

# CMA DIGEST

April 2026, Issue - 114, Volume 68

## ED VOICE – From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

Greetings from the desk of CMA Digest!

The first month of this financial year was quite busy for CMA, when two landmark events were conducted. The first was the Bridge Conclave, an interactive session between students and industry experts, and the CMA Sports Meet, both of which were hosted by Sri Ramakrishna Engineering College. Our gratitude goes out to them for their kind gesture. Both these events were well received, and are set to grow to the next level in the coming years.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as the Editor of CMA Digest, as my attention is required right now to focus on my pressing professional and personal commitments. As I write this farewell note, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to serve as the editor of this newsletter. Over the years, this publication has been more than a collection of articles and updates — it has been a platform for ideas and meaningful business conversations.

Working with dedicated contributors, inspiring industry leaders, and loyal readers has been a truly rewarding experience. Every edition reflected our shared commitment to learning, growth, and professional excellence. I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported this journey and made this newsletter vibrant and impactful. Your encouragement and feedback have always been invaluable. On a brighter note, I shall continue to be on the editorial board, and assist the incoming Editor, Dr. Vandana Madhavkumar, who I'm sure, will maintain the momentum with her dynamism and experience, thereby ensuring that this newsletter will continue to inspire and grow under her guidance.

Warm regards,

**K. Seetharam**

Editor

CMA Digest



## Editorial Team

Mr. K. Seetharam | Dr. A.G.V. Narayanan

Mr. N. Krishna Kumar | Dr. D.K. Karthikeyan

Dr. Vandana Madhavkumar | Ms. S. Sujithra Vadivu



COIMBATORE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

## Monday Musings

Monday Musings – 06<sup>th</sup> April 2026

### *Enhancing bottom line thro resilient supply chain - Best practices*

Mr. S.V. Prasad Sharma spoke on the topic "Enhancing bottom line through resilient supply chain – Best practices". He set the context of this interesting topic by stating that, in the current market where very abnormal geo political disturbances and climate change events affect day today business operations, building strong resilient supply chain matters a lot to all the businesses, as supply chains can break the very purpose of business and dent its progress. Hence, building a resilient supply chain is the need of the hour, and businesses, specially manufacturing, cannot survive without strengthening and de-risking supply chains to be very resilient. The basic structure of supply chain includes the following, which has been traditionally built with supplier to customer relationships through various stake holders like manufacturing, distribution and sales to end customer, and the suppliers then extending the supply chain to tiers 1, 2, and 3, to have the entire supply chain elements in place.

Speaker: **S.V. Prasad Sharma**



- 1) Energy supply disruption
- 2) Chocking of the polymer and feed stock supply chain
- 3) Stalling the movement of vessels and containers due to the blocking of the Strait of Hormuz.
- 4) Gas shortages.

Hence, the resilience for the supply chain can be built to mitigate business risks. He concluded his talk by stating that the world of today has seen several unpredictable situations and has been hit hard by geopolitical events and climate change, and economic barriers through tariffs and global trade are being influenced by strong commercial trade wars. Hence, any business should consider building the supply chain with full de-risking process as outlined above to sustain business growth.

Monday Musings – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026

### *Clicks, Bricks, and Beyond: Transforming Retail in a Phygital World*

The presentation "Clicks, Bricks, and Beyond: Transforming Retail in a Phygital World" by Dr. Shilpa Sarvani Ravi explored the rapid convergence of online and offline retail into a unified "phygital" ecosystem. It begins by challenging the traditional dichotomy between e-commerce and physical retail showrooms, highlighting how modern consumers seamlessly move between digital discovery and in-store experiences.

A key theme is the rise of the convenience economy, where speed, accessibility, and personalization drive consumer choices. The session emphasized that successful retailers are those who integrate technology with physical touch points to enhance customer journeys rather than replace them. Through case studies like Nykaa, JioMart, Zudio, and IKEA, the presentation illustrated diverse strategic approaches— ranging from omni-channel

Speaker: **Dr Shilpa Sarvani Ravi**



integration and supply chain innovation to experiential retail and cost-efficient branding. The talk also underscores how data, digital interfaces, and physical stores together create a holistic retail experience. Retailers are no longer competing on channels but on customer experience consistency across channels.

