

**12 Marketing Mantras from Dr. Darlie Koshy based on the Speech delivered at the
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**“DARLIE KOSHY’S 12 MANTRAS FOR COMPETITIVENESS
OF TEXTILE-APPAREL-FASHION SECTORS”**

DR. DARLIE O. KOSHY

A dozen Marketing Mantras sounds a bit ominous. ‘In disruptive times’ you all need a “safety belt” around as you want to soar high with your ventures. Here are the thirteen “Lucky” Mantras :-

1. **“Creative Destruction”** : Adopt ‘Creative Destruction’ as an integral process of management for your organization leading to constant innovation in ideas, products, processes and systems. No regrets for discarding old ideas and adopting new ones. Creative destruction helps you to avoid “Kodak Moments” of the current times of ‘disruption’ technologies!
2. **“Reorient Mindsets and Skillsets”** :- To stay relevant, ‘rethink’ and ‘reimagine’; ‘Mindsets and Skillsets’ both need change; often Mindset changes but Skillsets fall behind and to pull the organization down with the gravity pull. Sometimes Skillsets are updated but the Mindset remains frozen in time which drags the organization down.
3. **“Mass Customization”** :- is a new approach necessitated by the “gig economy” unfolding before us. Indian Apparel Industry needs to discover this and should go after to master the concept of Mass-customization. There was a long period of nearly 2-3 decades during which China became “a factory to the world” starting from late 70s and early 80s and later Korea also became a manufacturing giant in late 80s and 90s etc. This approach is rendered irrelevant as the world moves towards “Mass Customization” where each individual customer now needs to be satisfied with a product- service offering through appropriate information gleaned through Data Mining which is now possible through “Artificial Intelligence”. Products often combine with service to become an “experience” as interpreted by each individual customer.
4. **“Intangible Vs Tangible”** :- There was a time when Brick & Mortar assured a fair return on investment but today “Brand & Design” have replaced these and get you better returns. The Indian Apparel Exports and even domestic brands need to learn more about ‘Design Thinking’ and branding to differentiate in the market and gain premium; competitiveness is not anymore in “labour” arbitrage but in intangibles like ‘speed’, ‘design’, ‘brand’ and ‘service’ etc.
5. **“Speed to Market” and “Speed to Cash”** :- Fashion is all about ‘Time’ and premium is actually paid not for designs only but for being ahead of time and therefore, in Apparel Business

one needs to consider and perceive “Fashion” as perishable and all processes need to be set in motion with great Speed. Hence, product like Cycle Management, Fast-Track Design development and Brand Management with a ‘Cradle to Grave’ approach etc., all need to be in place which fetch market leadership.

6. **‘Sustainability’** :- Earlier the approach was to create the products without any concern about ‘Planet or Environment’ but today one needs to have a “sustainable” approach in manufacturing of both Textile and Apparel Products. In a ‘Circular Economy’ (“Zero waste”), new processes like Digital Printing and Laser Cutting, Laser Finishing etc. find new currency and environment management takes a critical place in manufacturing.

7. **“Digital Transformation”** : ‘Digital Transformation’ and ‘Industrial Revolution 4.0’ are interlinked and in order for companies to be Future-Ready a complete Digital Transformation Strategy needs to be in place. It may start with very basic ‘Website’ and ‘Internet’ and ‘Social Media’ management to E-commerce and beyond depending upon each company’s aspirations.

8. **“Textile Apparel-Retail Value Chain as an ever-changing and constantly evolving Fashion Eco-system”**: - Often the entrepreneurs fail to define their business appropriately. The entrepreneurs must perceive and begin to work as an integral part of constantly changing and evolving ‘fashion eco-system’ and use and leverage talent, technology having ‘tolerance’ to outliers to succeed in the market place.

9. **Uberisazation and ‘Ola – OYO’ Approach for Apparel Sector**: - There are millions of ‘small manufactures’ and vendors and retailers and there is a pressing need for vendor / retailer development and also of ‘aggregation’ for strengthening quality, performance and “speed to market” and reach and access to customers. Uberization is yet to hit the Fashion Business and has much more at Stake-No doubt. If Hotel Rooms and cabs on hire can do it, why not Fashion?

10. **“Future Proofing”** : - We are living in disruptive times. A simple disrupter like ‘Carvaan’ helps Sa–Re-Ga-Ma of R.P. Goenka Group to create a turnaround story for the company. Future Proofing can only be done through ‘continuous innovation’ and speed to market with such innovations in order to commercialize and monetize.

11. **“Demand (youth) Driven”** :- The majority of active consumers in India are the 500 million youth with median age of 29. They are likely to remain so till 2035 atleast and this is the time to define and create value for them through Textile-Apparel Value Chain or Fashion Eco-system

placing youth in the 'centre' so that youth fashions across the world can be positively influenced. If the existing companies and new companies miss the focus of being 'Demand Driven' and 'Youth Driven' especially 'Millennial Driven', then they are likely to be left behind on the way side. Notwithstanding, there is enough potential to also place suitable focus on fashion for the 'ageing people' in India as the category is expected to cross 20% of their total population by 2050.

12. **"Scope Vs Scale"** : - India had missed the bus of getting on to the 'scale' Bandwagon. In the era of 'Mass customization' and 'speed driven fast fashions', there is a need for rediscovering the inherent advantages of 'scope' (small is beautiful!) with speed i.e. meeting certain niche demand and creating larger adjacent areas to drive the company's growth.

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(The views expressed in this article are entirely that of the author only and do not represent that of any of the organization(s) he is associated with).

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