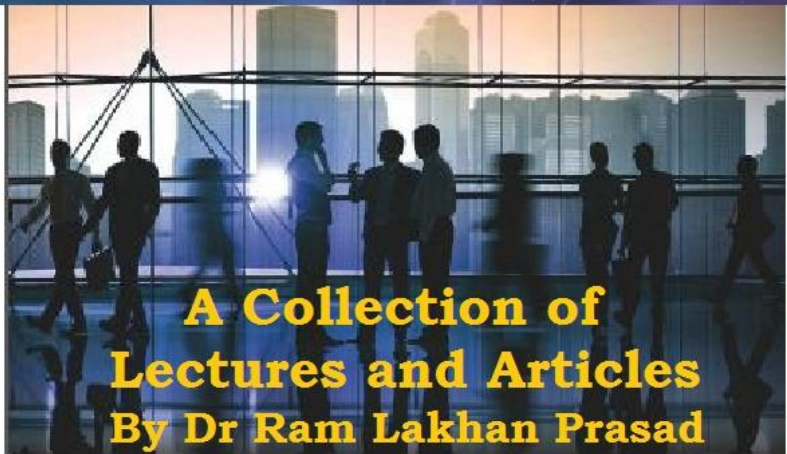


# People Power



**A Collection of  
Lectures and Articles  
By Dr Ram Lakhan Prasad**

**Managing People  
In The  
Business World**



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# **People Power in the Business World**

**A Collection of lectures,  
speeches, anecdotes and  
essays on managing a  
business successfully.**

By  
**Dr Ram Lakhan Prasad**

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# Foreword

**Ram Lakhan Prasad** is my father and he is known in our business circle for his multiple achievements; as a successful teacher, a skilled school administrator, a tactful unionist and a dextrous director of human resources of a large multinational organization. Therefore, his newest publication “Managing People in the Business World” that contains his personal and professional experiences is an excellent reading for us. Those of us who deal with the most important resource of our business world, our people, know that all those who work for us need our support and care if we want them to contribute effectively to make our organizations prosper and rejuvenate.

To achieve the above objective, this collection of lectures of Dr Ram Lakhan Prasad is a relevant starting point to look at the many challenges we face in the modern business world. His collection is not a panacea but an eye opener in many aspects of dealing with our workforce and making our work place an even better environment with improved atmosphere for our success.

If the ideas suit us, we can use them but we have an alternative to adopt, adapt or change these to suit our own needs and circumstances. Our people of the business world will certainly have a lot to ponder and then act after reading this professional presentation.

I sincerely thank and congratulate Dr R L Prasad for his continuous effort to enlighten us with his professionalism and his years of varied experiences in his chosen field.

My father makes me proud, thank you my friend and my mentor.

Rohitesh Prasad, Chief Executive Officer, i-HR Consulting Sdn Bhd  
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# INTRODUCTION

This publication is a collection of various professional articles and lectures that I have been presenting on invitation to my clients and managerial staff over the last five years. The views expressed are related to my four decades of active involvement in the acquisition, management, development and administration of the people involved in a variety of business, private and government organizations in four different countries. Some are my essays and others have taken the form of my articles and anecdotes to be used as discussion points.

I was not born as a manager but became a manager of people and places through my experiences of different businesses and the realities of various workplaces. I am indebted to the people I interacted with because I refined and modified my thinking from their encounters, problems, failures and successes.

Over the years I discovered that business management had an apparent complexity but it also had an apparent simplicity. It is complex as far as organizing, coordinating, commanding and controlling are concerned. It becomes simple if we as managerial personnel begin to realize that the target keeps moving; events and people do not always conform long enough to be planned and controlled. Therefore, it is vital that our business leaders involve themselves in continual experimentation with new and workable approaches to solve the old, new and more challenging problems.

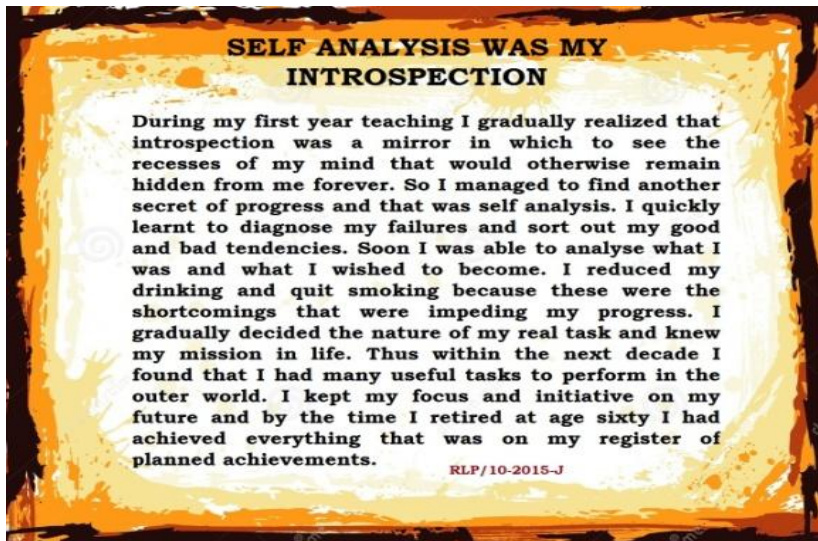
I was once told that I will grow and learn to be a successful manager by careful observation, proper practising, clear thinking and rethinking, effective experimenting and continually questioning, so I began to follow the maxim: "Try it, fix it, do it."

After reading my views people who manage people could carefully observe their own business realities and then take a step to either

change or review the strategies that they are already using. If the managerial style that you are following works without my ideas then good luck to you. You are my champion. But you are free to pick any ideas up and use them for the benefit of managing your people who work for you.

There is one more issue that I would like to dwell on when it comes to using these ideas. I have not been the perfect manager of people but after I learnt to recognize the power our people who work for us have I started respecting them. This mutual respect made the people share their power with the management. Their loyalty enabled us to serve our customers with dignity and relate with our business partners and competitors with added care and understanding.

Ram Lakhan Prasad.



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## Success for Everyone.

Success for anyone has multiple explanations. Different people look at their success differently. If you have worked for over fifty years in the human services areas of various businesses, educational and political fields like I have done, you have the capacity to measure and provide some valid explanations for the success of people in their respective organisations.

Many wise people have asked some very valid questions on this topic. Is there a power that can reveal hidden veins of riches and uncover treasures of which we never dreamed? Is there a force that we can call upon to give health, happiness and spiritual enlightenment? When we talk of a power or a force we look at our success spiritually but it can be considered generally as well. We know fully well that all our success in life does not altogether depend and impinge on our ability and training because it also depends on our determination to grasp the existing or arising opportunities that are presented to us.

Those of us who have had meaningful interactions in business, social and political life can categorically say that opportunities come by creation and not by chance. If we are ready to create opportunities for us then our paths of success become smooth, controllable and manageable. Since we have created them, we can earn the benefits out of them and use them to our best advantage.

If we are determined to use all the available outward means as well as all our natural abilities to overcome and manage every obstacle that come in our path we will then gradually utilise and develop the unlimited potential that lies within us to succeed in any aspect of life. We just have to think positively and generate our will-power. These internal human gifts will make us see all our successes revealed for us.



We alone are totally responsible for all our actions, words, thoughts and deeds. It is believed that we demonstrate our success or failure according to our daily activities. If our mind is always looking in the negative direction then an occasional positive thought is definitely not enough to give us the success that we envisage. However, if we set our minds to think well and ponder rightly then we will definitely be able to plan our future properly and find our goals and objectives even if we face multiple dark spots in our life.

This power of positive thinking can be achieved by everyone through constant effort and proper practice but it requires volition or will power. We need to establish mechanical as well as conscious will and be determined to be constructive in all our efforts and endeavours. If we search hard within us we will find the needed talents and strengths to combat any weaknesses and shortcomings. If we take advantage of all the opportunities that knock at our door then we will be able to devote our entire energy to mastering one thing at a time and move towards success step by step.

Almost all successful people have tried to attempt simple tasks first and then as their confidence strengthens they have become more dynamic and aimed for more difficult accomplishments. Those successful people neither scattered their energies nor left something half done to begin any new venture. They have often made wise selections and refused to submit to failure. This led them to success for them. We can learn a lot from many of such examples.



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## Moving Ahead in the Corporate World

I have been thinking about the new profile of an achiever in the working world and have made multiple attempts to finalise the issue but every time an additional aspect finds its way into that important statement. However, this time I am determined to complete this task somehow even if the idea sounds very basic and ordinary.

It is an accepted fact in our commercial and industrial world that today's work place is a lot more exhilarating, demanding, challenging and customer-driven than ever before so there is no doubt in my mind that the people who are in the workforce and want to get ahead and to rise to the top have to be high achievers.

I wish to go back to the basics of human qualities as means and methods of achievement. These may sound and look obvious but often a reminder creates a miracle to change and adjust our attitude.

My high school teacher gave me a description of a high achiever as an individual who is fully committed to team work, is always prepared to take risk, is a balanced thinker, is a continuous skill builder and is ready and eager to produce good results at all times. He told me a few specific things that make us high achievers like quality, skill, attitude and inspiration.

Ever since then, I have been adding my own thoughts to the profile of a high achiever for the business world. Whether we are working in high-tech or low-tech, in service sectors or manufacturing areas, and whether we are accountants, sales persons, plant operators, engineers, market researchers or managers, and supervisors, and whether we are Chiefs or just ordinary Indians, clerks or switchboard operators, we need to look at and check our essential biography or profile as an achiever if we want to move ahead successfully in this tough and competitive world.

In my many years of working as a teacher, administrator, curriculum developer, examiner and human resource practitioner I have heard members of corporations not only talking about their missions, strategies and objectives but they have been generating reams of written material, lectures, reports and memos spelling out what they wanted their people to know about their plans and policies.

Sometimes all these just end up being words piled upon words, with blame games pointing at failed associates. So what should be done? We need actions and attitudes that we can clearly measure and that can help us get there with ease and understanding. In order to achieve our goal we need specific means, behaviour benchmarks and design-oriented quality that tell us that we are on the right path and are fully engaged in the correct processes.

Let me pose a few relevant questions. Are we more entrepreneurial than we were this time a year ago? Just how much value have we added to ourselves in the past three months? Have we mastered decision making? These and similar other questions call us to move towards the global drift and do some skill building and renewal because everyday our work is becoming more demanding than ever.

My suggestion is that we in the business world should learn to sharpen our executive, individual and corporate instincts and seriously view and adjust our own biography or profile if we want to move ahead. Who are we? Where are we? What are we doing? How are we performing our duties? When are we changing?

As I said in the beginning, now I will look at various basic and simple human qualities and attitudes that we can add to our profile and become high achievers as time moves on.

Our smiles and frowns convey very vital attitude about our work life and are important aspects of the high achievers. Our genuine and authentic smile is an encourager that quietly says, "Go ahead and tell me. Go ahead, do it. I believe in you. I am counting on your ability to do better." A high achiever has to have the right kind of smile and be a spendthrift in this aspect.

On the other hand, frown, although it is appropriate in some instances, does a lot of damage because it depicts an attitude of an intimidator or discourager. So while the smile of a high achiever conveys an upbeat attitude about performance, our frowns may project the opposite, so let us take stock and adjust our disposition.

Then there is merit in a good handshake. My wife spoke at a wedding in Vancouver once and said that hand-in-hand contact is an expression of encounter, involvement and the good beginning of intimacy but it requires firmness. A weak handshake can show that we are moving away from people whereas a very firm handshake cannot be taken as persuasive but dominating. A high achiever gradually learns to resolve and adjust the handshake style accordingly to convey friendliness toward others and make them feel friendly toward self.

Many prominent workers have found that it pays to accept their weaknesses and character flaws. So it is often wise to accept that we have made a mistake and have learnt something from that error. If we do not acknowledge our limitations, we most certainly will doubt our strengths.

I know that a high achiever by trying to make the visitors and subordinates feel comfortable gets better results through involvement and by the degree of warmth that is displayed for the people who are part of the workforce. So it is better to resolve that it is worth our time and concentration to make our colleagues and visitors feel at ease at all times by teaming up with warmth because this basic human quality of warmth inspires and attracts.

Then a high achiever has to be an excellent listener because an impatient listener almost always misses the message. If you learn to give time then you are saving time and you respond appropriately at all times to exchange all your information well. This is critical for good performance at any work place.

One good point to remember here is that the word silent when reframed can become listen. So it is wise to be silent when we want

to listen well and get everything that a speaker says and intends to say. An achiever anywhere is the one who is a careful listener.

My grandfather made me study poems from early Indian poets and one of his efforts is still fresh in my mind.

Guru Govind Dono Khade Kaake Lagoon Paaye  
Balihari Guru Aapne, Govind Diyo Bataaye. –Kabir Das

If my Guru and God were to stand in front of me, to whom should I bow first? Well, I choose you my teacher or my mentor because if he or she hadn't been there I would have never known what God is.

I have always felt that achievers who are eager to learn and seek to be taught by masters of their crafts have always benefited tremendously in any position. An important aspect of learning from any mentor is that you will be criticised, face demands and maybe at times stressed but you have to take the initiative to find that teacher (that mentor) and convince him or her that you are a promising learner.

I have in my many years of work experience found that serious seekers definitely find gold and their quest assures enlarged perspectives and a lot more options for better achievement. So I have been promoting the maxim 'get a mentor and prosper' over the years.

If we have any convictions then we ought to have the courage to implement them but my understanding in this idea is that the peak performers have to dig deeper sources than their brains for calling up the needed courage to proceed. A long time ago I was told that fear has many eyes and courage has only one. I find that emotions are not always subject to reason but they are definitely always subject to action.

If we are among those performers who believe that they are authentic and not what they wish they were but what they really are then they can easily realize that their authenticity is what can

generate superior exhilarating performance. However, to fully understand what we really are requires a lot of courage.

My point here is simply to believe in ourselves and let all the colleagues do the same. Then whatever convictions you have at your work place could be implemented with courage and competence.

An achiever who is a positive thinker must have the stamina to act positively. This will assist us to create a variety of opportunities to develop mental capacity to seek and find workable, beneficial and appropriate options. Our positive attitude will encourage us as well as our colleagues to stop supporting all hopeless causes and reject all forms of defeat when we face tough projects and other problems.

We as achievers then not only can cultivate the needed attitude of positive thinking by discovering a workable, beneficial and proper options but encourage ourselves and our workers to act on them and keep on moving with added vigour and enthusiasm.

I think I have started the ball rolling for anyone to develop a more distinct profile of an achiever. A peak performer at any work place has to understand that we all are ignorant in some field and no one can profess to possess knowledge about everything. This feeling is the starting point to extend our knowledge.

Let us not claim to know something we do not and ask our colleagues to enlighten us. This action of an achiever will act like a two edged sword. This will enhance your knowledge and make the other person happy to share the knowledge he or she has developed over the years.

The modern complex work culture demands that we share our knowledge and learn to accomplish through collaboration and joint efforts. Any worker, executive, manager or leader who is ready and eager to tread on this vital path of admitting ignorance would be able to promote the concept of sharing knowledge, skill and all other vital information needed to establish peak performance.

I know that a lot more can be expressed on this important issue by people who relate better to their work place and workers, have a higher purpose and want to improve the lot of mankind and the workforce. We can definitely make our jobs more meaningful by thinking about all the people who are going to benefit from our quality performance.

The more we are able to realize how important we are to the work place and how lucky and fortunate we are to be in the work force, the better would be our profile of an achiever.

This important realization will enable every enlightened executive, every practising manager and every enthusiastic worker to keep revising the requirements of an achiever.

I firmly believe that we have the rationale to continue to sharpen our innate instinct to be an effective, enthusiastic and efficient performer at our respective work places to serve the community with distinction.



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## NATURE OF OUR WORKPLACE AND WORKFORCE IS CHANGING

I have been seriously looking at various questions that come to my mind when I think of the changing nature of our workplaces and workforce.

These include:

What do we want at our workplaces? Do we want to have more responsible, functional and adaptable workforce? Do we want to?

- Be more in charge?
- Generate greater productivity?
- Establish our rightful authority?
- Make our organisation more profitable with fewer workers?
- Be more firm with our people?
- Motivate and inspire all our people?
- Get our workers to see things our way?
- Ensure peak performance from every one?
- Have greater control over things?
- Bring about even greater change?
- Generate peace, prosperity and harmony at our workplace by meeting the ever increasing challenges?

If these are some of our goals at our commercial and industrial enterprises then we are moving towards assertiveness but there is an irony in some of the objectives mentioned above.

Our new and successful managers have to be different from the mediocre and average supervisors of places, products and people (three Ps) and possess some other important and vital managerial and organisational skills and techniques. Our three Ps have changed to CPs, DP's and EP's ie Changed Places, Different Products and Effective People. So it is time for us to change as well.



The new managers cannot only be either controlling or acting as bosses or as remote authoritative figures or be a rugged individualists who decide things unilaterally and command the troops. My humble belief is that the neo managers should work with and through their peers, subordinates, superiors and their troops to negotiate workable and feasible solutions that produce better results and are more acceptable and satisfactory for everyone.

Believing that our workforce as well as our workplaces is changing, we will increasingly notice corresponding modification in our values as well as expectations. These in turn bring attitudinal reformation. Our individual achievements lead us to group performance because emphasis is being placed on building a collaborative work environment in which authority and decision making are shared for harmonious workforce and modified work places.

These introductory remarks lead us to the issue of leadership style. So the older hierarchical forms of organisation and the value system have to find relative adjustments and a new mode of managing the workforce and the work place has to gradually emerge to bring about greater success.

We therefore need a new breed of manager who still has to plan, organize, control, implement and evaluate but the style has to be modified from traditional management of direct and aggressive style to more teamwork and group decision making. The days of all- or-nothing outcome and expecting a clear win or lose situation have to be re-looked at seriously by every modern manager.

The new style of managing our workforce and work places has to be based on synthesizing, intuitive and qualitative thinking. Our new breed of manager has to exercise power flexibly according to context, with consideration for the various relationships involved. A serious look at the whole picture rather than a specific task has to be done.

When the new breed of manager learns to share all the internal resources and establishes apt interdependent relationships of support then the workforce and the work place become more

attuned to the subtleties of human interaction. We then become better equipped to deal with the overwhelming challenges and changes that are now occurring and will continue to occur in our society and in our respective organisations.

Leadership in the future has to change from control to influence, from planning as prediction to planning as learning and from scientific management to entrepreneurship.

Planning as learning requires a tolerance for error and has multiple interpretations. Entrepreneurship requires responding to changes with openness, flexibility and intuition rather than relying on rigid or abstract principles of control.

So the entrepreneurial manager has to quickly learn to respond like a skilled captain of a ship on the open sea. When the weather is calm, the captain runs the vessel 'by the book' but when events are turbulent, the new leader is ready and prepared to develop new strategies for all unexpected twists and turns.

Therefore, in my view the key to success as a new manager lies not only in control, authority and power but in a new form of assertive management that is demanding influence, collaboration and free and open communication.

My final point is that there are no magic formulas and no specific rule books for the new manager. The best guide for the new leader at our fast changing workforce and work places will be the leader himself or herself and their own motivation, training, judgement, ingenuity, imagination and flexibility. Our willingness to change is vital.

The vital question that many economists and quality control personnel have been asking nowadays is 'whether we can be more productive and profitable with fewer workers at our respective workplaces?'. The rightful and appropriate solutions to this aspect of workplace reform can be discussed by our current active business leaders because no textbook approach would fit every situation.

Surely then, the nature of our workplace and our workforce is changing and it is good to notice that our new breed of business leaders have been looking at various ways and means of adapting to the transformation. I have a lot of faith in the growing abilities and vast experiences of our modern leaders to meet the increasing changes.

### **POSSIBILITY THINKERS' CREED**

WHEN FACED WITH A MOUNTAIN OF PROBLEMS, I WILL NOT QUIT,  
I WILL KEEP ON STRIVING, UNTIL I CLIMB OVER THEM,  
FIND A PASS THROUGH THEM, TUNNEL UNDERNEATH THEM, OR  
SIMPLY STAY THERE AND TURN ALL MY MOUNTAIN OF PROBLEMS  
INTO MY GOLD AND DIAMOND MINES.

If we wanted to succeed with this idea then we too have to take some serious actions like saying the creed loudly with our emotional commitment. We can move ahead with possibility thinking in our life and be able to move many mountains of problems. We can expect nothing great from any person of little hearts. We must have an iron will if we want to cross the wide ocean and we must be strong enough to pierce mountains.

This creed can make some difference to our whole attitude to life, work and family. It is worth trying. You can get it if you learn to co-operate and go as a team. Wake up, stand up, be bold, be strong and take the whole responsibility on your own shoulder to understand that you are the creator of your destiny. Make your own future look brighter and more meaningful.