In conclusion, the presentation positioned phygital retail as the future, where businesses must blend technology, operations, and consumer insights to remain competitive. It encourages organizations to rethink strategies, focusing on integration, agility, and value creation in an increasingly interconnected retail landscape.

Monday Musings – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026Speaker: **Dr Alagiri Govindasamy**

## *Artificial Intelligence (AI) – A Curse or fortune for Business schools & Management students?*

Addressing the theme, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) – A Curse or Fortune for Business Schools and Management Students?”, Dr. Alagiri highlighted the transformative role of AI in building scalable, affordable, and user-friendly simulation platforms for higher education institutions.

During the session, he traced the evolution of technology over the past four centuries and explained how humanity has consistently embraced disruptive innovations despite initial resistance. He emphasized that AI, originally conceptualized by Alan Turing in the 1950s, has now entered a new phase of mass adoption due to advancements in cloud computing and high-performance computing infrastructure. He further explained that modern smartphones effectively function as mini supercomputers, making AI capabilities increasingly accessible to individuals and institutions worldwide. While AI presents certain challenges, leading global and Indian business schools are rapidly integrating AI into their management education frameworks because of its immense academic and operational potential.

Dr. Alagiri noted that management students face a unique education challenge compared to engineering students, who can validate theoretical concepts through laboratory-based experimentation. In contrast, business students often lack practical environments to test managerial decision-making and strategic thinking. To address this gap, simulation-based pedagogy has emerged as one of the most effective learning methodologies adopted by premier business schools globally. However, he pointed out that many Indian institutions continue to depend on expensive overseas simulation platforms that suffer from several structural limitations, including:

- Limited India-specific business contexts and case environments
- Minimal customization capabilities for faculty and institutions
- Lack of accessibility features for diverse learner needs
- Absence of integrated AI functionalities
- Affordability barriers that restrict access for a large percentage of students

Dr. Alagiri emphasized that Gen AI has the potential to fundamentally transform this landscape by enabling faculty members to independently design and deploy customized

simulations aligned to their academic objectives.

As part of this vision, Simlight Technologies Private Limited has introduced what it describes as the world's first Gen AI-powered simulation platform designed specifically for business and management education. The platform enables faculty members to create customized simulations within approximately 120 minutes while also providing a comprehensive library of ready-to-use simulations across multiple business and management specializations.

Key features of the platform include:

- AI-powered evaluation and assessment mechanisms
- Advanced digital learning capabilities
- Intuitive performance dashboards
- Faculty-driven simulation customization
- Scalable and affordable deployment architecture

The company also offers educational institutions a customer co-creation engagement model, MoU-based academic collaboration opportunities, and complimentary platform access for two weeks to evaluate the ecosystem.

Dr. Alagiri concluded that AI driven simulation ecosystems can significantly improve experiential learning accessibility and help bridge the gap between theoretical management education and real-world business decision-making.



### Management Quiz

- Q1. What does RTD stand for in the beverage industry?
- Q2. Which US-based RTD brand is gaining traction in India?
- Q3. Which company acquired Himachal-based Ayurvedic brand 'Pahadi Local'?
- Q4. Dabur India has acquired a 51% stake in which Ayurvedic brand?
- Q5. Which FMCG company is acquiring Axiom Ayurveda for ₹200 crore?
- Q6. The product 'eRZL', cited in the legal dispute, belongs to which company?
- Q7. Which company acquired a majority stake in the pooja accessories brand 'Satvik'?
- Q8. Which Indian pharmaceutical company has agreed to acquire Organon?

For answers see page 07

Monday Musings – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026

### 'Make Your Presentations Impactful'

Mr. Puneet Krishnan spoke on the topic "Make your presentations impactful". The speaker shared some practical tips about presentation structure and slide dos and don'ts. He emphasised the importance of knowing the subject well and practicing delivery. According to the speaker, time management is a crucial aspect of any presentation. He emphasised on the fact that in

Speaker: **Puneet Krishnan**

corporate world, one is bound by the company's design and template and that there is very little room left for 'creativity'. All in all, he stressed that practice is essential in making any presentation impactful.



