



THE
SUMMIT
OF
OLYMPUS



NEWSLETTER



The Customary Editorial

4.30 am. I get an email. Four words. "Sent to the printer." And I finally begin to breathe normally for the first time all day.

It all started with an email. A different one. An email that I sent to apply for the editorial posts for an interesting sounding event – The Summit of Olympus. A few days later, up on the Summit website for all to see, it said, "Editor-in-Chief – Taruni Kumar". "Brilliant", I said, "this should be fun." And THEN I was told what was expected of me and my team. Here's the short version:

Four days before the Summit is to begin, I'm in a meeting with the Managing Director, Akshay Sharma, who calmly informs me that the next day is the deadline for me to produce a general layout of a Newsletter/Event Report that is to come out on the last day of the Summit. Plenty of time you'd think. Except I haven't even met my entire team yet.

Three days before the Summit, I schedule a meeting with my team. Only my photographer and my two editors show up. One of my reporters is out of town, the other too busy. Or so he claims. He also calmly informs me that he's far too busy to see me the next day as well, so he'll only have time for a briefing the day before the event begins. I hang up, and as calmly as I possibly can, bang my head against the wall. That night a very (very) basic outline arrives in the Summit of Olympus email account as their Ed-in-Chief prays to god that they won't notice how threadbare it is. They don't.

Two days before the Summit, another scheduled meeting with the same three people. By this time, slight panic begins to set in, which I desperately try to quell. We continue working on the outline and by the end of the night I have three articles in hand. The sight of those words typed out on my computer screen, causes a slight decrease in the speed of my racing heart. But the horrible organ still seems hell-bent on training for 2010. That night, a conversation with Akshay leads to a semi-certain decision that our perpetually busy team-member needs to be relieved of some of his workload, namely the workload of a reporter. Later that night, I receive an article titled the Summit of Christmas and our prodigal reporter redeems himself.

One day before the Summit, I finally meet my entire team. And I begin to relax. Their obvious competence eases some of the tension as does the sight of the four articles on my desktop. Things might not be as hectic as I thought they would after all.

The story of what happened during the Summit is long-winded and I don't have as much space as I would have liked to be able to narrate the entire sequence of events to you. Suffice to say, my entire team, proved to me beyond a doubt that they could handle immense pressure, criticism, the lack of adequate time and my yelling at them to get me an article or a certain interview. "NOW." Not that they didn't whine, I assure you. Angels, they are not. But as clichéd as it may be, I couldn't have done any of it without each and every one of them.

After working two days and one night straight, on the evening of the second day, we suddenly get a shock as we're trying to finish our articles. The newsletter might not come out. Lack of funds they say. But finally, after a long, extremely vocal meeting it's decided that it will come out but will have to be restricted to 12 pages. Which is when the horrible job of cutting articles falls upon me. I apologise profusely to my team for having to cut out their articles on which they spent entire days. And this newsletter is my way of thanking them for their dedication. This newsletter is also for the core team and organizing committee who after all their hard work deserve something to lighten their mood.

I hope you all like it.





CORE TEAMS

- *Ishita Dasgupta*

CONTENT TEAM

Executive Director- Sanchita Arora
Associate Director- Jigeesha Nayyar
Onaiza Drabu
Vanshaj Aggarwal

Probably the most crucial committee of the Core, the Content Team handled the “substance” for everything that went into the Summit. From the establishment of the Greek theme for the event to the finer points of each session, they did it all.

The team began at the very nascent stage, to have a consensus on the objectives of each session. After brainstorming over the whole concept of leadership, they decided on seven prime attributes that were essential to any leader, and designed the sessions around each. And that led to a rigorous analysis of the modus operandi of each trainer. There was special emphasis on making the sessions as interactive as possible, and not be crippled by the standard routine of a person lecturing the students on leadership. After reviewing and rejecting numerous frameworks, they eventually settled on the ones that were conducted, each stressing on the concept of “doing and learning”, rather than “hearing and learning”. A comprehensive study led to the exact definition of the participants’ role in the entire process and exactly how the activities and sessions will help them achieve leadership as a long term goal.

