



Business Leadership Forum

M.P. Birla Institute of Management

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Managing Virtual Networks

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A virtual team (also known as a geographically dispersed team, distributed team, or remote team) is a group of individuals who work across time, space and organizational boundaries with links strengthened by webs of communication technology. These days, it is entirely possible to run a thriving business out of a dozen different cities – with no central office. The number of virtual workers in the U.S. has increased 800 percent in the past five years, according to study conducted.

Kalpana Margabandhu in her presentation to the students which was a part of BLF initiative explained the formation of the virtual teams and Challenges faced by organizations in managing workforce located at different locations. In many trans-national organizations, the workforce is globally distributed. But working has been made possible by the information spread through internet and related technologies.



Forming Virtual teams have helped in building a smart workforce which is a business imperative and has necessitated formation of suitable strategies to succeed in businesses. There is a need to leverage technology to ensure work is carried out seamlessly.

In her lucid presentation she outlined various challenges like Commitment, Standardisation issues, Cultural dimension and need for an effective collaboration. The organization will also have to address the difficulties in assigning ownership and Accountability.

Kalpana joined IBM in 1993 as Software Specialist. Performing various key technical roles on development of several products, she progressed to a Consultant Software Specialist in 1995. She made a switch to management in 1999 and executed as the Lab Manager for the India Software Lab for 4 years. In 2005 Kalpana was appointed Program Director. As the



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Director of AIM Development in India, she oversees development activities for all AIM products (WAS, WebSphere Commerce, TxSeries, etc.,) delivered by ISL.

Kalpana has received several awards in recognition of her leadership with the India Software Lab, and was named the recipient of the IT People Award for Women Leadership in 2007 and the Women In Leadership (WILL) Women's Choice Award in 2008. Some of the key assignments handled by her are:

- Unleash the Lab(ISL) – A Customer focus initiative
- GMT (Growth Market Team) Ambassadors for Gender Diversity
- Member of Global Women's Council
- Co-Chair for WIT (Women in Technology) Executive Steering Committee.
- Member of the India Leadership Forum
- On the Board of IBM India.



Born and brought up in Bangalore, Kalpana completed her Masters Degree in Engineering from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore in 1982.

Her talk evoked good response which resulted in a meaningful interaction from the students.

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