

I am often asked to describe how it all began - I mean the story of KZR and everything that followed. So here is a brief glimpse of the very beginning, for family, friends, colleagues, clients, prospects and indeed, for posterity.

My passion to help individuals from all walks of life to develop and prosper was triggered soon after I started my career in banking, back in 1976. However, I never quite saw training and development as an option for me to consider. It was when I attended a Dale Carnegie course in London in 1981 that my eyes opened to the possibility. I simply continued to harbor a dream of doing something to serve a multitude of people who inhabit our planet and can benefit from greater awareness and empowerment.

When visiting Pakistan from the UK on holidays, once every two years, I would ask some of my friends, as to what they thought of the prospects of training and teaching as a vocation. What I learned from most of them was largely discouraging. Here is what I recall a friend telling me in 1988: "In Pakistan, everyone thinks he's a teacher. No one seems to be interested in learning." Regardless of what most people had to say, I continued to believe that training and teaching was a worthwhile activity, even if it was done on a voluntary basis.

My cousin, Salman Ansari, was an exception. He knew me well from my London days and was aware of my capacity as a manager and as a trainer. We met on June 11, 1991 in my aunt's house in Chaklala, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. This was only my second day in Pakistan, where I had come to re-settle, after having lived in the UK for twenty years. He suggested that I pursue training as a career. I shared with him what I had been hearing about the prospects of this profession in Pakistan. On seeing my reluctance, he jokingly remarked, "If you don't get into this work, then you too are a WIMP!" I got the feeling that he may have tried telling some of his contacts earlier to do the same, but without success. The word "wimp" got me going! So, I replied thoughtlessly, "Where and when?" Without a pause, he said, "Tomorrow - at 8 am!" At the time Salman was general manager, marketing in Paktel (a subsidiary of Cable & Wireless Company, UK). Paktel was one of the first cellular companies to have been granted a license to operate in Pakistan, and had opened its doors to business in 1990.

On June 12, 1991, my 3rd day in Pakistan, precisely at 8 am, Salman collected me from Chaklala and took me to Paktel's office in Islamabad to meet with Chris Edwards, the then CEO of the company. As I entered Chris's office, I recall spontaneously uttering, "Home from home!" I have never looked back since!

Kamran Rizvi

P.S. More will be added in the coming months :)