



THE NOTICE PERIOD

A Story by Vishal Thakur



The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

About the Author



Vishal is an HR professional with a leading NBFC and a research scholar at an eminent university. His area of research is ‘Spirituality at workplace and its impact on leadership’.

Vishal’s work on managing Gen Y, leadership in modern times and workplace spirituality has been published by leading HR publications and has been presented and appreciated in various conferences in recent times.

‘The Notice Period’ is a novel effort to establish a new genre in management literature where he is experimenting on driving management lessons by storytelling.

Vishal can be reached at

itsvishal@gmail.com

Foreword

Storytelling is an art, which not only charms readers but also helps them relate better to the narrated scenario. A well-narrated story helps reader to remember key takeaways and also works as a guiding example in case of similar situations.

'The notice period' is one such story which narrates the dilemma of Ajay, a high performing employee, who decides to part ways in spite of ten years long service with his employer. This story will take you through the corridors of a typical corporate where such a situation is not unusual. Readers would relate to the characters of this story and eventually, it will help them to *notice* what all one must sincerely evaluate before ending a long term employment.

The story addresses the niche challenge of retaining high performing vintage employees.

Attrition of high performing vintage employees is a bilateral loss and has its own ripple effects. Their retention is challenging, as this set of employees has already received better compensation, fast track growth, and other possible benefits. As per the principle of marginal utility, the material benefits cease to be perceived valuable in long run and organizations have their limit in extending it too. That is the tipping point, where either such employees decide to quit or get transformed into complacent low contributors.

That is when expectation management moves to another level and then employee and employer both needs to reflect on the non-monitory bonding shared between them. However, it is easier said than done, as over the years both start taking each other for granted and start holding a lot of feelings which they should have expressed.

It is difficult to prepare a to-do list for organizations or a checklist for employees to go through before taking the exit call, as the solution in such cases going to be case specific always. 'The Notice Period' helps readers to sail through one such case which touches upon many similar cases and lets reader decide whether they only *work at* or *belong to* their workplace.

...So if you are planning to quit or if already on notice period this one is surely
for you!

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

The Notice Period

It's called notice period, because that's when your company starts noticing you.

With more than 100 likes and several shares, this became one of the most trending Facebook statuses of Ajay.

Ajay has resigned with a *heavy heart* after ten years of long service to his current organization. He joined this company from campus as management trainee and this was indeed his first job. Many of his colleagues are friends on Facebook and his status update was a declaration of his separation with a bit of sarcasm towards the way he feels he is being noticed in the company post-resignation.

His last working day is on coming Friday and today is the last *Monday morning* he has in this office. The moment he switched on his email a reminder popped up-

Exit Interview, Conference Room A1,

1000-1030 am, 10th Oct 2016

Sent By: Shouvika Sen

It's a Monday morning and HR has nothing else to do! Moreover, the interview is with Shouvika. She is from same management trainee batch as mine, she is a friend indeed. HR can't be more casual about exit interview of a high performing employee. Anyway, just another formality to be ticked, nothing ever happens post an exit interview, Ajay thought.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Ajay entered the room. Shouvika was already seated there with a pen and paper in hand.

“Hi Shouvika, so finally the day has come. Have you ever thought, one day you would take an exit interview of your own batch mate?” Ajay asked.

Shouvika smiled. “This is not the first time Ajay. I have interviewed Monish, Priya, Keshav and Deepti over the years, who were all from our batch only. However, I never thought that you would be exiting one day. I mean you are doing so well and it’s been ten years.”

“So what if it is ten years? I am leaving because my work is being noticed outside more than in this company. In fact, since the day I resigned all of a sudden everyone started noticing that I was doing so well. By the way, is it a standard statement to begin the exit interview?” Ajay said bitterly.

“You seems to be carrying some bitterness Ajay, you were not like this earlier. Anyway, it’s good that we can discuss things now and I can certainly assure you to help you with whatever you perceive as a challenge with your current organization, work profile or manager. If you need I can help you to speak with your skip manager and we can also organize a counseling session with CHRO or a mentoring process to support you handle your personal and professional challenges. After all, you are a high potential employee and organization cares...”

