

# Stacking Up Success



A hypermarket is a place where you get everything. But this is a story about those who gave everything to the hypermarket. Between the thriving aisles and abundant stocks in the MORE. Hypermarkets are stories of immense hard work, passion and commitment that went into making them possible. These are the stories of a unique team led by Suraj Bahirwani.

Suraj began his journey as a management trainee several years ago. He quickly stepped up the ladder from becoming an executive assistant in the Chairman's office and then straight to Coastal Andhra Supermarket Operations, and now leading the Hypermarket operations. His responsibilities spanned all locations, coordinating critical activities including operations, merchandising, human resources, marketing, etc. He is a remarkable leader, and in his course of work with the Aditya

Birla Group, has been a pivotal member in resurrecting Coastal Andhra from near closure.

Around five years ago, Suraj joined the Hypermarket team. In this short span of time he has experienced several challenges. From basic ones like delays, property tussles and sourcing of right people to grave challenges like maintaining a seamless working process, understanding economies and growing the business steadily.

The team, along with Suraj, still lights up when they talk about the first day of opening a new hypermarket. They say they are always amazed to see so many people, finding what they need in one place. He compares the excitement of launching a new hypermarket to that of having a baby. It's the same nervousness, joy and excitement and a hope that it grows to be successful.

But this joy doesn't come easy. Every 15 days, the team goes to the site and does a full check on the development. They ensure that all the schedules and procedures are set in place and stringently followed. With three to four hypermarkets being launched every year, they often find themselves crunched for time and resources. The value of seamlessness is regularly challenged, due to the sheer amount of varied departments and processes. But the real strength of the team is to make a speedy recovery and get back on track.

The team ensures that they are all acting in a transparent, professional way. They do not ever compromise with the work and expect every member of the team to communicate and put forward every idea, mistake or grievance. The team maintains

intellectual integrity and acknowledges the effort put in by every member.

Every department has contributed to and agreed upon a “standard operating procedure” which details the processes and tasks needed to launch a hypermarket. This was done to ensure that the knowledge is shared with the company and not just with the team.

With his seamless managerial style, Suraj has managed to save 12 store months across 7 outlets translating to over 60 crores in sales. He is a leader who has managed to find solutions that have benefited his people and his business.