



## News Briefs

By Rotman Advancement Staff

### Rotman Integrative Thinking Seminar Series Resumes

It's every manager's nightmare: you spend thousands of dollars training a talented young employee, only to have them jump ship to work for a competitor. But don't fret – this scenario is largely a

As a co-founder of Infosys – a world leader in consulting and information technology services – Nilekani has seen his Bangalore, India-based company grow from 200 employees and revenue of \$5 million in the early 1990s to 11,000 employees in 150 cities and revenue of \$500 million.



From left: Dean Roger Martin and Nandan Nilekani.

'corporate myth', according to **Nandan Nilekani**, president and CEO of Infosys Technologies Inc.

"The truth is, the more you invest in people, the more they stay with you," says Nilekani. "We have always invested heavily in our employees. That, in turn, makes customers happy, too – they recognize that they are getting cutting-edge service." Not surprisingly, Infosys was recently named the 'Best Employer in India' for 2002.

He spoke to a full house at the Rotman School in September as part of the ongoing *Rotman Integrative Thinking Seminar Series*.

Nilekani attributes his company's meteoric success to a 'confluence of events' that suddenly came together in the early 1990s. "The key drivers of our success were sudden market liberalization in India; new technology – which allowed us to source the entire world for intellectual capital; and the depth of human capital avail-

able in India," he says. "It was time for us to step up to the plate. Infosys could no longer remain unknown on the global stage and continue to attract the human capital we needed to succeed. We had no choice but to start competing with larger international companies."

From the beginning, the company has taken a holistic approach to its business. "When making any major decision, we look at the impact it will have – not just now, but five years from now – on prices, on customers, on competitors, on employees. This multi-dimensional, holistic view has become key to our operating practices," he says.

It's important to find a balance between short term and long term gains, says Nilekani. "At Infosys, we are always cognizant about creating a company for the future. We need to create at least 100 new leaders for the future of this company – and this is something that is always on my mind."

Despite his company's success, Nilekani spoke of some of the challenges he still faces every day. "One is increasing our scale without losing the values and culture we've so carefully built up. Another is the challenge involved in a monolithic Indian organization becoming international. Then there's centralized

decision making vs. the autonomy of our various operations. There are benefits to each, and it's important to find the right balance.

Attempting to define how highly-successful people like Nilekani think lies at the heart of the ongoing *Rotman Integrative Thinking Seminar Series* – part of ongoing efforts to engage the Rotman community in the process of building a model for integrative thinking and learning.

For details about upcoming sessions, see our Web site at [www.rotman.utoronto.ca/events](http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/events) — *Karen Christensen*