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Shouvika was speaking like a rehearsed newsreader while Ajay just stood up from his seat picked up the jug, pour some water into a glass and offered to her saying in a loud voice, “Stop Shouvika, please! Don’t you get tired of muttering these jargons continuously? What do HR people eat to be so insensitive and stereotypical? Do you actually carry a dictionary of jargons, rehearse them regularly or there is an app to make you a champion of these crap words?”

There was a pin drop silence for a while, Shouvika took the glass of water and sipped. Ajay sat down and spoke in a saddled voice, “I am sorry for the outburst, but it’s not only me who has changed, you too have changed Shouvika. You too were not like this earlier. You were the person who many people referred as agony aunt. But I have always seen you more as a shrink or a psychologist or what do you call in your HR language, a counselor. You always had innovative solutions to complex problems, you used to help people realize another side of the coin but look at yourself now, what you have become, talking like a trained customer service executive or a robot who has a standard scripted response for each question.”

“I agree,” Shouvika said, and Ajay cut her short saying, “Even *I agree* or *I understand* are such typical corporate phrases, which are so fondly used before letting out your own disagreement to what you have just agreed. Remember in that three days’ workshop on personal effectiveness, they thought us *agree to disagree* or something vice versa. Actually, this is a trap. A trap to keep you puzzled forever. The only thing which is good is change.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Instead of changing myself to become a person like a machine, I prefer to change the job and I would recommend the same to you.”

Silence preceded in the room again. With a deep sigh Ajay said, “I am sorry Shouvika, I know you have to face many employees like me for exit interviews and you have to receive a lot of muck from them, which they carry for someone else. Nothing personal. Let’s start with the interview.”

“It’s okay,” Shouvika said, “I do not meet such passionate employee in every exit interview.”

“Passionate, or frustrated?” Ajay reacted.

“Only if you could notice the difference,” Shouvika said with a mystic smile on her face. Perhaps Ajay's monologue has revived the counselor in her.

“So here comes your first question, Mr. Ajay. What is the reason for your Separation?” Shouvika asked.

“Better prospects,” Ajay respond immediately.

Shouvika: “Really! So you know the drill.”

Ajay: “What drill?”

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Shouvika: “Don’t kid me, you really don’t know? I thought at least Ajay would give a real answer and not the typical one.”

Ajay: “I didn't get you Shouvika. What is so typical about it? It's just the first question.”

Souvika put the pen down and said, “let me tell you, all employees know that if they say better prospects, there are only five more simple questions to answer in exit interview, like what is the hike? What is the role? Would you like to join us back? Would you recommend this company to others? etc. But when you have reasons other than better prospects then stories come out. Then you have to share the details and mention names and instances. So everyone plays safe, they all leave for better prospects but no one tells what is wrong with this company and the world thinks I have an interesting job to do. In fact, there is no need of a counselor or a shrink if no one is ready to share the problems. If you pick up the records of last hundred exit interviews and sandwich them with respective resignation letters written with a *heavy heart* and the *adieu mails*, you would feel that they were living in an ever happy big joint family where some unfortunate circumstances have forced them to separate. Very much like a daily soap.”

After a pause she continued, “So Mr. Ajay, it’s not only HR people who are stereotypical its everyone around behaving like that, especially after finding a better prospect.”

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Shouvika finished in similar manner as Ajay did a few minutes ago and they both started laughing. Pantry boy enters the room and looking at both of them asked, “Mam Your Green tea and Ajay sir yours would be black coffee without sugar?”

“You know it already Shyam,” said Ajay.

“Yes sir,” Shyam said and moved out to get the order.

“So even pantry boys know your preferences,” Shouvika smirked.

“Big deal,” Ajay retorted.

“Only if you notice,” Shouvika mentioned with her mystic smile.

“But seriously my reason for leaving is a better prospect. I am getting 30% hike and a higher grade.” Ajay reaffirmed.

