

By Jyoti Kalsi

Minocher Patel had the complete attention of the audience. They listened to his ideas with interest, participated eagerly in the discussions initiated by him and often burst into peals of laughter. 'The power of non-verbal communication' is not exactly an entertaining subject, but Patel's talk on the topic at the India Club recently turned out to be an enjoyable experience for all those who attended.

Patel peppered his address with humorous anecdotes and interesting examples to drive home the importance of correct voice tone, volume and modulation as well as other factors like posture, listening skills and body language in our personal and professional life.

The suave young man, who has made a name for himself in India as a motivational speaker and corporate trainer, was in Dubai to conduct training programmes for some local companies and to do the groundwork for an India-based residential finishing school with special courses for NRI children that he plans to launch in October.

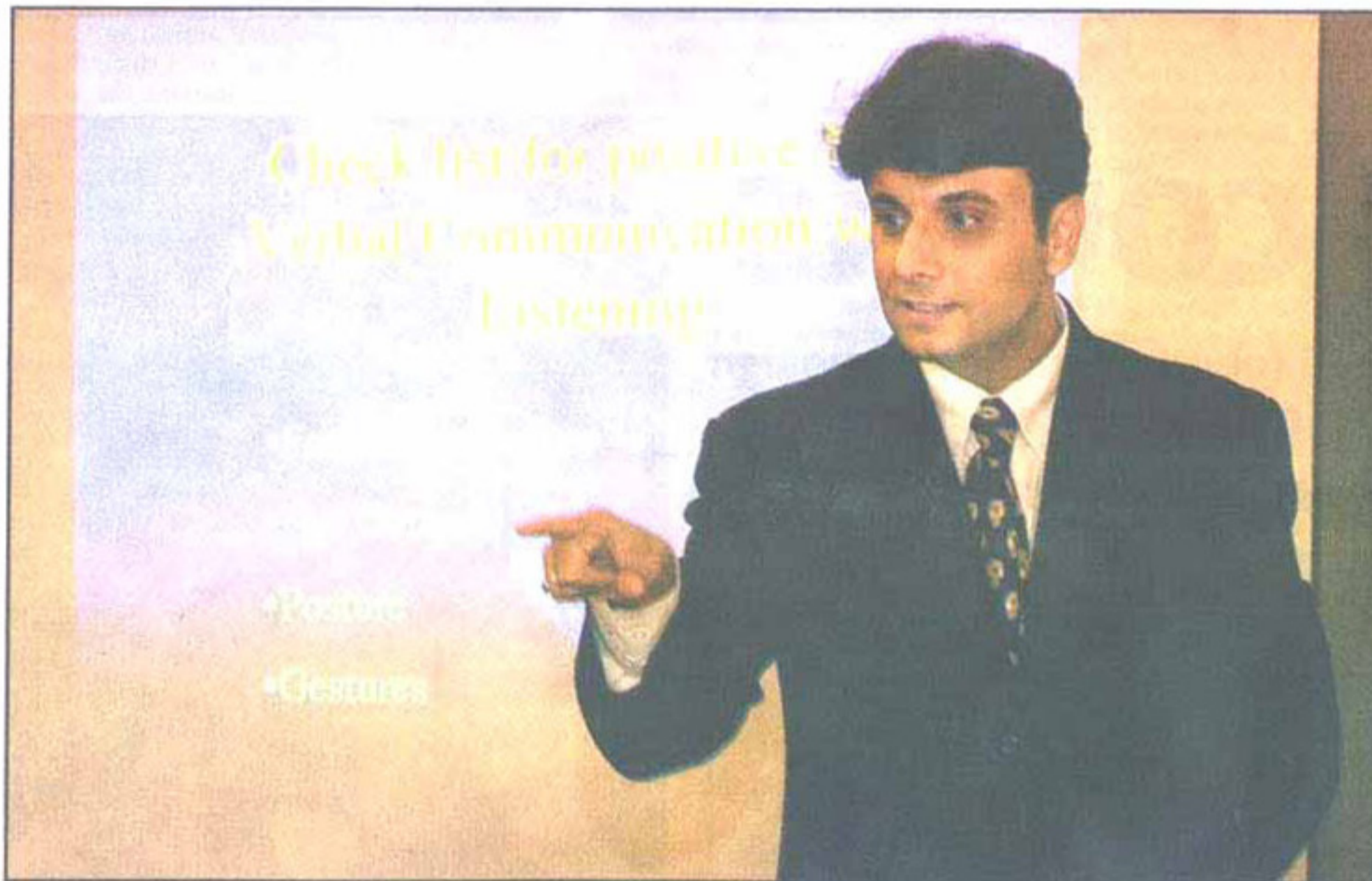
Five years ago, Patel gave up a well-paid job in Dubai to go back to India and start his own corporate training consultancy service. "I have always enjoyed public speaking, but the seed for this idea was sown when I won an award for best presentation at an international leadership development camp in Germany," recalled Patel. On the flight back the 20-year-old undergraduate decided that being a motivational trainer was his calling in life.

