

MANAGEMENT AND QUALITIES OF MANAGER: LEARNING'S FROM SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

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Introduction

Management thought and practices, as we know them today, have a history that may be traced back to ancient times. In fact, ever since people began living together in groups they have tried to organize their activities so as to achieve a certain level of efficiency and effectiveness. In India Kautilya's Artha-shastra contains an eye-catching account of how the State's affairs ought to be managed.

It is described as an “activity”, a “process”, and a “group of people” vested with the authority to make decisions. “Management” is a wide term. It carries different meanings depending on the context in which it is used.

According to Louis Allen, “Management is what a manager does”.

According to Henry Fayol, To manage is “to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to coordinate, and to control.”

According to Peter Drucker, “Management is a multipurpose organ that manages a business, manages a manager and manages a worker and work.”

According to James D. Mooney and Allan C. Reiley, Management is the “art of directing and inspiring people.”

According to Koontz and O'Donnel, Management is the “creation and maintenance of an internal environment in an enterprise where individuals, working in groups, can perform efficiently and effectively toward the attainment of group goals. It is the art of getting the work done through and with people in formally organized groups.”

Management is Formulation of objectives, plans and policies of the collective enterprise; Assembling men, money materials, machines and methods for their accomplishment; Directing and motivating the men at work; Coordinating the physical and human resources; Supervising and controlling performance; and Securing maximum satisfaction for both employer and employee and providing the public with the best possible services.

Management Quotes

- “Some people do the best work when led. Not everyone is born to lead. The best leader, however, is one who 'leads like the baby'. The baby, though apparently depending on everyone, is the king of the household. At least, to my thinking, that is the secret” -Swami Vivekananda
- “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things” - Peter F Drucker
- “Management is nothing more than motivating other people.” -Lee Iacocca
- “Good management is the art of making problems so interesting and their solutions so constructive that everyone wants to get to work and deal with them” – Paul Hawken
- “A good manager is a man who isn't worried about his own career but rather the careers of those who work for him”– H. S. M Burns
- “What's measured improves” - Peter Drucker
- “Rank does not confer privilege or give power. It imposes responsibility” — Peter Drucker
- “No matter how tiny you look, you can lead huge men if you have what the huge men don't have” — Michael Bassey Johnson

Qualities of Management

Management is very essential for successful running of an enterprise. It ensures proper use of physical and human resources by deriving the best results. It leads to efficient performance and higher productivity. Arising out of these benefits, the importance of management may be outlined as follows:

- **Helps in Achieving Group Goals:** Management assembles and organizes available resources for the accomplishment of the goals of an enterprise. It adds effectiveness to the efforts of a group of persons organized to achieve given objectives.
- **Optimum Utilization of Resources:** Management utilizes available physical and human resources productively. It eliminates all types of wastage and leads to efficiency in all business operations. Thus, it results in effective running of business activities.
- **Reduces Costs:** To secure efficiency of operations, management is concerned with reducing costs of production and increasing the output. Through better planning, organizing and control, and the use of various cost reduction techniques, efficient management leads to reduced costs and increased output.
- **Establishes a Sound Organization:** Management lays down a pattern of authority-responsibility relationship. The structure so formed shows the various inter-related positions for which the right type of persons with right qualifications and training are selected.
- **Maintains Equilibrium:** Management helps an organization to survive in its dynamic

environment. Good management enables an enterprise to adjust to the complex and ever-changing external environment. Thus, management is responsible for survival and stable growth of an organization.

- **Essential for Prosperity of the Society:** Efficiency of management leads to greater and more economical production for the society. Through increased welfare activities, it improves the standard of living of the people. Moreover, through its creative activities like designing new product and adopting new technology, management provides maximum satisfaction of consumer needs in society.

Manager

Management is a creative process which integrates and uses various available resources effectively to accomplish certain goals. For which, an individual is responsible to develop ideas and get things done through others. The concerned individual is designated as manager; any person who performs the function of planning, organization, staffing, directing and controlling for the accomplishment of pre-determined organization goals is called as manager.