6

## MOTIVATION THEORY

Needs cause motivation. Deep-rooted desires for esteem, affection, belonging, achievement, self-actualization, power, and control motivate us to push for what we want and need in our lives.

It has been my philosophy of life that difficulties vanish when faced boldly.

There are at least five sets of goals, which we may call basic needs. These are briefly physiological, safety, love, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

In addition, we are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest and by certain more intellectual desires. If we do not fully understand and visualise these basic human needs then motivation is not possible.

These basic goals are related to each other, being arranged in a hierarchy of pre-potency. This means that the most prepotent goal will monopolize consciousness and will tend of itself to organize the recruitment of the various capacities of the organism. The less prepotent needs are minimized, even forgotten or denied. But when a need is fairly well satisfied, the next prepotent ('higher') need emerges, in turn to dominate the conscious life and to serve as the centre of organization of behaviour, since gratified needs are not active motivators.

All human beings are understood to be either already motivated, unmotivated or ready to be motivated. These depend on biological, cultural and situational aspects.

Thus man is a perpetually wanting animal. Ordinarily the satisfaction of these wants is 'Not altogether mutually exclusive, but only tends to be.' The average member of our society is most often partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied in all of his wants. The hierarchy

principle is usually empirically observed in terms of increasing percentages of non-satisfaction as we go up the hierarchy. Reversals of the average order of the hierarchy are sometimes observed. We all have appetite or hunger drive and that is a starting point for our motivation. We want recognition, attention, importance and appreciation but we need to work for them and do something.

I was bored flying from Brisbane to Nadi so I decided to open my newspaper and read about what was happening in the world. As I continued to read, it seemed that everywhere I looked there were stories of injustice, pain, suffering, and people losing hope.

Finally, fuelled by my tired, irritable state, I became overcome with compassion and frustration for the way things were. I got up and went to the bathroom and broke down. With tears streaming down my face, I helplessly looked to the sky and yelled to God.

“God, look at this mess. Look at all this pain and suffering. Look at all this killing and hate. God, how could you let this happen? Why don’t you do something?”

Just then, a quiet stillness pacified my heart. A feeling of peace I won’t ever forget engulfed my body. And, as I looked into my own eyes in the mirror, the answer to my own question came back to me...

“Stop asking God to do something. God already did something, he gave you life. Now YOU do something!”

Also it has been observed that an individual may permanently lose the higher wants in the hierarchy under special conditions. There are not only ordinarily multiple motivations for usual behaviour, but in addition many determinants other than motives.

Any thwarting or possibility of thwarting of these basic human goals, or danger to the defences which protect them, or to the conditions upon which they rest, is considered to be a psychological threat. With a few exceptions, all psychopathology may be partially traced to such threats.

A basically thwarted person may actually be defined as a 'sick' person, if we wish or an unmotivated being.

It is such basic threats which bring about the general emergency reactions and desire not to seek inspiration or motivation.

The stronger the intellectual desire to achieve better things in life and at work makes a person truly inspired and motivation follows.

Hence, I contend that there is an urgent need in our increasingly competitive world to motivate the unmotivated. Let us all do something.

There are six reasons anyone does anything. These are

Love  
Faith  
Greed  
Boredom  
Fear and  
Revenge.

Leadership is all about caring, daring and sharing. So the more we dare to care and share the more we are going to lead.

I know what I am going to do for the rest of my life. I am going to learn to be caring for people, I am going to be daring to act fearlessly, and I am undoubtedly going to share all the successes with every one.



## Motivation is Inspiration

In my view the most powerful motivating force is the recognition of one's peers. When we look carefully around our organisation we will probably notice dramatic differences in the energy and enthusiasm our people bring to their respective jobs and work places.

The best of these workers perform their respective tasks harder and longer to meet their responsibilities and duties of either building sales, serving customers or making the work place safer and more productive. So recognising them publicly with tangible, personalized and custom rewards encourages their continued efforts and motivates fellow employees to strive for the same achievements and rewards.

It is unfortunate that not all our workers are adequately enthusiastic about the work they are assigned to perform. This is not what a modern commercial enterprise expects from the work force. These kinds of individuals need to be inspired to move with the rest of the team members.

There are a few schools of thought on the issue of motivating the unmotivated workers of our workforce. Some are possible, some are difficult and almost all can be looked at professionally. So even if we have some workers who are not able to meet the challenges facing them, we can do a lot to inspire them to do peak performance.

The one that sounds very positive is that every member of our workforce can be additionally encouraged and inspired to do better to reach the expected peak performance. I know that many successful managers have been successfully motivating the employees by giving them a clear sense of direction rather than just being preoccupied with paperwork and procedures.

Then there is another view that no matter how hard we try there are some people who have slipped into our team who cannot be

motivated and should be put out of the system. This is unfortunate but sadly enough there are work places where such views are still maintained.

Of course, another view is that an eager or enthusiastic worker does not need to be pushed beyond his or her limits, hence does not need to be motivated. He or she is inspired enough to perform the duties assigned quite well with least or no supervision. These are the top performers with appropriate knowledge, information and skills. Shall I say that this should be part of our human nature?

From time to time I have had similar views on motivation but as work places and workforce have been changing so have my opinions and views seen some modifications and transformation. Now I am a liberal thinker on this issue.

I am a firm believer of listening to our people because wherever I have worked I found that the successes we achieved in productivity have come from the employees who are actually doing the work. They assisted us in developing ideas for doing the jobs faster and more economically.

However, now my views on this subject are somewhat different. I believe that motivation is similar to inspiration. It is a personal choice of a person to be motivated or not to be motivated. It must initially emerge from within a person. It is epidemic. It is self-generated and yet we have able training personnel who prepare appropriate prescriptions to tackle the issue.

If a leader is able to provide personal inspiration and has been successful in creating an inspiring work environment then this innovation can easily bring out the best in the employees by inspiring them to emulate their leader. Thus the inspired workers will be in a position to perform at their individual and collective potential.

It makes sense to me that the most powerful motivation of the employees comes from their internal inspiration and they are willing and eager to do peak performance for their equally inspired leader of an inspirational setting. Such should be the case at all work places



that are following the revolutionary leaders and inspirational work environments and practices.

It is therefore the belief of some leaders to detect those uninspired and unmotivated employees early in the induction process and replace them with more suitable choices, otherwise our efforts to inspire and motivate the other members of the workforce will go in vain.

So our first task is to find out if our workers are ready and willing to be motivated. This is where I do not agree that we cannot motivate the unmotivated. At least we can give it a try and keep trying until we see tangible success.

Now the question is 'Can our leaders give up that easily?' and stop motivating the unmotivated. When we assess the time, effort and money that went in the recruitment process of such unmotivated people we cannot justify our stance to get rid of them so quickly and easily. So let us look at how we can motivate or inspire the uninspired and unmotivated.

I have already said that when we think of motivating the unmotivated a lot depends on the imagination of the leader. I wish to emphasise this point here once again.

If we have these types of lethargic and unwilling workers then naturally we are frustrated and would like to do something positive to inspire them to perform better for our mutual benefits. We cannot give up on the uninspired and only concentrate on the inspired workers because there are ways and strategies that we can employ to motivate all our people whether they are good, bad or ugly performers.

Each worker is an individual and has different attributes therefore needs a variety of prescriptions to get the best result. Our investment in our human resource does not justify us to forget the uninspired workers of our workforce.

Firstly, the degree and types of workers differ and we have to select and group them so that we can develop different strategies and prescriptions for each type. According to some training consultants they can be commanders, drifters, attackers, pleasers, performers, avoiders and analytical. If there are so many types of people in our workforce we cannot afford to implement one prescription for all of them.

We have to take these as their talents, strengths or weaknesses and try to take the opportunity to build on these attributes or short comings. We have to design methods to put the right people in the right place. This match making of employees and their jobs has given a lot of benefits to many modern business enterprises as well as other private and public organisations.

Secondly, we have to find out what would motivate these different types of workers. Since many of our workers nowadays look for rightful rewards for the good work they have been doing, it will pay us a lot of dividends if we rewarded their positive contributions through our sincere, authentic and genuine compliments rather than harping on criticism.

We can do two things to achieve this objective. Let us stop criticizing, condemning and complaining and start doing something positive to make all our workers become top performers. Let us reward the good ones more rather than reprimanding the bad ones.

Thirdly, we need to develop different methods for each of the groups before we take any action. Some employees need praise for the good work they are doing because they begin to feel that their participation and contribution are valued. I believe that when we tap into the strengths of the employees and allow them to do more of what they are naturally adept at, people become more inspired to show their talents, strengths and achievements.

Therefore, I believe that if the workers are doing well enough then some simple words of encouragement and praise go a long way to make them happy and when they are happy they get inspired to contribute more.

For an inspired leader all these suggestions are easy, inexpensive and definitely very motivational, hence they are worth giving a try.

I still believe that there is merit in old prescription to inspire your workers where you

- hire your workers rightly,
- provide them clear objectives,
- manage by wandering around (MBWA),
- be transparent with all company financial information,
- set realistic benchmarks for incentives to entice staff,
- build and maintain trust, and
- Treat your workers like real people.

Many people have asked to explain how we could perform all these important tasks. These are some of my thoughts on this aspect:

- Take time to vet all candidates properly and hire people who are qualified and fit for the job and the cooperate culture;
- Take time to inform workers what needs to be done by what deadline because vagueness bashes motivation;
- Take time to constantly visit various work places because employees do what we inspect and not so much of what we expect;
- Take time and effort to share company finances because this is one of the positive steps towards inspiring workers;
- Take time to ensure that your incentive programs for staff are right ways to entice them rather than make them inactive and lethargic;
- Take time to increase trust by showing empathy for the concerns of workers and listen to them to make decisions because workers do things for leaders they believe in; and
- Take time to treat all your workers as real people by respecting their personal aspirations and desires to inspire them to excel.

These are some of the strategies and prescriptions I would employ to inspire my workforce whether they are already motivated or need motivation to present themselves with top performance.

If I were active in the workforce, I would let the managers of the future focus more on teamwork to build the pride of the people we

manage in achieving success at our work place. I am of the opinion that If we regard our workers more as part of our inspired team rather than only individuals, we would certainly be on the right path to inspiring our workforce to help us take our enterprise to a new height.

One more very important point before I finish off on this subject. My contention is that an organization that regards the whole managerial team as the HR practitioners would see a lot of tangible benefits from this practice. Every manager would be ultimately responsible and accountable for the recruitment, training analysis, development and management of every member of the workforce. There would be no instance of reference to the HR or the separate department. This practice may seem new but it has the potential to save a lot of time, money and unnecessary worries.

My elder son works as CEO of a 6000 plus organization and they do not have a HR department for the very reason I have given above. In fact every HOD and every Manager of that organization is an active and well equipped HR practitioner. Mind you they are spread in various locations right throughout Australia and every one of their Managers is accountable to every decision about the people who perform for the business and no one refers anyone to the HR department for discipline or any other action. This new trend is slowly catching up with other forward looking businesses.

In other organizations and countries this trend may be revolutionary but something to seriously evaluate.



8

## The Best Way Out of a Problem is through it

(An Anecdote)

My grandfather was an indentured sugarcane farmer and when I was a first year teacher he told me a story that intrigued me.

He said that he ploughed around a large rock in one of his fields for years. While doing this he had damaged several of the blades of his plough and even a few ploughs as well. He had grown rather morbid and gruesome about that rock. After breaking another new plough blade one day and remembering all the trouble the rock had caused him through the years he was finally determined to do something about it.

When my grandfather put his crowbar under the rock, he was surprised to discover that it was only about a foot thick and that it could be broken up easily. So he broke it into pieces and when he was carting it away he had to smile to himself and remembered all the trouble that the rock had caused him and how easy it would have been to get rid of it much sooner.

Then he passed this wisdom to me and I still treasure his words. He said that there was often a temptation to bypass small obstacles when we were in a hurry to get a large problem solved. We simply do not want to stop and take the needed time to deal with it immediately. Like I used to do, they just plough around it. Usually we tell ourselves that we will come back to it later but what really often happens is that we never do.

So he said, if the obstacle is of a type that will keep reappearing over and over, we are usually better off to take the time to fix it and be done with it. However, if we are tempted to go around it time and time again, then we should tarry a little and should ask ourselves, if the cost in time and money and trouble is worth it.

He concluded that the best way out of a problem is through it. I agreed and followed his wisdom all my life and still do.

## Avoid Personal Obsolescence

There was time when a manager could learn a job and then do it. I do not think it is true any longer. The explosion in knowledge and in management methods and techniques are facts all of us must face.

A good portion of what today's executives know about their job may become obsolete in a short period. Modern managers have to cope with global competition, cultural diversity and all sorts of new business methods that did not exist a few years ago.

The executive who longs for the return of the "good old days" is whistling in the dark. New techniques, new equipment and new attitudes are replacing the old ways of running a business. The pace of change is accelerating all the time.

Many companies and industrial associations schedule meetings, seminars and training programmes to help their professional people keep abreast of the latest developments. The alert managers plan their own programmes to make sure they do not become prematurely obsolete. Therefore mapping out an individual growth programme can be as exciting as it is rewarding.

There are various examples of these practices.

- If your industry has a professional society, you should be an active member.
- Periodically attend their meetings and seminars and talk to your peers.
- Subscribe and regularly read a good professional journal covering your speciality.
- Strive to keep up with all the innovations in your industry because it is one of the best ways to win the respect of your people and your associates.
- When someone else proposes a new way to do something, instead of thinking of the reasons why it would not work, do you look for one good reason why it should?

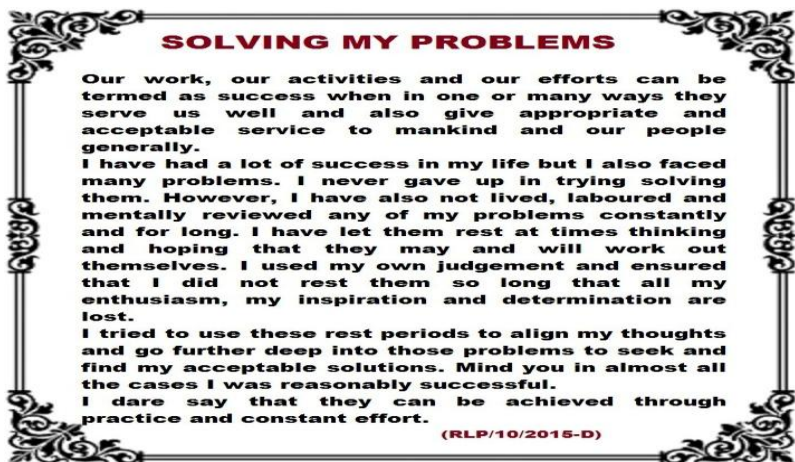
- When a new management procedure, a new process or a new piece of equipment is installed, do you accept it willingly and learn all you can about it to try to make it work?

I firmly believe that professional progress never stops for progressive managers and supervisors who feel responsible for their own self-development. It is the only sure way to avoid personal obsolescence.

Therefore, all modern managers must plan to keep their skills and knowledge up to date and remember that change is a challenge that makes life more interesting.

As one of my lecturers had advised me long time ago that all too often, people are afraid to admit they do not have all the answers, so they just make them up. They elaborate on what they do not understand to the point of embarrassment. Instead, all they had to do was say, "I do not know, but I will find out."

Let us all remember that nobody can fault us for admitting we do not know everything. In fact, my experience is that they will even admire you.



## Ask and Ye Shall Be Told

My grandmother was a sweet woman and softly spoken and she used to brag about the way she spoke by saying to me in her own language thus, "Barkana, (My eldest grandchild) if your words are soft and sweet, they would not be as hard to take back to swallow when you have to eat them."

My grandfather on the other hand was a practical man who believed in using his common sense. He used to tell me that you would have many decisions to make everyday in your life so it would be good to weigh all your answers against all the simple questions.

Common sense is simple to use. Just ask yourself frequently, "Does it make good common sense?" If it does then go and do it but on the other hand if it does not then do not do it at all.

Then I found out what it means when common sense says do not smoke when you are filling your gas tank or do not go through red lights or do not overeat or do not spend more than what you earn.

My father who was a simple farmer had another meaning of common sense. He said that common sense was sometimes called horse sense because at the racetrack we do not find a horse betting on how fast a jockey can run.

When I completed writing my book, "Motivation Towards 2000" where I made a few interesting remarks and observations about procrastination my wife who edited the manuscript said that there was no such thing as future decision because we only face present decisions that would affect what would happen in the future.

She explained that since procrastinators waited for just the right moment to decide they became security seekers who were running in place, going through the motions and getting deeper in a rut. If we waited for every objection to be overcome, we would attempt



nothing. She asked me to stop stewing and start doing because she did not want me to be depressed and active at the same time.

She wanted me to change the word motivation slightly to reflect a personal commitment to take charge of the current situation and make my day as best as possible. She liked the idea of motive plus action that would equal motive-action.

I do not know why I did not take her words seriously at that time but now when I reflect on her thoughts I can not help thinking and witnessing that everybody is looking for new ways to get motivated. After my visit to Malaysia, I noticed that companies and corporations are paying sizable fees to consultants who try to make their personnel more productive and fire up their sales teams.

I was also told that when a properly motivated person thinks and says, "I am going to try it" we should take that comment seriously and work on it to turn that motivation into motive-action. If we do not then the quandary is that nothing would happen. The notion that could get us started is motive-action together with motivation.

My wife was trying to explain things to me in her usual kind words but I did not realize this until I looked at Mother Teresa's comments, 'kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless'.

Now I believe that it is better to ask some relevant questions than to think that we know all the answers.



## BEING DEPENDABLE

Being dependable is very important for everybody not only to the people who we work for but also to the people who work for us. It is as meaningful for people in the business world as it is for our family life.

There are many ways of winning absolute respect from people around us but one of the obvious ways is to be known as a person whose words are always truthful, good and can be depended upon.

We all know that promises are easy to make but sometimes hard to keep. It is bad business and even worse social living to make and take our promises lightly.

The manager to whom we have blithely promised improved results will not forget it quickly if we fail to produce those results with our effective performance. Neither will the employee whom we as managers and supervisors have led to expect something concrete that we could not deliver in time.

Therefore, it is never a wise move to make promises in a hurry. Whether it seems simple or hard, promises have to well thought-out conduct.

Of course, promises are a quick, easy and painless way to motivate people to get them to do what we want. Eventually, however, the time does come when we have to make our promises good and that is when difficulties show up.

I found out in my many years of managerial activities that actually there is nothing wrong with making reasonable promises and that is provided we observe a few precautions:

- Think carefully about how sure you are that you can deliver the promises, because all overly optimistic executives sometimes

get carried away and promise things they do not fully control. Therefore, the managers who promise to promote an employee, for example, ought to first make certain they can obtain the required approvals. All their intentions may be the best but what if higher authorities would not go along?

- Think also if you honestly intend to keep your promise because under the everyday pressure of the modern system it is easy to promise people something and then forget all about it and assume that they will as well. Unfortunately, they will not and more than likely, they will be thinking about it constantly. So if you want to avoid repercussions you had better not stop thinking about it either.

- Think carefully if you make a practice of delivering all that is promised because forcing people to settle for something less than what they have been led to expect leaves a bad taste for a long time. So if you want the continued cooperation of your people remember to always settle in full however inconvenient or painful you may find it.

My experience is that we should make promises to keep. If there is the slightest possibility we might not be able to then we should never promise. Therefore, deliver more than you promise, rather than promise more than you can deliver.

We would find that we are being treated as dependable and our workforce can be depended upon.



## HAPPINESS FOR US

I honestly think that the world today is not enjoying the true happiness that it rightfully deserves and the individuals as well as the organisations are not making a genuine effort to creating the atmosphere and the personal qualities that promote real joy in the hearts of the unhappy people.

It is often said that what we miss most in the world nowadays is the evidence of widespread personal determination of us all to develop and nurture a character that will in itself make for our lasting happiness.

All our emphasis seems to be on various reforms for improved living conditions, increased wages, better working conditions, stricter financial controls, better housing, education reforms and infrastructural innovations but there is very little emphasis on helping people to improve themselves.

I feel that the ingredients of personal joy are very simple.

- Happiness must be shared freely by everyone;
- Selfishness is the real enemy of joy;
- Happiness comes from within us;
- Happiness rests securely on simple truth, beauty and goodness;
- It needs clear conscience at all times;
- Not religion but ethical principles are essential for happiness;
- Although money is important happiness cannot be bought with money;
- Joy is related to self satisfaction and contentment;
- It begins with self-examination and self-realization;
- It ends with self-analysis and discovery of uniqueness.

