



RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Rajendra S. Pawar: The most untapped resource is the human mind

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Rajendra S. Pawar firmly believes that education will lift millions of children and adults in the developing world out of poverty, while at the same time create a pool of employable manpower to meet industry requirements in those same countries.

Mr Pawar is Chairman and Co-founder of the NIIT Group, the leading global talent development corporation, which has touched over five million learners and operates in 40 countries worldwide.

Set up in 1981, NIIT pioneered the computer education market in India, creating a completely new industry segment. Rajendra Pawar's vision of building talent for the IT industry was the guiding force behind nurturing NIIT into Asia's largest IT education and knowledge corporation.

During a session at the IMD Responsible Leadership Summit, Mr Pawar inspired his listeners by describing his organization's methods of using the latest technology to reduce the unit cost of learning and thus make it available to many more people than would otherwise be the case – and still make a profit.

"Enlightened self-interest" is the term Mr Pawar used to describe what his organization is doing.

"Often I have to remind our shareholders to be patient. Our objective is to create sustainable business models and this takes time and often requires working with multiple stakeholders (governments, technology companies, etc.). But the successes we've already had prove that this approach is viable both from a business point of view and as way of improving education standards for vast numbers of people."

Mr Pawar concluded by quoting an ancient proverb: "If you plan for a year, plant rice; if you plan for 10 years, plant trees; if you plan for a 100 years, educate mankind."