: Living by Values (TATA)

Holiday Destination: Hill stations

Hobby: Traveling/Driving

Motivational Mantra:

No pain, no gain

2. Share an insight, if any challenges you faced while running the Cals Renewable Energy and how you overcame them. What Inspired you to get into this industry?

Indeed, we've encountered numerous obstacles along the way. Nevertheless, we were prepared to make sacrifices from the very start, allowing us to confront stress head-on and steadily progress towards our ultimate goal.

Our mission centers on tapping into the vast potential of environmentally friendly and sustainable energy sources. Our objective is to provide a cleaner, greener environment for both present and future generations.

3. Being an Indian start-up entrepreneur, what message would you like to give? Your motivational mantra?

To all entrepreneurs, my message is clear: Embrace honesty, stay loyal, and dedicate yourself to hard work in your business endeavors. My personal motivational mantra is, "My journey towards excellence".

4. What, according to you, is the advancement in this industry in terms of technology? Do you think adopting such advanced technologies has brought you and your company to this elite position?

We've witnessed significant advancements in the renewable energy industry. Wind turbines are becoming larger with the average size installed in 2023 at 3.4 MW up from about 30 kW in the mid 1970s. turbines of MW size are being developed and commercially available. Alternatively, Solar PV cell technology is also being developed, with the average size in 2023 at 600 Wp modules up from about 50 Wp modules. The technology is being improved and indirect costs have come down so that the number of power & micro-projects increased. Further, AI helps many in renewable energy projects that help operation & maintenance in the most efficient ways and



supply chain management. This creates lots of job opportunities in this renewable sector.

We're proud to incorporate & utilize these cutting-edge technologies in equipment and software applications, resulting in cost reductions and higher efficiency. Ultimately, these advancements have left our investors delighted with the outcomes.

5. What are the products / services provided by your company?

Our expertise lies in Engineering, Procurement, and Construction across various sectors, including transmission lines, switchyards, transmission line bays, and pooling substations. We also specialize in procuring suitable land for wind and solar projects, sourcing Solar PV Modules, installation and commissioning of MMS systems, securing land permits and approvals, and catering to the commercial and industrial market (C&I).

Furthermore, we have a strong presence in Solar rooftop projects and offer comprehensive Operations & Maintenance services.

Akshay Chopra

Leading the Revolution in
Health and Fitness with
‘We R Stupid’

WERSTUPID

www.werstupid.com

Akshay Chopra holds an impressive background, having graduated from the renowned National Defence Academy and the Air Force Academy. With a background as a former Indian Air Force pilot, he also held the role of captain for the Air Force Bodybuilding team.

Beyond his aviation career, Akshay is a prolific writer, having penned numerous articles for various magazines and websites. He is also the author of more than multiple ebooks in his specialized field of research.

Akshay is known for his versatility as a

speaker, having delivered lectures and talks to diverse audiences across the nation. He has addressed gatherings in defense establishments, schools, universities, corporations, hospitals, gyms, fitness expos, and prominent events such as TEDx, Josh Talks, and the India International Science Festival.

In addition to his speaking engagements and writing endeavors, Akshay is the founder of “WE R Stupid” and “Genesis.” He is also a co-founder of “Mango Herbs” and “Body Mechanics.” His contributions and achievements have earned him recognition, including the BW 40 under 40 Award.



Akshay Chopra is the visionary behind “We R Stupid”. It is a pioneering channel in India that stands out for its commitment to research-backed content, complemented by in-depth articles for those who want to delve into studies and research findings. This platform is dedicated to dispelling myths and challenging established beliefs in the realms of health, fitness, and nutrition. Its primary mission is to offer its audience evidence-based information, pushing them to critically examine and reconsider long-held notions about these subjects. Instead of relying on self-proclaimed experts and unverified claims, the channel aims

to foster a more educated and scientifically informed approach to health and fitness.

1. Tell us about your journey (personal & professional), when you started your journey in this industry and how it is going and what is the future plan.

I started my journey in sports and fitness in the late 1990s. My family has a history of being involved in sports, with my grandfather being a wrestler and my mother winning national awards as an athlete. So, you could say that a love for sports and staying fit runs in my family.