Therefore, I submit that

- To live content with small means may bring joy to us;
- To seek elegance rather than luxury may give happiness;
- To be refined rather than fashionable can assist us find joy;
- To be worthy and respectable can help us to be happy;
- To be wealthy internally and not loaded with richness may help us find joy;
- To seriously study hard can bring happiness to us;
- To think well and without bias may help as well;
- To talk gently with compassion and empathy should help us find joy;
- To act well and frankly is one of the answers for joy;
- To listen silently and with full comprehension should give us joy in life;
- To talk to the wise and enlightened can also help;
- To read extensively with proper comprehension can assist us find happiness;
- To open our hearts to serve the needy in the community can definitely give us joy;
- To bear the pain, sorrow and lonely cheerfully can help;
- To perform all duties and responsibilities well and with vigour and bravely is our answer for joy;
- To wait for the right occasion and never hurry can help attain joy;
- To wake up and do things for you is our right path to happiness.

This is the reason why wise people say that happiness is not a state to arrive at, but a manner of travelling.



## Healthy Respect for Success.

Business management is a science for those who are meticulous and skilled and is an art for those who are creative and humanistic. It is partially inherited and it is partially acquired or learned. However, those that insist that it is neither they would reach failure much sooner than they could expect.

Therefore, I feel that business failures can never be excused by circumstances because a skilful business leader is basically responsible to adapt the enterprise operations to a variety of changing circumstances.

There is no substitute for fairness, thoroughness, toughness, perseverance and hard work when managing a successful organization or enterprise. If a management perseveres to be fair, tough and intends to put in hard work continuously then the chances are that it will create an atmosphere where a lot more can be accomplished and achieved without politics, where talents can be employed positively and strategically. This is how the capable would always succeed.

No management can ever take salesmanship as either ignoble or an outmoded skill because, let us face it, salesmanship is tactful and persuasive. We all perform this vital task in our daily activities. The person who can find new strategies, workable ideas or useful products and then with the needed imagination and persuasion convince others of their inherent value that individual is destined to perform a noble management task.

Some modern firms do not have a separate Human Resource Department because they do not wish to let the personnel department make any decisions on their behalf and be in charge of managing the most important resource of the enterprise, the people. In fact successful management stays in charge of the people of the

entire organization in order to stay close to the morale, control, selection, training and compensation of employees.

These new types of managerial brain feel that process or procedures, although important but not so than the people they employ to work for them. So they see that bureaucracy is now in large supply and that their enterprise is somewhat fading and needs to be restored. They honestly keep a proper balance among the four elements of bureaucracy namely hierarchy, specialization, rules, impersonality, and the four main ingredients of their enterprise, which are incentive, idea, person and process.

Having said the above, no one should think that working in any business is easy, more so in a family business. Being the son or daughter of the boss makes it twice as hard to show and maintain success. It imposes an obligation for performance much higher than other employees do.

I do not think that Parkinson was wrong when he stated that work would expand to fill available time. Generally speaking it is the busiest person who has the time to spare and many managers are amazed by how much could be done by a few and how little can be accomplished when a large number of persons share a management or policy role.

Therefore, in all my managerial accomplishments I made it sure to give the highest respect to success. I felt that anyone could ask relevant questions or suggest alternative ways to do something and they could even look very smart in doing it but I have seen many lousy managers who have made careers by asking irrelevant questions and fouling up good operations. If something is working or is continuously successful, then it is proper and useful to have great respect for those and the managers who are in control.

It is therefore not very wise managerial strategy to be tempering with success stories but always give them healthy respect.



## Power and Authority

Some managers and supervisors with big egos enjoy the fact that they have more power and authority than others do. They show this in the way they give orders and directions and they think that they are superior to the people in their charge. Simply put they get a kick out of displaying this superiority.

Some of us think that people who do this are wrong and foolish and others talk ill of the conduct. However, everyone but the affected managers and supervisors know this and continue with their high-handed behaviour.

I am not saying that managers and supervisors should not use and exert their rightful authority to get the people in their charge to do the right things right at all times but what I am implying is simply this: It really shouldn't be necessary to command people to do things because I found in my half a century of HR involvement that it should be enough to tell our people what you would like them to do and discuss it if they have any questions.

In most cases, the motivated people would be perfectly willing to co-operate therefore I do not see much point in bothering to use forceful, ostentatious and high-handed approach. I found that it was not productive to order the people to do things when they would actually willingly perform better if we simply asked them for their best co-operation. It all depends on our diplomacy, humanistic approach, our effective leadership skills and our workable motivational techniques to get the best out of our workers.

Power –A lion has to be a lion all its life; a dog has to be a dog but a human being can play with and bring about a huge number of different identities. The one he finally chooses will be determined by neither reason nor common sense but by imagination.



**Authority-** Some people succeed because they are destined to succeed but most people succeed because they are determined to succeed. Balancing the our action will not damage our authority but being over authoritative can be harmful for smooth administration of HR.

**Co-operation-** One trouble with all of us is that so many of us stand vigorously for our rights but we fall down miserably on our duties. It is the right duty of every manager to show the best co-operation at all times.

**Approach-** To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart.

Let us all work to become something special at our work place and learn not to work to acquire power and authority for the sake of them.

**HOW AM I DOING?**

Arriving at the workstation the supervisor said, "Everyone, On your marks, Get set, Go!"

Many workers who had a busy weekend were sitting on their respective chairs snoozing peacefully. One worker with bleary eyes and tired face quickly stood up and mumbled, "How am I doing, Boss?"

This is a question most people at our work places need answered every now and then. It is the manager's job to tell them, whether it is good, bad or otherwise. Unfortunately, many of our managers or supervisors duck this vital task and find it unnecessary, unpleasant or cumbersome.

I believe that telling our employees about their performance or conducting regular performance appraisal is crucial for progress and productivity at any work place. I know that telling an employee that his or her performance is not satisfactory by spelling out exactly how and why you expect him or her to do better is not a very pleasant

task but it has to be performed with expertise. Some managers and supervisors hate to do this and tend to avoid, postpone or neglect this vital responsibility.

In my many years of administrative and management activities in the commercial and industrial sector, I have to say that this is one of the most important functions of HR management. It can and should be one of the most useful, fruitful and productive things an effective, efficient and a successful leader should do.

My question is simply this: How can our people do better unless they are made aware of what they are neglecting or doing poorly? How can they correct their mistakes unless they realize what they are doing wrong?

On the other hand if their work is excellent, why should they maintain it at that level unless they know that their positive efforts and efficient performance are truly recognised and properly appreciated?

As a manager, we have a responsibility to give everyone who works for us an honest periodic appraisal of how they are doing. We owe it to them and we owe it to the organisation. It is one of the most practical things we can do to improve our and the working standards of our employees.

Telling people face-to-face how and where they are falling down on their jobs will never be pleasant but it can be a lot less unpleasant and more productive if we can follow some fundamental points to perform this important managerial and supervisory responsibility.

We definitely can be friendly and try to help our people help themselves by helping them to be more successful in their respective jobs. It is unethical and cruel to try to force better work out of our workers who are supposed to be our most important resource.

We should be constructive by not dwelling on their past failures and point out the specific things we want them to do to do better. Specify the results you want them to achieve in the future. Ask them to show the higher standards you want them to measure up to.

We should be honest in our approach by not telling them that they are better than they really are or worse if that is what they are not. Do not give them a false picture because you yourself lack the courage of your conviction to present the truth about them.

We ought to be fair and do not appraise people poorly just because their work that day or that week was not up to par. Always remember the good work they have done in the past.

We must be just and appraising performance and results and not abilities because I have found out that people tend to overrate their own capabilities. Therefore, it would always pay to avoid that area by talking about specific actions, performances and results on the job.

Let us be generous in our actions. If our people deserve a high rating, give it to them generously and reward them appropriately because I know that nothing will kill morale faster than doing good work and not getting the rightful credit for it.



## Recruitment

I can still recollect the good old days when a person was simply thrown into a job and allowed to sink or swim but a lot of water has passed under and over this bridge. It was an expensive procedure even then but the modern recruitment procedures are even most costly. Hence, a lot more care and caution has to be put in place.

Today, with good people as hard to find as they are, needless failures are even more costly. If there is anything that might be done to help a new person succeed, it is well worth the time and effort of everyone involved.

Trouble may start before new people are even on the payroll. When they are being offered jobs, they are treated as they are really somebody. An effort is usually made to impress them; they get attention and the position is presented to them in the best possible light. Is it any wonder, then, that they show up on the job with high expectation?

If their first few days do not live up to what they expected, their morale may be affected before they have hardly started. A big build-up leads to a big letdown if people treat them as if they are part of the woodwork once they are on board.

I know that intelligent HR leaders, no matter how busy they are, they do not handle new recruitments haphazardly. They give new people personal attention. They schedule time to orient or induct them and they plan what jobs these new people can handle during those critical first days.

It is natural for new employees to have anxieties. Will they like the job? Will they be able to handle it well? Where do they start? How will they get along with others? Will there be much chance for them to get ahead? So encouraging new employees to ask questions and talk about some of these issues always helps to reassure them.

Not the least important is to make sure they have enough to do because nothing is more frustrating to people full of energy and enthusiasm for a brand new job than to sit and twiddle their thumbs, or have to kill time while pretending to be busy. A good manager therefore, can get them up to speed a lot faster by giving them challenging assignments right from the start.

It is very important to follow their progress and show continued concern by checking every now and then on how they are making out. The best way to maintain their interest in the job is to maintain your interest in them.



## Opportunities that made me what I am today.

My common sense and integrity demand that I should do what is right for everyone even if at times it is unpleasant and unpopular for me.

Oysters create pearls and if we know that these are the product of pain, these are precious tiny jewels conceived through irritation, these are valuable items born of adversities and these are things that are nursed by adjustment. Then we have a lot to learn from this process.

I have wandered through life for many years in search of goals and objectives but the day I learnt to keep my eyes on the doughnut and not on the hole, my life changed for the better and my goals became clearer.

One of my favourite teachers told me that as a sentient human being I could survive the most adverse and difficult circumstances if I am not forced to stand alone in the world.

My legacy in life was that I tried to make things better than it was when it was given to me. Every opportunity was well taken and used to my advantage because I understood the idea of opportunity.

In the olden days before the modern wharfs were built, a ship had to wait for hours for the full tide before it could get to the port. In Latin, people called this situation *ob portu*, which meant that a ship had to stand over off a port, waiting for the moment when it could ride the turn of the tide to harbour.

We have derived an English word opportunity from that original meaning. The captain and the crew were ready and waiting for that one moment because they knew that if they missed it, they would have to wait for another tide to come in.

Shakespeare turned this background of exact meaning of opportunity into one of his most famous passages in Act 4 Scene 3 of his play Julius Caesar when he wrote:

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat;  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our ventures.

My prime premise of life, business and family life was that nothing needed to be boring and dull. It ought to be fun, exciting, bright and lively. If it is not so then I have been wasting my time. I have tried my best to use my power of persuasion when it came to managing people either at home or at work.

If you have ever had a dog, you would definitely have known that the following is true. Come up to your dog when it is not expecting you and try to give it a push. The harder you try to push that dog, the harder it will resist but then walk a few metres away, call its name gently and it will come trotting over immediately.

The same is true of people. If they feel that they are harshly shoved to accept something they will resist. On the other hand, if they are gently persuaded, they will often be won over easily.



## TERMINATION IS TROUBLESOME BUT NEEDS TACT

I once read a statement, "He harms the good that spares the bad." Since then I have been wondering about developing an article around that idea for people management.

Most of us like to work for an easygoing and tolerant manager in contrast to a dictatorial and an authoritarian one. Of course, we like to feel we are doing our best because we want to and not because we are forced to.

However, just as it is possible to be too commanding, it is also possible to go too far in the other direction. The leader who overlooks too much is really ducking the job of leadership. On the other hand, unfortunately, there will always be people who will take advantage of the situation because they would do only what is necessary to get by. The minute the boss turns his back they start loafing.

The leader who deliberately ignores this is in effect condoning their actions. This in itself would be serious enough but the real danger is even greater. It will harm those who are trying to do a good job. I think that the people who do not take advantage and have a sense of responsibility and duty can be demoralized by such a lack of leadership.

I guess that there are a few things that we can safely do to ensure that we do not fall into such an awkward situation.

First, let us set clear-cut standards of conduct and responsibility. All our people should know exactly what is expected of them and all should be judged against the same set of values.

Second, we should try not to spare the bad apples in our group. We as leaders and managers should have the courage of our conviction



and guts to correct the situation before it contaminates our entire organization.

Third, we should always adequately reward the good people. Rewards to those who deserve them serve to maintain their morale and enthusiasm. They also let those who are loafing know where they stand too.

But are we worried about the people who intend to leave their jobs for either this or other reasons? I think that the people leaving their jobs for any reason are no longer outdated. Either often it is for a better opportunity elsewhere or more money. Even with the lure of more pay, people who are reasonably content with their work and their supervisors seldom go out looking for other jobs.

Some managers have a higher turnover among their subordinates than others do, sometimes embarrassingly so and often, it is the better people who leave. This is always a costly and frustrating problem.

Sometimes, obviously, people have been offered opportunities or salaries that are so extraordinary we could not possibly have matched them anyway. All we could have done in any case is let them go and wish them good luck. But do not be too sure and before we let ourselves off the hook let us pose a few questions and try to answer them as honestly as we can.

- Did we let those exiting people know how important they were to us and to the organization? Alternatively, did we more or less take them for granted?
- Did we give them a chance to be proud of themselves? Did we pass along all the authority we possibly could or keep them tied to our apron strings?
- Did we give these people and get for them the credit and recognition they deserved from us and from others in the organization? Or did we tend to leave them in the shadows?
- Was the job of the departing employee a challenge? Did we do our best to make it so?
- Did we make their work as varied and interesting as possible? Did we show them the possibilities of a promising future?

Or did we simply left them in a rut and exploited their abilities to our own advantage?

Let us not be too quick to absolve ourselves from all blames. If we were responsible, in any respect, it is smarter to realize it than to hide our head in the sand. Unless we change our attitude or actions, we may lose more than just good people. We may be on the verge of destroying our own organization or our career as well.

Therefore, I feel that the best time to think of all these things is before we begin to lose our good people rather than after. Remember that people have the right to judge us more by what we do than by what we say.

I have always maintained that managing people is difficult and time-consuming work, done best by kindness, watching, warning, patience, praise and above all by example. Any person in a management or supervisory position is basically a salesperson. Therefore, it is our job to sell good attitudes and effective work habits. If we do not practice them ourselves, it is harder sale to make and sometimes even impossible.

Good executives appreciate that the power of a good example is one of the most effective tools. They know that their people are watching them as they go about their daily work and that their own example will influence those people far more than verbal advice or preaching.

Some people feel that when they have reached an executive level they are no longer subject to the same standards they expect of others. They think it is their job to tell people what to do, regardless of whether they do it themselves or not. But if they do not believe in something strongly enough to practice it themselves, the telling seldom does much good.

The strengths and weaknesses of a particular department or organization often reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the men and women who manage it. When we have difficulty getting people who work for us to measure up to the standards we insist upon, then it is time for us to take a second look at ourselves.

Do we measure up to these standards? Are we practicing them whole-heartedly in our own work, or just preaching for the benefit of others?

Another serious question to pose here is obvious. If we habitually let down and take it easy when our own manager is away, how can we expect our own people to act any differently when we are not around? If we are usually late ourselves, how can we expect others to be on time? The words will go in one ear and out the other.

During my school days, I was told that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Therefore, if we want to be an effective leader, we would better believe that because it is the way we people are made. If we want them to buy something let us be sure we are ready to buy it ourselves first.

I have not abandoned my idea of the choice between being a developer of our human resource and the terminator of people who do not perform well in our organization.

In any matter of people management, let us never underestimate the importance of a good example because I strongly feel that 'Seeing is Believing'.



**18**

**TERMINATOR OR DEVELOPER?**

We as HR practitioners have a choice when it comes to dismissal or disciplining our poor performers. The choice is either to terminate or to find other ways and means to develop the worker to re-enter and fit in the system. Keeping the legal notion of condonation in mind, it is still possible to take a different path to that of dismissal and termination and become a developer of human resources.

Learning to recruit the right people for the right job is one of the most important aspects of any HR leader. In fact, our success of maintaining a healthy workforce depends on it. If we have done this well and maintained our good training and development programs after conducting regular training needs analysis then the responsibility of keeping the workers performing as per our requirement would not be difficult.

While some HR practitioners seem to have a knack for picking the right people others have not been able to do this important work well. Actually, it is more than a knack. It takes careful analysis of the job requirement and the people available plus a large dose of imagination and foresight.

The first step obviously is a careful analysis of the job itself to find out what abilities are required or what kinds of personality and temperament are needed. Even how essential is previous experience and what kind of person can you imagine doing that job well?

The next step is even more difficult. What candidates do we have available and how do their abilities and personalities fit the requirements? If, on the other hand, we are unsure of their abilities, is there any way we can test to find this out? Could any of them meet the requirement if given some special training?

Sometimes it is obvious that none of the available candidates could fill the bill and that is where our foresight comes into the picture. It should have been used a long time ago to foresee and avoid such a predicament. No one can put the right person in the right job unless the right person is available and we have a system to develop the right person for the job.

That is why a forward-looking HR manager tries to anticipate how a department might grow and develop rather than taking any drastic actions to conduct the termination and dismissal processes. Such HR practitioners seriously contemplate and think about finding and developing the kind of people who will be needed next month or next year.

It always pays to think about tomorrow's needs as well as today's. How will your present subordinates fit into the picture then? What training and experience will they need to be ready to move along and keep improving their performance? Do they have the necessary potential? So it is vital to know our people who work for us. If the people do an excellent job in their present assignments then it becomes our responsibility to find out what else they can do by testing their capacity with other assignments. This can be done by discovering their strengths and weaknesses.

This way, when the time comes to improve their performance and consider them for another job, we will be able to make an intelligent decision. Our people will always be trained and ready to do the tasks allocated to them. But the fact that someone is doing well in a present job is no guarantee that another position will be handled equally as well. It depends upon whether the capabilities of the person match the requirements of that particular job or whether our training and development programs are working well enough to avoid costly consequences of termination and dismissal.

Telling employees that their performance is not satisfactory and spelling out exactly how and why we expect them to do better are not pleasant tasks at all. Many HR managers hate to do these. Perhaps that is why so many of us tend to avoid, postpone or neglect this important responsibility and seek an easier solution to

be a terminator rather than be a developer of our team to fit every occasion.

The fact remains that these are the most important functions of management and they can and should be the most useful, fruitful and progressive things that any leader does. The question remains, how can people do better unless they are made aware of what they are neglecting or doing poorly? How can they correct their mistakes unless they are made to realize what they are doing wrong? We should help them get out of these difficulties through various on the job, off the job and self developmental programs.

As a manager, we have a responsibility to give everyone who works for us an honest, periodical and continuous appraisal of how they are doing. We owe it to them and we owe it to the organization because it is one of the most practical things we can do to keep improving our workforce and the working standards.

Here are a few fundamentals to help us maintain a healthy workforce. Let us be friendly and try to help our people help themselves to help them be more successful in their jobs. It is always more productive not to try to force better work out of them but develop them to suit our requirements.

It is important to be constructive by not dwelling on the past failures but pointing out the specific things we want them to do better and the result we want them to achieve in the future. Let us always try to set the higher standards that we want our employees to measure up to.

Honesty is still the best policy in people management. It is not good to tell the employees that they are better or worse than they really are. It is unwise to give them a false picture because we lack the courage to present the true one.

Be fair dinkum and do not appraise people poorly just because their work that day of that week was not up to par. Always remember the good work that they have done in the past.

Be just by appraising performance and results, not abilities. People tend to overstate their own capabilities so avoid that situation and talk about specific actions, performances and results of the job.

Be generous by giving your people a higher rating if they deserve it. Nothing would kill morale faster than doing good work and not getting the credit for it.

Therefore, if I were still actively working in the HR field I would do the same that I did for ten years at a large multinational corporation where I did not terminate the work of any worker but found ways and means of developing them to fit back and re-enter my workforce. I was not a terminator but acted as a developer of people.



## 19

### The Psychology of Self-Development (*Another Anecdote*)

I was once told that the most useful concept for helping people turn their lives around was what is called the “four little words.”

The first two were: **if only**. I was told that many of us spent our lives in the past anguishing about what we should have done in various situations and circumstances.

When we are unable to secure a job, we say, “If only I had prepared myself better for that interview...”

When we are unable to manage our work, we say, “If only I had expressed my true feelings to the boss...”

When we find out that we are inadequately qualified for something, we often say, “If only I had taken that accounting course...”

We all know that wallowing in this sea of regret is a serious emotional drain. I personally think that the antidote is very simple. We should try our best to eliminate these two words ‘if only’ from our vocabulary and substitute these with ‘next time’ to convince ourselves.

“Next time I am going to be well prepared...”

“Next time I am going to speak out...”

“Next time I have a chance I am going to enrol in that course...”

