

BEAUTIFULLY INAPPROPRIATE!!

Recently my wife and I were invited to the house warming ceremony of our neighbour. We learnt that the couple had bought the brand new house from an architect-builder. The house looked as if it been replanted from the US of A: large glass walls on the east and the west and no sun shades!! It would have been perfect for a cold climate in the northern latitudes, in a place where there are no neighbours for miles. Apart from most rooms being open to view, it was hot, a perfect solar heater.

I had recently met a CEO who was struggling with his leadership and succession questions. He was quoting many western authors and wanting to have his team coached so that they would show the behaviours that were modeled there. It took many meetings to help him see that the behaviours exemplified in these narrations are based on a culture and child rearing practices alien to India. Also, behaviours that look like strengths in one context are liabilities in another. He seemed to appreciate that the qualities that made him succeed were appropriate for the context in which he set up the enterprise and for its people. We agreed to help his team dialogue and discover what the right way would be as they grew and evolved, and that we would not start with ideas that seemed good elsewhere.