However, during the 1990s, being good at sports wasn't highly valued in society. What mattered most was your academic performance, regardless of any other talents you might have. In my case, I was great at sports but not so focused on academics, often sitting in the back of the class.

Even though I had a strong dislike for academics, I had a deep passion for reading books. I was an avid reader. Surprisingly, it was this combination of my love for sports and my reading habit that led me to successfully qualify for the prestigious National Defence Academy (NDA). My experience at the NDA completely transformed my outlook on life.

After my time at the NDA, I joined the Air Force Academy, where I underwent rigorous flying training and subsequently received a commission in the Indian Air Force (IAF) as a pilot. I vividly recall my initial posting in the beautiful city of Baroda. Despite having an exceptionally demanding flying schedule, I remained committed to my fitness routine and

managed to maintain a regular workout regimen.

One day, while I was exercising at a local gym in the city, a group of coaches approached me and persuaded me to enter a bodybuilding competition. After approximately 8-10 months of rigorous preparation, I took part in my inaugural competition, which happened to be Mr. Baroda, and proudly secured a gold medal.

This achievement caught the attention of the Indian Air Force (IAF) bodybuilding team, and I was extended an invitation to join their ranks. From that point onward, there was no turning back. Over the next few years, I consistently participated in and triumphed in various competitions at the state, inter-services, and national levels.

The best part of my journey was the practical experience I gained from top coaches in various sports. However, I always felt a lack of theoretical knowledge behind what I was doing.

So, I began studying exercise science, nutrition, and more, and earned international certifications. Still, I felt something was missing,

which led me to conduct independent research in fitness and nutrition.

I started by writing articles, giving talks, and authoring books. After retiring, I ventured into fitness through my YouTube channel, WE R STUPID, and the Genesis online fitness program, with clients from 42 countries.

I also founded Mango Herbs, offering over 20 natural products backed by solid research, blending ancient Ayurveda with modern science. I received the Business World 40 under 40 award.

2. Share an insight, if there were any challenges you faced while running the company and how you overcome them. What Inspired you to get into this industry?

We R Stupid was initially created to debunk myths, eliminate misinformation, and offer evidence-based facts in the fields of fitness, nutrition, and lifestyle. It started as a YouTube channel and has since grown to encompass various aspects of fitness and nutrition, including the online coaching program GENESIS, serving people of all ages from over 42 countries. We also launched MangoHerbs, a health supplement company, among other ventures.

My current focus is on expanding the product range and customer base for MangoHerbs. What began with a single product has now expanded to over 20, with a goal of reaching 50 or more. Over the next 5 years, our target is to achieve an annual revenue of over 100 crores and to venture into areas like skincare and haircare.

3. Being an Indian startup entrepreneur, what message would you like to give? Your motivational mantra?

Entrepreneurship in India presents unique challenges, but it also offers tremendous rewards. With access to the world's largest client base and market, success is within reach. However, it's essential to grasp the psychology of the Indian customer and define your target market clearly.

Set ambitious but well-defined goals, and then put your all into achieving them.

4. What, according to you, is the advancement in this industry in terms of technology? Do you think adopting to such advanced technologies has brought you and your company to this elite position?

► **Book** – I've learned from hundreds of books, and I can't pick a favorite.

► **Holiday Destination** – I enjoy exploring holiday destinations worldwide, each with its own unique charm and beauty.

► **Hobby** – Reading books, and workouts

► **Role Model** – I've been inspired by many people throughout my life, each at different stages, so I don't have just one role model.

Technology has transformed the health and fitness industry, making it accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. For example, my brand, MangoHerbs, is entirely online, allowing us to provide quality products to customers worldwide with a simple click. This technology eliminates the need for intermediaries and ensures that customer benefits from improved product quality.

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— INTRODUCING —

CS PRO Technologies

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www.csprotechnology.com

In the ever-evolving landscape of IT solutions, CS PRO Technologies has emerged as your go-to destination for expert guidance and seamless technology solutions. Founded in 2020 by the visionary Chandra Gupta, the company initially set out as a technical support provider but swiftly transformed into a dynamic consulting firm. With CS PRO Technologies, you're not merely engaging a service; you're forging a trusted partnership on your quest for technological excellence.