Greek theme for the Summit was another exceptional idea, which was applied to each session by this team. The endeavor to make this Summit a means of breaking away from the usual stereotypes, is evident yet again. They did not attempt to idolize any of the existing icons of leadership in the country, people who have attained excellence in their fields of business and industry. Instead, they went back to the roots and incorporated the ancient Greek Gods as their fountainhead for capturing of the essence of leadership.

MARKETING TEAM

Executive Director- Mehak Kharbanda
Associate Director- Vasundhara Jain
Ananya Gambhir
Sargam Sardana

The prime objective of the Marketing Team, in the words of one of the team members, was convincing you that the Summit was “awesome.” And indeed, there couldn’t be a better definition for their job profile.

In spite of being the first of its kind, the Summit of Olympus captured the attention as well as participation of students from all over the University of Delhi and even outside. The marketing marvels of the Core stopped at nothing to make this event what it is today. It might be easy to develop an idea in theory, but making other people believe in it and actually make it happen, is at best, an overwhelming task.

The marketing campaign for the event extended from social networking sites like Facebook, Orkut, to SMS campaigns through msgupshup.com, and posters, etc. The campaigns became the way to let people know about the Summit, to generate interest as well as garner the “exclusive” tag for the Summit of Olympus. Selling the Greek theme to an audience not largely inclined towards mythology, would not have been easy. But this team turned the concept in their favor, and in the end, the theme majorly added to the event in terms of an intellectual appeal. The Greek





CORE TEAMS

- *Ishita Dasgupta*

influence in fact, made scores of students research the Greek gods and find out more about them, so they could better relate to the sessions conducted.

This intensive marketing process, and “selling” of the idea, became the reason that there were hundreds of applications for participation, out of which only 60 got selected for the esteemed workshop. The recognition of the Summit of Olympus as a brand in the university network has been an immense task, commendably managed by this team.

RECRUITMENT TEAM

Executive Director- Ridhi Mahendru

Associate Director- Reetika Bir

Akanksha C

Palakshee Chakraborty

If the marketing team was the reason behind the number of applications for participation, the Recruitment Team was the reason that 60 applicants actually made it to the event. These were the people who spent long nights, drowned in papers, reviewing multiple questionnaires, to select the most deserving students for the workshop.

The process began with the making of the application form, which involved the help of the HR department and its teachers, who made them realize what they need to look for in the candidates. The team focused on choosing the keenest applicants, in addition to having basic skills and the potential to learn even more. After a lot of study, a comprehensive application form was produced, which judged the student on skills like teamwork, prudence in crisis situation, and several other parameters. The form was based on the latest psychometric methods of analysis, and did not restrict itself to academic achievements of the candidate. The teachers, along with various people from the industry, helped them decide the weightage for the different criteria.

The selection of only 60 participants for the event was not received kindly by the organizers, but the Recruitment Team was firm. The idea behind taking a relatively small number was simply to ensure individual attention for each student participant, throughout the workshop. The personal touch was in fact a huge success, which was evident from the feedback forms obtained from the participants after the daily conclusion of the Summit. Additionally, the recruitment process also made sure that the intermingling was between like-minded people, who would discuss concepts on similar wavelengths. They could interact well with each other, as well as the trainers, which was very different from the one-way lecture format they have grown accustomed to. Overall, the sessions were thoroughly enjoyed by the participants and trainers alike.

FINANCE TEAM

Executive Director- Manvi Kathuria

Associate Director- Chitra Singh

Disha Sharma

Sanya Talwar

Now these are people who do not require an introduction. Any event, at the end of the day, requires sponsors. It would not have been possible to pull off the Summit of Olympus, without the Finance Team.

Even though the project was financially backed by the University of Delhi, it was essential to get sponsors for various amenities required at the Summit. The team ventured out to acquire .





CORE TEAMS

- *Ishita Dasgupta*

sponsorships in kind from different companies, keeping in mind their needs as well as the choosing of products that could be easily related to the Summit and the youth. This resulted in the team making hundreds of calls all day, 24x7, in addition to having regular meetings all over Delhi. As one team member was quoted as saying, "We felt like a call centre."