This concept was never easy for me and I know that it would not be easy for anyone but if we get determined and practised this simple technique until it became our habit then I feel we would never ever rehash errors we have been making.

However, if we do find ourselves doing so, simply begin telling ourselves. “Next time I will do it differently.”



The possible consequence of this change in attitude will be that we will find that this closes the door on the matter to free us to devote our valuable time and our important thoughts to the present and the future instead of the past.

## What Is Quality?

I think quality is people because it is the partnership of researchers, designers, production workers, office workers, salespeople, inspectors, sailors, captains, crew and many others who are determined to help one another put out the best goods and services in every field.

Then some people believe that quality is the old-fashioned pride of an expert in a special craft where the expert feels the greatest happiness in doing the best job possible. I believe it is the thrill of beating competitors with a better product and coming out with new products before they do.

Therefore, quality can even be in a sweeper's broom or a cleaner's mop, which keep the place neat and clean. However, everyone in the enterprise or the department has to equally share the pride and the gleam then the whole accomplishment becomes qualitative. So quality is not the domain of any one worker at an enterprise or a department it must spread and be really contagious.

At our respective workplaces, we are all sweepers and cleaners to some extent and the orderliness that we help to establish for our own endeavours is the first essential of quality work and the resulting quality product.

One reason for the prosperity of any firm is the right kind of emphasis on the continuous improvement of the variety of processes by which all the work is done and activities are conducted.

I honestly feel that we must all guard against the tendency to say NO too quickly if we want quality to flourish at our workplace. Never assist to bury a good idea. As Peter Drucker says, "Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is what the client or customer gets out of it."

Think twice before you say:

- It will never work.
- We have never done it that way before.
- We are doing fine without it.
- We cannot afford it.
- We are not ready for it.
- It is not our responsibility.

When we find our people at our workplace are using some of these phrases or something similar to these, it is time to stop and re-think. Do we really mean it or are we merely looking for a convenient excuse to throw cold water on quality idea?

The idea of quality should become a habit, which is a powerful force. Good managers should always use this force to their advantage. Learning the techniques of managing others is one thing and putting those principles into practice by making them our habits is something else. It requires conscious, carefully planned and deliberate effort.

Once the idea of quality becomes our habit then we would be doing things right and doing them well at all times. Thus, we would be able to let our habits work for us by freeing our mind from detail, increasing our efficiency, catching our mistakes and releasing our conscious memory for other important things.

When business leaders learn or acquire new management techniques they should immediately set out to make these their habits, instinctive and ingrained parts of their everyday actions. That is quality performance and quality control. Consider such principles as suspending judgement until we have heard both sides of a question or remembering how important it is to hold our temper when others are losing theirs. If we conduct ourselves in this manner then we would be able to maintain quality in everything we set out to do.

The way to master such principles and make them part of us is to keep them constantly in mind and practice them religiously until they become habits. The more we are able to master and apply the

principles of good and quality management to make them our habits, the better we would be able to manage others in our organization.

Good and qualitative habits work for all of us at all times, even when we are not at our best. Unlike conscious actions, they do not depend on how we feel or how busy we are. Therefore, it is my contention that our qualitative habits are always more reliable than memory.

Every time we repeat an act we reinforce and strengthen our habit. The important thing to remember is not to make any exceptions when it comes to quality control and qualitative activities. Exceptions merely weaken the habit so only steady, unbroken and constant repetition can fix a habit firmly and makes it part of our total quality consciousness.



## Self Motivation

We become what we think about. –so said Earl Nightingale and I say that let us think hard to become something else, maybe an extraordinarily inspired human being. This is possible to do and I am going to show you how.

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do, so as Mark Twain said, throw off the bowlines, sail away from safe harbour, and catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore, Dream, Discover. This is what I call inspiration and others term it as motivation.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now. Says a Chinese Proverb. Let us examine our own conscience and plant the tree of the strongest inspiration in all our back yards. Let that tree keep inspiring us for the rest of our life.

As we all know “An unexamined life is not worth living. So said Socrates. Examine.. examine... examine yourself and your activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe our time on this earth is small and it is limited, so let us not waste it living someone else's life. Live well and then inspire to let others live well-motivated and fully inspired.

My soccer coach once barked at me, “Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is. If you want to win go and play your part well.”

From that day I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions.

Has anyone told you that Christopher Columbus would not have succeeded as an enchanted explorer if he did not believe that “You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.” He lost sight of the shore of England and discovered the

New World. We can do that too if we detach ourselves from our attachments.

So either you run your day all inspired, or the dull day will begin to run you down, out and unmotivated. We all have a choice, whether to think hard that you can or you think soft that you can't.

Whatever you can do, or dream you can do it but you have to begin it ASAP.

**DO NOT PROCRASTINATE. PROCRASTINATION IS THE BIGGEST THIEF OF TIME.** Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.

My son Roy has brilliant words of Zig Ziglar on his profile of Skype. "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing. That's why we recommend it daily." But Zig Ziglar led me to another river of knowledge, "Motivation is the fuel, necessary to keep the human engine running."

My family and work life either has been shrinking or expanding in proportion to my courage and that is what I have told my children and my colleagues. Those that believed me have seen great success in their lives. I cannot talk of those who did not follow my idea. They have their own ways of sailing in the difficult and competitive world. I respect their wish and try to learn from them as well.

During my teaching days visiting teachers used to come and inspect our work. I received an outstanding report from this highly respected education official and he asked me how I felt and I just said that I do not try to teach better than anyone else. I only try to teach better than myself.

He told me that I should not wait until everything is just right. I know It will never be perfect. There will always be challenges, obstacles and less than perfect conditions. Try your best and be yourself.

So I want to tell you what happened in my life. I got started. With each step I took, I grew stronger and stronger, more and more skilled, more and more self-confident and more and more successful. I was inspired more than myself and I kept on getting promotions, praise and recognition in my career. Never looked back but kept looking ahead with greater determination.

From then onwards my every success has not been final. I kept moving, moving and moving with added vigour. , Failure for me was never fatal because it was my courage that continued to count for me to show me better paths. I knocked at all closed doors to wake up the sleeping opportunities. One important aspect of my luck was that I had colleagues and leaders who kept inspiring and encouraging me.

I am old now but I feel no matter how old we are now, we are never too young or too old for success or going after what we need, desire and want. Here's a short list of people who accomplished great things at different ages:

- 1) Helen Keller, at the age of 19 months, became deaf and blind. But that didn't stop her. She was the first deaf and blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree.
- 2) Anne Frank was 12 when she wrote the diary of Anne Frank.
- 3) Pele, a soccer superstar, was 17 years old when he won the world cup in 1958 with Brazil.
- 4) Jesse Owens was 22 when he won 4 gold medals in Berlin 1936.
- 5) Issac Newton wrote *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* at age 24
- 6) Albert Einstein was 26 when he wrote the theory of relativity
- 7) Alexander the Great, by age 29, had created one of the largest empires of the ancient world

- 8) Oprah was 32 when she started her talk show, which has become the highest-rated program of its kind
- 9) Edmund Hillary was 33 when he became the first man to reach Mount Everest
- 10) Martin Luther King Jr. was 34 when he wrote the speech "I Have a Dream."
- 11) Marie Curie was 35 years old when she got nominated for a Nobel Prize in Physics
- 12) Mark Twain was 40 when he wrote "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer", and 49 years old when he wrote "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"
- 13) Christopher Columbus was 41 when he discovered the Americas
- 14) John F. Kennedy was 43 years old when he became President of the United States
- 15) Colonel Harland Sanders was 61 when he started the KFC Franchise
- 16) J.R.R Tolkien was 62 when the Lord of the Ring books came out
- 17) Ronald Reagan was 69 when he became President of the US
- 18) Jack Lalane at age 70 handcuffed, shackled, towed 70 rowboats
- 19) Nelson Mandela was 76 when he became President
- 20) RL Prasad completed his doctorate at the age of 51.

So if I were one among my audience I would start to get going. Move forward. Aim High. Plan a takeoff. I won't just sit on the runway and hope someone will come along and push the airplane. It simply won't



happen. Change your attitude and gain some altitude. Age should not be a barrier for our progress, prosperity and motivation.

Believe me; you will love your life a lot more.

But remember to live your truth. Express your love. Share your enthusiasm. Take action towards your dreams. Walk your talk. Dance and sing to your music of your life and living.

Embrace your blessings. Make all your today worth remembering. Any individual who says it is not possible should move out of the way of those who are doing it.

Just remember that when defeat comes, accept it as a signal that your plans are not sound, rebuild those plans, and set sail once more toward your coveted goal. The road to success is always under construction.

Our ability is what we are capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it. Collect your capability, manoeuvre your motivation and adjust your attitude then like Robin Hood you too would rise and rise again until your lambs become lions.

My favourite teacher once asked me, "Son what does it take you to reach out and touch your dreams?"

When I hesitated to give him any answer he said: "Are you hungry? Are you thirsty? Is it a fire that burns you up inside? How bad do you want it? How bad do you need it? Are you eating, sleeping, and dreaming? With that one thing on your mind, how bad do you want it? How bad do you need it?"

Because if you want it all. You've got to lay it all out on the line"

So I did. I laid my dreams on the line and did not sit still; I started moving with my dreams. In the beginning, you may not go in the direction you want, but as long as you are moving, you are creating

new routes, pleasant paths, accurate alternatives, and proper possibilities. That is what I did.

Let me remind you that your definite desire is the key to motivation, but it is the solid determination and candid commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek. You will not fail.

My father used to tell me, "If you don't know what you want, you'll never find it. If you don't know what you deserve, you'll always settle for less. You will wander aimlessly, uncomfortably numb in your comfort zone, wondering how life has ended up here."

I thank my father for motivating me. My life started then and there, I began to live, love, laugh and let my light shine for me as well as others.

The negative power of "can't" is our hindrance. The word "can't" makes strong people weak, blinds people who can see, saddens happy people, turns brave people into cowards, robs a genius of their brilliance, causes rich people to think poorly, and limits the achievements of that great person living inside us all.

So look at the word CAN'T and knock the T out of it to reveal your strengths, talents and opportunities and get rid of your weaknesses. This is the SWOT theory of motivation. Then you will have a brilliant phrase before you "I CAN".

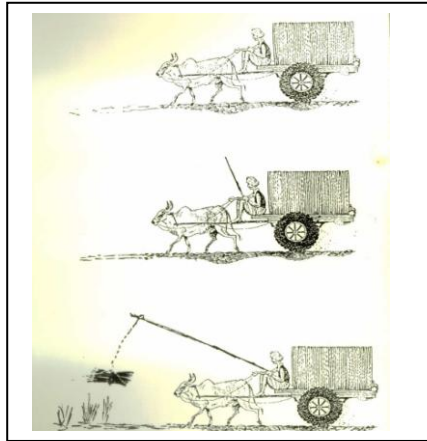
Finally I can say that everything you need is already within you. The beauty of life is that: your DESTINY lies always in your hands. The time has come for you to STEP UP and BE GREAT and say I CAN.

Be Still. Let Go. Flow freely. Breathe well. Believe in yourself. Allow clear thinking. Grow up. Align yourself with the right aspects. Be the Light. Be Awake. Be Aware. Anticipate. Participate.

Embrace Change. Take that...Chance. Love your life. Love your work. Ensure that You Are Loved. Rise to every Occasion. Fuel your

Motivation and Make the world become a better place. Can you?  
Say YES I CAN.

You can motivate people by fear, and you can motivate them by reward. But both those methods are only temporary. The only lasting thing for us is self-motivation.



## My Motivation

The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why. –Mark Twain

Once I attended a prayer meeting in Fiji and the priest who was from India was preaching. I liked his idea of human qualities of truth, beauty and goodness and went to see him in private. He greeted me and asked me why I was afraid. Then he spoke to me. I have not forgotten the sentiments of his sermon and I would like to share it with you.

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

After talking to him I continued doing my own reading on the issues he had raised. I discovered the reason why.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.

So very early in life I concluded that  
“Only as high as I reach can I grow,”  
“Only as far as I seek can I go,”  
“Only as deep as I look can I see,” and

“Only as much as I dream can I be.”

My desires and my needs became the key to motivation. I developed a determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of my goals - a commitment to excellence. I have been telling everyone that that will enable us to attain the success we seek.

So I resolved that wanting something is not enough. You must hunger for it. Your motivation must be absolutely compelling in order to overcome the obstacles that will invariably come your way. That is the theory of motivation and what we put in our activities is our practice.

For me from my high school days motivation has been everything. You can do the work of two people, but you can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next guy down the line and get him or her to keep inspiring his or her people.

This was the inspiration that Lee Iacocca supported.

Then gradually my inspiration kept moving ahead and I found that motivation comes from within. You have to be inspired. That's what I do. I inspire people, I inspire the public, I inspire my staff. I inspired the organizations I took over to want to succeed. I inspired myself to be able to inspire others.

Like Napoleon Hill, I firmly believe that whatever the mind of a person can conceive and believe, it can gradually achieve and go beyond.

As Robert Frost said there are two roads diverging in our life and if you dare to take the one less travelled by then that would make all the difference in your life.

The mind is everything. What you think you become, Said Buddha.

Let us put our mind right to think well and then our route to success would be as bright as how we are able to think and act.

## Stress Management

In his book Future Shock, Alvin Toffler predicted that the rate of change in modern civilization would accelerate to such a degree that enormous numbers of people would experience shattering stress and disorientation. This was over half a century ago but we are feeling the impact of global change where the effects of change reach into every crevice of life putting us more and more under pressure. We now notice that various forms of physiological and psychological stress emerge as a result of a growing deficit between daily demands and our coping resources.

Our current working environment has become so demanding and competitive that it is virtually impossible to avoid stress despite our efforts to avoid it or manage it. To cope with this situation we need to get tough and practice stress toughness or stress hardness.

I find that stress is different things to different people. It may be the challenge of pushing physical resources to the limit by striving a demanding goal. It could be the hassle of heavy traffic and obnoxious exhaust fumes. It could even be work, exam or life pressure. The greatest problem is that most people respond to the word stress in negative ways because they see it as a destructive and debilitating force.

However, not all stress is negative or distressing. There are some types of positive stress we are likely to experience when we inherit a large amount of money, win a lottery or receive an unexpected promotion or reward. This is the stress of winning and achieving.

Distress on the other hand, can be the stress of losing, failing, overworking and not being able to cope well and this affects us in a negative and often harmful way. I know that we all experience distress from time to time and it is normal, unavoidable part of living or work life. I am not a medical practitioner but having worked in the commercial and industrial world I know that stress results from

failure to adequately cope with stressors such as loud noise, uncomfortable air-conditioning, increasing debts, ringing telephones, broken relationships, unrealistic deadlines, discouragement, fear, pain and many others that impact upon us in the normal course of our life.

I feel that it is impossible to avoid stressors because they would always be there in this imperfect and unpredictable world. We experience stress as the body adjusts to the external demands placed upon it. Our body constantly seeks to maintain stability and stress is usually sensed as the body re-adjusts to too much pressure. Therefore, stress is always manageable. The source of stress may be outside the body or it may originate within the body in the form of blood pressure, pain, tumours or disturbing thoughts.

However, we need to assist our body to cope with stress because our natural biological stress-adjustors are not ideally suited to the increasing demands of modern living. If we physically run away from our workplace stresses whenever things got on top of us then this would not enhance our standing in our organization. Conversely when we do something stupid as a result of our stress we can get into greater level of difficulty. Consequently we need to develop special physical, social and other skills to deal with stress.

Rapid mass communication has changed the way we think about the world around us. We are continuously witnessing technological, social, cultural and political changes which have been affecting our lifestyle in many ways in the last few years. These changes will often escalate in the current climate of uncertainty and unpredictability to generate greater stress by forcing us to make finer adjustments in our work and family lives.

Many types of diseases have been linked with stress and psychological stress has greater physical ramifications. Too much stress naturally leads to burnout which is a condition characterised by emotional and physical exhaustion. The main symptoms associated with burnout are outlined below:

- Chronic fatigue
- Anger at those making demands on us

- Self-criticism for putting up with the demands
- Cynicism, negativism and irritability
- A sense of being besieged
- Hair-trigger display of emotions.

A combination of all these symptoms indicates that stress is wearing us down and that a holiday or some kind of relaxation therapy might be long overdue.

One of the best ways to deal with stress might be to confront it head-on and to perceive it as a positive stimulus for personal growth and development rather than as a destructive and debilitating force. This can be termed as stress-hardiness. This might mean we may have to find ways and means to provide us with specific and suitable knowledge and skills to assist us to develop positive approach to personal stress management or stress-hardiness. I have seen that with practice and application we can gradually toughen ourselves to cope with the stressors that invariably come our way.

In my long years of managerial responsibilities my therapies of stress-hardiness included some of these activities:

- Firm commitment to family life- Stress hardy people have high levels of commitment to work, leisure and family so they find interest, stimulation and novelty in the things they do. Commitment for them means interest in living and it means putting a spirit of adventure into life and being willing to try new things. They put in all their effort to be participators rather than spectators of work and life. This adventure is an experience and has a sense of delightful urgency that can generate a positive enthusiasm for learning, discovery, personal development and participation. There is no room for any stress.
- Attitude control – Our response to stressors is essentially individualistic so if someone speaks to us aggressively then we return aggression with aggression or when a motorist abuses us we would like to yell abuse as well but although these are normal responses they are not the only ones available to us because we can either ignore these or feel pity for them. The choice is ours if



want to avoid stress. The question for us is simple, “Will I give permission to my stressors to disrupt my peace of mind and spoil my pleasure?” Stress-hardy people have an internal location of control and reflect this attitude in positive assertiveness and a strong sense of inner confidence.

- Rational thinking – It is not uncommon for people to hold irrational views about work, family, education, relationships and about themselves. That our work situation is totally secure and not subject to change. This is an irrational idea because change is inevitable so it is irrational to assume that we are totally secure anywhere, in any situation and in any relationships.
- A reasonable sense of humour – Laughter as we all know is the best medicine for stress so we must view and listen to comedies and tell and hear jokes. In the field of stress management laughter is a very sound form of relaxation therapy.
- An effective exercise program – Simple exercise is believed to play an important role in strengthening the immune system and managing stress. We can develop and sustain a good level of physical fitness with surprisingly little effort therefore let us not equate our kind of aerobic exercise with hard, strenuous and painful activities because simple walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, cross-country events and rowing may be sufficient for stress management.
- Knowledge of problem solving – Problem solving skills are essential and can be developed for the resolution of many stressful experiences. It is irrational to assume that every problem can be easily solved but solutions or compromises can be found for most problems if the time is taken to examine them logically, creatively and thoroughly. To manage stress it is vital that we know the real problem that we want to solve, what is the ideal situation, what options are available to us and what are some of the consequences after the decision is taken.
- Practicing autosuggestion- There is a powerful relationship between our mind and body. We have the conscious and the subconscious mind that influence our daily behaviour. While the

conscious mind attends to matters that claim or attract our immediate attention one thing at a time, the subconscious mind is concerned with matters that are critical to our survival all the time.

Therefore our subconscious mind is like a fertile field capable of growing healthy good crops, fruits and vegetables but also producing weeds if left unattended. Since it absorbs all the information that flows into our conscious mind, every word we speak, every sentence we read and everything we see is stored away in our subconscious mind and can influence our actions and character. So we can regulate the information that reaches our subconscious mind through our five senses. We can be reprogrammed through the process of auto suggestion and fill our mind with the images of what we would like to be. There are two critical times of the day when our subconscious mind is open to suggestion. First is the half hour immediately before we drop off to sleep and the second is the half hour immediately after our alarm goes off in the morning. If we want to be successful in any field or cope more effectively with stress in the workplace and at home then imagine ourselves dealing with problems in a more calm and confident manner and keep telling the subconscious mind to awaken the conscious mind.

- Stress boomerangs- Our life is a circle and the area inside the circle is our inner world of thoughts, actions and attitudes but our stressors impact upon us from outside world. These can be environmental stressors like the heat, cold and noise or physical stressors like pain, fatigue and headaches or psychological stressors as the deadlines, conflicts and insecurity. Whatever stress you receive from outside try to throw them back. It may be difficult but it is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness.
- Paradoxical intention concentrates on the thing that a person fears and through the use of humour exaggerates that fear until it loses its potency. If you feel nervous when you have to have a meeting with the boss then deliberately try to increase this feeling of nervousness or your hands shake noticeably whenever you have to speak in public then deliberately try to exaggerate the shakes before you have to speak or you get very tense and anxious whenever you face an examination then deliberately try to exaggerate the feelings

of anxiety and nervousness. Paradoxical intention is not a cure for all problems but it can lend itself to many applications.