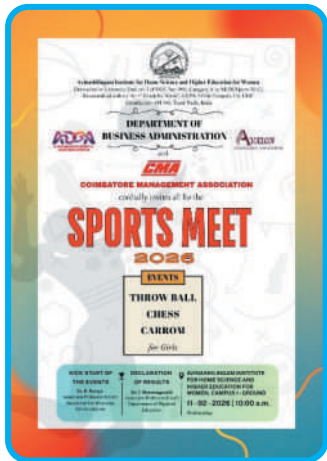
## BRIDGE CONCLAVE – 2026



Sri Ramakrishna Engineering College and CMA jointly organised the Bridge Conclave 2026 on 06th April 2026 in Sri Ramakrishna Engineering College to strengthen the coordination between the educational and industrial sectors. The event brought together thought leaders, academicians and Industry experts to discuss quality education, innovation and global standards for future ready professions. The Key Note Speakers were CA. S. Venkatesh, President, Auditor's Association, Mr. Mr. Janakiram Raju, Ex-

Chairman BASF, Mr. Prashant Subramaniam, Past Chairman, CII, Dr. N. Raveendran, Past President, CIO Association. Presidential Address was by Dr. Sundar Ramakrishnan, Managing Trustee, SNR Sons Charitable Trust, and the Theme Address was by Dr. Nithyanandan Devaraaj, President Coimbatore Management Association, in the august presence of Dr. Prashant R. Nair, IEEE Pothigai (South & West Tamilnadu), and anchored by Mr. Puneet Krishnan, Secretary, Coimbatore Management Association.

## CMA SPORTS MEET



Sri Avinashilingam Group of Institutions hosted the CMA Sports Meet for girls on 11th February 2026. The events were Throwball, Carrom and Chess. More than 60 players participated from different B Schools in Coimbatore.



The Sports Meet for Boys was hosted by Sri Ramakrishna Engineering College on 08th April 2026. The events were Cricket, Carrom, and Chess. More than 120 students participated in the various events.



## THE TRIPLE A LEADERSHIP – ACCEPT, ADAPT AND ADOPT

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Many a times, I have emphasized that people and organizations are two sides of the same coin. An organization and its brand is built around its own people first and everything else next. As a fond follower of Japanese philosophies, it is heartening to know that, if a company is into consumer products, for example, it is important that the employees of the company are its first customers and it should be out of pride and not by force. This will ensure belongingness and trust in what an organization and its people are expected to do, and the principles they stand together for.

I still remember the LPG Era with awe – **Liberalization, Privatization & Globalization**, thanks to the then government for changing the **Behavioural Landscape of both Buyers and Sellers**. Opening up of Indian Economy exposed Indian consumers to multiple choices of global products, from otherwise **compromised buying out of limited choices**.

Thanks to Maruti Suzuki, the Japanese were amongst the earliest to take advantage of the situation.

Indian Brands in the consumer durables segment paved the way for much better Japanese products, not just because of brand preference. **Process Leadership** of Indian companies gave way to the perceived **Product Leadership** by becoming licensed manufacturers or collaborators. This brought in Japanese culture into Indian organizations. It was early days in my career where **“Company Uniforms”** for executives was unheard of. Career growth helped me to understand the significance of wearing a company uniform with **Pride and Belongingness**, which I later adopted for the organizations I lead, either formally or informally. And it also dawned on me that this is how a **Brand is Built and Promoted – by Employees first and then all others next**. I did also notice, especially in the consumer durables segment, that employees are encouraged to buy only own products and are certainly discouraged from buying a competitor's product, irrespective of market standing. This does really make a case for **What You Make is What You Get**.

**EVOLUTION:**

**SPELT Environment (Socio-Political-Economic-Legal-Technology)** evolved alongside market evolution. Concepts of **TQM and QFD** were liberally used in bringing together the stake holders for **mutual good**. The education system and employee patterns shifted along with generational shift and demographic changes. **Supervision gave way to facilitation, and managing gave way to leading**. The 80:20 rule came to be realized – 20% of people work for the future (5-Year plans), while 80% work for the present (2 Years).

