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Esha - People for the blind

Esha (www.braillecards.org and www.clabil.org) is an initiative by volunteers to make life better for the blind. We use neutral. There is no disability, challenge or special ability attached to this. We are blind means we cannot see. Period. means you can see. You can access the online library directly at www.braillecards.org/audio.htm

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

Preeti Monga - Esha Achiever of the Month - Guest Post by Sandeep Koul

I was new to this, had no previous experience taking such an interview (although I had been on both sides of the table for countless job interviews...). So, I kind of looked forward to the experience, hoping the exercise would enrich me – give my overloaded resume another skill to boast of. Alas, it was not so – speaking to Preeti Monga (Director, Silver Linings) was just like having a friendly chat with one’s mom. I had kept a few canned questions prepared, so that I came across as a professional guy, and hoped that their answers would lead to further questions. I had also decided to admit up front that this was my first time and seeing the extensive media coverage that the subject had been exposed to previously, I thought she would have a better idea about how to go about it than I would.

With this, I launched into a planned spiel about Esha – what it does and why. This did not go too well, since she began telling me about the visiting cards she wanted Braille inscribed and began asking me how to go about it. I had been mistaken for a Salesperson from Esha, and I set out to correct this mistake as soon as possible. I gave her Nidhi’s coordinates, and said I had called for an interview. This non – vegetarian who loves to read, knit, travel, chat and investigate spirituality took the hint, and allowed me to move on.

With that, I jumped into my first brilliant question, the reply to which I hoped would generate enough new questions to last me the interview. I asked, “Tell me the story of your life in your own words.” The answer I got, though factual and informative, did not do the trick for me. She said, “That’s what I have written an autobiography for. You can get the info you want at our website too - www.silver-linings.org/.”

Touche, maam – guess that was the first lesson to at least conduct background research before barging into someone’s life. Then, I wheedled that this question had been my “master question”, which I had hoped for it to lead to many “corollary” questions – so she gave me a perfunctory response about being a “successful granny”.

Hey, I just realized that I am committing the cardinal sin – writing about the interviewer and the interview, not about the interviewee, as I should. So, to set the right tone here and in the interview, I jumped to my second “canned” question – “How do you motivate yourself to face the world every morning?” The answer to this one had me stumped for a moment – she said, “how about you, how do you do it?” I sure as hell hadn’t been expecting a counter – question, and my mumblings were ignored, as they deserved to be. Then, finally, we got a quotable answer, and the interview was underway. She said, “I set goals – and drive myself to achieve them. Once I taste success, I set larger, tougher goals ad infinitum”.

In between, she made an attempt to make me more comfortable at this by telling me that her younger brother was also named “Sandeep”. Our identical taste in music, in terms of loving Rafi saab and oldies, was another source of comfort. Though the similarity did not extend to the kirtans from Granth Sahib she adored.

My next canned question fit in nicely here. “The kudos palls after a while – so why go on?” “Ye Bandar adrak ka swaad chakh chuka hai”, she quipped. “Ab ise aur badi adrak chahiye.”

On that note.. to be continued...

Posted by [Esha - People for the Blind](#) at 10:57 PM

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