



CONVERSATION WITH COMPANY SECRETARIES

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What encouraged you to become a CS?

CS is one of the few professional courses which can be taken up after Class 12th. Coming from a smaller city, with limited options for colleges, and considering that I wanted to do something along with graduation, CS course offered me that opportunity to pursue both my graduation and CS simultaneously. The CS syllabus gives you exposure to an amazing breadth of subjects, like corporate law, securities law, taxation, finance, accounting, labour laws, etc. The 15 months mandatory article ship is another unique feature that the course has to offer. Training gives valuable insights into the working of the corporate sector. This is the period where the theoretical knowledge has to be utilized in practical situations. Adding all these factors, and considering the immense scope & opportunities that the profession has to offer, I opted for the same, and today I can proudly say it has been the best decision.

How do you deal with shareholders grievances at the AGM (including those that could not be responded to during the AGM)?

We have outlined a framework to ensure a smooth and transparent procedure for interacting with our shareholders and dealing with the grievances. Our values exude in all our interactions and are enshrined by the principles of corporate governance at Vedanta.

Coming to the specific question on dealing with shareholder grievances at the AGM, among other key initiatives undertaken by the Company for enhancing shareholders' experience, prior to the AGM, a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is made available on the Company website for attending to the major concerns of the shareholders, and for ensuring a seamless participation. Shareholders who desire to speak at the AGM are provided the facility to pre-register as speakers, by sending request to the Company as per detailed instructions provided in the Notice convening the AGM. Proceeding with the flow during the AGM, shareholders who have registered and conveyed their desire to speak at the AGM, are sequentially invited to ask questions, provide suggestions, or seek clarifications, if any, from the Company. Thereafter, responses are provided by the management collectively. Members are also provided the facility to submit their suggestions, feedbacks, or questions online during the conduct of the AGM or by writing to the Company through email before or after the AGM, which are henceforth addressed by the Company in due course.

The Company has also provided a shareholder satisfaction survey on the website of the Company to understand our shareholders and serve them better. A detailed framework for escalation of any unresolved grievances is also disclosed on the website for the ease of shareholders.

Is it important to connect with IDs between meetings? If so, how do you do it?

Connecting with Independent Directors between meetings holds significant importance as they bring in rationale judgement and assist in promoting the principles of corporate governance by facilitating disclosures, transparency, and accountability of the Company to its stakeholders. In an effort to ensure liaison with the Independent Directors between meetings:

- an active communication channel with executive management is sustained with periodic business updates and presentations on key matters;
- visits to plants and business locations are organized periodically to provide an insight into the Company's operations;
- interactive sessions with senior management, business, and functional heads are held periodically

Considering the increasing demands made on a CS, how do you manage your time?

Whether you are a newbie or a veteran, you always need to manage your time in the workplace. For me, I like to plan and exercise conscious control of the time spent on specific activities to work smarter. Have developed the art of juggling various things. It helps me increase efficiency and strike a better work life balance. I usually draw up a to-do list, which might not seem like a ground-breaking technique, but it is one of the most powerful ways to become more productive. I like to prioritize wisely, be focused, and manage distractions at the same time. Being organized, and working in a structured manner, along with self-awareness, helps me achieve my goals and targets. Good time management leads to improved efficiency and productivity, less stress, and more success in life.

What good practices, not prescribed by law, have you put in place?

As a professional, you need to keep working on how to add value to your role and profile. Accordingly as a department, we always strive to bring something new to the table and have put the below best practice in place:-

- Web-based Insider Trading Monitoring Tool and Awareness programs on Insider Trading;
- Online UPSI Sharing Database;
- Ethics and Governance Employee Sensitization Initiatives including Awareness Video Clips, Online Ethics Quiz, Ethics Compliance Month activities etc.;
- Automated Code of Conduct Training Module;
- Online Gift Declaration Portal;
- Online Tool for Annual Affirmation with Code of Business Conduct and Ethics;
- Paperless Board Meetings
- Online Platform for Structured Performance Evaluation of Directors;

Various initiatives have been taken for the effective management of shareholders:-

- Facility provided on Company website through which physical shareholders can update their PAN, Bank mandate and email ID with the Company;
- Online registration and chat facilities during general meetings for the ease of shareholders;
- Online Survey made available on Company website for enabling feedback;
- Sending of emails and correspondence to the shareholders for quarterly results, annual reports, investor briefs, tax transparency reports, sustainability reports, CSR reports etc.

Sensitizing cross functional departments on various regulatory changes and organizing learning sessions with the Group. It is our constant effort to be agile in our ways of working and constantly benchmark ourselves to achieve higher results.

To hear what other Company Secretaries have to say

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