The smooth functioning of a business unit depends on the performance of the manager. If a manager has adequate skill, he can discharge his duties effectively. Manager plays a key role in planning. Planning involves deciding the course of action well in advance. The manager can decide the procedure to be followed in order to achieve the objectives of an organization. Planning the work is a rational activity. Manager has to take a lot of decisions with regard to the assignment of work to every worker and delegation of authority to do a job. A wise decision can be taken by an efficient manager. Quality of decision is based on the intelligence of the manager. Manager should delegate authority whenever a project or work is assigned to others. Nobody can do anything without authority. So, the manager has to delegate authority on need basis. Sub-ordinates bring problems before the manager. The manager has to solve the problems instead of salving (pacify) the problems quickly. Finding solution to a problem will prevent cropping up such problems in future. The tasks or activities of the sub-ordinates are co-ordinated for quick execution of a work. Increased productivity is to be achieved through effective co-ordination. Overall organizational objectives could be achieved only by the process of co-ordination of various individual efforts. The workers have to be motivated to do their work. Workers will be idle in the absence of motivation. Motivation could be done by money or kind. The Manager has to choose between the two depending on the situation. Target is to be fixed by the manager section wise. Setting of target indicates the workers the extent of contribution made by them in the overall performance. Target is fixed on the basis of the main objectives of an organization. Even though the manager is a boss to his sub-ordinates, he can guide the sub-ordinates in the performance of their work. The Manager is acting as a friend at this stage. The guidance of the manager is a necessary tonic to sub-

ordinates. Availing the facilities in the working place is crucial for effective performance of any work. So, the manager has to arrange the required facilities. Besides, the manager has to watch over the utilization of the facilities. The Manager has to control the workers if there is any difference between standards of performance and actual performance. The control ensures the right performance. The exercise of control is in the hands of the manager.

Case Study

Srimad Bhagwad Gita and Modern Management: Lord Krishna as a Management Guru

Quoting Bhagwad Gita to emphasize management principle is very much relevant today. Modern management gurus introduce modern management concepts; Saints of India had applied identical strategies in their works Gita has got all the management tactics to achieve the mental equilibrium and to overcome any crisis situation

Teachings of Lord Krishna are infinite. His names and forms are innumerable. Lord Krishna who is an entity unto itself is a proven charismatic leader and manager. He imparted his teachings through his exemplary life and actions. Let us reflect and take a glimpse at the illustrious facets of Lord Krishna.

An exemplary- a leader, a hero, a protector, a teacher, a philosopher and a friend: all in one. Krishna was one of the most pragmatic Lords of all times. He propagated theory of bhakti and good karma in Bhagavad Gita. The Holy Book Bhagavad-Gita elucidates several important management lessons for all.

The goal of this case study is to stimulate thinking in the minds of management researchers and practitioners the enormous potential that ancient Indian literature has in suggesting better alternatives for management. We will explore some aspects of these from one of the sacred spiritual text of ancient times, viz., Srimad Bhagavad Gita-a text for spiritual progress and self-realization.

Learning's from Srimad Bhagavad Gita

Srimad Bhagavad Gita is a divine poem containing an inspired doctrine and is popularly known as the Gita. It is a sacred Hindu scripture and is one of the most important texts in the history of literature and philosophy. Authored by Sri Veda Vyasa and compiled through the hands of the Lord of Wisdom, Ganesha, it finds a place in the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata. It comprises of 18 chapters spread out in 700 verses. It presents the counsel of Krishna, the Super Management Guru to his disciple Arjuna – two prominent leaders of Mahabharata, the epic of the feud between two warring clans – the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

Lord Krishna (embodiment of wisdom) preached The Gita as counseling to Arjuna (embodiment of skill) to motivate him to perform his duty when he faced an ethical dilemma whether to

kill or not to kill his own kith and kin in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

The transformation of Arjuna from a self centered restless person to a conscious peaceful person is a case of leadership transformation ,the Bhagavad Gita can be experienced as a powerful catalyst for such a transformation. It is universal scripture applicable to people for all temperament and for all times.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna's first lesson to Arjuna is to train his mind to the notion of time that is essentially long term (Chapter 2, Slokas 11-13).