Over the years, CS PRO Technologies has earned a reputation as a dependable and forward-thinking technology



CHANDRA GUPTA, FOUNDER

service provider. Under Mr. Gupta's visionary leadership, the company is dedicated to ongoing growth and sustainability, constantly exploring new technological opportunities to enhance business value.

Whether clients are seeking the creation of compelling, visually striking websites or

top-tier support and managed IT services, CS PRO Technologies offers a comprehensive solution for businesses looking to boost their online presence and optimize their operations.

1. Tell us about your journey (personal & professional), when you started your journey in this industry and how it is going and what is the future plan.

Our journey at CSPRO Technology Pvt. Ltd. has been thrilling and fulfilling. We started in 2019 with a vision to change the industry with innovative tech solutions. Today, we're proud of our

progress and our outstanding team. In the future, we aim to keep pushing the limits in our industry, expand our reach, foster strategic collaborations, and further enhance our products and services.

2. Share an insight, if any challenges you faced while running the company and how you overcame them. What inspired you to get into this industry?

Similar to any journey, ours has encountered its fair share of obstacles. In the ever-evolving tech field, maintaining a leading position is crucial. We faced obstacles in terms of competition and adjusting to swift technological shifts. What kept us motivated was our mission to make a positive impact. Overcoming challenges required unwavering dedication to excellence, a commitment to continuous learning, and fostering a resilient team culture. Our inspiration stemmed from the opportunity to solve real-world problems and drive positive change.

3. Being an Indian startup entrepreneur, what message would you like to give? Your motivational mantra?

To aspiring Indian startup entrepreneurs, I'd like to emphasize the importance of perseverance and resilience. When confronted with difficulties, hold on firmly to your convictions and your long-term vision. At CSPRO Technology, we live by the motto "Learn, Innovate, Collaborate, and Go Ahead." Embrace innovation, seek meaningful collaborations, and grow not only your business but the industry as a whole. Always keep in mind that every obstacle presents an opportunity for growth.

4. What, according to you, is the advancement in this industry in terms of technology? Do you think adopting of such advanced technologies has brought you and your company to this elite position?

The tech world is continually advancing

with incredible advancements in areas like AI, blockchain, and IoT. At CSPRO Technology, our commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements has been a key driver of our success. We don't just keep up; we lead the way, and this helps us offer creative tailor-made solutions that fit our clients' needs.⁵

5. What are the products/services provided by your company?

CSPRO Technology Pvt. Ltd. specializes in a complete suite of IT solutions and services. We have a range of services, including Cloud service and support, Homer user solutions, IT consulting and planning, Server management and support, Security and Protection, Backup and Recovery, Wordpress Development, e-commerce and more, to meet our clients' changing needs. Our solutions are designed to optimize efficiency, enhance security, and drive digital transformation across various industries.

► Educational Qualifications:

B.Sc IT, With Networking, Certified Network Engineer by NIIT

► Book: Think and Grow Rich by Napolean Hill

► Holiday Destination: Mountains and Hills

► Hobby: Leading and mentoring, reading

► Role Model: Mark Zuckerberg

► Motivational Mantra: Be the unstoppable force

We appreciate the opportunity to share our journey and insights with you. Our passion for innovation, commitment to excellence, and unwavering focus on client success continue to drive our company forward. We look forward to the future and the possibilities it holds. Thank you for being part of our adventure.

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TO WATCH IN STARTUPS 2023



1. Tell us about your journey (personal & professional), when you started your journey in this industry and how it is going and what is the future plan.

Growing up in Brazil and Japan really influenced my perspective on individual style and fashion. Japan in particular focuses on the unique, personal style movement and everyone there truly appreciates quality and design. When we started Free Society, the vision was to get every Indian to be confident in their own distinctive style and to mainly bring sneakers and streetwear from all over the world to the Indian market.

Since we started Free Society three years ago, we have catered to more than 10,000 customers and have proudly created a tight-knit community

of fashion fanatics while being completely self funded.

Now, we plan to further expand to 4 new cities in the next 12 months and start focusing on our international customer base as well.

2. Share an insight, if any challenges you faced while running the company and how you overcame them. What Inspired you to get into this industry?

Our biggest challenge is always hiring. Since the sneaker community is still nascent, the know-how is limited. Due to this, getting experienced people is hard and we usually have to train new employees, which does in turn help retain them in the long term.