They succeeded in obtaining in kind sponsorships from several big brands, including Blanchard International, Pepsi Co., Harper Collins, Café Coffee Day, etc. These partners helped in procuring goody bags, gifts, beverages, books, and many other necessities for the Summit, in return for advertising. The team worked round the clock in arranging the goodies from the sponsors, and also ensuring appropriate recognition for the brands along with the Summit.

Thanks to the efforts of this team, the participants at the end of the three-day workshop, were gifted with goody bags from Café Coffee Day, books from Harper Collins, and even sweatshirts from the University of Delhi. Blanchard International organized many of the skill-building sessions at the Summit. The exhaustive process of securing these funds was executed in an excellent manner.

LOGISTICS TEAM

Executive Director- Keshav Anand

Last, but not the least, we come to the people who made the Summit of Olympus happen. These are the people who do the groundwork for each department. The Logistics Team has indeed been here, there, and everywhere, making sure that things work.

Also known as the "roadrunners" of the Core, their work started with assisting the Finance Team get sponsors from every sector of the industry. This involved round-the-clock phone calls to numerous companies and convincing them about the Summit. The focus was not to obtain monetary funds for the event, but to procure in kind partnerships which would help in the logistics for the Summit.

Next came the vital job of publicizing the event, along with the Marketing Team. The team went all out with posters, plastering them all over the University of Delhi, different colleges, and several places popularly visited by students. In no time, the Summit became the buzzword in the university, and garnered enormous interest among all.

If that wasn't enough, the team then got in touch with the Content Team for the requirements for various sessions. Each trainer gave specific instructions for the prerequisites for each session, which were meticulously purchased and organized by this team. In fact, the purchase, transport and stocking of all stationary and food necessities for the participants and others, were all fulfilled by this team. The members made the fundamental budgetary decisions for the entire event. From the hoardings at the entrance of the Conference Centre, to the projector in the hall, and the mementoes given to various participants, everything you could see at the Summit was brought in by this team.



It's All Greek To Me

-Aanandita Chawla

When someone is told that they look like a Greek god, it is a compliment never to be ignored. The Greek gods have pervaded each culture with their perfection and are hardly ever to be taken lightly.

This is why, 'when the Greek gods speak, everyone listens'. But who are these enigmatic creatures? After all, there is a multiplicity of gods in every culture.

Ancient Greek theology revolved around polytheism, which is the presence of more than one god. As a direct comparison, Indra, the Hindu supreme god, depicted with a lightning bolt in hand, has a counterpart in Zeus, the Greek king of all gods.

Greek mythology refers to Mount Olympus as the heavenly abode of the deities. This mountain does in fact exist, and it is one of the loftiest peaks in Europe. A trek to the pinnacle would not reveal the immortal gods though, even though the gods have been known to associate with humans.

Zeus was the god of the weather and of law and order. He was known to deliver a just ruling to those who spoke the truth and to provide stern punishments to those who wronged. Leadership was Zeus' forte, by virtue of which, he could influence the Olympian gods to accept him, follow him and respect him. Thus the session on leadership has been named after the king and the leader of all gods.

One of his sons, Hermes, was Zeus' personal agent, he delivered messages at incredible speed and was depicted with winged shoes in ancient drawings and sketches. Hermes is also known to protect travelers and assist people in traveling to the afterlife. Hermes' name has been invoked in the session regarding breakthrough communication, if communication back and forth between the dead and the living isn't breakthrough, what is?

Themis is an ancient Greek goddess. She is described as the goddess of "good counsel", and is the embodiment of divine order, law, and custom. Themis means "law of nature" rather than human ordinance, literally "that which is put in place". Themis is often confused with Justicia, the latter is the one depicted with the balance of scales and a blindfold outside of the courthouses. Themis takes you back to your roots and work on your basic instincts in the session on identifying your calling.

Dionysus is the god of wine, the inspirer of ritual madness and ecstasy, and one of the twelve Olympians. He is also Zeus' son and his mother was a mortal. Dionysus is also directly linked to the story of King Midas and his touch of gold as it was he who granted this wish. Dionysus touches the effective team and relationship building session with blessings of a cohesive work ethic and happiness.