**MANAGERS AND LEADERS:**

As a widely travelled “Intrapreneur”, it makes me wonder on the way Indian organizations are structured. Probably it is more to do with societal expectations than those of organizations. While global organizations appear to be more flat, a majority of Indian organizations continue to remain highly vertical. Exceptions can be in the services sector. This could be either because of Indian organizations still growing, or to meet career aspirations of employees who anticipate **promotions periodically**. Personally, I see this to be challenging. Money is not a problem but change in hierarchy is, unless there is **scope for additional responsibility**. Statistics puts this at 10% of total work force who can be considered for promotion, the **limitation being Organizational Growth**. A **certain percentage of retirement and recruitment** is also essential for the **Organizational upheaval**.

I have also noticed, **elsewhere in the world, except for HR Professionals, very rarely in other functions, people manage people**. Functional and Process Management are clearly distinguished from People Management. There has to be a unique distinction in roles for people to become managers, especially when the structure is flat. However, in the Indian Scenario, **managers** in hard-core functions (other than service functions), the major responsibility is People Performance, and that is meant to **Maintain Value**. **Leaders** who are expected to **Add Value**, will look mostly into progress, and therefore, induce change and manage it for its betterment.

**LEADING FROM THE FRONT:**

**Management Styles** will largely depend on the **Nature of Business, Employee Demography, and Organizational Life Cycle**. **Traditional Organizations** which have more of **Doers than Planners**, and employee educational levels low to moderate, will call for leaders who take responsibilities and lead from the front, mostly assisting and supporting people to perform. It is more of **Task-Based Leadership** wherein employees are expected to meet their DRM obligations. Such organizations will also be highly “verticalised”, rely on procedures, and have a great deal of role clarity - very common wherever manufacturing is involved.

**LEADING FROM BEHIND:**

Demography-induced generational shifts have paved the way for modern organizations. Employee education levels are superior to that of traditional industries. The role of managers is that of facilitators, as commonly practiced elsewhere in the world. A majority of such organizations have stringent recruitment procedures and are generally flat in structure – as seen in the services industry. **Leaders in such organizations rarely involve in DRMs, except for that of structured reviews and dash boards**. The role of leaders, then will be on ESG and Growth – the 3Ps – People, Planet and Profits. For such organizations, leaders usually work from behind, encouraging the team to achieve targets and goals – mostly **Problem Solving and Mentoring**.

**SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP:**

Like commanders in the war front, **most effective Business Leaders are adaptive**, meaning, they **appreciate the circumstances, accept the need to change accordingly and adapt themselves**. This is essential in a dynamic business world, wherein geo-economics is multipolar, and WTO has become less significant in the era of reverse protectionism. Once leaderships adapt themselves to the changing necessities, sometimes called **Predictive Leadership**, leaders start to understand the need for validation, post which, they ensure the **organization's wide adoption** of effective changes.

The **“Why” part is always clear – “What”, “When”, “How”, and “How Much”** determine the **Effectiveness of Leadership**. Of course, the start is always the **right understanding of the “Why”**.



## UPCOMING AIMA EVENTS



Topic : **Capacity Building Programme on Effective Negotiation Skills for Contractual Correspondence**

Date : **06<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

Venue: **Goa**



Topic : **6th Aima ICRC Case Writing Competition Conference 2026**

Date : **14<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

Venue: **New Delhi**

### 13th HR LEADERSHIP RETREAT

70 | AIMA

Beyond People Strategy  
HR in the Age of Intelligence

21-23 May 2026 Hotel Le Meridien  
Calangute, Goa



Topic : **13<sup>th</sup> HR Leadership Retreat**

Date : **21<sup>st</sup> May 2026**

Venue: **Calangute, Goa, Hotel Le Meridien**



1. Ready to Drink

2. BuzzBallz

3. Reliance Retail

4. RAS Luxury Oils

5. Emami

6. Kenvue

7. Cycle Pure Agarbathi

8. Sun Pharmaceutical Industries