



He eventually joined the Academy of Architecture, Mumbai. "There was no entrance procedure and I got admission on the basis of my drawings and marks in the higher secondary examination. Days at the academy were exciting and after passing, I joined Ar. Porus Master, a very good architect at detailing who always maintained a low profile," he says. While this started him on the learning curve, he points out that the real change came after he joined Ar. Hafeez Contractor. "I learnt that good architectural practice requires several ingredients: from designing, detailing to PR and

marketing. I realized the importance of being practical with the client, not only in design but in many other ways. Those 4-5 years gave me a lot of confidence. I designed some buildings and from 1985 onwards started my own independent practice," he says.

Few large independent architectural practices existed then. Twenty four years later Ar. Mehta rues that trainees today are driven primarily by monetary incentives rather than the desire for knowledge. "In fact" he adds, "like they pay fees

to colleges, they should pay senior architects for training them. They can join a design architect like our office, municipal or state department offices or builders' office. They can also specialize in interior design. Design architects and state departments pay less. On the other hand developers and builders pay more but the youngsters won't be able to learn much from there. Early choice can avoid disappointment later. I worked hard from 7.30 in the morning till late night because I wanted to learn and that paid rich dividends."