Lending light to the situation is Apollo. He has been variously recognized as the god of light and the sun; truth and prophecy; archery; medicine and healing; music, poetry, and the arts; and more. That's multitasking! In more popular usage, Apollo is also referred to as Adonis, the epitome of good looks. Apollo's spirit has been channelled for the session on motivation because light gives clarity and clarity of thought gives motivation.

The god of war, Ares, or more accurately, the god of bloodlust and one of the primary gods of Greek mythology is also, Zeus' son. Ares' half-sister Athena was also considered a war deity but her stance was that of strategic warfare, whereas Ares's tended to be one of unpredictable violence. In today's troubled times, it is only befitting we invoke his name for Conflict resolution.

Furthering, the family tree of Zeus we have Athena, who is the goddess of wisdom, war, strategy, industry, justice and skill, and is supposed to have burst out of Zeus' head fully grown. It is said that there was a prophecy made about Zeus fathering a child who would have the power to overthrow him, fearing this, he swallowed his current consort, but she was already pregnant with Athena. Athena then remained inside Zeus until she was fully grown, and then she burst out of her father's head. She is the only one other than Zeus himself, who wields the lightning bolt and aegis.

Athena is a shrewd companion of heroes and the goddess of heroic endeavour. She is the virgin patron of Athens. The Athenians built the Parthenon, on the Acropolis of her namesake city, Athens, in her honour. Athena, the goddess of Wisdom and Strategy, lends her aegis to the session on problem solving and decision making.

With the Summit of Olympus, a pathway is laid out to assist ascension to the heavenly heights, such as those of Mount Olympus, for even though one may not find the gods, it certainly is a view worth seeing.



They, The People

-Pritish Agarwal

Before -

We interviewed certain participants before the summit even started, to get an idea of what they were expecting and why they were there.

There was a great variety of reasons why the delegates had applied, ranging from an interest in something new and interesting, to finally getting what they've been waiting for, and even to being forced by their friends. Some applicants had already been a part of many leadership summits and wanted to experience the Summit of Olympus to compare it to others.

Many delegates were intrigued and fascinated by the unique selection process, which involved an application form consisting of questions made to test the applicant's basic aptitude and psyche. They appreciated the novelty of it, and the fact that it was a well-thought out and developed form. Though most agreed that it was enjoyable to fill out, one of the interviewees felt that it was a bit too long and was also too subjective to be an effective test.

On the omnipresent theme of Greek mythology, there was some contention. While some felt it was a little overdone and not exactly pertaining to common knowledge, others thought that it was refreshingly different. One participant told us that he had always thought of himself as a Greek God, and thus felt that it was appropriate.

Most participants were looking forward to the promising new concept of the Summit, though there was still some lingering fear that it might be a lot like other leadership summits which were essentially lectures that failed to capture their interest for too long.

After -

After 3 sessions of the Summit of Olympus, we once again questioned the participants to gain their perspective. One of the participants remarked, "I underestimated it greatly. I never thought that it'd be this interesting, in fact I was even afraid that it might be boring. But I thoroughly enjoyed everything that we've done in there so far. It's a 2-sided affair, which is the best part. Also, I could completely relate to everything that they said in the sessions and incorporate them into my life"

All participants unanimously agreed that the training faculty was fantastic and the Summit had been a great learning experience. It was greatly appreciated that the trainers were there to actually help these students, and not just to get their job done and leave. One delegate had a complaint about how some of his peers were not paying adequate attention to the sessions, but then took a stoic point of view and said that it's their loss.

It was generally agreed that the organization had been perfect and that all the participants would walk away from the Summit having gained a considerable amount of skill.



The Cult of the Olympians

-Dron Malhotra

"Oh! Don't be ridiculous Andrea. Everybody wants this. Everybody wants to be us".

This conversation, taking place between a doe eyed, naïve Andrea Sachs and the mighty snob Runway Editor Miranda Priestly, in the 2005 Hollywood release *The Devil wears Prada*, has the latter pointing very explicitly, towards everyone's desire to be in their shoes and ride the elite cult. The Summit of Olympus is not as big yet. And neither are we based in plush New York City. But, a holistic glance at the event makes a reasonable promise of it catapulting into the next most sought after rage amongst the intellectual crème-de-la-crème of the University of Delhi.

