

Meridian's Pillay Is a Natural Problem Solver

Chris Pillay, founder and CEO of Meridian Technologies, says he's an "accidental entrepreneur," but he wouldn't have it any other way. Although forming Meridian may not have been intentional in the beginning, Pillay was destined to start his own business.

A self-described perfectionist and "math geek," Pillay has always enjoyed the challenge of solving a puzzle. As a child, he remembers taking appliances apart and putting them back together to see how they worked. "Anything from thermostats to electronics — I have always loved tinkering with things," says Pillay.

Now he's tinkering with what he calls the biggest challenge of his life, running his own technology consulting firm. Meridian provides technology consulting and software solutions to a number of Fortune 500 companies. "Our clients have very complex problems, huge amounts of data and multiple systems. It's fun to wrap my mind around their problems to figure out solutions."

Pillay is motivated by his clients' success. He's famous for telling his team of employees, "Client success leads to Meridian's success, which leads to our individual success." It's a philosophy that works. Revenue has increased 100 percent every year since the company's founding.

Pillay's perseverance and dedication to serving clients was shaped in part by his parents, who immersed him in the Indian culture as a young boy. Along with the food, which he cannot do without, he cherishes the high

values espoused to him by his parents. "Ethics are extremely important to me," explains Pillay. "Internally, we always ask ourselves, 'What's the right thing to do?'"

Pillay is quick to credit his employees for the company's rapid growth. "Our core strength is our people," he explains. "We hire only forward thinkers who are proven leaders in the technology field."

Meridian's high-caliber team gives the company an edge when competing with heavy hitters like IBM and Accenture. "We are going after the same projects," Pillay says. "Because we aren't a huge corporation, we are highly focused and we're able to provide a high level of attention and continuity."

His collaborative management style is contrary to most large corporations as well. He draws an inverted triangle and places himself at the bottom. "My job is to support the rest of the organization." Of his org chart, he remarks, "I turned it upside down." Pillay may end up doing the same to the technology consulting industry. ▲