- Relaxation has been practiced for centuries and in the form of meditation is an essential element of stress management because it raises the pain threshold, reduces unnecessary fatigue, aids recovery from strenuous activities, lowers anxiety and gives a sense of inner control and peace. Relaxation is basically letting go and it involves stopping and passively abandoning oneself to a state of enjoyable tranquillity.
- Creativity and journalism – Writing a few poems, songs and keeping a personal journal can become a source of inspiration and encouragement for us. These can include interesting quotations, positive conversations, new ideas, humorous incidents, successful achievements and your creativity of any theme you find interesting.
- Stress-Event review – Every stressful experience we encounter extracts an emotional and physical price. If the event is extremely stressful then the cost to our health and well-being can be considerable. We can definitely learn a lot from our past experiences if after the event has passed and our emotional levels have subsided we are then in a position to objectively review the situation to define the events factually and review the event positively to determine future strategies.
- Isometric Relaxation is stretching for stress and there are many stretching exercises for hands, legs, fingers, shoulders and feet that we can do while sitting on a chair or standing up in our room.
- Lifestyle redesigns for diet, smoke, alcohol and caffeine-Stress can be generated by improper diet, nicotine intake and alcohol abuse. The modern office runs on coffee and tea but a sensible intake is recommended if we want to manage our stress.
- Information gathering – Ignorance can be a cause of our stress because it is extremely difficult to cope with the unknown. Continuing to study, self- help books and visiting libraries regularly

will give us information that we can obtain to substantially reduce our stress.

- Intimacy and companionship – A supportive relationship is no doubt the most valuable resource for coping with stress because fortunate are all those merry souls who have a special person in their lives with whom they can share their burdens.
- Regular medical check-up– Many people push their physical and mental resources to the point of breakdown before seeking medical attention. If you have not had a thorough medical check-up in the past twelve months then you should take a positive step to do so immediately.
- Music therapy- Music is a tonic or the medicine that inspires one to new generative processes. “...when griping grief the heart doth wound, and doleful dumps the mind oppress. Then music with her silver sound...with speedy help doth lend redress...” (Shakespeare 1982)
- Crying, smiling and laughing – Crying like smiling and laughing provides a natural outlet for stress tension. It is not a sign of weakness but it is the utilisation of a special outlet that nature has provided to permit emotional healing.
- Ability to face the worst case scenario- If we can face the worst-case and gather the strength to deal with that then we are in a strong position to deal with all the other in-between outcomes that may arise. If you face job redundancy then the worst case is unemployment, an unbearable position to be in for a while but there are positives even in this situation when you can continue your personal development, or do things that you wanted to do but did not have time or go fishing or visit friends and family members to manage your stress.
- Pet therapy – Studies have shown that owning a pet can reduce the impact of daily hassles for many of us. Pets are ideal companions for people who face unavoidable loneliness. Take a dog

for a walk, stroke a cat or feed the goldfish or ride a horse to manage your stress.

- Peace of mind – This state of mind is a quiet happiness that comes from good living and peaceful interpersonal relationships.

Life is stressful, unpleasant and almost intolerable without peace of mind. It is worth more than material wealth and much more than all the earthly rewards. So it is a worthwhile beacon to follow if we want to be stress-hardy.

### **FEAR IS OUR ENEMY NUMBER ONE**

Human beings have the most enlightened brain which is the storehouse of life energy. This energy is used by all our muscles to constantly put us to work, walk or do such similar things. So why are we all not able to use our energy to be successful?

It is our fear that exhausts our life energy and becomes our enemy to all our success and progress. Fear paralyses us, it lowers the vitality of our body and it weakens us considerably. Fear causes our brain to send wrong and inhibiting messages to our organs to constrict and disturb them.

How was I able to minimize my fear? I developed faith in God and believed in the powers that were within me. All my god given strengths were eager to get my command to destroy my fears and overcome my obstacles. I continuously prayed for courage. These became the powers of my brain and I kept restoring my life energy to get rid of my fear. QED.

**(RLP/10/2015-G)**

## Mentoring At Workplace

Those of us who in our business or personal lives have successfully walked the path and feel that we have accumulated enough relevant experiences that we honestly think could enrich and develop the lives and careers of so many others then we should not hesitate to become willing mentors to transfer those valuable skills, knowledge and insights. The experiences that we decide to transfer could be either of technical, managerial or personal nature depending on the need and aspirations of our mentees and our own strengths.

Sometimes the line between my failures and successes was so fine that I scarcely knew when I passed it. In fact it was so fine that I was often on the line and did not know it. As a teacher I was giving all I had to make the people around me transform their activities for the better living and organization. As an administrator I kept coaching and motivating young people in the community as well as at the various workplaces that I was actively involved.

The only reason I had some success was that my audience believed in me and I had a lot of respect for their quality performance. Therefore, I had a strong desire or deep willingness to spend some of my valuable time with someone else, more particularly my colleagues and companions. I constantly reminded myself to stay positive, to remain motivated and to continue to grow and develop my own knowledge and skills. When I look back to my early work life I firmly believe that the process of mentoring has helped and enriched my life a lot more than my any of my mentees.

Mentors, coaches, guides, motivators and the like have made a lot of difference to the lives of people; young and old, students and academics, players and athletics, artists and performers from time immemorial but the greatest power behind this innovation has always been the people themselves, the mentees. The people, who took careful notice, attentively listened to get up and go and change their attitude to bring those needed transformations in their lives.

During my entire life I liked sharing whatever accumulated ideas I had with my friends, relatives and family members. These sharing and caring or advisory roles that I inadvertently developed gave me great pleasure because these turned out to be of mutual benefit for me as a mentor and later for all my mentees at various workplaces. The effective transference of these valuable competencies, skills, knowledge and insights went a long way to expand and increase my own motivation, horizon, development and the general growing up.

I knew that I needed a little more persistence, a little more effort, some proper assurance and above all a lot more confidence to be successful in my challenging venture. I did not want to be over-confident or be a big ego but believed in challenging and assisting all my mentees with my sincere critique as well as a variety of open ended questions to help them form their own valid conclusions, think and act and to look at their own future situations with a new perspective. I was a good listener for all my mentees and after carefully observing their body language and keeping good eye contact, I constantly asked my mentees to tell me why they had chosen a particular path or an answer or a conclusion.

I now think that my strengths in succeeding at this special responsibility were some of the following:

- I valued what they were thinking, doing and saying;
  - I did not unnecessarily interrupt them;
  - I was adequately patient and willing to delay my judgement;
- and
- I felt honoured to provide my mentees with regular feedback of their progress and improvement.

Thus in the four decades of my managerial duties I was able to adequately transfer relevant information, some of my competence and almost all of my experience to many of my mentees so that they could make full and good use of those and they could gradually discover themselves to build their own enjoyable and rewarding career with confidence.

If in some small ways I was able to encourage, nurture and provide support to my fellow workers and colleagues during my work life, I consider myself fortunate because in the final analysis I have been the greatest beneficiary of this innovation. I felt that I was needed at my workplace and that I was doing something useful and necessary as an essential ingredient of human resource development.

I am confident that if anyone decides to become a mentor at any workplace they would not only join in an innovation that will expand the skill base, build strong teams, strengthen apprenticeship programmes but develop and take their entire workforce to a new height of excellence. Wish you all the best if you have the desire to assist the workforce. Let them feel that you have walked the path and are ready and willing to show the light to others as your managerial responsibility.





## Is Authority a Poor Substitute for Leadership?

One of my early management lecturers stressed that 'authority was a poor substitute for leadership'. At first glance I felt like disagreeing with the idea but as I went deeper into actual management and administrative duties and practices I could see great merit in that statement.

Now after so many years of managerial responsibilities I not only find it to be believable but I see how easy it is for most of us in the day-to-day hustle of business to forget it.

Every management job has a certain amount of authority that goes with it but one of the finer arts of management dictates that we must use it sparingly and wisely. It is natural that everybody likes to have authority maybe because it makes us feel important. However, when we use it unnecessarily or in a way that makes other people feel unimportant, then it is not good management.

It has been my experience that sometimes it is incredible what a little bit of power does to people. I have witnessed that if you move some people up a notch or two in the hierarchy they begin to act so superior that we cannot or hardly be able to freely talk to them anymore. They begin to give orders and that is what matters to them. This may initially seem the fastest way to get people to respond. In some situations it may require instant reaction and perhaps it is justified but it is no way to build a lasting feeling of co-operation and loyalty in people in our fold.

Therefore my question has always been very simple. Can real authority be just handed to a person anyhow? I have had my doubts because to be really effective, it must be earned. I think it is not so much the authority of a person's position or title that gets people to perform well as their regard for that person's competence and ability.

The more able your subordinates sense you are, the more willingly they will follow your directions. So a person's competence automatically gives that person a certain measure of authority. If people look upon you, for instance, as an expert on the subject, they will normally let you exercise all the authority you need to get the job done.

On the other hand, the people who do not respect the competence or judgement of their leaders will follow their lead grudgingly, no matter how much they are pressured. They will be more apt to drag their feet, resist what their supervisors want and maybe even throw sand or a monkey wrench in the gears.

It has been my contention that competent managers rarely feel the need to "pull rank" or throw their weight around. If they are confident that they can handle their jobs well they then should find no necessity to impress everyone that they are in charge. They will get better results and be better liked by relying on reason and persuasion rather than by just ordering people to do things.

Therefore, it would be sensible for modern managers to rethink about authority and look at the idea of good reason and the power of persuasion.

Most of us can do more than we think we can, but usually do less than we think we do.



## PRODUCTION AND MORALE

I think that one of the earmarks of a good manager is the ability to keep suspicion and rumours to a minimum. In my opinion, both can be very costly because they definitely would hurt production and lower morale at our work place.

Many times all it takes to arouse suspicion is a few unexplained facts. Once suspicions are aroused, it is amazing the things people can imagine. To all suspicious individuals, two and two invariably add up to a good deal more than four. This has been our draw back at some modern work places.

Unfortunately, people rarely keep their suspicions to themselves. Sometimes that is started as a speculation, may be further be enlarged and distorted as it passes along the grapevine. I am sure like me you too have seen it happen right in your or your colleague's organization. We can do something about this to increase the morale at our respective work stations.

How can we avoid this? The first thing I would do is to conduct myself in an open and above board manner, because in my few years of HR management I found that an effective supervisor of people never acts secretly or suspiciously.

The second is to always keep people well informed of what is going on. An efficient supervisor who does this regularly will find his people far less susceptible to speculation and rumour.

The third thing is to be constantly on the alert for things that might be misunderstood or misinterpreted and keep explaining them before any suspicion and rumours can get started.

With a little imagination and by keeping in close touch with everyone, an effective supervisor can usually spot incidents that need prompt

explanation. Then take the necessary action to remedy the situation before it further deteriorates.

As long as humans are human, I know that no one can stop suspicion and gossip completely because there would be always a grapevine of one sort or another in any organization. However, good supervisors though can do a great deal to keep suspicion and rumours from developing. They can definitely minimise the damage even though they may not be able to prevent them entirely.

And do not forget that you may occasionally be suspicious too. Nobody is totally immune to this human phenomenon. Suspicions can twist our thinking the same way as they twist the thinking of the people who work for us.

Therefore, when we are suspicious about something, whether it concerns the people who work for us or the people you work for, always remember not to speculate. It is always sensible to go directly to the people concerned to get all the facts for future rightful actions. It surely saves time, worry and ulcers.



## LEARNING TO PICK THE RIGHT PEOPLE

It has become an acceptable cliché that people are our greatest resource but what are we doing to make this matter in our work places?

Learning to pick the right people for the right job is one of the most important activities that any effective leader performs. In fact, a lot of success and progress depend upon this responsible task.

Some of us seem to have a knack for picking the right people for the right job whereas some of us are hasty and are not able to perform this responsibility with care. Actually, it is much more than a knack because it takes careful analysis of a variety of aspects such as job requirement, the people available, the work environment, the ability to blend with the mission statement of the organization and the depth of qualities and qualifications of the applicants. Plus of course a large dose of our own imagination and foresight.

The first step obviously is a careful analysis of the job itself. What abilities are required? What kind of personality or temperament is needed? How essential is the previous experience? What kind of person you can imagine doing this job well? and Why this particular person and not any body else?

Next step is to see what candidates do you have available? How do their abilities and personalities fit the requirements? If you are unsure of their abilities, is there any way you can test to find out? Could any of them meet the requirement if given some special training?

Sometimes it becomes obvious that none of the available candidates could rightfully fill the job or the bill. That is where foresight comes into picture. It should have been used a long time ago to foresee and avoid such a predicament.

No one can put the right person in the right job unless the right person is available and that is why a forward-looking manager tries to anticipate how a department might grow and develop. Such a person thinks about finding and developing the kind of people who will be needed next month or next year. This is our long term or forward planning technique.

It pays to think about tomorrow's needs as well as today's. How will your present subordinates fit into the picture then? What training and experience will they need to be ready to move along? Do they have the necessary potential?

We should know our people. If people do an excellent job in their present assignments, find out what else they can do. Test their capabilities with other assignments. Discover their strengths and weaknesses and abilities and opportunities. That way, when the time comes to consider them for another job, you will be able to make an intelligent decision. The people will be trained and ready to perform as you want them to.

The fact that someone is doing well in a present job is no guarantee that another position will be handled equally as well. It depends upon whether the capabilities of the person match the requirements of that particular job.

Therefore, leaders with the knack for picking the right people make a point of studying both the capabilities of the person as well as the requirements of the jobs at hand.

I can still recollect the good old days when a person was simply thrown into a job and allowed to sink or swim but a lot of water has passed under and over this bridge. It was an expensive procedure even then but the modern recruitment procedures are even most costly. Hence, a lot more care and caution has to be put in place.

Today, with good people as hard to find as they are, needless failures are even more costly. If there is anything that might be done to help a new person succeed, it is well worth the time and effort of everyone involved.

Trouble may start before new people are even on the payroll. When they are being offered jobs, they are treated as they are really somebody. An effort is usually made to impress them; they get attention and the position is presented to them in the best possible light. Is it any wonder, then, that they show up on the job with high expectation?

If their first few days do not live up to what they expected, their morale may be affected before they have hardly started. A big build-up leads to a big letdown if people treat them as if they are part of the woodwork once they are on board.

I know that intelligent HR leaders, no matter how busy, do not handle new recruitments haphazardly. They give new people personal attention. They schedule time to orient or induct them and they plan what jobs these new people can handle during those critical first days.

It is natural for new employees to have anxieties. Will they like the job? Will they be able to handle it well? Where do they start? How will they get along with others? Will there be much chance for them to get ahead? So encouraging new employees to ask questions and talk about some of these issues always helps to reassure them.

Not the least important is to make sure they have enough to do because nothing is more frustrating to people full of energy and enthusiasm for a brand new job than to sit and twiddle their thumbs, or have to kill time while pretending to be busy. A good manager therefore, can get them up to speed a lot faster by giving them challenging assignments right from the start.

It is very important to follow their progress and show continued concern by checking every now and then on how they are making out. The best way to maintain their interest in the job is to maintain your interest in them.

## What Do You Feel About Your Work?

There were times in my work life as an administrator when I too had certain feelings about my work. These could be translated as my attitude, my opinions, my ideas, my expressions or my comments that contributed to my effectiveness, efficiency or otherwise in working with people.

There were a few moments when I

- Felt like being absolutely responsible for productivity at my work station but there were other times when I did not care much but just rolled along with colleagues.
- Felt like communicating with my people but there were times when I did not want to talk to anyone.
- Provided coaching, motivational advice and some suggestions to people when performance problems arose among the workers.
- Gave praise freely when it was earned by my workers but there were other times I totally neglected this important performance appraisal responsibility.
- I was intimidated by what my workers and superiors really thought about me but other times I did not care about it at all.
- Sought new ideas and innovations and used them whenever possible but often this vital duties was overlooked and maybe neglected.
- Respected and honoured the knowledge, skills, talents and strengths of the people who worked for and with me but sometimes these could not be promoted.
- Followed up with precision to be certain that commitments, goals and standards were being met by everyone but when I did not I felt somewhat guilty.
- Was sensitive to the needs and feelings of my colleagues and other workers but there were moments that this managerial responsibility was neglected.



- Was not worried or used the knowledge and good information of the employees who knew more about things than I did.

When the computer technology came about and many of my employees could not keep pace with the revolution and technological changes, I woke up to my responsibility and organised appropriate training and development courses for them. However, when I found out that there were ill-prepared employees who had limited ability to use the equipment I either transferred them to do other duties or terminated their services.

One of my other managers had different idea about the situation. She prompted the employees to get more involved with the modern equipments. Thus learning became the top priority and she created a supportive environment with good with good trainers, training needs analysis and training materials and tried to make those employees gain competence in whatever field they were good at.

I now feel guilty that I was not able to support her when she set up an extra weekend or after hours retreat or one on one teaching and learning environment. When she was successful in retraining the workers and reforming them to the needs and wants of the organisation I got totally behind her and produced results that brought excellent results, productivity and profitability to the organisation. I learnt a lot from my non co-operative attitude.

Therefore, I felt I was a smart manager who made my mistakes worthwhile by being magnanimous enough to first admit them, then strong enough to correct them and maybe intelligent enough to profit from the process.



## Time Is Valuable

Many of us in the managerial and supervisory roles are well aware that our time is extremely valuable however, not all of us are equally conscious that other people's time is valuable too. Recognising that time is money and other people's time as well as our own is vital for the total profitability of the organisation, it should follow that a constructive way to encourage people to use their time is a lot more wiser and better phenomenon.

I have always strongly felt that we must try our best to make everyone in our organisation realize that time is valuable and must be managed with utmost care, proper control and adequate concern. This is definitely one of the vital things we have to strive for if we want an efficient operation and a profitable organisation. We must also remember that our concern for ours as well as other people's time makes everybody feel important.

We managers are busy people and if we face a situation where our people or others want to see us we often or usually let them wait. Let us put ourselves in their shoes and then we would be able to understand whether it is wise and could make a much more positive impression if we quickly found out what they wanted.

In this way we may be able to immediately find out that it is something we can do to handle in a few seconds. If not, then we can suggest that they come back later when you could see them right away. Either that or we would be able to drop by and see them.

Remember that we would not achieve anything by forcing them to cool their heels for half an hour or so. This forms and dictates a better attitude at workplace.

Let us consider another scenario and time when we are really tied up with very important matters and our issues are very urgent. In such cases we do not want to be disturbed by additional matters if

we can help it. All right, can we think first about the people who might want to see us and check to find out if they need your opinion or action immediately? This is where the issue of delegation of authority to someone responsible to handle the matter may be seriously considered. This action would certainly go a long way to make the situation smoother and manageable even if it would be someone else's decision.

Some supervisors and executives, whether they realize it or not, are definitely in a bottlenecked situation and do not envision that their subordinates' time is valuable too. Therefore those of us who do not think that other people's time is worth money then why should they? Closely related to this issue of time is the element of communication in the workplace and so it is very important when the listener properly understands the speaker. However, there are many reasons why real communication seems often to be short-circuited by the managerial personnel.

- Employees and the managers do not always feel free to say what they really mean.
- Some words have different cultural and social meanings to different people, particularly in a diverse work force.
- Some people hear only what they want to hear, with the result and consequence that the meaning intended by the speaker is somewhat or totally distorted.
- It sound odd but some people even do not want to listen. Much of the time they are either too busy thinking of what they are going to say next or they are in a different wave length.

Therefore, it becomes very important in relation to our time management as to how well do we communicate to succeed at our workplaces.



## Work to Better Your Life.

Listening -Interacting -Formulating -Energizing

Half of LIFE is IF therefore we have to look at a lot of valid reasons for our existence before we proceed to make it full and fruitful.

Of course, we are human and as such we are subject to err or mistakes and misjudgements.

Let me elaborate my point of contention by using the word HUMAN.

**H**appiness in life will only come if we are honest with all our duties and responsibilities.

**U**nique abilities are our divine possession and we are capable of great deeds in life if we try.

**M**ethodology that we use is weak or questionable and so we face ups and downs in life.

**A**ctions that we plan and take are inappropriate hence, we get frustrated with life.

**N**otions and beliefs that we hold are not clear so we face hardship in life.

What should we do? Turn your LIFE to FILE and in that file insert some useful aspects of your life.

**F**ind your talents, strengths, weaknesses and enlarge your opportunities.

**I**nitiate healthy interactions with colleagues to increase your knowledge, skills and experiences.

**L**earn to negotiate at every step to find a path that is risk-free, safe, beneficial and productive.

**E**nthuse yourself towards increased imagination and confirm this frequently by your affirmation and never give up. Keep saying I CAN and your profile would shine brightly.

Once your LIFE moves on in the right direction, it will bring the other half back.

They are your

- Listening skilfully and
- Energizing you effectively.

“Live so enthusiastically that life becomes long and effective.”

Since laughter has been prescribed as the best medicine,

“Laugh so much and so loudly that crying becomes impossible.”

Your laughter and enthusiasm would make your life truly worth living.



