

K. SHYAMPRASAD

SCRIPTING HIS OWN SUCCESS STORY

A first-generation entrepreneur, Mr. Kodimule Shyamprasad is a man of his word. After starting his career as a chemist, he went on to establish Vidya Herbs from scratch and made it a global brand that is known for its superior quality products all over the world

BY SONAM GULATI



Mr. K Shyamprasad pursued his education in Natural Product Chemistry. He started out as a chemist after that in 1990. Soon after he started working in a pharmaceutical company; his interest piqued and he wanted to start his own firm. In 2001, he set up Vidya Herbs and set foot into manufacturing botanical products and there has been no looking back ever since.

STARTING HUMBLE, BUILDING RIGHT

Vidya Herbs had humble beginnings. Mr. Shyamprasad started by establishing a trading firm that was dealing in botanical extracts and exporting to only limited geographies like the US and Japan. Slowly he realized that there is a huge market for good quality botanical products and that's why he started his own manufacturing company. It started as a small manufacturing facility on a 10,000 sq ft land with a shed. It is with consistent work and improvisation that Vidya Herbs gained its reputation of an herbal extraction company that doesn't compromise on quality. It is a firm that employs over 600 people and has reach in advanced markets like the US, Europe, Korea and Japan.

Mr. Shyamprasad made the bold move of quitting his secure job and putting all his time and energy into building this company. He made sure that every milestone the company achieved was based on extensive research, customer feedback and quality products. Under his leadership, Vidya Herbs has recently opened its new marketing office in London, Russia, Dubai, and Mumbai to expand its customer base and penetrate new markets. Today, Vidya Herbs takes pride in its 5 manufacturing units in India, 5 warehouses globally, 12 global locations and over 10,000 customers.

QUALITY OVER EVERYTHING

A quality product is of tremendous importance for Mr. Shyamprasad. Being in the business of health and nutrition, he is extremely cognizant of the fact that the products needs to be authentic and unadulterated.

To make sure that each product meets global standards, he has invested heavily in research and development. He utilizes novel research and production methods, such as supercritical CO₂, and conventional extraction processing and practices strict quality control at all facilities.

His focus has always been on organic growth. Be it in terms of size or reach, he has always emphasized on Vidya Herbs getting bigger by the virtue of the top quality products it manufactures. He always had the penchant for growth but also possessed the patience to attain it. Owing to his dedicated efforts and noble vision, the company has achieved remarkable success.

Mr. Shyamprasad has also undertaken initiatives like taking farmers to the factories to sensitize them about the ill-effects of adulteration in raw materials. They even ask farmers to charge them a premium but to not compromise on quality in any way.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Mr. Shyamprasad is committed to nature and practicing sustainable policies. He truly feels grateful to nature for providing all that he has built his business on. Be it farming, production, processing, exporting or sales he tries to be as ecologically friendly as possible. He has introduced policies and programs that are scientific in nature and are backed by thorough research. These policies help him and his team to scale their business in the most sustainable manner. "We actively seek to reduce dependence on synthetics, chemicals and their derivatives in all our processes," he asserts. In fact it is their pragmatic approach to be as close to the natural source for their products that sets them apart and provides them with the distinction the need to compete in the natural products market.

He also actively participates in the development of the local community. The company closely works with local farms, committed to the economic development of the local farming populations and provides them with agricultural inputs and farm equipment for better agricultural practices.

Mr. Shyamprasad has tried to imbibe all of these commitments to nature and environment as part of his company's culture. All employees and team members are expected to practice a certain way or working. For his contributions, Mr. Shyamprasad also received the Bharat Nirman Award for "Industry Development"



"TO MAKE SURE THAT EACH PRODUCT MEETS GLOBAL STANDARDS, HE HAS INVESTED HEAVILY IN R&D. HE UTILIZES NOVEL RESEARCH & PRODUCTION METHODS SUCH AS SUPERCRITICAL CO₂ & CONVENTIONAL EXTRACTION PROCESSING, & PRACTICES STRICT QUALITY CONTROL AT ALL FACILITIES"

from the Indian Trade and Industry Organisation.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR CUSTOMERS

Mr. Shyamprasad is committed to not only to meet, satisfy and exceed customer expectations, but also to 'walk the extra mile' to ensure customer success. His definition of customer care is not the usual reactionary approach where resolution is needed but he makes sure to actively seek what the customer needs and makes it his responsibility to work for that. He takes customers' feedback very seriously and ensures that every customer feels heard. He has established a code for all his employees where everyone knows that the key is to establish personal relationships with the customers for an empathetic understanding of each other's needs and work towards a mutually satisfactory relationship. For him, business is all about relationships. All his clients become returning customers

because of his transparent working culture.

Mr. Shyamprasad leads by one motto, "To deliver 100% natural high quality products for healthy living ethically and contribute back to the society." Under his guidance, Vidya Herbs has scaled many milestones. Vidya Herbs has recently started its Coffee Curing works in Chickmanglur, India and is already listed in the top 10 coffee bean exporters within 2 years. With the new expansion plan in place, Vidya Herbs is all set to bring in Rs 1,000 crores in revenue in coming years.

All of this has not been an easy feat. It took every ounce of hard work, determination and consistency from Mr. Shyamprasad and all his team members. When Mr. Shyamprasad started Vidya Herbs around 2 decades ago, he wanted to build a business that put quality and customers ahead of everything else. Even today, many milestones later, his basic philosophy hasn't changed and that is what makes Mr. Shyamprasad and his venture stand out from the crowd.