While still in college he was selected for another training course in Finland where he again won an award for his presentation. "The two-week course changed my life and my way of thinking because it helped me to focus on my strengths and build on them. This is why I can tell parents with conviction that during my month-long residential programme I will be able to bring about major attitudinal changes in their children," reiterated Patel.

With this goal in mind, Patel did

Talking the talk

Motivational speaker prepares to launch Asia's first residential finishing school



Minocher Patel conducts a training programme at Seaview Hotel, Dubai

Picture: Asghar Khan

an MBA in marketing and worked with an Indian company as brand manager followed by a two-year stint with a Dubai company. "Working in sales and marketing gave me the experience necessary to make my courses relevant and practical while Dubai offered me a unique window to the world. In no other city can you interact with people from so many different countries. The insight into various cultures that I gained here helped me tremendously in formulating my 'business etiquette', 'cross cultural

sensitivity' and other programmes," conceded Patel.

He began by conducting 'presentation skills' and 'personality development' workshops for college students. "This field is often perceived as a con game, so to gain credibility one has to be really good and effective. I try to develop programmes that are easy to understand and practical enough to be implemented," he underlined, claiming that positive feedback from customers is responsible for his success.

image and profits of an organisation," he highlighted.

Business etiquette training is another area he specialises in. "With globalisation, managers need new skills. Besides personal grooming and table manners, companies are requesting us to train their senior managers in ballroom dancing and the art of entertaining. We have also conducted courses for wives of managers on the art of being a good hostess as well as a pleasant guest," he informed.

Patel is now poised to realise his biggest dream by launching Ecole Solitaire, Asia's first residential finishing school. "Just as the true beauty of a diamond emerges only after it has been properly cut and polished, my school is designed to shape and polish individuals and bring out their full potential," he said, explaining the name of the school.

Modelled on Swiss finishing schools, Ecole Solitaire will operate from a five-star resort in Pune. During the summer and winter vacations the school will conduct one-month courses for 15 to 30 year olds with a few 'girls only' batches. It will also offer a variety of one-week courses throughout the year.

The one month programme will cover courses in public speaking, etiquette, social and communication skills, health and fitness, cooking, dancing, personal grooming, management skills, self awareness, career planning, goal setting and time management. An optional module called 'Sanskriti' will be offered to NRI's and overseas students. "This course is designed to provide a better understanding of Indian culture to foreigners and Indians residing abroad," clarified Patel. More details can be obtained from the school's website on training@ecoledsolitaire.com.

Patel also plans to launch a three day self development programme called 'destination success', which he will bring to Dubai later in the year. "My biggest high is when people tell me that I have changed their life and my ultimate ambition is to be known all over the world as the best public speaker India has ever produced," he declares.

Patel now operates with a team of eight reputed trainers and conducts training programmes in various aspects of self development, etiquette, grooming and personal effectiveness, both in India and abroad. He has trained staff of large corporations, students, housewives and even policemen. "I have been able to successfully demonstrate that proper training and correct implementation of 'effective telephone communication', 'effective listening' and 'presentation skills' can make a big difference to the