

## Book Review

# The 3 mistakes of my life

**Author : Chetan Bhagat**

**Publisher: Rupa & Co India, 2008**

Chetan Bhagat has emerged as a leading writer in Indian English. He has understood the pulse of Indian readers and rightly picks up the subject for his books. His third book, 'The 3 mistakes of my life' is equally exciting, if not more, as his two other books 'Five point some one' and 'one night @ the call center'. This 258 pages book is written in the language in which Indians speak English.

### **Business, Cricket and Religion**

The subjects of the novel are business, cricket and religion. He won't disappoint youngsters; there is love story too. The subjects of the novel are very interesting. One is interwoven in the other. In business there is cricket and religion, in cricket there is business, religion crept in Cricket. Love disturbs the business equation. Cricket, Business and Religion are intoxicating to Indians, that too for Gujarathis, it is true cocktail. Novel is written in the backdrop of Gujarath and to top it all, the author has placed the novel in the era when Gujarat suffered with a nightmare of an earthquake and the communal riots after Godra incident.

### **Tips to Businessman**

For a passionate businessman the author gives many tips. More than these tips he cautions them not to commit mistakes. The author advises those who commit mistakes as how to overcome them. He tells there is life after few mistakes, if one is ready to realize one's mistakes and take the right path.

### **Focus-Location-Diversification-Segmentation**

Govind is both hero and villain in the book. He is like someone who creates and destroys simultaneously. He is instrumental in starting a partnership. Business is in his blood. His mother is also a small time business woman. He is also responsible for split of business. With his two friends Ish and Omi he starts business. Ish a failure in studies, but a great cricketer .Omi comes from a family of priests. In a Cricket crazy country, a sports retail store with special focus on Cricket is a good sector to enter. Retail sector is also emerging. The location of a retail store is crucial for success. The partners choose a shop near a temple where Hindu children come with their parents to temple. Yes, minority Muslims do not come near temple, special effort has to be made to attract this segment of customers. Anyhow a major segment is addressed. In this competitive market no one can cater to all in the market. Every businessman has to choose his niche. When the partners wanted to expand their business, they choose to include notebook, pen, pencils, pads, and other stationery, which children buy. Chetan gives diversification lesson through sports shop diversifying into stationery. This is how the 'Team India Cricket Shop' emerges in the book. Thanks to the shrewd business acumen, the shop starts making profit almost instantly. As the profits grow, Govind's ambitious plans also grow with that. He once again persuades his friends cum partners to pool in their profits to rent a store in a Mall coming up in a posh area. But before they can move in, the Bhuj earthquake crushes

the mall. Govind and his partners overcame the crisis and are back to the humble shop in the temple complex.

### **Passion**

Among three friends Ish, being a cricketer himself is more passionate about it. He is a coach too. They identify Ali, a Muslim boy who is genius in cricket. Ish gets fascinated about Ali's batting skills. Ali had 'hyper reflex' that use to help him to judge any ball at any speed to hit a six. Sad part is playing marble is more exciting to Ali than Cricket. Ish takes a challenging task of making Ali realize his strengths in cricket. Ish trains him by putting his heart and soul. The business partners take Ali to Goa as well as to Australia, to give him exposure and the world's best coaching in cricket. Ish and his business partners wanted him to face the world's best bowlers to see as whether Ali is genius or not. Ali passes that test too (Where else we get a testing ground than in Australia, the country of world champs!).

Govind is an established name in the town in Mathematics tuition. In India tuition is an industry that gives high return with little investment and risk. Mathematics is an important sector in tuition industry. Ish convinces Govind to take Mathematics tuition to his sister Vidya. Govind taught Maths and Physics to Vidya. Tuition made them to fall in love. The privacy in a private tuition takes these lovers too far.

In a town where everyone is more religious than the other, Omi's parents were the champions of Hinduism. But, for these partners who run a sports retail shop, Cricket is more passionate than their religion. In Ali they use to see a cricketer than a Muslim boy. When it comes to Cricket and business, the partners were more passionate about cricket. At the end, the partners realize that it is the business that kept them going together. Once they got separated in business, their personal life also gets different directions.

Overdose of religion is intoxicating. In the communal clash between Hindus and Muslims Omi loses his brother. Ali's father too is one of the leading Muslim leaders. The Hindu group led by maternal uncle of Omi attacks Ali when he was with Omi. Omi's father wanted to take revenge for his son's death in communal clash. Omi and Govind wanted to save Ali at any cost. The trishul hit to kill Ali kills Omi. Ali's wrist gets damaged. Govind confesses that this is one mistake of his life. That he could not avoid damage to the wrist of Ali. Indeed a great lesson to all religious maniacs.

### **Business and Love**

Nothing comes easy. To realize one's goal one must be ready to overcome turbulences. Business and love did not go together. When Ish found that his business partner and friend Govind is in love with his sister, he starts disassociating with him in business and in personal life. Govind confesses this mistake of making an unacceptable love. The author writes that if one realizes one's mistake and takes corrective steps, one can take life forward as Ali hits sixes again after a wrist operation and Vidya goes out to Mumbai for her higher studies and takes life forward. Govind who attempts suicide is back to life. There is life after Earthquake, communal riots and crisis in business and personal life.

*Reviewed by :*

**Veena A.**

*She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Management Studies, PESIT, Bangalore.*

*She can be reached at veenaandini@gmail.com*