## Therapy For Success

1. Ponder over the smallest advantages of every event of your work life and make use of these to the fullest. Always remember that if you cannot do great things everyday you should try to do small things in a real great way.
2. Think of things that have happened today and now and make them positive and successful. We know that yesterday and then are dead. Our tomorrow and our future are not born yet. We can definitely build our current position firmly and leap to establish our tomorrow with a real difference.
3. Every individual is a unique person so we should never compare ourselves with others. This can develop an inferiority complex in us. Have faith in yourself. People who do not have faith in themselves and their creations provide opportunities for others to bypass them and go ahead of them.
4. Try to consider your critics as your well-wishers because I always found them helping me describe and clarify my weaknesses. They will gradually make you improve some of your faults, errors and mistakes and make you not only a better worker but an improved personality.
5. Try to forgive people who make life difficult and create hurdles in your work and family life. Then take some positive steps to forget those unhappy and irritating incidents. Be sure not to be fooled and fouled by the same person twice.
6. Try to train and develop yourself to solve one problem at a time by starting with the easiest one and proceeding to the most difficult one as you move on. I have found good solutions to many of my difficulties and problems using this powerful strategy. I can assure you that it is worth a try by everyone who seeks success in life.
7. Remember that people who are able to spare some time to assist others can greatly minimize their own tensions, worries and anxieties. Therefore, it is good to join some group to serve the

needy, poor, under-privileged or struggling people of your own organization.

8. I always over emphasize the value of positive attitude towards our day to day events. We can heal and convert many of our pains, sorrows and confusions into our joy and pleasure if we continued to conduct all our events with this type of attitude.

9. If I could not change a disturbing situation despite my best effort and genuine endeavours, I was not disheartened, unhappy and depressed because I knew I could make a difference if I kept trying. Time as we have been often told is the best healer of all our wounds. Of course, we should try to change things using another method by developing some new ideas and getting more guidance from our colleagues and mentors.

10. Acting your part well on the fast changing stage of this tough and competitive world has become a must. Since all real life dramas have the similar tragedies, conflicts and frictions it is always advisable to look for truth, beauty and goodness in everything that is difficult and troublesome.

11. Change yourself because self transformation is much soothing and better than the thought of taking any kind of revenge. Change yourself for the better things ahead rather than thinking of taking revenge for the wrongs done unto you. Always remember that change in our thinking in the end brings charm whereas the mere thought of revenge is reckless for good progress.

12. We know that jealousy is harmful for everyone because it burns our own mind, body and soul. So let us develop that kind of wisdom that brings immediate peace, solace, comfort and satisfaction to us. We would never be jealous about the progress and work of others if we could understand the true meaning of teamwork and co-operation.

13. Happiness is definitely contagious and reciprocal so the greater joy, pleasure and mercy we give to others the greater there is the likelihood that a lot more of these would come dancing back to us to distribute and share these traits to others.

14. The problems and difficulties we face at our work places as well as life are often the direct result of our own activities, actions and inactions so if we learnt to be pro-active and act immediately then we can save more of these piling up later. As the good weathermen say, prepare yourself for the bad weather.

15. Selfishness has never paid anybody any dividend so let us not be selfish. Expect more but work for it. Take what is rightfully yours but do not deprive others.

16. Discipline of the mind is dynamic. Control your words, actions, thoughts, character and heart to prevent unwanted and unnecessary ideas entering your system. Use your free and leisure times with care, caution and control.

17. We can definitely overcome lot of our worries by thinking out and planning our own solutions. Your knowledge and right information would be your power to proceed but you may have to do some extensive reading, careful listening and putting your thoughts and ideas into good practice. Plan all you act carefully and then act your plan well.

18. If we spent some fifteen minutes of our working day in meditation we can develop sound values for good living. This meditation would recharge you for additional action.

19. The demands of the new era are: to learn to do better than before, to delegate if you are over committed and to take more work load if you are free.

20. Develop relevant and needed skills and keep re-skilling yourselves continuously to remain productive at all times. Do not stagnate but learn to live with pride, dignity and honour.





## MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE HELPING PEOPLE GET RESULTS

“How did I feel about my work?” This is often an important question for all workers.

“How did my attitudes contribute to my effectiveness in working with people?” This is another vital question. If our answers match some of these then we should be satisfied with our attitude to work.

I liked

- being responsible for productivity
- people and enjoyed talking to them
- to provide coaching and advice when performance problems arose
- to give praise freely when it was earned
- to seek new ideas and used them whenever possible
- to respect the knowledge and skill of the people who worked for me
- to follow up to be sure commitments, goals and standards were being met
- to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others
- not to be worried by employees who knew more about their work than I did
- Not to be intimidated by workers who told me “what they really thought of me”.

So I have found a few ways that management can help their people get results.

1. Make sure that the right person is in the right job. People whose skills or training do not fit the job will waste valuable time and effort trying to do things they cannot do.
2. Give subordinates a clear idea of where their jobs begin and end. Overlapping responsibilities often result in duplication of effort.

3. Make sure that the people in the group know what the main objective is and how their work will help to achieve that objective. Going off on tangents means wasted time.
4. Give individual attention to those who mean well. Those who seem to be busy and to be working but who do not usually accomplish much.
5. Remember to correct faulty work habits and wrong mental attitudes. Then your worker will be able to contribute fully to the overall effort.
6. Help people cut through details and routine to the heart of the matter. Too many people get so wrapped up in HOW to do things that they lose sight of WHAT they ought to be accomplishing.



## COURTESY AT WORKPLACE

To be courteous is definitely a prime human attitude but many of us fail to realize how important this human phenomenon is for our daily living either at home or at our work place. Courtesy and the interest we take in our clients and customers, friends and family members, our colleagues and compatriots and our people put us in a very elevated position in our daily dealing with them.

In fact courtesy begins at home and spills into the community to give us a huge dividend at all times. The more interest we take in our people, our employees and our organization and the more assistance we give them the better our places of work become. To be courteous and kind are the true attitudes of mankind.

Courtesy is a strange thing. We tend to give it generously to strangers and yet the better we come to know people, the less we think about using it. This is unfortunate because plain ordinary courtesy, the same kind we often extend wittingly and automatically to strangers, is an excellent way of winning cooperation and good will from the people who work for us.

Therefore, I feel that courtesy is more than a matter of lip service. It shows up every day in many ways. Many times little things, perhaps, but they all add up and they then can produce a huge effect on the attitude of those who live, work and interact with us. For example, do we always take pains to greet people pleasantly? Or do we sometimes settle for a preoccupied grunt?

If a stranger wanted to tell us something we should have the courtesy to listen carefully and respond appropriately. The question that comes to mind is, do we tend to half listen and interrupt?

Courtesy or the lack of it can be symbolic of a person's, a manager's or an employee's attitude toward others, subordinates and superiors.

I find that people appreciate courtesy and they are quick to notice the lack of it, too.

My conclusion is that courtesy is the shortest distance between two people.



## CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH A DIFFERENCE

It has been stated from time immemorial that our customers are always right however, in modern world of selling this may not have much meaning now. It is not the question of whether our customers being right or wrong but the how do we deal with them with tender loving care to achieve our aim of encouraging them to purchase our products.

I still feel that Mahatma Gandhi said it all when he developed this statement.

“A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business; he is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him; he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so.”

Well, if Gandhi was indeed a salesman, he wouldn't have found favour in most of the organizations of today. This is simply because he would have laid bare the entire truth behind his product or service that wouldn't have gone well with the company that employed him.

Gandhi realized the importance of honesty being the best policy, something that you won't find much popular among most salesmen. But honesty is definitely the best policy if you are trying to sell something.

This is a fact that most salesmen forget when they are trying to persuade their prospects to make a sale, especially if they are trying to hard-sell. Being honest, which is the correct approach to selling, isn't easy to practice. This is given that being honest about the real quality of your product or services can sometime lose you the sale. All products and services have their flaws, so openly telling the prospects about the same might turn most of them away. So be careful how you tackle this issue.

### Put the buyer first

Help the buyer buy from you. Don't try to sell to them. Understand their needs and why they have come to you in the first place.

### Tell the truth

No product or service is delivered perfectly. There are bound to be flaws. But what customers hate the most is being sold or serviced using dishonesty. So if you are offering something that has flaws, tell it right there and then and let the prospect make a conscious decision. If there has been a flaw in servicing the customer, accept the mistake, apologize for it, and promise to never make it again.

I know that many salespeople have succeeded by following words like these:-

One word that is vital for all good customer service- YES

Two words that make your customers to return- THANK YOU

Three words that generate interest – GLAD YOU HERE

Four words to give your feedback – HOW DID WE DO

Five words of service- HOW MAY I SERVE YOU

Six words of wisdom – WHAT IS MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU

Seven words of pleasure- WHAT ELSE CAN I DO FOR YOU

Eight words to win customers- NOT SURE YET BUT I WILL FIND OUT

Nine words to nurture- THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS PLEASE COME BACK AGAIN

Ten powerful words- I APOLOGISE FOR MY MISTAKES LET ME MAKE IT RIGHT

I am sure you have your own ways of serving your long and short term customers and I would love to see your addition to this presentation.

### What do customers need?

- Care that is tender and loving
- Understanding that is well meant
- Satisfaction that makes them happy

- Truthfulness and tactful approach
- Openness that helps them appreciate your service
- Methodology of presentation and essential knowledge must be right
- Enthusiasm to conduct the job must always be there
- Response with responsibility with good reaction.



## MOTIVATIONAL AND INSPIRATIONAL CHOICES

Everything in life, at home or at work is your own choice. Let me read a poem by Shannon L Alder.

“You chose”

You chose to give away your love.

You chose to have a broken heart.

You chose to give up.

You chose to hang on.

You chose to react.

You chose to feel insecure.

You chose to feel anger.

You chose to fight back.

You chose to have hope.

You chose to be naïve.

You chose to ignore your intuition.

You chose to ignore advice.

You chose to look the other way.

You chose to not listen.

You chose to be stuck in the past.

You chose your perspective.

You chose to blame.

You chose to be right.

You chose your pride.

You chose your games.

You chose your ego.

You chose your paranoia.

You chose to compete.

You chose your enemies.



You chose your consequences.  
You chose.

However, you are not alone. Generations of people in your firm and family have chosen. People around the world have chosen. We all have chosen at one time or another in our lives. I stand behind you now screaming:

“Choose to let go.

Choose dignity.

Choose to forgive yourself.

Choose to forgive others.

Choose to see your value.

Choose to show the world you're not a victim.

Choose to make us proud.

Choose to make a difference.

Choose to be motivated and inspired from within.”



## Gross Misconduct in the Workplace

I can define Gross Misconduct as a proven crime in connection with employment. There is no doubt in my mind that it is serious enough and repulsive to require dismissal. Oxford Dictionary defines misconduct as improper behaviour and gives adultery as an example but I have added a lot more acceptable examples in this presentation.

In my four decades of practice as a human resource director with over a thousand employees in twenty locations and with four subsidiary companies I did not come across any employee who we could dismiss because of gross misconduct. There were several reasons for this excellent employee behaviour.

Firstly, the guidelines in our personnel or disciplinary policies were precise and clear for the employees and their respective managers to fully understand the adverse consequences of such misconduct if it ever occurred.

Secondly, our management system was geared to various checks and balances and there were various controls in place to nip such misbehaviour in the bud.

Thirdly, our training and development programs were geared to addressing all types of misconducts, gross or general, at all our work locations.

Of course, the regular social and cultural meetings, gatherings and the get together with various professional, ethical and motivational lectures, speeches and appropriate presentations developed a deep sense of loyalty, a greater sense of camaraderie and teamwork among the workers. In fact I continually noticed a feeling of brotherhood among the cross section of the employees and there was a very high degree of mutual respect in and among the hierarchy.

However, it was one of my greatest disappointments to get a false report of gross misconduct about one of my very loyal workers. A diamond ring was reportedly missing from the safe and the only person who had the key to the safe was this employee. The auditors alleged that the item was stolen by the person who had the keys because neither the shop nor the safe was broken into. I started the investigation and to my dismay and surprise I found him totally innocent because two days before the ring was reported missing or purportedly stolen by the employee, the previous manager in charge had locked the item in another more secure safe known only to him and went away on leave for three weeks. Since then I have always been very careful about any reports of gross misconduct unless of course there are specific eye witnesses and proofs of such adverse behaviour.

A recent example of dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct was the BBC case of Jeremy Clarkson who was responsible for an “unprovoked physical and verbal attack” that left a colleague bleeding and seeking hospital treatment.

Tymon was “subject to an unprovoked physical and verbal attack” by Clarkson, during which he was “struck, resulting in swelling and bleeding to his lip”. The attack “lasted around 30 seconds and was halted by the intervention of a witness”, and Tymon “offered no retaliation”. But the later effect of this episode is noticeably troublesome when other colleagues of Jeremy Clarkson have left the job to protest against his sacking giving us a feeling that this behaviour was not a gross misconduct.

The term “gross misconduct” has a variety of interpretations in the business world, particularly as the term applies to employment law. The subjective term is typically defined in detail by human resources organizations and is based on individual definitions. In general, gross misconduct in the workplace is characterized as an objectionable action that is wilful and cannot be described as a mistake or an act of negligence. It is deliberate act of misbehaviour.

I have always viewed gross misconduct from two angles. Firstly, the employers who are not able to manage their employees well can often take some blame for the unacceptable behaviour of their employees. However, this does not grant any freedom to any employee to misbehave. In fact there is no excuse for anyone at any work place to be an alien to commit any criminal activity which reveals gross misconduct. The fault lies in employees who deviate from normal, professional and ethical conduct at their respective workplaces. Lack of leadership, inadequate training, poor managerial control or any such adverse administrative role should not ever become a valid reason for gross misconduct by any employee.

Some accepted descriptions of gross misconduct include blatant disregard for the safety of others; deliberate acts of violence or hostility; attempts to financially defraud a company; significant levels of gross negligence and insubordination; blatant rudeness and use of abusive language; drunkenness; offsite misconduct and dishonesty through falsification of documents or other forms of misrepresentation. Generally, most criminal offences that happen in the workplace are defined as gross misconduct. This includes murder, sexual assault and embezzlement. Criminal gross misconduct is typically identified and defined in the legal system and a court of law.

It is understandable that the legal world and the courts view these acts on case by case basis. However, whoever is the determinant, the differentiation between wilful and negligent behaviour at workplace has to be looked at very seriously not only because such activities are of criminal nature but because they are harmful for the overall prestige of the business organization and our human resource practices.

On the other hand we cannot compare gross misconduct with any acts of poor performance, minor errors of judgment, or negligence of duty at workplace because these are slips that can be improved and controlled by training and development programs and rehabilitation intervention.

In my consultancy services as a HR practitioner I have always advised employers to try to make an exhaustive list of all the examples of gross misconduct they can possibly think of in their disciplinary or personnel policy document or staff handbook. Ultimately whether or not an offence is gross enough to amount to gross misconduct will be a decision of the management.

A lot of employers nowadays place a non-exhaustive list of examples of gross misconduct in their staff handbooks and disciplinary policies and procedures. That list often includes:

- Theft from the employer, clients, customers or colleagues.
- Fraud or deception in the course of employment including making a fraudulent expenses claim.
- Assault, fighting or any other violence in the course of employment.
- Serious misconduct or criminal acts whether during or outside the course of your employment bringing the employer into disrepute.
- Vandalism, damage or sabotage to any property of the employer.
- Harassment of colleagues, clients, customers or suppliers whether or not in the course of normal employment including harassment of a sexual or racial nature, or on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or disability.
- Bullying or intimidation without reasonable explanation such as to cause significant distress to a colleague, client, customer or supplier whether or not in the course of normal employment.

Many employers usually extend this list to cover matters specific to their own organization which are important to them, for example lending a security pass to colleagues, if security is particularly important. One vital point that needs to be considered when drawing up these guidelines is the current laws of the country relating to employment.

I have experienced that firing an employee who has grossly misbehaved can be one of the toughest business decisions we have to make, so we do not want to make it worse by getting it wrong and opening ourselves up to various legal and tribunal claims. This is

possible if the employers are unsure of the procedures to be followed when effecting a fair dismissal. Therefore, it would be advisable to always study the relevant regulations to be sure than sorry.

General misconduct tends to cover minor misdemeanours and misbehaviour that would not warrant dismissal for a first offence, but may lead to a verbal or written warning. Continued misconduct of this nature can result in dismissal, subject to the proper procedures being followed. Gross misconduct, as the name suggests, is much more serious. This can take many forms, ranging from offences which jeopardize the functioning of a business, or the safety and well being of the staff.

I emphasize the need for the employers to draw up proper and non exhaustive guidelines to differentiate misconduct and what constitutes gross misconduct to give the employees a clear framework so that they realize when they have overstepped the mark. These should be the important part of the personnel policies that are given during induction or regularly communicated to the staff.

The following were listed in one of well known HR managers of an SMI and these were the top 10 reasons they cited for summarily dismissing and firing an employee immediately:

- Criminal damage to work property
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol during work hours
- Theft or fraud
- Harassment or discrimination towards other employees, customers or the employer
- Gross Negligence
- Repeated absenteeism without due cause
- Inappropriate use of email, telephones or the internet
- Insubordination
- Falsifying experience and qualifications or general incompetence
- Leaking confidential information
- Any act of violence

- Any sexual misconduct.
- Any act of terrorism etc.

It is advisable to instigate disciplinary proceedings where dismissal may be a possible outcome but the correct procedures need to be taken. No decisions should be taken until a full investigation and disciplinary hearing has been conducted, and the employee has had the opportunity to put forward their case.

Some employers take the risk and conduct summary dismissal on any count of gross misconduct that is outlined in their guidelines. Some even do not wait for the courts to finalize their decision for the criminal of their crime.

I believe that a dismissal for gross misconduct will only be fair if, at the time of the summary dismissal, the employer:

- Believed the employee to be guilty of misconduct.
- Had reasonable grounds for believing that the employee was guilty of the misconduct.
- Had carried out as much investigation as was reasonable.

### Conclusion

The present employment field has come a long way from the old days of autocratic hire and fire. The laws have changed or modified and unionism has embarked on employee protection or the legal firms have begun to stand in between the employees and employers to bring about various types of litigations.

Another misconception about gross misconduct is that employees cannot be dismissed if their employer cannot produce indisputable evidence of their wrong doing. This mistake is often made by employees facing a criminal trial at some point in the future and their employer decides to dismiss them before their criminal case is heard.

Whatever is the case and scenario at workplace for gross misconduct, the procedures that are legislated should be followed and if actions are taken after proper investigation then there will always be harmony in the business world.

Gross misconduct is misconduct which when objectively considered, is capable of destroying the trust and confidence in the employee. It covers obvious serious misconduct such as dishonesty or violence as outlined before, but in any such cases, as long as an employer can clearly show

- That the employer can justify taking it so seriously, and
- That the employee should have been aware how serious it was.

Then the employer is entitled to treat it as an act of gross misconduct without any problems and the employee will have to accept the consequences of the unacceptable action.





## **Leadership with a New Perspective**

I am of the opinion that true leadership is a ladder that many have attempted to climb but a few have succeeded. We have community leaders, religious leaders, and political leaders and there are business leaders. All these can be defined as people who manage their domain and are totally in charge of their flock and in doing so they are people who promote prosperity, progress and peace.

I admire many leaders because of their qualities but my greatest admiration goes to that Polish gentleman who defined the very essence of leadership and who grew up to be the shepherd of over one billion Catholics. I am talking about Pope John Paul II for whom leadership seemed to come naturally. It radiated off him and he used it to not only steer his flock but influence presidents, dictators, kings, queens and many ordinary leaders as well as simple people.

The more we study his life the more we find that he had those special qualities that are so hard to define yet so obviously recognizable when you finally see them. He had them all as did the Rev Martin Luther King Jr had them. Just as Mahatma Gandhi had them and Mother Teresa, and Winston Churchill and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Nelson Mandela, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama or John F Kennedy had them.

Ever since my College days I have been reading about various leaders and studying their ideas and philosophies. I have agreed with some and disagreed with others and yet I have had a lot of respect for all of them. Even if I disagreed with them, I respected their clarity of convictions.

This pope had a rare charisma, a quality some people described as his special, penetrating, transcendent warmth. That luminosity was hard to resist, winning over even that toughest crowd of all, the teenagers. On his many trips around the globe, these teenagers flocked to him by the thousands and even their parents could only marvel at the magic.

A vocal advocate for human rights, John Paul often spoke out about suffering in the world. He held strong positions on many topics, including his opposition to capital punishment. A charismatic figure, John Paul used his influence to bring about political change and is credited with the fall of communism in his native Poland. He was not without critics, however. Some have stated that he could be harsh with those who disagreed with him and that he would not compromise his hard-line stance on certain issues, such as contraception.

