



**SHRI SOURISH MOHAN MITRA**  
**DIRECTOR, LEGAL COUNSEL, GARTNER**

*We are happy to introduce Sri Sourish Mohan Mitra, a professional with a blend of global in-house, consulting and private practice experience who aims to deliver solution oriented legal services and build growth synergies with internal and external clients. Sourish is regularly invited by leading national and international media, journals, websites etc. and has contributed over 100 articles on diverse topics ranging from current legal issues & social concerns to personal development & leadership excellence. He is a speaker at legal conferences and events.*

1. Sir, please introduce yourself to our readers. [This will be used for introductory bio in the by-line as a third person]

Sourish is a professional with a blend of global in-house, consulting and private practice experience who aims to deliver solution oriented legal services and build growth synergies with internal and external clients. Sourish is regularly invited by leading national and international media, journals, websites etc. and has contributed

over 100 articles on diverse topics ranging from current legal issues & social concerns to personal development & leadership excellence. He is a speaker at legal conferences and events.

2. How do you see the advancement of the legal education in India in the last fifteen years?

Legal education has advanced by leaps and bounds in the last 15 years. Law schools today endeavor to provide much more all-round development beyond the legal subjects which offer avenues to a learner to choose a suitable field when they graduate. I am in awe of the impressive infrastructure that is available to current law students.

3. How important are the academic grades one scores in the law school?

I feel that academic grades that a student attains in a law school is very critical for entry level opportunities especially in organisations which have grades as criteria for freshers. Beyond that it is an individual's hard work and keenness to grasp the intricacies of a subject matter that cements his or her professional progress.

4. Sourish Sir, please educate us on the transition from a law firm practice to in-house.

In a law firm, interpretation of the law and providing advice to clients takes centrestage. An in-house role expands these areas of advisory to take into account the organisation's business needs. The transition from a law firm practice to inhouse entails mingling of the law firm experience and winning arguments to give sound workable solutions to internal clients on wide ranging issues, which can easily go beyond the realm of interpretation of statutes. Moreover, an in-house counsel has the critical responsibility of implementing the management's business decision within the ambit of applicable law as well the organisation's policies and global best practices.

5. Would you advise law students and fresh graduates to do internships or start off their careers with the 'Big-Fours'? Please focus majorly on learning and self-growth.

I feel that law students should undertake as much internships as possible with the aim of figuring out, on their own, as to what is of interest to them. It will make it more

relevant for a law student to choose the most suitable career option after law school, if he or she is able to derive an understanding of his or interest while interning in law school. Any organization like the 'Big-Fours' offers immense scope for professional development, which needs to be explored at the internship stage and evaluated if it will be a good idea to start off a career with them.

6. Majority of the law students are inclined towards joining corporate practice these days. What according to you could be the driving factor for them?

I understand that corporate practice would mean joining non-litigation practice in a law firm or taking up employment with an organization. I feel that the driving factor could be the rise of sustainable transactional work in law firms and eagerness of Indian and foreign organisations to seek out entry level legal talent.

7. Do you feel that stringent data protection laws is the need of the hour in India?

Definitely, data protection law in India is quite overdue when we look at the corresponding regimes in other similar economies. As we plan to be a developed country in the coming years, data protection will play an important role in promoting individual capabilities and securing their rights.

8. Please guide our readers on the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019. Do you feel it will serve the purpose well in its present shape?

I believe that the present shape of the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 is a well-compiled document pursuant to intensive research and consultation. For any new law on a subject matter that has not been much discussed in India, it takes extensive effort to prepare a draft and it is inevitable for some gaps to creep in. The Joint Parliamentary Committee has received numerous suggestions from industry bodies and subject matter experts on plugging some gaps which they have identified and raised objections to. Once these suggestions are debated and addressed, I am confident that we will have a more acceptable and practically implementable personal data protection law, which will evolve over a period of time through judicial interpretation

9. Sir, emerging technologies like, blockchains, artificial intelligence, drones etc. are not taught in the law schools. What advice would you give to the readers who are interested in pursuing them?

Technologies will come and go and it may not always be possible to cover every such technology in a law school curriculum. While law schools should endeavor to offer courses on the current and future centric technologies, law students inclined to gain knowledge on these topics should pursue them independently from experts.

10. Anything else you would like to suggest / address our readers upon? [General Question, you may choose to leave it, but I would insist if you could enlighten our readers on their self-development in the legal profession]

In my numerous interactions with young lawyers, I have realized that there is a mismatch in what they were doing then and what they had intended to do while in law school. While it is important to dream about a career path in law school and work towards it, practical realities may alter one's path leading to disillusionment some years down. I feel it is paramount for law students to have result-oriented goals in place especially by the first or second year. This will garner ample time to test the practical challenges through internships and skill building through additional courses. By starting early, one learns to strike a fine balance between one's priorities and capabilities, which will enable one to take correct decisions. Every law student has unique powers and talents, which should be utilized to build a rewarding career through creativity, innovation and hard work. Stephen Covey has conveyed this rather beautifully when he says '*I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions*'.