“Seriously!” Shouvika reacted in a shocking tone at his response.

Ajay reacted, “What’s wrong with that. You are in HR; you know what kind of hike I have received in last ten appraisals in spite of good ratings. Even when I got promoted the increment was less than 20%. You already know increment percentage in other years and in my last 9 years there was that one year of recession too, when no one got an increment. And do I need to tell you about promotions? In last 10 years, I was promoted only twice. This year it was due

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

and I did have a strong case, but all I got was an unconvincing, stereotypical regret from my boss. That day only I have decided that I will..."

"...find a better prospect," Shouvika added, hijacking Ajay's monologue.

"Yes." He affirmed in a strong voice.

"Ajay, give it a second thought, 30% hike in a midyear, which means you would not get much of an increment in the coming appraisal in new company. Besides, you won't get a promotion for next 2-3 cycles or more. Basically, if you get a promotion here next year, in long run you would be in a better position here itself." Shouvika tried to explain.

Ajay said, "Shouvika, I know my maths and I also know that..."

"...HR is poor in maths" Shouvika added.

"But still give it a thought. If you have done your maths for say five years do it then for more number of years and please do it for past ten years too and try calculating what business people call it...yes, CAGR." Shouvika mentioned stressing upon CAGR.

Ajay grinned, "you are challenging my calculations, I know I am not at loss."

"May be, but if you calculate CAGR you would notice that your growth here wasn't that bad and also the better prospect is neither as great!" Shouvika

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

said adding stress to 'better prospect' with her mystic smile again. Perhaps the shrink is back.

Shyam knocked and entered the room to tell them, its 1030 am and someone else is waiting outside to occupy the conference room. Shouvika started winding, up meanwhile Ajay asked, "Should we move to cafeteria and continue?"

"Well... Ok, this time it would be as quiet as a conference room," Shouvika agreed and they both moved to the terrace café at 27th Floor.

"The best thing about this cafeteria is the view. You can actually have a big picture of this crowded and congested metro suburb." Ajay said while stretching his arms in the open air.

"Look at those cars stuck in a jam at that flyover. They all must be thinking, what a bad day, clueless about when the jam would be over and they would move. Some of them must be cursing themselves for choosing this route. But they don't know or rather they can't see that it's a matter of few minutes, jam is there for just twenty meters and the journey is smooth ahead." Shouvika added pointing towards the traffic down the road.

"What do you want to say?" Ajay asked.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“Well, I have already said it. Didn't I?” Shouvika questioned.

“Can you explain in *layman's language* please?” Ajay smiled. “You know *layman's language* is my favorite jargon. In fact, this is the only jargon which helps to simplify thing than complicating them.” Ajay added.

Shouvika Smiled, she moved back, rested herself on the chair and took a deep breath and said in a philosophical tone, “When you leave a place, you not only get relieved from the negatives of that place but also get detached from the goodness of that place. You move to a new place, and that place would have its own comforts and discomforts. You would never know that what you are leaving for is a good bargain or not till you move and spend a good couple of years there.”

“Couple of years?” Ajay gave a perplexed look.

“Yes,” Shouvika said, “At least one full financial year. In fact, there is a jargon for that too, *cooling period* or you can say *honeymoon period*.” and they both burst into laughter.

“Actually Ajay, after investing your ten years in one organization you must not leave for an increment or a grade hike only. After few months you won't feel that extra cushion and same with the grade promotion too. It's a matter of just one more year and you may be upgraded here. What you should rather calculate that what you would be missing after moving from this place and more so in terms of non-monitory aspects.” Shouvika said.

Her mobile rang and she opened the Message.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“Hey Ajay, I need to rush for another meeting now and we would continue the interview may be tomorrow. Wait. Even tomorrow is difficult. Let's do one thing, we will meet on Friday and would close this.” Shouvika said.

“Friday is my last day here.” Ajay reminded.

“Yes, I know but don't worry I am giving you a task and we will review it on Friday.” Shouvika again had that mystic smile on her face.

