

Report on NISP Cell Event “Design Thinking, Problem Solving through Critical Thinking”

Event Title: “Design Thinking, Problem Solving through Critical Thinking”

Name and designation of the Guest Speakers: Mr. Mainak Basu (Sustainability Advisor, Digital Transformation & Global Delivery of Innovation at scale)

Venue: Auditorium, C-Wing MPSTME, NMIMS, Shirpur

Start Date: 27 September 2024

End Date: 27 September 2024

Time: 3:00 to 4:00 PM

Duration of the activity (in Hrs): 1 hours

Link of social media post of e-pamphlet:

Link for social media post of video:

Program Type: Level 1 Expert Talks

Program Theme: ‘Entrepreneurship and Startup’

Objective of the activity

The session sought to provide students with real-world insights into innovation and entrepreneurship. Through the speaker’s personal experiences, the event aimed to motivate students to think creatively and adopt problem-solving approaches using critical and design thinking methods. The talk was especially aligned with the goals of the NISP Cell to enhance students' entrepreneurial mind-set.

Benefit in terms of learning, skills, knowledge obtained

The session on "Design Thinking, Problem Solving through Critical Thinking" offered valuable insights into the evolving landscape of skills and innovation. Students gained a clear understanding of design thinking, learning how to apply this user-centred methodology across industries to address complex problems creatively. The speaker, Mr. Basu, highlighted the shift in skills brought about by emerging technologies like Generative AI, explaining how adaptability, critical thinking, and problem-solving are becoming essential in today's rapidly changing world. Students also enhanced their ability to think critically, break down problems, and approach solutions with empathy, creativity, and logic.

Additionally, the students learned about the importance of iterative learning, user feedback, and cross-functional collaboration in developing successful products that meet real-world needs. Mr. Basu's entrepreneurial journey emphasized resilience and the need for persistence in innovation, inspiring students to focus on real-world problem-solving and continuous learning. Overall, the session equipped students with key skills and knowledge, preparing them to adapt to future technological advancements and pursue entrepreneurial ventures effectively.

SVKM's NMIMS Faculty Coordinators for the activity

1. Mr. Rajesh Verma, Assistant Professor, MPSTME

SVKM's NMIMS Student Coordinators for the activity

1. Harikrishna Panchal
2. Aaditya Devadiga
3. Biswajeet Rout
4. Atharva Khandelwal
5. Pratham Deore

Number of student participants: 236

Number of faculty participants:

Number of External Participants, if any:

Expenditure Amount, if any:

Mode of session delivery: Offline

Background of the speakers

Mr. Mainak Basu, have over 24 years of leadership experience in strategic advisory, business transformation, and product innovation, Mr. Basu is a seasoned technology leader. He has been a key figure in scaling lot of Accenture's businesses in India. He also specializes in sustainability, and platform development and has driven significant customer transformations across industry segments and also credited with multiple patents.

His passion for innovation has fuelled large-scale digital transformation initiatives, creating substantial business value. Known for his strong stakeholder management and ability to lead diverse, cross-cultural teams, Mr. Basu is committed to mentoring and connecting people.

Report on the session with the key outcomes

The event commenced with a welcome address where the audience was introduced to the importance of the NISP Cell's objectives, which focus on fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and problem-solving among students. The session was officially introduced by highlighting its alignment with the NISP Cell's goals of inspiring students and enabling them to engage with real-life innovators. Following this, the speaker for the event, Mr. Mainak Basu, was introduced.

Mr. Mainak Basu began his talk by sharing his journey in the field of innovation and technology leadership, providing valuable insights into the evolving landscape of product innovation. His extensive experience across industry segments, particularly in sustainability and platform development, served as an inspirational case study for the students.

Key Themes and Insights from the Session

1. **Emphasis on Design Thinking:** Mr. Basu underscored the importance of design thinking as a critical tool for solving complex problems in today's rapidly changing world. He explained that design thinking helps innovators to approach problems from multiple perspectives, ensuring that solutions are both human-centric and feasible. The iterative

nature of the design thinking process allows for continuous refinement of ideas, encouraging creativity and innovation at every stage of product development.

2. **The Shift in Hard and Soft Skills:** One of the key insights Mr. Basu offered was how the advent of tools like Generative AI (GenAI) is transforming the landscape of required skills. He explained that what we currently consider "hard skills," such as programming or data analysis, will increasingly be automated and thus regarded as "soft skills." Conversely, traditionally "soft skills" like creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence will become essential "hard skills" in the era of AI and automation. This shift highlights the need for students to focus on developing strong critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
3. **Critical Thinking in Innovation:** Mr. Basu outlined several crucial steps for fostering critical thinking and innovation. These steps, when applied in tandem with design thinking principles, enable innovators to create impactful, user-centric solutions.

Interactive Q&A Session

The session concluded with an engaging interactive question and answer session. Students actively participated by inquiring about the role of critical thinking and design thinking in product development. Mr. Basu emphasized that innovation begins with understanding the problem deeply and employing design thinking to iteratively develop solutions. He also encouraged students to embrace failures and learn from them, as they are an integral part of the innovation process.

Key Outcomes of the Event

- **Awareness of Design Thinking:** Students gained a solid understanding of design thinking as a structured yet creative process for innovation and problem-solving.
- **Understanding Skill Transformation:** The session highlighted how the landscape of employable skills is shifting due to AI, preparing students to focus on developing the essential hard skills of the future, such as critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability.
- **Inspiration for Entrepreneurship:** Mr. Basu's journey and his emphasis on innovation sparked an interest in entrepreneurship, motivating students to explore innovative solutions for real-world challenges.
- **Active Engagement:** The interactive session fostered a sense of curiosity and eagerness among the students, encouraging them to think critically about the challenges they may face in their professional and entrepreneurial journeys.

Conclusion

The event was highly successful in its aim of fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. It provided students with valuable insights and inspiration to think creatively, critically, and strategically about future innovations. The NISP Cell looks forward to organizing more such events to continue building a vibrant innovation ecosystem at the institution.

Glimpses of the event (4 photographs)