► **SAHIL NANDAL**
CO-FOUNDER

3. Being an Indian startup entrepreneur, what message would you like to give? Your motivational mantra?

This too shall pass, so don't give up, because there is always a way forward. Despite multiple regulatory and infrastructural challenges, I realised that as long as we don't give in to the

problem, we can find a solution. The ones that survive and stay consistent, eventually succeed.

4. What, according to you, is the advancement in this industry in terms of technology? Do you think your adoption of such advanced technologies has brought you and your company to this elite position?



► **Educational Qualifications:**

High School: St. Mary's International School, Tokyo. Undergraduate : Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

► **Book:** 1984 by George Orwell

► **Holiday Destination:** Europe

► **Hobby:** Soccer

► **Motivational Mantra:**

Don't over think, just do it.

In our industry, the core problem is inventory management and backend solutions. There are multiple solutions and softwares that need to be tested and implemented as soon as possible. After experimenting for a year, when we finally shifted to a new management system, it helped us overcome multiple challenges we had faced. We reached new heights.

5. What are the products / services provided by your company?

We are India's leading suppliers of hype sneakers, global streetwear, accessories like watches, etc. We are the only company in Asia currently providing brands like New Balance and Birkenstock on retail, while also providing the customers the option to buy sold-out Jordans, Balenciaga, Yeezys at resale.

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Nuggetz

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Sausez



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Kebabz



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1. Tell us about your journey (personal & professional), when you started your journey in this industry and how it is going and what is the future plan.

I am a mechanical engineer, graduated in 1985, and have accumulated 37 years of diverse industry experience both in India and overseas. I have worked in heavy engineering fabrication, electronic appliances, media, software, packaging, and real estate sectors. My most recent role was as the President of Global Supply Chain for a US company.



SUNDARARAMAN SEETHARAMAN

FOUNDER

My entrepreneurial journey began in 2019 when I founded GoWorkZone, a professional coworking space in Domlur, Bangalore. During the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, we persevered, and GoWorkZone has now completed four years of providing a space for startups and freelancers to establish their businesses. Despite the continued prevalence of remote work, our business is steadily rebounding.

2. Share an insight, if any challenges you faced while running the company and

how you overcame them. What Inspired you to get into this industry?

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of startups and companies were keen on using co-working spaces. However, after the pandemic, providing workspace became a challenge. For nearly a year, we experienced minimal occupancy rates and encountered pricing difficulties. Through persistent marketing efforts and the promotion of unique selling points, we gradually managed to navigate these challenging times.



► **Educational Qualifications:**

B.E.(Mechanical) Awards or recognitions received): ISO 9000 Lead Assessor, Certified Six Sigma Black Belt

► **Hobby:**

Fitness fanatic and health enthusiast, music composer, lyricist, singer, keyboardist, guitarist. Written and composed over 400+ songs in various genres and sung close to 3000 songs in 5 languages.

► **Motivational Mantra:**

We are the creator of our destiny

As for my inspiration, it wasn't a specific source; one day, I simply decided to start this business, and within fifteen days, I had established the company.

3. Being an Indian startup entrepreneur, what message would you like to give? Your motivational mantra?

We shape our own destiny. Our courage exceeds our self-perception, and our intelligence surpasses our self-assessment. Every expert was once a beginner. If we set clear objectives and pursue them with discipline, success is inevitable. Persistence can overcome resistance. Instead of seeing crises as setbacks, view them as opportunities for growth and, most importantly, never give up.

4. What are the products / services provided by your company?

We provide a workplace (office space) for professionals that is fully equipped with all facilities.

'Our goal is to build tomorrow's titans and an environment that actively promotes innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration.

GoWorkZone brings people together by offering a workspace where they can meet, collaborate, bring their ideas to fruition, and work towards achieving their aspirations'.



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CO-FOUNDER & CEO, INSURANCE SAMADHAN



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Deepak comes with 17 years of insurance expertise out of 26 years of work experience. He is dedicated to enhancing transparency and improving customer experience in the Indian insurance industry by leveraging his robust connections and adept problem-solving skills. He has a positive standing and a respected reputation among CXOs in the Insurance and Finance sectors. He is a passionate biker and adventure sports freak.



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