“What task? you won't let me go peacefully.” Ajay reacted.

“Listen to the task at least. consider this as a part of your exit process only, you should not doubt your shrink!” Shouvika continued.

“So, here is the task, in fact, it's not even a task, as you need not do anything, you only have to *notice*.” Shouvika pitched like a seasoned sales person.

“Notice what notice?” Ajay was confused.

“Mr. Ajay it's your notice period. Please make some better use of it and notice these three aspects for heaven's sake- Identity, Acceptance, and Bonding.” Shouvika continued.

“Have you started writing a script for a Rajshree or Balaji ?” Ajay snapped with sarcasm. “I mean it's not a family affair, we need to think professionally.”

Shouvika got up to leave and said in a theatrical tone, “Family is an organization and every organization is a family. You should try to identify whether you belong to it or not? There are times when you stop belonging there anymore. I want you to check just that only.”

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“I will fill up your exit interview form based on your better prospect. But will see you for sure on Friday to review if you have noticed anything from what I asked.” Shouvika smiled and left.

Ajay turned and glanced over the jammed flyover. A little surprised he was to notice that it wasn't jammed anymore. There were few moving vehicles and the traffic was as smooth as there was no congestion a moment ago.

Ajay reached home early today, who stretches anyway during notice period? Waiting at door after a couple of bells he decided to open the door with his key. He was little surprised to see living room so neatly done, as if some guests are expected. Centre table had a box from 'Cake-Walk'. Must be having a cake inside.

Is it someone's birthday or anniversary? How can I forget? Ajay was still flipping calendar in his mind when Jaya entered.

“Oh, you are already here,” Jaya was a bit surprised.

“Enjoying few remaining days at VishCorp,” Ajay Said.

“Has your replacement joined?” Jaya asked while shutting the door.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

"No, not as of now, in fact, I don't even know if they have finalized someone, but I don't care, I will be free this Friday," Ajay said.

The doorbell rang again, it was Mayra, their five years old daughter returned from school. Mayra was overjoyed to see Papa and a cake at home at 4 pm.

"So whose birthday it is?" Ajay asked.

"Its 10th October, how can you forget? It's the day when ten years ago you came home and proposed to..."

"...Your Papa," Ajay added hijacking her answer.

"Correct," Jaya said and they both laughed.

"I have already accepted your proposal in college, it was papa only who needed to be convinced and you know how tough was that," Jaya said.

"Well, yes in India, you do not deserve a credit card and decent marriage alliance till you have a job," Ajay said like a critic.

"Not sure about India but yes, for papa your job was the key concern. He had an idea that we are not just friends in college, still, he had identified few prospects for me. Guys working in MNCs, IT companies with opportunity to shift abroad and all. But when you got this job at VishCorp, I knew his candidates wouldn't stand against that." Jaya mentioned with a smile.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“So he likes VishCorp more than me,” Ajay scowled.

“Not really, but VishCorp is a respected company, a famous brand and everyone around looks up to VishCorp employees with respect,” Jaya defended.

“You remember, he asked for your visiting card when you came home,” she added with a smile.

“Yes, thank God he did not ask for my confirmation letter. I was carrying that too. I joined VishCorp in April and only after my confirmation I visited your dad,” Ajay recalled.

“So, it’s not only him but you too cherish the identity of being a VishCorp employee. In fact, Papa sometimes takes it a little too far, he never fails to brag about you being an AVP at VishCorp,” Jaya added while setting up the cake on the table.

Ajay was sinking in his thoughts regarding his Identity as VishCorp employee.

A VishCorp visiting card was very much like an elite club membership. Whether you check-in a hotel, share it with a business prospect, drop it at the counter of a conference or even share it with some relative, they always reflect back with a unique glance, full of respect and sometimes with jealousy. The designation printed under the name was not much of their concern, for the world, my identity is a VishCorp employee. Ajay thought.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“Where are you lost?” Jaya pulled him. “Get ready we will cut the cake.”

