

Slippery Slopes

A newly wed couple is sorting through the gift envelopes. They are elated because the total sum of “congratulations money” has surpassed their wildest expectations. But one strange envelope bothers them. It does not have the sender’s name written on it. Inside, there is no money, only 2 VIP tickets to the concert of a top Bollywood musician scheduled on that same evening and a scribbled note stating: “Guess who sent this?”

The couple racks their brains, but can’t figure out who may have sent the thoughtful gift. The concert is widely anticipated, the tickets are expensive, and reservations are hard to get. The couple doesn’t want to waste the anonymous guest’s kindness, so they decide to go for the concert. They are not disappointed—the concert rocks and they have the best seats in the arena.

When they get back to their apartment, they find a note with the same scribbled style stuck to the door, “Now you know who sent the tickets!” They open the door only to find out that the apartment is ransacked and the big pile of wedding cash is gone!

Sometimes, we act on insufficient information, and pay a price for our lack of diligence. Organizations fall into this trap. As do professionals. This happens when companies become reckless—risky innovations, daring acquisitions, weak diversifications, and so on. The outcome is the same when professionals become impulsive—careless job-hopping, overhyped retooling, time-consuming degrees, and so on. The result—we end up straying from areas we currently excel in. By the time our fleeting adventure is over, our core strength is diluted.

Aspire for more, we all must. As long as our moves are well informed and calculated.