

# RAHUL NAYAK

A FLOURISHING LEADER WHO PLACES A HIGH VALUE  
 ON INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY



**Rahul Nayak,**  
**Director, Nayakem**

*Rahul completed his B. E. in Chemical Engineering from Thadomal Shahani Engineering College and later completed his Master's of Management Studies from The Fuqua School of Business, Duke University. Before joining Nayakem as the Director, Rahul gained international experience in USA and China.*

**Location:** Mumbai

**T**oday, businesses of all sizes are expanding into new markets across the world. There are several advantages to expanding into new markets, including the potential for increased market growth and diversity. An additional benefit of expanding your business internationally is the potential to build your brand with a global clientele. The most established businesses owe a large portion of their success to developing a trusting relationship with a broad customer base.

Some of the steps involved in establishing such a brand image might be considered advantages in their own right. To begin, the entrepreneur should operate in the chosen regions to gain in-depth local knowledge of the international market. And Rahul Nayak, the Director of Nayakem, believes in the same principle. While Rahul was assigned the duty of developing the firm abroad, he believed in first learning about the culture of the nations where the company would be operating. Below is the excerpt of Rahul's exclusive interview with CEO Insights.

## **What inspired you to take on the role of Nayakem's Director?**

After completing my under-graduate studies, I opted to join my family's enterprise, Nayakem Organics, as an Assistant Operations Manager looking after the supply-chain and day-to-day operations of our manufacturing unit. Later in my career, I had significant responsibility in the group charged with overseeing Nayakem's international business, as we were in the process of developing non-phthalate and more sustainable plasticizers. We were keen to expand our export operations, therefore I headed to North America to meet with potential customers there. After establishing a loyal following of clients, I concluded that it would be ideal if I could gain more international experience in areas like North America and China, which may open new supply chain opportunities for us. As a result, I enrolled in a Management course at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, where I spent time studying in USA and in China.

When I returned to India, I was offered a position by a Fuqua alumnus, which included business development responsibilities that required me to interact directly with government officials

and major corporate leaders on various development initiatives in their operations and logistics. After gaining a wealth of knowledge and competence there, I returned to my family business. But this time, taking into account my education abroad and the experience I acquired over the years, a decision was made to provide me with a senior management position at Nayakem. Thus, I was appointed Director of Nayakem, and my first objective upon taking on the post was to strengthen the firm and take it to the next level, while keeping sustainability and environmental norms in mind.

## **Define Nayakem as an organization and its current position in the industry?**

My grandfather founded Nayakem in 1970, and my father joined in 1984, ensuring the continued growth and success of the company. In both the domestic and international Plasticizers market, we are one of the most prominent pioneers. Even today, we are one of the leaders in the manufacture of greener non-phthalate plasticizers and Benzoate plasticizers in India. After many years of doing business, I am proud of the relationships that have been passed down from my grandfather to my father and hopefully will continue with me in the future. Their hard work has really been key in building a platform for me to take the business to newer heights.

Furthermore, Nayakem has grown exponentially, and we've constantly been working on innovative ideas. We are working on developing more environmental-friendly products and are constantly improving our manufacturing process to achieve long-term sustainability goals. To assure the quality of our products, we have spent time and resources on R&D. We strive to provide our clients with high quality and high yielding products while trying to minimize the ill-effects to the environment. The quality of our products has ensured that our clients continue to choose us over other players, even after all these years. The trust that our customers have placed on us is one of the pillars on which Nayakem's success has been built on.

## **What has been the success mantra that constantly helps you arrive at positive outcomes?**

I grew up in an entrepreneurial family, with my grandfather and my father contributing to our firm's

success. Even my sister runs her own business. And it's been a blessing and a privilege for me to have grown up in such a setting. They have taught me so much, and I'm grateful for it. Additionally, I have developed a willingness to always learn and strive to innovate, improve, and, most importantly, complete all duties assigned to me, because most things in our organization involve a large commitment of time, effort, and capital. There are times when taking on these duties seem overwhelming. Therefore, I've tried to break them down into smaller tasks and finish my responsibilities each day, rather than overloading myself with too much work.

This strategy has aided me on my path to success, as I feel that setting large goals is essential, and they can be accomplished by quantifying the effort and breaking it down into smaller targets. This has been my success mantra for a long time.



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## **Based on your strong professional experience, what advice would you give to the upcoming leaders in the industry?**

To date, throughout my working life, I've come to understand that the secret is in experimenting and discovering what works best for me. Life and the dynamics of the world are always changing; therefore, it is best to explore early on rather than remain stagnant. Therefore, my suggestion is to attempt new things even if you fail, since failure is also a necessary component of success; you learn something from your mistakes and then just get up and go on. However, having said this, it is also important to not compromise on one's own principles, ethics, and business practices. The goal is to keep moving forward consciously.

Today this has led us to develop greener plasticizers and has been key in developing more sustainable practices in our business to ensure for a greener world. [CEO](#)