“Nothing, I was noticing something,” Ajay Said.

“What?” Jaya Asked.

“Nothing special, will tell you,” Ajay got up and moved in to freshen up.

After cake cutting, Ajay was flipping the pages of newspaper which he has already read in the morning. “Let’s go out for dinner,” he suggested.

“Not today,” Jaya Said. “Need to complete craft project with Mayra. We will go some other day.”

“Why don’t you invite Ramesh Sir someday home for dinner? You are now leaving VishCorp, I think we must get together with him and his family. In fact, we haven’t had a dinner together for more than a year. Earlier we used to meet so often. Should I plan for this Saturday?” Jaya was looking at Ajay while asking him. While Ajay was staring at switched off screen of their TV, lost in his thoughts.

“I asked you something,” Jaya nudged.

“I know,” Ajay said but spoke nothing further.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“What? Haven’t you spoken to Ramesh Sir after your resignation?” Jaya was surprised.

“No; We did. In fact, we still speak, write to each other and even meet, but something is missing.” Ajay said.

“I think You should speak to him and have a heart to heart chat. He has not only been your boss but a *senior friend* too.” Jaya said, giving special stress on *senior friend*.

“What is this senior friend?” Ajay gave curious look with a frail smile.

“You only told me once, some five years ago, few months after he became your boss, that he is not only a boss but a *senior friend* too,” Jaya replied.

“I have always seen him as some elder cousin or a family friend. Whenever I met him he never pretended like a vice president or office colleague. He always asks about family, Mayra, her school, our parents etc. In fact, last year during Ganpati festival when he visited us, our neighbor Mr. Mehta confused him with Raju Bhaiya.” Jaya had a sparkle in her eyes while talking about Ramesh Sir.

Ajay said with slight acceptance in his voice, “I know, he is like family, a mentor at work but...”

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“...I think promotion was not in his hand,” Jaya interrupted to divert Ajay’s line of thought.

“I know promotion was not in his hand. What disturbs me that he knew it already that I am not getting promoted and he didn’t share that with me in advance. I got to know when appraisals got released and he only came to tell me that – “I am sorry; it couldn’t happen this year.”.”

Ajay continued, “He knew how eagerly I was waiting for this promotion. He should have told me in advance. I lost my trust that moment.”

“Trust?” Jaya was stunned. “You remember he pushed you so hard to purchase this house, when you were planning to buy that SUV. He has also forced you to take flexi-timing when Mayra was born. May be there were some reasons, he couldn’t share.”

“He could have shared that reason at least when I resigned. When I told him I have found a good opportunity. He only asked me about the new job, new salary and said, ‘I am ok if you think this move is good for you’.” Ajay had a hint of dissatisfaction while mentioning this.

“He approved my resignation the same day.”

“A senior friend!” Ajay said in a sarcastic tone and switched on the TV.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

Ajay was staring at all the trophies, mementos and certificates on one corner of his cubicle when his desk phone rang. It was Ramesh- "Can you come to my cabin for a while?"

Ajay moved into Ramesh's cabin with his diary in hand. Nimesh was already sitting there looking tensed. Nimesh reports to Ajay and for last one month or so, working directly with Ramesh on new projects. Ajay was okay with that, as he didn't want to get involved in anything new at this moment.

Ramesh signaled him to take a seat and spoke to Nimesh, "I will discuss these issues with Ajay and he will guide you further. Till the time I am back, you can take all approvals from Ajay and go ahead accordingly. Okay?"

"Okay Sir, thank you," Nimesh said, with a big relief on his face. He got up and left.

Now only Ramesh and Ajay were there. Ramesh called the pantry and asked for a tea and a *black coffee without sugar* for Ajay without even asking him. This time Ajay noticed that some people know him a little better than he believes.

