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Capacity building for educational CSOs

Collaborative innovation at Satya Special School: a capacity-building framework

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At Satya Special School (SSS), collaboration serves as the cornerstone of innovation. Its aim is to transform individual potential into team-driven amplification. This belief permeates the organization. It fosters an environment ripe with optimism and synergy.

The guiding principles at Satya include continuous learning and innovation, and strategic partnerships and expertise. To stay committed to our mission, we embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and celebrate the strength of collective effort. As an institution, we try to put in the hard work in a determined manner to build a more inclusive world for children.

Capacity-building programs have brought strategic agility to support our vision of inclusivity. Through these initiatives, we have developed the capacity to turn challenges into opportunities. These programs have helped us develop a culture of curiosity and cultivate a culture of persistence. This has

been ensuring both organizational growth and sustainability.

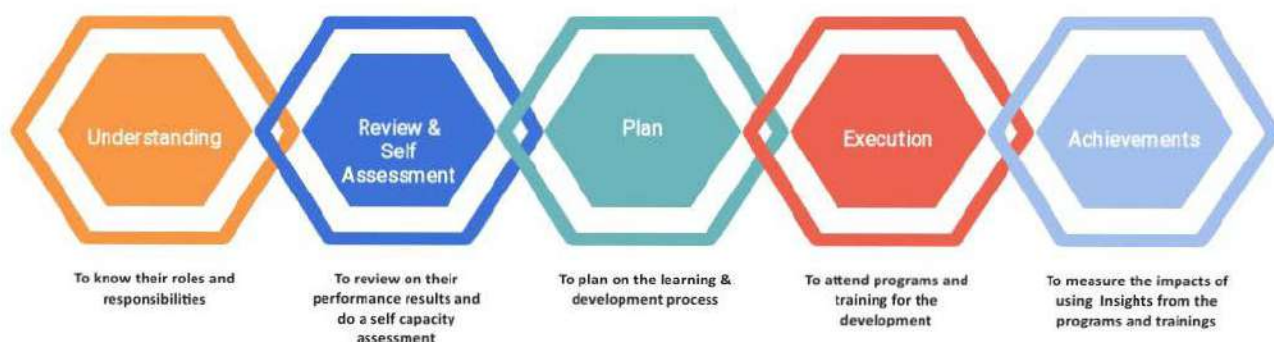
Understanding our requirements

At Satya, there is continuous improvement all around. It is an effort that starts with everybody — from top to down the line staff. Decisions are made collaboratively and at every level.

We perform a systematic assessment of where we might be able to do better. We ask our front-line staff to note observations. These are followed by a meticulous scrutiny and examination of these ideas to assess their compliance as well as influence on the objectives we want organizationally.

We then go through the most valuable suggestions. We analyze how they could help in organizational growth or in aiding staff development. This iterative process could be likened to solving a puzzle, where all the pieces will fit perfectly.

SATYA'S LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT: From Understanding to Achievements



With this process of trial and error, we have perfected our strategies for helping special needs children. Satya is as an organization of varied voices. These include both new recruits and seasoned staff. We, therefore, try to cultivate a culture that is always evolving the way we make our impact.

Strategic staff selection for training programs

In selecting candidates for training, we consider multiple core developmental dimensions, focusing on knowledge acquisition, transfer and utilization. The selection committee evaluates each candidate's learning potential, ability to synergize with colleagues, and capacity to apply acquired knowledge.

Selected candidates typically demonstrate fundamental skills. They also have a zeal for learning, and character traits that align with our institutional culture. We emphasize both skill competence and maturity in conduct.

Retention strategies are designed to support skill and capacity development. These also try to account for additional attributes beyond primary responsibilities. Selection criteria include proactive engagement, a cooperative spirit, and adaptability to evolving teaching dynamics.

Individuals who participate in capacity-building programs are expected to gain personal growth. The process also ensures that they are also better able to contribute to the institution by sharing and applying their new skills gained in the process.

Testimonies of impact

The transformative effect of these interventions is evident in the testimonials from participants.

Gayatri, a participant in our Mental Health Program, shares, "There has been immense transformation in my work ethic. It's not just about personal resilience through stress

management and mindfulness techniques. It is also about improving institutional performance."

Another participant spoke of how recent training in classroom management transformed her teaching approach. They share, "This training completely changed how I teach. Working with various learning challenges has positively impacted my classroom."

Following her training, this participant conducted a comprehensive cross-center assessment. Through this, she examined the physical environment, teaching methodologies, and engagement patterns within the classrooms. She then led professional development sessions focused on hands-on activities. These were designed to foster interaction and improvement in key areas.

This approach cultivated a strong learning community with systematic activities. These included daily student check-ins, visual supports, and organized learning environments. The structured engagement led to measurable outcomes. The behavior of students improved. So did their engagement, and transition between activities. These changes underscored the effectiveness of a well-planned cultural shift within the learning environment.

Supporting change

Introducing change in an established institution can be challenging. To support the process as we implement new practices, we follow a few methods. We share these here.

We systematically use documentation to ensure consistency and clarity. We have also created mentorship programs, pairing experienced staff with those adopting new methodologies.

We conducted regular check-ins to monitor progress and address emerging issues. Roles

are assigned based on the strengths of the staff. We try to recognize and encourage their contributions to innovation and growth.

The journey continues

At Satya Special School, capacity building is a continuous journey. Our partnerships with Wipro and in-house programs have made us resilient, innovative, and aligned with our mission.

Looking forward, we are energized by the possibilities. Each new skill that is acquired, and process which is refined, brings us closer to our vision of a world where every child, regardless of ability, can thrive.

Our commitment to growth is grounded in collaborative teamwork, even in turbulent times. It inspires us to ensure organizational sustainability and development.

Chitra Shah is the Director of Satya Special School (SSS). She has two decades of

experience in inclusive education. Her work has involved transforming SSS into a leading institution for special education and rehabilitation in Puducherry, starting from a modest beginning.

Jijo Jose heads Monitoring and Evaluation at Satya Special School. He leverages data-driven strategies and development management expertise to advance social impact initiatives.

Winifred Sophia Ross works as documentation manager at Satya Special School. Through her work, she tries to enhance visibility and stakeholder engagement through strategic communication, promoting inclusion and empowerment.

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Capacity building for staff