

**D**ear esteemed colleagues,  
 It was a privilege to lead a delegation to participate in the XVII World Congress of Accountants. An event considered as the Olympics of accounting profession, held once in four years, attracted over 4,000 delegates from about 120 countries in Istanbul, Turkey between 13th and 16th November, 2006. It was an enriching and exhilarating experience that made a lasting impression. The emerging prominence of India was apparent as most of the speakers in the World Congress referred to the increasing role for professionals in view of India becoming global destination for investment. Speech delivered by Hon'ble Shri K. Rahman Khan, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha and a member of ICAI in the Plenary Session of the Congress received wide acclaim. Presentations made by CA. Kamlesh S. Vikamsey and CA. Sunil Goyal, past Presidents, ICAI and Dr. Ashok Haldia, Secretary, ICAI in the Workshops were well received.

### **Mutual Recognition**

Using the presence of heads of many accounting bodies, we held discussions to further mutual cooperation. Deliberations with heads of representatives from Australia, France, UK and USA enabled good progress in this direction. We could also hold discussions with Sir David Tweedie, Chairman, IASB on various issues.

### **Income-tax Appellate Tribunal**

The Income-tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) is a renowned noble institution rendering yeomen service in securing justice with no fear or favour. This is a unique forum, which enables convergence of expertise of legal profession, accounting profession and revenue officers and is growing from strength to strength. Members of Chartered Accountant fraternity who are part of ITAT are rendering excellent service bringing great reputation to the judiciary

and ICAI. Judgments on various macro level matters including cross border transactions pronounced by them are acclaimed at the international level. I had the privilege of participating in the inaugural session of a two-day refresher course in Mumbai and addressing the honourable tribunal members.

### **Articled Assistants**

As you may be aware, the nomenclature "Articled Clerk" has been replaced by "Articled Assistants". The flow of students is on the increase and with the launching of new curriculum it would steadily escalate. We have recommended to the Government for change in Regulations so as to enhance the number of vacancies for training and awaiting approval. As per the recommendation, a member should be able to train up to 7 assistants depending on the number of years of standing in the profession. Besides, the recommendation enables qualified paid assistants with more than one year association in a firm to get eligible to train one Articled Assistant.

### **Melbourne Chapter**

After Toronto in Canada, it is now the city of Melbourne in Australia that gets a Chapter of ICAI. All the formalities having been complied with, the Chapter would start functioning soon. The Chapter would help showcasing the Indian accounting profession and create greater bondage amongst our fraternity and their families living in Melbourne.

### **Soft Skills Empowerment**

Every professional needs to be equipped with soft skills. Knowledge is power and when coupled with ability to communicate, it gives greater empowerment. Thinkers could influence the society only by effectively communicating their thoughts to transform people. Ability to express is not given to everyone but at the same time it cannot be denied to anyone who aspires

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to acquire such a skill. Communication skill can be nurtured if there is inclination and dedication.

Those who possess this skill are able to persuade, motivate, convince and inspire not just a few but even a nation as a whole. History could have had different chapters if some of the speeches were not delivered by certain leaders on crucial occasions. As professionals, we often need to convey our ideas; negotiate business deals; get things done by the team members; train and groom next generation of professionals; represent clientele before statutory authorities and many times impress upon the nature, need and value of services rendered. All these facets of profession call for effective soft skills. A marketing executive may know everything about a product but if he cannot tell, he cannot sell. A successful one at that job may succeed in selling a refrigerator even to an Eskimo.

In respect of students who pursue CA curriculum, this issue is addressed by making General Management and Communication Skills (GMCS) course mandatory. Although the course spans over just fifteen days, it has been creating tremendous impact and producing impressive results. In the new curriculum, this course with modernized content will be required to be undertaken during the practical training period so as to make it all the more effective. A similar initiative needs to be adopted for fine-tuning the skills of the members. I have urged the CPE Committee to take up with Regional Councils and branches to offer to existing members an upgraded version of GMCS course on weekends or in the evenings for a certain duration so that those who are desirous of pruning their skills would find it useful.

The general impression that a Chartered Accountant is knowledgeable, hard working and sincere but lacks communication skill is

gradually getting erased to the extent it pertains to communication skills. Let us expedite this transformation and build a different image by inculcating presentation skills. As Chartered Accountants, we always believe in the principle "substance over form". When the world is giving due attention and as much importance to "form" these days as given to "substance", we should take cognizance of this aspect and act or else products of inferior quality but attractively packaged may take away sizeable share in the services market. Chartered Accountants should not lose out by being considered as a product, rich in content but poorly packaged.



CA. T.N. Manoharan, President ICAI receiving a memento at the hands of Mr Vimal Gandhi, Hon'ble President ITAT on the occasion of refresher course organised for Tribunal members in Mumbai.

All of us would agree that it is difficult to produce a product with quality than to wrap it up attractively. When our fraternity can boast of comprehensive knowledge with specialization in core areas, why not embark on the easier exercise of adorning the intellect with skill set?

Knowledge, soft skills and credibility maketh a successful professional. If a Chartered Accountant cannot accomplish a combination of these, who else can do it? In the prevailing competitive scenario, communication skills should help us have an edge and race ahead of others. Let us demonstrate to the entire world that there is no dearth of skill sets among Indian Chartered Accountant Fraternity and excel in our endeavours.

Jai Hind. Jai ICAI.

Yours sincerely,

CA. T.N. MANOHARAN  
New Delhi, November 22, 2006

**Service Above Self**