"So Ajay, I called you for an important reason. We have suddenly got an appointment with cabinet minister for project Alpha. Something we have been following up for months. I have to travel to Delhi this afternoon and perhaps I will be back on Friday only. You know the protocol in those government

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

offices. I will not be accessible on phone or mails. Here Nimesh is working on the second phase of Digi-Tech project, whose phase one was led by you. There are important deadlines in phase two and in my absence, I don't know anyone who can guide him better than you. Also for any critical decision, I asked him to seek your approval, I will ratify those later. Hope you are ok with that," Ramesh asked.

Ajay was confused with mixed emotions. Ramesh asked him again, "Are you okay?"

Ajay composed himself and said, "Congratulations sir for the Alpha project and all the best. I will handle Nimesh and Digi-Tech project, but you know that it's my last week at VishCorp."

"I know that Ajay." Ramesh Said.

"I mean; you don't have any issue that I will be taking critical decisions in this project," Ajay said in a much lower tone and speed than his usual. "Should I mark someone a copy, who would be replacing me?"

There was a pause for a while. Pantry boy knocked the door and entered with tea and black coffee. Once he left Ramesh said- "Ajay, there is no one who is replacing you as of now."

Ajay looked up in confusion.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“We couldn't find anyone suitable so far. HR has arranged some CVs and I met some of them, but I am not able to find *you* in anyone of them.” Ramesh mentioned in a soft voice.

“Regarding Digi-Tech, it's not about the project or experience or skill set, it's about trust. And I know, I cannot trust anyone else in this crucial situation. Even if you would have left, I would not have mind consulting you on phase two of this project.” Ramesh added.

Ajay has got some relief from the turbulence of thoughts in his mind, however, he still couldn't gather courage to ask Ramesh about his promotion and resignation related resentment he is carrying.

But perhaps, Ramesh could read his mind, he stood up from his seat with the cup in his hand, went near the window, looking outside he spoke, “Ajay I know that you are upset about missing a promotion this year. I know how important that was for you and how eager you were. I recommended it, but we had to settle with few lesser promotions than recommended ones. I knew that a week in advance but, I couldn't share that to you earlier as I was feeling guilty of killing your zeal. I was also not getting right moment to explain it to you in detail and waited for the appraisals to go out. That day again I was at loss of words, perhaps over the years, we have grown so close that formal conversation has lost its importance between us. I wasn't sure that, Should I speak to you as a manager, a mentor or as a friend. I thought you would say something or react and I will speak from there onwards, but you didn't say much and left. Since then I am carrying this burden and I thought, I must

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

express this to you before you leave VishCorp, that you deserved that promotion though it couldn't happen this year. In fact, I consider this as a personal loss."

Ajay was looking towards Ramesh when he spoke, Ajay suddenly turned straight, when Ramesh looked back. Ramesh again turned back to window and continued, "Personally I would never want you to leave VishCorp but when you came to discuss your separation I realized you have got an opportunity with a good organization. I know that these things can be corrected here too in a year's time but I didn't want you to carry this feeling that I made you lose a good opportunity for my comfort of working with you, especially after a painful appraisal. Therefore, I said, if you think this is good for you, you must take it up. I know that your position can be filled, but no one would be able to replace you in my team."

Ramesh took the last sip of tea and moved towards Ajay with a smile, "I know, you would be a rock-star in the new company too. We will miss you here, but tell me when you are calling me home for a dinner?"

Ajay gave a frail smile with moist eyes. He couldn't say anything but was feeling completely relieved as if someone has removed a burden from his chest.

Ramesh moved out with his bag to rush to airport.

Ajay said, "All the best, sir" in a saddled voice.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

At times a conversation without an eye contact is more candid and heartfelt.

Ajay texted Jaya to say, “will be late today, had a lot of things to complete for a new project.”

Jaya reacted in surprise, “Really? Hope you are not going out on a secret farewell party?”

Ajay texted, “Nothing like that, your *Raju Bhaiya* has given a lot of work to me and he has left for Delhi.”

Jaya wrote, “So you spoke to Ramesh Sir? What did he say?”

Ajay replied, “Will tell you when I am home. By the way, plan that dinner this weekend for him.”

Jaya texted, “Okies. B Bye. I am happy.”