Inviting applications from all over and selecting the 60 most eligible delegates for the summit, certainly did hike the cerebral and esteem appetite of all alike. It brought an aura of highbrowed smarty-pants luxury both to the summit as well the delegates. And this is not just because of the extremely judicious selection procedure; the summit is the first one of its kind. Prior to this the platform for the students to get together and share ideas was negligible. Now that there is one, it has everybody vying for a slot. Not an ordinary slot. A slot of eminence. You mingle with the best minds on campus. One more facet of human psyche that is put into focus is an aspirational one. There will never be a dearth of people who have wolves in their bellies, to scale the steep height of the pyramid and stand on the narrow peak. These are exactly the kind of people who will act as catalysts for the expansion of this cult.

The summit got a perfect start and the university top brass had been banking on it. What we could expect in the near future is a pan India approach to the summit. Instead of just restricting it to Delhi University there could be invitations to institutes outside, partnerships with global intelligence think tanks. Even for this Summit, there were numerous applications from students studying in stalwart institutions like MDI and IIT, Delhi. Next time, these applications might even be accepted.

Who minds a piggyback ride to glory after all?

We've had the Freemasons, the Illuminati, the Knights Templar. Olympians will soon join this elite clan. Or create a brand new cult? Who knows? The point is everyone wants to be at the top of the pyramid. But as they say, it's a lonely place to be. But the view is better. So much better!



-Pritish Agarwal

The way the trainers see it-

We figured that it was only apt for us to get the trainers' thoughts on certain issues. After all, once the "behind the scenes" work is done, the summit belongs to them.

On what convinced them to be a part of this – especially for free

We saw an opportunity to interact with future student leaders. We already work with professionals, and we wanted to extend these activities to students as well. We wanted to expose students to the way we do things and highlight their core abilities, extracting their full potential.

We believe that students need leadership skills before they enter the workforce. So, the concept of the summit was in line with this philosophy. This was an opportunity to bridge the gap between the student world and the professional world, and the bridge is essential because everyone needs to make this transition. You could see it as investing in the leaders of tomorrow.

As for doing it for free, money is never the first motivator.

How did you prepare your sessions for the summit?

It took a lot of time and energy as we had to answer the needs of the students. We looked at the participant profile – the age group, the educational qualifications, etc. We knew that we had to build the sessions based on a team environment and motivation. We identified some very real problems that we all face in our daily lives, and set out to equip these students to solve them better. There are certain mindset problems that have been scientifically researched, proven and accepted. We wanted to link these with managerial concepts and essentially let the participants experience a simulated workplace situation. That's what the activities are for.

We do similar activities in the workplace as well. After all, learning doesn't stop when you stop being a student.

On what they think is attractive about the Summit of Olympus

The basic theme itself was very attractive. It showed that there was a creative set of minds behind the whole thing. Besides that, the content of the summit was a very new idea on an old concept. After all, leadership is all about thinking out of the box.

Also, it brought academics and industry together and made the participants more employable. It was good to see that the whole thing was conceptualized by students.

Walking in with the skills they'll develop in the summit, students will get an edge-up in the job market.

On the participants

We were very impressed; their commitment level alone would have convinced us to come for the summit. The best part is that there's a lot of fun, energy and laughter but at the same time there's a lot of serious learning as well. Abstract concepts are taught and since each student realizes what he has inside of him, everyone takes away their own learning.

On how far the Summit Of Olympus can go

We think it will go quite far!

Looking at the vision of the Vice Chancellor, the Dean, Chairperson CPC, and the Principal of CBS We hope it does. The way it has been conceptualised may take it far. Maybe in the future more universities can be involved, perhaps post-graduate ones too. We can also think about having one big summit annually, and other smaller ones throughout the year. It'll take time, but it's possible.

On the number of students

Smaller groups are always more effective. 60 just about fits the bill, it is neither too big nor too small. It can be managed and is good for group activities. At the same time, we should have more and more participation for all students making the transition into the working world.

The Summit of Christmas

-Pritish Agarwal

Optimists say even a broken clock shows the right time twice a day. But the optimism of even the most optimistic optimist will be positively tested if he is told to explain how the smartest students from New Delhi could have confused the abode of the Greek Gods with a Christian holiday.

