



Reviewed by :  
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**Title** : Go Kiss the World — Life Lessons for the Young Professional

**Author** : Subroto Bagchi

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Lessons we can draw from . . .

MindTree's co-founder, Subroto Bagchi realised that he could create the best value for his organisation and thus for its stakeholders by becoming a 'Gardener'. No, you will not spot him tending to the plants outside MindTree's premises, even though gardening, as we understand it, is one of his many hobbies.

Instead you will find him discussing personal and professional issues on a one-to-one basis with the top 100 minds at MindTree and helping them find the path towards leadership. This 'gardening' process is well-thought out in design and approach. It begins with the interviewee having to answer a basic but wide ranging set of questions from : Who am I? to What do I want to be? Only if you can understand yourself and are comfortable in your own skin, can you lead others.

One could perhaps envy those who get an opportunity to participate in these sessions. But, take heart, the Gardener has shared his wisdom in his recently released book, 'Go Kiss the World'. In case you are curious about the origins of this title, well, this is what his mother told him, her last words to him actually, as he set off for the United States.

Promoted by Penguin Publications as being an inspiration to 'young India' and to those who come from 'small-town' India, even I who cannot claim stake to either, learnt more than a few home truths. Subroto touches various personal experiences, right from his early childhood days in Orissa; his tenure in various organisations; his special relationship with colleagues and superiors at Wipro where he put in several years of work; co-founding of MindTree and his role today. These experiences and

a willingness to learn from each of them have helped him to be a better human being and a much admired entrepreneur. There is something in this book for everyone, be he or she, a chartered accountant or a software engineer.

Let me share with you three of my favourite nuggets, before I move on to the very core of this book. I have encountered these situations and maybe so have you. But, as this book is a landmine of anecdotal wisdom, it is likely that your favourite nuggets may be different altogether.

— **Perception issues** : A change in your career? Or a new job in a new environment? Or a meeting with a potential new client? There are countless books that tell you how to appear for that job interview or how to make that perfect PowerPoint presentation. But these books miss out on an important issue — perception. People are bound to have certain perceptions about you, based not only on what little they know of you, but perhaps also, on what they have heard about you — perceptions, believe me are hard to change.

Subroto recalls his experience in this regard. He had returned to Wipro, India from overseas. Back then, Wipro was known to be a frugal corporation. Subroto was perceived as not being cost-conscious and this got reflected in his 360 degree feedback. The same feedback was repeated again. His then boss, Dr. Mitta (a well-known Bangalore-based entrepreneur) told him: While it takes long to build perceptions, it takes even longer for perceptions to change. As Subroto advises: In our work we need to be sensitive to feedback and work to correct ourselves, but we should not expect people to change what they think of us overnight. This should not cause us to lose spirit — negative public opinion most often has some basis and we must have the grace to accept it.

#### Carrying past baggage :

Perhaps we are not even conscious of the past heavy baggage that we are carrying. Yet, it is this baggage that could be stopping us from achieving our fullest potential. May be we are carrying the burden of an unfair appraisal, a nasty boss, office politics, personal problems or even childhood experiences/memories. Here, Subroto provides a glimpse into his father's life — who was demoted to a second-class judicial magistrate because he refused a transfer from out of Orissa to Bihar for personal reasons.

