



UPSKILLING IN THE DEVELOPMENT SECTOR

A youth working in the development sector and hailing from the Naxal-affected region of Eastern UP, finds a way to switch gears in his career by acquiring skills and the attitude to move up.

"I'm more sensitive to the issues faced by the opposite gender and I want to be a proponent of women's rights."

24-year-old Rajesh belongs to Chandauli, a Naxal-affected region in eastern Uttar Pradesh, where the local population suffers with little or no access to basic infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, schools and colleges. "There is lots more to be done and people are still quite poor," says Rajesh. "Agriculture is hard work. I would work the fields till 9 am and then leave for my day job," he recalls. His small salary of Rs. 3000, earned from working as a teacher at an NGO, covered only a fraction of his family's needs.

On the surface, Rajesh's qualifications seem promising – a Bachelor's degree in Arts and an MSW degree in the pipeline. But he readily admits that he was not equipped with the right skills for the jobs that he wished to take up, and more importantly, that he lacked fluency in English, which he believed was central to a successful career.

There is an established link between speaking English and being employable in diverse jobs. The low quality of education offered in India is most worrying; and so is the huge gap between the academic teaching of English and employability requirement, observes David Graddol in his book, *English Next*.

During a trip to Chhattisgarh, this realization hit home for Rajesh. When introduced to visitors from the United States of America, he felt entirely unable to speak. "I had to ask a local school-going kid to translate for me. It was humiliating to feel so handicapped, when I had studied so much."

The DET Value: Building skills and breaking barriers

In 2016, Rajesh decided to take action by temporarily pulling the brakes on his life in Uttar Pradesh, and

"I feel very proud when I see my son guiding his friends on what they should do to improve themselves to get better jobs. My son has grown up!"
- Rajesh's father

WHAT WORKED FOR RAJESH

- Organisational management
- Microsoft Powerpoint
- Workplace skills
- Punctuality



RAJESH PATTU YADAV | Deshpande Susandhi Fellowship Program (Frontline Management), Alumnus, 2016

DET is a place where they **develop your capabilities** and make you competent enough **to get any job you want.** It was my good luck and destiny that I joined the course and **it has changed my life forever.**

making a dramatic move to Hubballi as a Deshpande Susandhi Fellow. He struggled with settling in and it was the dedicated faculty at DF, he says, who made all the difference. His teachers continued to support him by taking extra lessons during lunch breaks, when they would teach him in Hindi.

Initially reluctant to speak in large groups, Rajesh remembers the transformation he underwent at DSF, which molded him into the confident and commanding person he is today. In every class, teachers would insist that he come forward and speak in front of everyone, encouraging him to face his fear of public speaking and thereby easing him out of his shell.

The gender sensitization classes at DET played a huge role in breaking down Rajesh's home-spun ideas of the role of women in the workforce. "I realized that women are strong and have an important role in shaping our country," he says. The classes also helped Rajesh get comfortable interacting and working with women. "I'm more sensitive to the issues faced by the opposite gender and I want to

be a proponent of women's rights," he adds. The rigor and discipline that he developed during the six-week program built up a work ethic that he feels, holds him in good stead even today.

Productive Careers: Going back to roots

After DSF, Rajesh reached out to his previous employer and was offered a higher position as Block Coordinator at more than double his earlier salary. His improved English and computer skills helped him land a managerial role on a project imparting digital literacy skills to local women in Uttar Pradesh. He says the DF teaching methodology has helped him implement the project.

Looking back, Rajesh says he arrived in Hubballi only wanting to speak in English. But the benefits he reaped in the end were multifold. A firm believer in the transformative power of the DSF program, Rajesh encourages more people to join. "I don't want to be the only English-speaking person in my community," he adds, jokingly.

STUDENT PROFILE AND IMPACT POST-DET

Educational qualification	MSW (First Year)
First generation learner	Yes
Pre-DET monthly household income	Rs. 16,000
Sector of employment	Teaching
Hailing from	Chandauli
Working in	Chandauli

Salary Increment (INR):