A good understanding of this helps managers to feel less pressurized of performance targets in the short run and instead develop some conviction to engage in activities and decisions that seek to create a balance between short term and long term. Change management becomes easier as they develop comfort in the fact that people come and go and good principles and ideas must remain and drive choices in organisation, They will also begin to realize (as it happened to Arjuna) that whenever they face complicated and apparently insurmountable problems, one way to broad-base the problem and search for acceptable solutions is to revisit the notion of time.

Krishna as the Management Guru

Lord Krishna is the master of finesse and there is a lot to be learnt from him. Following are some of the management strategies useful for leaders.

- **Share your Learning:** True manager or leader must share their learnings with others. As the saying goes 'knowledge grows when shared with others', when applied is the best practice of all. Krishna who was called as a 'Sarvagya' – never hesitated to share his thoughts with others. When Arjuna was in a fix whether to fight his brothers or not, he reminded him of his purpose and taught him the methods to overcome his fear and doubts; thereby focusing on his duty.
- **Stick to your Goals:** Krishna had three definite life goals for himself. First, 'Paritrayana Sadhunam' which means welfare for good; second, 'vinashaya dushkritam' meaning destroy evil (thought) and third, 'dharma sansthapana' meaning establish and strengthen the good principles. As a manager he personified that one should have clear cut goals in the organization and one should never allow their senses to be controlled.
- **Strategic Approach:** Lord Krishna was master strategist who used problem solving approach throughout his life. He with his tactical skills won Mahabharata war for Pandavas. He proves that a person who is skilled in planning action or policy will win for sure in war and politics. A plan of action is important to achieve long and short-term goals.
- **Tactful Communicator:** Krishna through his power of speech and oration skills motivated Pandavas several times. He motivated them to serve good and only good, concurrently working towards attainment of justice. A true leader or manager always takes

initiative to motivate his colleagues and fellows.

➤ **Be Grounded:** Despite being a king and a supreme, Krishna lived his life in simplicity and he was a man of people. A leader should be humble, noble and down to earth. This will ensure his growth and progress.

Krishna is an embodiment of all divine potentials (whether hidden or not) and what befitting occasion of Janmashtami to talk about Lord Krishna. Celebrated with great fervor across the nation, Krishan Janmashtami symbolizes imprisonment in the worldly illusions, and incarnation of Lord Vishnu (birth of good) symbolizes vanquishing of evils (outside and within) leading to edification and peace.

Lord Krishna, through his life demonstrated how to live a life in entirety and stated continue doing right, without having attachment towards the outcome of those actions and most importantly, never hurt anyone.

Conclusion

Good management must result in greater satisfaction for all stake holders. If we carefully study the Gita, we infer that the central issue is all about doing work (karma yoga), in the most efficient manner.

A careful study of Gita from this perspective will lead us to important principles that managers must inherit to create rightful and long living organizations. Such a study will help us discover certain aspects of high performing organizations and, may provide vital clues for alternative paradigms of management.

Developing a good sense of neutrality is an important pre-requisite for discharging one's work very effectively. This may appear like a simple idea. However it requires deep contemplation of this idea and a conviction of its usefulness. Only out of such a conviction can one generate new behavioural patterns consistent with this idea. The current dominant paradigm 'I must enjoy fruits of action-else no work' will generate enormous amount of wasteful effort.

Embracing the overarching principle of karma yoga will have to be the alternative paradigm for improving the quality of management in organizations. If managers can take these two important lessons from the Gita, we can not only build an alternative paradigm of management but also succeed reasonably in the practice of management. That can be the greatest tribute we can offer to the sacred text of Bhagavad Gita.

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