Ajay smiled. Perhaps Jaya could hear what all he hasn't shared with her.

On the busy highway while Ajay was driving towards office, on the next seat Nimesh was worried looking at his watch.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

“What happened? Don’t worry I will not fire you for coming late.” Ajay smirked.

Nimesh gave a smile and said, “I am not worried about being late, I know we worked late last night to complete Digi-Tech. What I am worried about is parking. We won’t get a parking slot in or around office at this time.”

Ajay looked towards Nimesh and smiled, “I will show you how I get my car parked in the office any time.”

Parking is the most expensive real estate in this city. Even if you own a Porsche or Ferrari, parking doesn’t come free with that. Especially in the commercial hub of the city, where VishCorp has its office finding parking was as difficult as finding a seat in Mumbai local in peak hours. For employees VishCorp has fixed parking slots on first come first serve basis, which are often full by 0945 am and right now it was half past eleven.

The moment Ajay’s car reached the gates of VishCorp, a guard came and moved the ‘parking full’ sign and let him in. He stopped his car near the guard and the guard said, “347.” Ajay waived his head, gave a smile to the guard and moved in. Ajay parked his car at parking number 347 and got down with Nimesh.

“*Sir ji, ek minute,*” (Sir, one minute please) The guard came running towards them.

“What happened, Tiwari ji?” Ajay asked.

Guard said, *“Suna hai aap jaa rahe hain?”* (I heard, You are leaving?)

Ajay answered, *“Haan Ji, thik suna hai”* (You heard it right)

The guard had moist eyes and sad expressions on his face, he folded his hands and said, *“Sir aap the to achchha tha! Koi baat nahi aap ki tarakki ho to aur bhi achchha hai. Kabhi kabhi yahaan aate rahiyega. Hum ko yaad rakhiyega.”* (It was really good to have you here sir, but it is better if you are moving for a growth. Please keep coming here at times and do remember us)

He shook his hand with Ajay, moved back wiping his tears and ran quickly toward the guard post.

Ajay was stunned. In a moment he could visualize all those memories.

During his early days, when mobile phones were not so common, he used to give his cell phone to Tiwari ji for making calls to his family staying in distant part of the country. He often used to ask him about his wellbeing and a few times helped him when he was in need and hesitant to ask for a help. Nothing exceptional he has done. Getting an assured parking slot was more than enough in return. But perhaps, he never realized how much those small gestures meant to Tiwari Ji, Ajay thought.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur

That one handshake made him notice that he not only *works* here, He actually *belongs*.

Ajay opened his laptop and received a meeting invite.

Exit Interview contd., Conference Room B3

1000-1030 am, 14th Oct 2016

Sent By: Shouvika Sen

Ajay replied instantly, "Not needed anymore."

Shouvika called immediately on his extension, "Hey what happened?"

Ajay said, "Nothing Ms. Psycho, I will tell you when we will meet on Friday."

Shouvika said, "But you mailed, it's not needed."

Ajay said in a dramatic tone, "Yes, I mean *exit interview* not needed anymore."

Shouvika said in shock, "Really? what happened?"

Ajay said in a calm voice, "You will get to know soon. Sometimes even HR needs to wait."

Ajay put down the phone, reminding her to meet on Friday.

Ajay opened the Exit section of HRIS on his laptop. On the display was-

Resignation: Accepted

Last working Day: 14th Oct 2016

Reason for Exit: Better prospects, followed by a long list of exit formalities.

Towards the left of the screen, there was a blinking icon, which was only enabled to employees in 'talent pool' of VishCorp. The icon reads as 'Resignation Rollback'.

Ajay clicked on the same.

A pop-up window opened, asking "Are you sure you want to recall your resignation?"

Ajay pressed, "Yes"

Another window opened, asking, "Please mention the reason for reconsideration."

Ajay looked up, thought for a while, and with a smile on his face he typed, "The notice period."

And then pressed the submit button.

The Notice Period

A Story by Vishal Thakur