Traditional, old-school Catholics adored John Paul for many of the same reasons that disconcerted his critics. He was the rock star of many people. He was their hero, their voice of conscience and a voice of moral clarity in the wilderness. And this perhaps has proved to be John Paul's greatest legacy. In a nuanced world of various

shades of grey, he rejected relativism and forcefully preached a vision of absolutes.

He told the world what it meant to be Catholic and what was expected of them. We could either agree or disagree with his views but there was no mistaking his overall messages.

John Paul had great respect for all religious groups. John Paul II expressed his admiration for Buddhism: In particular he expressed his highest regard for the followers of Buddhism, with its ... four great values of ... loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity; with its ten transcendental virtues and the joys of the spiritual association expressed so beautifully in their scriptures. He ardently hoped that his views will serve to strengthen the goodwill between all of us, and that it will reassure everyone of the Catholic Church's desire for inter religious dialogue and cooperation in building a more just and fraternal world.

Many people who were adrift in the muddled turbulence that followed the Church's reforms of the 1960s were really grateful for the re-direction. Like the father who recognized the need and gave his children indisputable boundaries, Pope John Paul clearly set parameters that Catholics and the rest of the world should live by and just as the children, the faithful found in those strictures stability and comfort.

Of the many reasons I adore John Paul's leadership qualities is the one where he appeared guided by a

moral authority so consistent, so strong and clear that even a non-believer could almost accept the Catholic proposition that he was a direct extension of the hand of God. His Holiness indeed was blessed with holiness, with goodness and decency that every leader of my choice should possess.

When the paedophilia scandal swept the church, he was nearly as bereft and violated as the victims themselves. His anguish was palpable. The pope I am admiring as a world leader was so many things: poet, athlete, and academic, philosopher, multilingual intellectual, defender of innocence, crusher of communism, critic of capitalism, champion of the downtrodden and thus became the unstoppable force of peace, progress and prosperity.

Many people have said that he was the greatest gift to the world from heaven because if John Paul disdained communism, he also had plenty to say about the evils of Western affluence, its materialism and decadence. Even as he delighted conservatism, he hammered home many issues dear to the hearts of liberals such as peace, non-violence and economic justice. He forgave the man who tried to kill him. He reached out to Jews and Muslims. He decried the death penalty just as he decried abortion and euthanasia. He definitely understood that if life was sacred, there could be no exception.

In 1995, Pope John Paul II held a meeting with Jains, a sect that broke away from mainstream Hinduism in 600 BC. He praised Mahatma Gandhi for his "unshakeable faith in God", ensured the Jains that the Catholic Church

will continue to engage in dialogue with their religion and spoke of the common need to aid the poor. The Jain leaders were impressed with the pope's "transparency and simplicity", and the meeting received much attention in western India, home to many Jains. This was the courage and conviction of a leader who wanted justice for all.

John Paul chastised many presidents of many countries on more than one occasion to stop rushing to go to war. As one listened to him, it was clear he followed only one adviser, one opinion poll and that was his own moral code. If only all leaders could be so pure and do the right things at the right time this world would be a lot safer and peaceful place to co-exist.

He was a remarkable life. Upon the death of John Paul II, a number of clergy at the Vatican and laymen throughout the world began referring to the late pontiff as "John Paul the Great"—only the fourth pope to be so acclaimed and the first since the first millennium. He was certainly greater Alexandra the Great in many aspects of leadership.

I can not help thinking that even after his death, the pope's leadership still radiates. He showed us how to accept this life with dignity and grace. All the modern leaders- political, religious or communal- have a lot to learn from that great leader. If they are unable to then they would be a lot poorer in their performance.



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### The Basics of Strategic HR Practices

My first basic contention that I would like to make at the outset is that an organisation that regards the whole managerial team as the HR practitioners would see a lot of tangible benefits from this practice. Every manager would be ultimately responsible and accountable for the recruitment, training analysis, development and management of every member of the workforce. There would be no instance of reference to the HR the separate department. This practice may seem new but it has the potential to save a lot of time, money and unnecessary worries. I practiced this method of HR management for over a decade when I was an active director of HR.

My elder son works as CEO of a 6000 plus organization and they do not have a HR department for the very reason I have given above. In fact every HOD and every Manager of that organization is an active and well equipped HR practitioner. Mind you they are spread in various locations right throughout Australia and every one of the Managers is accountable to every decision about the people who perform for the business. This new trend is slowly catching up with other forward looking businesses,

Having made this very bold statement in controversy to the basics of Strategic HR practices I feel that HRM and HRD are still as vital as they were before and are becoming more and more demanding and refined. Many people of traditional belief find my introductory views rather disconcerting but after I have

completed my presentation a lot of my ideas should clarify many of my contentions.

There were certain very vital questions for me when I was recruiting, directing, developing and managing over 1000 people of a multinational business organisation. Strategic HR became basic to us all because of various reasons. We fully understood and appreciated that capital and labour were complementing each other all because of goodwill. Let me discuss those one by one.

1. MY SELF KNOWLEDGE- I tried hard to fully understand myself and this led me to make reasonable and proper decisions about my life and work. This basic strategy may sound very obvious but it gave me the sense of purpose every time I went off the rail. However, I knew and understood that self knowledge was not the only key to managing my people purposefully because I needed a range of other necessary tools, basic skills and knowledge which come to us from our extensive experiences and interactions with people around us. But self knowledge no doubt has been a healthy starting point for me.
2. NO RIGHT AND WRONG ANSWERS- There were no right or wrong answers except the traditional ones so I always tried to make sure that all my workers were in the right position in the right job. I constantly reminded myself to analyse the job requirements and job statements of my people and then focus on what was their needs, wants and core values. Thus I managed to foster and promote natural aptitude in the workers. This was very fulfilling for the process, enjoyment, strengths and the needed skills of everyone. It assisted all of us to enhance performance at the work place.

3. **ASSESSMENT AND ENCOURAGEMENT-** While I knew what kind of HR personality I was at different times for varied situations as well as for the different people I managed to encourage my people to continually assess the type of person they themselves were and then expected them to fit into and be in a variety of demanding and changing roles. This notion definitely made all of us the best performers and revealed our worst dilemmas.

I knew and respected both types of people at our work place- the introverts- those who were happy when they were by themselves doing their own things. In fact we did not worry too much if they did not pursue the social activities. Since they often felt uncomfortable in the specific scenarios we tried to develop special programs for them and found out that they produced exceptional results.

However, all our planned training programs brought about the needed changes for all the team members. Then there were the extroverts- those who interacted with people and felt at a loss when they were by themselves. They were the best of my team and gradually helped us bring the introverts into our fold. There was no rush but we developed our team slowly and certainly.

4. **REVIEW AND ADJUST OUR PERSONAL BALANCE SHEET-** While I treasured my own personal core values I kept trying to encourage my staff to add their own core values to their natural aptitude and personal strengths. The subject of Core Values is a topics of full



discussion separately but let me just mention a few to clarify my point. Leadership, inspiration, positive change, sustainability, justice, passion and compassion, excellence, motivation, innovation, accountability, empowerment, service, integrity and respect for people etc.

This is how we would be able and ready to review readjust our personal balance sheet everyday with an eye on tomorrow. I clearly understand and respect the notion that everyone has a personal value system and they should be encouraged and inspired to workout their own priorities. I was once asked "What should we value at our workplaces?"

My answers were in the form of more questions because each individual is different in looking at the order and structure in the work environment, the chances to assist others, to accept freedom and flexibility, the extent of achievement, power, recognition and authority.

Do you value conformity and structure?

Do you value service and assisting others?

Do you value freedom and flexibility?

Do you value peak performance and achievement?

Do you value mentoring, skilling and re-skilling your colleagues?

Whatever are our core values they would take time to mature and get implemented so it would be wrong to believe that they could be achieved at once.

##### 5. AWARENESS OF MY FUTURE.

While I was fully aware of my future demands and challenges I continued to inspire and motivate my staff

to be equipped with the needed and required skills, talents, knowledge and strengths to make the correct choices. I did tell them that it was not very easy to acquire. They needed to put in hard work, find more time and effort and be more effective and efficient in everything they were charged to do. They knew from my inspirations that work life was a flowing river and not a static pond.

Therefore specific and constant changes were needed and necessary. I told them to keep a WATCH- words, actions, thoughts, character and heart. No one should be tied to one particular mould at work so it was vital to keep up to date by looking at their past, studying their present and building their future accordingly. Adapt, adopt and adhere to the changes was always my advise. Start immediately and do not leave matters for the next day or later. Procrastination was the greatest thief of everything. Establish yourself at work firmly, concentrate and consolidate to stay on course and avoid all forms of turbulence. While in gear do not think of retirement.

6. OUR PUBLIC IMAGE WAS ESSENTIAL. Another basic HR strategy I followed blindly was that of our public image. For me the public image of my organization and the people who performed to achieve that goal, that mission, that objective was of paramount importance to me. Therefore I emphasised that the way a Company was regarded by its competitors, supporters, suppliers, critics, the general publics and the customers told a lot about us and our style of service by our people. I asked all staff to fully understand the complexities of the organization for which they worked. I told them that they were the

specialist performers and effective contributors to the overall image of the organization. I concluded that the more ambitious they became in this area the greater success they would achieve.

7. OUR PEOPLE WERE OUR MOST VITAL ASSET. My maxim was always very simple. Our people who worked for us were the most powerful and important asset of the organization and as such they had to be well respected and looked after. My assertion was that if every worker functioned efficiently and worked effectively not only within the outlines of the job description but went beyond these, there was no need to know who was in charge and who had the power to perform. This naturally created a powerful teamwork where everyone was managing the given tasks with dignity, honour and respect.

No one needed any extra push, pull or unnecessary guidance or administrative orders. Everyone fully understood the role and the need for efficiency and effectiveness. Our people became peak performers and bold achievers. Of course, they were adequately rewarded for their participation.

I firmly believed that if we are building a successful career in any organization, we wanted to be closely associated with success. I wanted all my staff to be part of the winning team that produced success. For this to be materialized satisfactorily I made it sure that all our team leaders had and practised these qualities.

We practised the ideas of TOPS and MBWA for all our HR management. Brevity was essential for all our reports, hence the one page system. Every worker was important and had to

be visible; hence the idea of management by wandering around (MBWA) was thoroughly practised rather than being attached to the office desk.

Finally in order to motivate my people I first investigated what motivated me most and then took the necessary step to initiate any changes. I know for certain that many of you may have had these HR practices, found them workable or modified these to suit your specific environment. I wish you well in your endeavours to manage your people at your business location because of two reasons. Firstly, it is essential and secondly, it is difficult.



## **TIME IS VALUABLE FOR ALL PEOPLE.**

Time is money. Time is important. Time is valuable. Most of the enthusiastic people are well aware that our time is valuable. Not all of us, however, are equally conscious that time is important and valuable for other people as well.

So recognizing all of the above points we can safely say that there is always a constructive way to use our time more wisely. When we ignore the value of time of other people, you cannot blame them if they do the same.

Therefore recognizing that other people's time is valuable is a subtle way to help them realize it too. This is one of those important things that we have to strive for if we want an efficient operation. Your concern for other people's time makes them feel important.

If you are busy when people want to see you, do you usually let them wait? It is wiser and makes a much more positive impression if you find out immediately what they want. Maybe it is something you can handle in a few seconds. If not then suggest that they come back later when you can see them right away. Either that or you will drop by and see them. You do not achieve anything by forcing them to cool their heels for a half hour or so.

Then how about the times when you are really tied up with very important matters? They are urgent and you do not want to be disturbed by other matters if you can possibly help it. All right, let us think first of the people who might want to see you. Check to find out if they need your opinion or agreement on anything before you become available. Then delegate authority to someone else to handle the other matters that may come up. Make it possible for life to go on as smoothly a

possible, even though you would not be available to make all the decisions you normally would.

Some managers, supervisors and executives whether they realize it or not, are definitely bottlenecks. They do not realize that their subordinates' time is valuable too. If you do not think that other people's time is worth money, then why should they?

Helping people get results instead of just going through the motion is what management is all about. We can establish a few suggestions to help us achieve our goal and save our as well as the time of other people

First, make sure that the right person is in the right job. People whose skills or training do not fit the job will waste valuable time and effort to do things they cannot do.

Second, give subordinates a clear idea of where their jobs begin and end. Overlapping responsibilities often result in duplicating of effort.

Third, make sure that the people in the group know what the main objective is and how their work will help to achieve that objective. Going off on tangents means wasted time.

Fourth, give individual attention to those who mean well, who seem to be busy and to be working, but who do not usually accomplish much. Faulty work habits and wrong mental attitudes must be corrected before the worker can contribute fully to the overall effort.

Fifth, help people cut through details and routine to the heart of the matter. Too many people get so wrapped up in *how* to

do things that they lost sight of *what* they ought to be accomplishing.



## HR Profiling

The need for talented people in the right jobs in any modern business organization can be summed up in a simple way: no talent, no numbers. Talent is a leading indicator of whether the business is headed up or down. Smart leaders put people before numbers, because it is talent, in the end, that delivers the numbers necessary to keep a business strong and healthy. No business organization is able to secure a reputable position without delivering peak performance and acceptable returns on investment.

Some questions that need truthful answers from every HR professional are:

Why talent is the only competency that endures when financial results, market share, brand and legacy have half-lives?

How world-class organizations find and nurture talent?

Why intimacy with your talent and a repetitive rhythm of reviews are the foundation for creating a steady, self-renewing stream of leaders for all levels of the organization?

How to pinpoint and build an individual's leadership strengths?

What are the guidelines for assessing and improving your organization's talent mastery capabilities?

"What knowledge and abilities are necessary for HR professionals and leaders to achieve high performance?"

There is only one reasonable answer for this and that is TALENT.

**T**actfulness

**A**bility to Lead

**L**egal Knowledge

**E**fficiency and Effectiveness

**N**ew Ideas

**T**enacity



Profiling in general is the recording of a person's behavior and analyzing psychological characteristics in order to predict or assess their ability in a certain sphere or to identify a particular group of people.

HR profiling can be used in –

1. Recruitment and Selection - To point out the required behavior to accomplish the job and match those with candidate's profile. Example - Psychometric Test.
2. Performance Management - To check/control the real performance in accordance with organization's objective.
3. Competency Mapping /Skill Gap Analysis - To judge the current level of employee.
4. Training and Development - HR profiling provides inputs in designing the T&D.
5. Succession Planning. - Prepare future leadership.

It has been argued that different bundles or configurations of human resource practices can improve innovation performance, but there is little empirically-based research that provides details of the practices utilized by different types of innovative firms. It is important to identify how different types of firms vary their HR practices to build organization-specific innovation capabilities.



## MY INITIAL WORK AS AN HR EXECUTIVE

Before I started my work as an HR Director I had to ask myself a few pertinent questions and find workable answers for them. I had to know my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and talents so that I could perform my work well. I initial objective was to excel and be a peak performer.

### **Who am I?**

This question took me to self knowledge which was invaluable in my work. Of course, I had to ask myself many supplementary questions to get to the right decisions such as 'Am I in the right job? Is the job right for me? What am I good at? And what else can be done to strengthen me and my skills?

### **What type of person am I?**

**Thinker** – Do I enjoy tackling problems with logic? Am I strong on analysis but weak on implementing solutions? Am I a methodical worker? Am I skeptical of projects unless they are backed up with sound and rational arguments? (At Work) Am I good with facts and figures, researching, systems analysis and financial side of business?

**Sensor**- Am I good at getting things done? Am I impatient at planning stages? Do I feel at home with routine work? Do I believe in having a lot of common and practical sense? Do I strive to work hard and am usually well organized? Am I energetic enough with single-mindedness? And at work Am I good at initiating projects, setting up details, negotiating, troubleshooting and converting ideas into actions?

**Intuitior** –Do I enjoy playing with ideas and theories? Am I good at seeing the overview but miss the detail? Am I creative and have a strong imaginative sense? Do I often get hunches about things that turn out correctly? And at work Am I good at

long-term planning, creative writing, lateral thinking and brainstorming?

**Feeler** –Do I enjoy human company? Do I assess on personal values and not on technical merit? Am I warm and sympathetic? Am I perceptive about peoples' moods, feelings and reactions? Do I overlook blatant facts in favour of my gut feelings? And at work Am I good at cementing team relationship, counselling, arbitrating, public relations and talk freely and openly with everyone from a clerk to an executive?

**What do I value?**

Some values are innate and others are acquired or brought about by various conditioning in life or career. These are not always easy and can take quite a time for dominant values to emerge.

Do I value conformity and structure?

Do I value an ordered environment and security?

Do I value assisting others?

Do you look for chances and opportunities to help others?

Do you value freedom and flexibility?

Do you want to be your own boss?

Do you value achievement?

Do you provide opportunities to others to achieve? Do you value power?

Do you value the difference between power, authority, recognition and responsibility?

Do you value a tangible product?

Do you value that all products that are tangible and can be further improved and finished?

Do you value facts and figures?

Do you value working with people?

Do you value congenial people to work with? Do you value financial and economic success? Do you value personal and added fringe benefits?

From my entire Do's I pulled out my Don'ts and then I became reasonably aware of the future?

I tried to be an HR Executive with an unlimited and multiple strengths, talents, skills and strategies to overcome some of my weaknesses and take advantage of all the opportunities that were knocking on my door.

Consequently I could see that I was serving my organization with dignity and vigour. Hence, I got my report card.

### **My REPORT CARD as HR Executive**

How did I feel about my work as a successful HR executive? After a few years of reasonable results I asked managers to frankly assess me and give me a report card.

Many of my section managers expressed their views and attitudes about me in these ways:

My attitudes that contributed to their effectiveness in working with them were summarized as follows:

- I like being responsible for productivity
- I like people and enjoy talking with them
- I provide coaching and advice when performance problems arise
- I give praise freely when it is earned
- I am not intimidated by workers who tell me, 'what they really think about me.'
- I seek new ideas and use them whenever possible
- I respect the knowledge and skill of the people who work for me
- I follow up to be sure commitments, goals and standards are being met.
- I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others
- I am not worried by employees who know more about their work than I do.

## **MY CONCLUSION:**

In the end, knowing myself made me arm myself with the necessary tools and equipment to make correct choices concerning my work life and job but these were not something that were easily acquired because it was not simply a matter of answering the above questions and adding up to my scores. I tried to continually look and relook at these and additional questions to keep improving my performance.

Therefore, I as a humble HR Executive of yester years have always felt that there is no beginning or end in questioning ourselves about our needs, personality, type, strengths, skills, talents, weaknesses and opportunities. For me work life has been a continuously but smoothly flowing river of knowledge and not a static pond.

I know that change and impermanence are part of the world tomorrow and I should be ready to accept all the challenges. I do not know if I am in a fit position to face the future head on but I am ready to get started, establish, consolidate and stay on course despite the much turbulence before I begin to plan my retirement.

I am confident that all the new breed of HR Executives would do much better if they found a reasonable route from some of my practical experiences.



## **STRESS MANAGEMENT AND POSITIVE THINKING**

*As the director of training at my workplace I had to conduct various training programs to motivate my staff and here is one episode of that presentation.*

While talking to my workers who needed some advice on stress management and the power of positive thinking I picked up a glass of water from the table. They all thought that I would be talking about the old maxim of glass half full or glass half empty. But they were surprised when I asked them, "Guess what would be the weight of the water in the glass?" They all agreed that it might weigh 300 to 400 grams but when I told them that whatever weight you have guessed makes no difference to my point of contention, they were further confused.

The real difference is revealed when I know how long I can hold this glass of water in my hand.

I said, "What will happen if I keep holding this glass of water in my hands for a minute?"

The answer was insignificant because I said nothing might happen.

I then said, "On the other hand what will happen if I keep holding this glass of water in my hand for an hour?"

The answer was obvious that I may feel some pain in my hand or there can be some stiffness in my hand.

But my next question was critical, "What will happen if I keep holding this glass of water in my hand for a day?"

My answer was that my hand would definitely be very painful, could be paralyzed or I may not be able to use my hand well

after this. However, in all the three actions the weight of the water in the glass neither increased nor decreased. It did not change at all.

Similar corollary can be drawn and give result in our work and family lives for our anxiety, worry, stress, sorrow, fear, misery, calamity and other concerns.

If you can manage to just keep these in your mind for a minute then nothing will happen to you.

However, if you keep these in your thoughts for an hour they can begin to bother you to cause trouble by giving you pain, tension and perplexity.

But if you keep them sitting in your thoughts and mind for days on end then these calamities would make your life miserable and you will find it hard to perform your tasks, duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. They will paralyze your thoughts and you will not be able to think well and act with proper rationale.

In conclusion let me state that in all the three situations your glass of worries and tensions remained constant but remember to put the glass of anxieties, calamities and tensions away within the first minute of picking it. Do not carry it for days in order to remain free from all types of stress and negative thinking.