One simple slip-up and all of a sudden the gala Christmas event of the year turns into some kind of leadership summit. Not that the head honchos at CBS (Consortium of Brainy Students) have realised it yet. "Why would anyone participate in a leadership summit on Christmas weekend?" asked a CBS representative who wishes to remain unnamed. "We've got better plans than that. We have this party thing going on, we've booked a massive place for it as well; It's on the north pole so we'll really feel the spirit of Christmas" he continued. When it was pointed out that the party venue was actually a conference hall and that it was only North Campus and not the North Pole, he walked away with a brisk "Merry Christmas", muttering something about the disintegration of business communication in the modern world.

At the forefront of it all is, of course, Santa Claus, better known as Akshay Sharma. Looking as benevolent as ever in his bright red clothes, he told us more about the celebration. "This year has been great. We actually chose our elves after a lengthy process before we employed them at the sweat shop - I mean toy factories. We want the best for those little children out there, after all". After a brief flash of his evergreen teeth, he continued "Thanks to modern technology, I actually have children filling out forms and trying to convince me that they deserve their gifts instead of me having to observe them all year long. 60 children have proven themselves worthy and I'm just filling up the sack with good stuff for them. No choo-choo trains though." Asked about the spirit of giving, he answered, "It is an integral part of the holiday. I've been handing out deadlines and assignments to just about everyone. There's no substitute for the warmth you get from giving to others."

I dug deeper into the organisation and came across a smart young man called Keshav Anand. "I'm playing Rudolph this year", he said, slightly red in the face (nose?). "I've been flying across the city with the rest, reminding everyone that it's that time of the year again." "Air traffic and fog delays have been a pain", he added, before heading into his office.

Manvi Kathuria was pleased with the fact that Scrooge misread his calendar. "For a while we were scared that people wouldn't indulge in Christmas shopping because of Scrooge's campaigning, putting banks out of business and distributing pink slips and all that. But things have turned out great since he struck a few months too early. We've posted a record collection for the past 236 years, in fact". Turning away, she calls out to her associate Chitra, "Your Christmas Bonus will be in the red stocking above the fireplace, as usual."

Sanchita Arora and Jigeesha Nayyar have been a topic for debate recently, mainly because of their work in rewriting carols. "We wanted to change the concept of a Christmas carol completely", they said in unison. "Earlier, we only had some people singing and some people listening. Now, we have some people singing and everyone else acting out the lyrics. It's a revolutionary concept."

Intrigued by these ideas, I set about on my quest to find Mehak Kharbanda and Ridhi Mahendru, in the hope that there would be something about Christmas this year that I could relate to. However, my quest was in vain for a young elf informed me that both of them are actually in custody of the Elf Police. On further enquiry I learnt that they had created great controversy by having allegedly scheduled a meeting under the mistletoe on the second floor corridor of the CBS building. "Their intentions were purely honourable!" proclaimed the elf before he joined his friends on the street protesting for liberty and rights.

That's right, folks. Hope you had a merry Christmas after all you're now equipped to be a Leader of Good Times.

"Note: Akshay Sharma is the MD, Keshav Anand is the Executive Director (ED) of Logistics, Manvi and Chitra are ED and Associate Director (AD) respectively for Finance, Sanchita and Jigeesha are ED and AD for content, Mehak Kharbanda is ED for Marketing and Ridhi Mahendru for Recruitment. We would like to add that they all worked very hard to organise the event. That should keep the writer from disappearing under mysterious circumstances."



The Editorial Team

Editor-In-Chief -Taruni Kumar
"I want it done. NOW."

Editors –
Aanandita Chawla
She might be sleepy but that doesn't mean the work doesn't get done.

Ishita Dasgupta
She might be sleepier but the work still gets done.

Reporters –
Pritish Agarwal
He claims to be awesome, and when he manages to show up, he's not all that bad.

Dron Malhotra
He's as efficient as a drone but thankfully has a mind of his own.

Photographer – Saman Quraishi
Saman. She's brilliant. She even made our Ed-in-Chief look pretty.

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