Be positive. Be Happy. Be Useful. Be Healthy. Be Productive.



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**REDUNDANCY, RE DEPLOYMENT  
AND RETRENCHMENT**

Looking back at my own work days as HR director I can see a lot of differences in the definition, processes and requirements for redundancy, retrenchment and redeployment of workers nowadays because of various progressive factors such as the impact of unionization, legal assistance and awareness, political support for workers and even better understanding and management by the employees as well as the other leaders within the business organizations

However, the fact remains that redundancy has become an important business decision for many business leaders in cases of downturn in their business, change in overall economic circumstances of the country, downsizing for some other reasons such as lack of specialist and other necessary skills and/or looking at restructuring the organization for profitability and performance demands from the Board of Directors of larger organizations.

Therefore, workplace dictionary has been enlarged to relook at redundancy, retrenchment and redeployment with extra care and specific consideration for the employers as well as the employees. We cannot just look at the entitlement issues for both sides of the organization. While the employers can justify redundancy because of various changes in workplace and work pressures, it is equally true that the employees have reached a stage where with the help of their unions, their other legal representatives and even supportive laws, rules and regulations they too stand up and seek justice for wrongful dismissal, cooked up redundancies and unjustified downsizing.



So the current situations, changes, circumstances and other revolutionary and educational endeavours have given us reason to look at both sides of the story to tackle the issues of redundancy and retrenchment in order to find reasonable methods of redeployment, severance pay, restructuring the workforce and conduct general downsizing of the business organizations that can justify these necessary evils.

Some of the sensible requirements and pre requisites of these issues are effective communication, discussion and consultation with the people concerned before taking any action. Holding needed consultative sessions with the board, the managers, unions and the workers will enable us to make reasonably acceptable decisions regarding voluntary or compulsory redundancy and the extent of redundancy packages or any possible swap with the sister or other similar organizations.

Many organizations fail to act properly in these matters to be able to seek flexible work arrangements, re-skill the workers, re- structure the work place, cut or shorten working hours, allow workers to take their unpaid leave, organize temporary layoff with reasonable wages, swap jobs, loan employees to others interested firms, institute pay cuts and even perform the FIFO procedure.

Sometimes the organizations can justify their actions to restructure, make workers redundant and re deploy workers on the grounds of bankruptcy, solvency or poor profitability provided they have been communicating their difficulties with the people involved and holding the necessary consultative procedures. However, this is a delicate issue for the employers and the employees and can relate to the loyalty of one to the other.

When it becomes absolutely necessary to take this action no amount of loyalty is helpful to face the worsening economic conditions and other adverse circumstances. I have known of people getting retrenched with over twenty years of loyal service so I advised them to keep and make themselves employable by re skilling, get advice from colleagues regarding their finances in case of redundancy and be ready for a career change at any time.

Finally I would avoid the mystery of the unknown through regular information about the situation to everyone involved. This vital process of communication and consultation would reduce anger, frustration, fear, confusion, anxiousness and any aspects of denial on either side of the table. If all the required and necessary procedures are followed by everyone involved then the entire process of redundancy, re-structuring and re deployment can be a smooth adventure in all circumstances including adverse economic business, downturn, and inefficiency.



## **Living Our Core Values**

**We enlightened human beings love to live with our core values if we truly believe in the progress of humanity. Our core human values are the foundation of our truly successful business or family life. Let us look at some of the core values that could assist us to better our human existence and our relationship with people we work with.**

**Confusion is the worst dilemma that we humans possess when the time comes for our advancement. Therefore, it is advisable to gain real clarity about who we are and what we stand for because to get what we really want, we must know who we truly are.**

**Do I sound confusing? Let me explain further. Self-knowledge is invaluable to anyone who is seriously intent on choosing the right life or business path. If we do not fully know ourselves, we will be led into making ill-advised decisions about our life and work from which it would be difficult or impossible to get out.**

**Some questions that could assist us in knowing “Who we are?” can be:**

**Am I in the right job?**

**What type of person are you?**

**What do you value?**

**Are you aware of your future?**

**Let us find out why sound core values are the foundation of a truly successful life.**

**1. Gain Real Clarity** about who you are and what you stand for. To get what you truly want, you must *be* who you truly are.

**2. Better Use of Time.** You make better choices about where you spend your time—your most valuable asset. There's no way to get any more of it. To live an ideal life, you must learn to choose carefully as to how you invest your time. Your core values should be your guide.

**3. Core Values Means More Income.** Being true to your core values affects your bottom line. It's a lot easier to earn money when you're doing what you love in accordance with your core values.

**4. Purpose and Passion.** Knowing and being true to what really matters to you means having more passion in your purpose and more purpose in your passion. The congruity makes it happen.

**5. Inspiration.** Understanding and living from your core values opens the door to more inspiration in your life. And we can all use more of that.

**6. Motivation.** Living in accordance with our core values keeps you motivated. It's motivation from within rather than motivation plastered on from the outside.

**7. Overcoming Discouragement.** We all experience challenges and we all get discouraged from time to time. But when we know what our most important values are and are dedicated to making them live and breathe in our life, we become more resilient.

**8. Stay On Track.** Our values are like our moral compass. They keep us headed toward our true north. And when we get off course, we notice sooner. They help us get back on track more easily.

**9. Easier Choice of Goals.** Choosing which goals we set and go after is easier when we're clear on our most important values. We can do anything we want, but we can't do *everything*. It's incumbent upon us to choose wisely. And that's easier when our values are front and centre all the time.

**10. Better Decisions.** Being clear on our core values makes every decision we make easier. Weighing the pros and cons of any decision is simply less painful and less complicated. In short, discovering, defining and living our core values allows us to get more of the right things done and enjoy the journey more.

Let us start with 20 examples of core values with brief description of each. This would be followed by examples of Business Core Values of Top companies that influence our online existence.

- 1. Accountability-** Responsibility of our actions that influence the lives of our customers and fellow workers.
- 2. Balance-** Maintaining Healthy life and work balance for workers.
- 3. Collaboration-**Collaborating within and outside the company to give the best.
- 4. Commitment-**Commitment to roll great product, service and other initiatives that impact lives both within and outside the organization.
- 5. Community-** A sense of responsibility and contribution to society that define our existence.
- 6. Consistency-**Be consistent in offering the best for wonderful experience.
- 7. Diversity-** Respecting the diversity and giving the best of the composition.
- 8. Efficiency-** Being efficient and effective in our approach to give best solution each time.
- 9. Empowerment-** Empowering the employees to take initiative and give the best.
- 10. Fun-** Having fun and celebrating small successes in our journey to achieve big.
- 11. Innovation-** To come out with new creative ideas that have the potential to change the world.

**12. Integrity-** To act with honesty and integrity without compromising the truth.

**13. Leadership-** The courage to lead from front and shape future.

**14. Ownership-** Taking ownership of the company and customer success.

**15. Passion-** Putting the heart and mind in the work to get the best.

**16. Quality-** Giving the best and unmatched results for all round satisfaction.

**17. Respect-** Giving due respect to self and others and maintain the environment of team work and growth.

**18. Risk Taking-** Encouraging self and others to take risk for a bright future.

**19. Safety-** Ensuring the safety of people and making sure to give them trouble free experience.

**20. Service Excellence-** Giving the best and world class service and achieving excellence each passing day.

### **Examples of Core Values**

Core values are the fundamental beliefs of a person or organization. The core values are the guiding principles that dictate behaviour and action. Core values can help people to know what is right from wrong; they can help companies to determine if they are on the right path and fulfilling their business goals; and they create an unwavering and unchanging guide. There are many different types of core values and many different examples of core values depending upon the context.

### **Core Values About Life**

Often, when you hear someone discuss why they fell in love with a spouse, they will mention that they have the same values. In this case, they are often talking about compatibility,

their core values, or internal beliefs that dictate how life is to be lived.

Some examples of core values people might have about life include:

- A belief, or lack thereof, in God and/or an affiliation with a religious institution
- A belief in being a good steward of resources and in exercising frugality
- A belief that family is of fundamental importance
- A belief that honesty is always the best policy and that trust has to be earned
- A belief in maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

Parents also try to instill these types of positive core values in children.

Of course, core values don't always have to be positive. Some people may be driven by self-interest or greed, and these are core values too if they dictate the way the people live their lives.

### **Corporate Core Values**

Companies can have core values as well. These are the guiding principles that help to define how the corporation would behave. They are usually expressed in the corporation's mission statement.

Some examples of core values for a company might include:

- A commitment to sustainability and to acting in an environmentally friendly way. Companies like Patagonia and Ben & Jerry's have environmental sustainability as a core value.
- A commitment to innovation and excellence. Apple Computer is perhaps best known for having a commitment to innovation as a core value. This is embodied by their "Think Different" motto.

- A commitment to doing good for the whole. Google, for example, believes in making a great search engine and building a great company without being evil.

As you can see, many of the core values that companies have are similar to those that individuals might choose as guiding principles as well.

Companies may also have negative core values as well. Companies that are solely motivated by profit, such as tobacco companies who lied to their customers about the dangers of smoking, may have been driven by core values of self-interest and an overly strong profit motive.

### **Some Types of Core Values**

There are countless types of core values, as you can see, so you will need to choose the ones that are right for you or your organization in order to manage people and their activities.

Here are some examples of core values from which you may wish to choose:

- Dependable
- Reliable
- Loyal
- Committed
- Open-minded
- Consistent
- Honest
- Efficient
- Innovative
- Creative
- Humorous
- Fun-loving
- Adventurous
- Motivated
- Positive
- Optimistic



- Inspiring
- Passionate
- Respectful
- Athletic
- Fit
- Courageous
- Educated
- Respected
- Loving
- Nurturing, and
- Caring.

### **Identifying Core Values**

While some people or companies might expressly publish their core values, often the best way to identify these values is to look at how they act and behave. A core value is only a true core value if it has an active influence and if the people or companies manage to live by it, at least most of the time.

Our people who work for us have values as well and if their core values and the core values of the organizations match then the entire management of human resources becomes effective and efficient. The advantages to the business organization would be enormous.



## My Confession

When I was a younger executive, I was to be given an award for excellence by an organization to which I belonged. I was invited to the dinner where the award was to be presented and was asked to say a few words. I must admit that I was scared to death because at that time my background as a speaker was quite limited.

The evening arrived and I found myself seated on the platform next to the main speaker of the evening, a person with a national reputation for witty and entertaining after dinner talks.

I confided and confessed my fears to the main speaker, "I am supposed to say a few words and I cannot think of anything to say. In fact, I am terrified."

The guest speaker smiled sympathetically, "I know just how you feel," he said, "I have made hundreds of speeches, yet I am probably just as scared as you are."

I was surprised and said, "But ... you do not have to be afraid!"

The speaker then said, "Let me tell you a secret. Everyone on earth is shy and self-conscious underneath. All of us are timid about meeting strangers, whether singly or in a group like this."

"That audience out there," continued the main speaker "is just as scared as you are, believe it or not. So if you just spend the first few seconds trying to make them relax and feel comfortable with you, you will forget your own fears and make a fine speech. Just try it."

I did and it worked for me that night and has always helped me present myself adequately. Thanks to my mentor, Sir Ronald Gould.

## **SECRET OF JOY AND SERENITY**

- Make the most of what comes and the least of what goes;
- Accentuate all the positive thinking and try to eliminate all the negative ideas;
- Make the most of your blessings, your assets, and your joyful moments but make the least of your handicaps, your liabilities and your moments of sadness and loneliness;
- Make the most of all your strengths, your opportunities, your talents and your successes but make the least of your weaknesses, your setbacks, crises and adversities;
- Make the most of everything that comes into your life. If good comes your way then be grateful. If the worst comes along then accept the challenge and make the most of it;
- Analyse the reasons for everything and ask, "What can I learn from my experiences?"
  - You will find a path for your happiness.



## **DESIRE FOR EXCITEMENT**

Inside all of us is that internal desire for some excitement, even when everything else is gone from our life.

If we cannot dance any more, if we cannot ride a horse any more, or play golf or tennis anymore then we know for certain that we have reached old age.

One by one these things from our life get taken away from us but we can either sit quietly or sulk or we can substitute with something else and find some alternatives in life.

I am looking for those alternatives and I am getting there gradually.

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# CONCLUSION

A writer without the enthusiastic readers is not quite complete and whole. I am indebted to so many of my readers who have been downloading my books to read from my [www.free-ebooks.net](http://www.free-ebooks.net) website. It is just another human nature when we think that we are smart, opinionated and fully engaged in life to present a lot of good thoughts but many times the truth of the matter differs from this notion. I am an ordinary person wanting to make a difference in the workplace. If my thoughts are relevant they can be taken and used to the advantage of the people and their organizations but if they are obsolete then they can be revised or discarded.

Right from the day I became a teacher early in 1960, people made me feel welcome in their lives. Many of them have become my good and faithful friends. Some like my writing, others love my words and thoughts and there are others who have not yet made up their minds about me. Of course, there are others who hate my courage to move on regardless.

I sincerely thank all of them for their true feelings about me. All these have been an honour for me in my three scores and ten years of happy and fruitful life. Now I have moved beyond seventy and have enjoyed every moment of my childhood, my exciting adolescent, my fascinating single life and my happy family life.

I know that all of us are created equal but we are not born equal. We do not grow up equal. We do not have access to equal education or opportunity. Some of us are fortunate to be born in wealth or marry or stumble into it. Others do what they must to survive. I have worked hard in life and have survived.

My life has been reasonably rewarding and at times impossibly beautiful. At times it was wildly unpredictable but worth embracing

every moment of everyday. I want to believe that truth, goodness, beauty and gentleness will someday prevail for all of us. Then this world will be a better place to interact.

For my father farming was a mysterious challenge and yet he tried his best to send me to one of the best educational institutions of those days to give me the firm foundation to fit into the complexities of the modern world. My father read scriptures, studied people behaviour, went out fishing, and did some hunting so for his eldest son life became a second nature to move ahead with added vigour. I took all of it that my early life could present to me like youngsters take to learning a second language, effortlessly and intuitively.

My father was always the cool, collected and courageous one. When there was a crisis or an emergency he was at his best, calm, in charge and taking control. For my whole life he had been that strong hardwood of the equatorial forest that I loved to emulate and turned to for strength and security. I grew up confident that he could right my any wrong and fix any problems that I faced in life.

I have to narrate these facts of my life so that people who read my essays can see some of my past challenges, difficulties and hardships that I faced and yet found myself safe to see the opportunities that were knocking on my door for me to keep advancing and let others move in the right direction. All my lectures and essays are expressions of my personal experiences, some theories but I have been able to refine many worthy ideas of my professional colleagues.

I now feel that loneliness is much better than any bad company. My friends and colleagues have been my greatest learning ground and I was privileged to harvest these to my advantage. I could mention the names of all these worthy contributors but I am afraid that I may miss the one who gave me the most valuable knowledge.

Therefore, while I am truly indebted to all my acquaintances, let me sincerely thank my wife, Saroj and all my children as well as my grand children for enriching my life. I am what they have together helped to give me unconditionally.

Finally, let me admit that whenever I wanted to climb the tree of success I did not leave anything to chance because managerial or administrative accomplishments are rarely straightforward. This inherent notion almost always demands moving up with definite goals and objectives which seem to grow harder and harder the nearer you get to them.

Let us all be realistic about the valuable strengths, cruel weaknesses, open opportunities and great talents we all possess and want to sail well in this complex and competitive business world. People who are willing to put in their best foot forward with added vigour should always get the reward.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

To begin with let me state that I am old and one of the advantages of being of my age (76) is that people like me have had the better fortune to meet many wiser and more intelligent people in their life. The people who were experts and who knew much more about great many topics and who willingly provided me their hard-earned knowledge and experiences. I sincerely appreciate this kind gesture.

We all are ignorant in some fields and as long as we are willing to learn, we can gradually use that knowledge to think, write, speak and compose. Authors like me have been using the ideas, knowledge and thoughts of their friends and colleagues and whether one calls this borrowing or stealing is a matter of interpretation.

If I begin to mention all the generous people who have made me rich in word, action, thought, character and heart I would have to write a separate book of my worthy helpers and teachers. It is sufficient to mention that all these generous people have really enriched my life by allowing me to use their ideas, information and thoughts to make me look like a wise presenter or a fluent writer.

My admiration and gratitude go to my wife Saroj Devi Prasad, who had been my inspiration for over half a century and although she is no more in this world, I am, as always, sincerely grateful to her for the vast knowledge that she was able to compress into me. I am just 'regurgitating' some of those to call them my own. This is somewhat selfish of me but as always, she was the one who understood my feelings quite well and deeply.

I have special debt of gratitude to our four children and their respective families including our eight grand children for their help in a million different ways. They were my learning ground.

As always, the best is left for last, my teachers, who gave me the power, knowledge and wisdom to think, speak and write. I salute you all.

I agree with a lot of writers on this subject that management is about people and not systems because it is believed that people get together to achieve the many worthy objectives of their organization. It is the effectiveness and efficiency of the people who work for the organization that enable the organization to state, promote and brag about their mission statement.

I have been writing and speaking to a variety of business groups in my working life as HR practitioner and the above are some of the thoughts and ideas that I was able to express at various locations.

This is not the end of my contributions and if time, interest, enthusiasm and effort permit I will continue to develop more ideas in the future. But until then let me thank the people who gave me tons of practical and theoretical ideas. This collection is dedicated to all who helped me become what I am today.

You all have made me proud and you deserve my appreciation.

This has been my favourite maxim of work and family life:

**“IF IT IS TO BE IT IS UP TO ME”**

**R**AM **L**AKHAN **P**RASAD.



## **EPILOGUE**

### **KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS**

We often hear about exceptionally generous people in the commercial world who would give the best shirt off their back to you but many of us would never believe that anyone would do such a thing until we hear the story of my good business manager friend Anwar.

Anwar's son Kamaal, who was a final year law student, went to Perth during his semester break. While he was walking to catch a bus with his friends, the strap of one of his sandals broke. He told his friends to proceed without him. Just then another young man whom he did not know stepped forward and asked Kamaal the size of his shoes. The stranger then took off his shoes and handed them over to Kamaal.

He refused payment or an offer to meet up later so that the shoes could be returned. For Kamaal it seemed like a 'wow' moment and the one all his friends are still impressed with. This is one of the stories that my friend Anwar will always treasure in his book of kindness which he says is contagious.

Anwar's wife Jamila has a few other stories of charitable acts that she had experienced that intrigued me and restored my faith in the human race. She knows of an eighty-year-old widow in Chapel Hill who requires a wheel-chair to get

around. Jamila is amazed at the generosity of strangers who willingly deviate from their usual business to push her wheel-chair to the place she wants to go.

Jamila too has often assisted her eighty- year- old neighbour who says, “Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect to be the recipient of so much kindness. I feel like I have a constant guardian angel with me.”

I was extremely fascinated to witness various such instances of kindness at many workplaces that I have been visiting and feel this is the result of good promotion of social and cultural management by our business leaders. I am of the opinion that this type of culture will definitely strengthen our business organizations because our workforce will be composed of more considerate and even kinder human beings. Thus, more quality customer service will prevail at every work place.

Good on you people. I salute you and your social and cultural commitments and conduct. It is an honour to share my thoughts with the readers.



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### About the Author



There is relatively a small segment of HR leaders in the commercial and industrial world who seem able to build harmonious relationships, trust, and rapport with almost anyone, and then are able to broker the relationships and make connections between people, creating partnerships and alliances, and motivating forward momentum to get things done but Dr Ram Lakhan Prasad is one of those people. Getting things done and driving results through collaboration, partnership and relationship from his experience as Director of Human Resources of a 1000 plus company is what he is all about. With an enthusiastic and genuinely friendly attitude, Dr Prasad radiates a sincere passion for delivering value and benefits to his clients.

A teacher by training, he earned his professional qualifications from reputable tertiary institutions in UK, USA, Fiji, Australia and NZ. After twelve years of active teaching, then ten years as a senior

curriculum developer, advisor and evaluator, he joined an internationally recognized enterprise as their Director of Human Resources. He was responsible for acquisition, development and management of over a thousand employees in a variety of duties.

His contributions cantered on spearheading development and delivery of training and management programmes for various sections of the enterprise. Throughout it all, Dr Prasad has repeatedly proved his ability to lead through diverse and challenging situations.

Today, although Dr Prasad has retired from all active involvement, he continues to do consulting work and providing advisory services as part of the i-HR Consulting Sdn Bhd Advisory Board to various organizations. He also spends time producing professional material and doing creative work on specific as well as general issues. His professional books, novels, short stories, poems and other articles are all published in various forms.

One of his revealing services has been to motivate and inspire young entrepreneurs and youth involved in community services. For him any motivation minus workable strategies is equal to frustration. So he feels that continuous adjustment and addition to our profile make us an ardent achiever and sharpen our executive, social and all other instincts.



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