

## Management – Re-Defined - A Step Forward Towards Modern Management Philosophy



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### ABSTRACT:

***Mind is very restless, forceful and strong, O Krishna, it is more difficult to control the mind than to control the wind.***

~ Arjuna to Sri Krishna- Bhagavad Gita

Management is a process of aligning people and getting them committed to work for a common goal to the maximum social benefit - in search of excellence. The critical question in all managers' minds is how to be effective in their job. The answer to this fundamental question is found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which repeatedly proclaims that "you must try to manage yourself." The reason is that unless a manager reaches a level of excellence and effectiveness, he or she will be merely a face in the crowd. The classical Indian epics written thousands of years ago, enlightens us on all managerial techniques leading us towards a harmonious and blissful state of affairs in place of the conflict, tensions, poor productivity, absence of motivation and so on, common in most of Indian enterprises today and probably in enterprises in many other countries. The modern (Western) management concepts of vision, leadership, motivation, excellence in work, achieving goals, giving work meaning, decision making and planning, are all discussed in the *Bhagavad Gita*. While Western management thought too often deals with problems at material, external and peripheral levels, the Indian thought tackles the issues from the grass roots level of human thinking. Once the basic thinking of man is improved, it will automatically enhance the quality of his actions and their results. Management is, therefore, all about man and about his development, not merely his body, mind or intellect but his heart. It is when heart responds to heart that a static organization becomes transformed into dynamic one

**KEYWORDS:** Excellence, Effectiveness, Transformation, Technological Innovation, Optimum Utilization

### INTRODUCTION

Indian management, so long, has followed the path of adhocism. In the Pre-war years, India learned the technique of modern management mostly from the United Kingdom. In the Post-war years, India turned to the United States in this and many other spheres of knowledge and techniques. There has been tremendous 'Quantitative expansion' in the field of management. We can truly boast of having of army of modern managers.

But this 'Quantitative expansion' called for qualitative enrichment to become transformed into dynamic developmental management. This did not come forth. Resultantly, Indian management became an experiment in alien culture. The present industrial scene is a monumental testimony.

The Successes in industrially advanced countries have demonstrated that successes come basically because of two factors – (a) technology and (b) synergetic human resources.

Many studies like the Hawthorns, the Ahmedabad, Lippitt and white, and researchers like Whyte's "The Organization Man", Argyris's "Personality and Organization" have also shown that results can be achieved in organizational settings by integrating technology with people. Management thus focuses its attention on both: technology and people.

In our concern for transformation of Indian society from a basically agrarian society to a dynamic industrial society, we have, so far, been giving attention to technology aspect of management only. Everyday increasing technical collaboration and our craze for Hi-Tech 'Phoren' technology are ample examples of our concern with technology. There is no doubt that high tech, whether in the form of computers or Tele-communication, Robots on the factory floor or office automation, biogenetics or bio-engineering, is of immeasurable qualitative importance. High-tech provides the excitement and the headlines. It creates the vision for entrepreneurship and innovation in the community, and the receptivity for them. However, the problems that we are

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facing today cannot be solved by scientific and technical skills along; they require social skills. Our problems are not in the world of 'things' but in the world of 'people'. Our greatest failure has been the inability to secure co-operation of and understanding with 'others'. Shortly after World War II, Eiton Mayo recognized this problem when he reflected that "the consequence for society of the unbalance between the development of technical and of social skills have been disastrous.

As we consider the challenging problems in the management of organization – business, government, school and family, we realise that the success of our organizations is directly dependent of the effective use of human resource-our people. As such, orders are obtained by people, designs are carried out by people, products are made by machines operated by people, and plant is assembled and commissioned by people in short, people are the most vital resource in the whole process of wealth generation. It is they who can turn sand into gold. Fascale and Athos's observation on American Management is also relevant to us. They have pointed out that:

"Today world competition poses an organizational challenge that cannot be met simply by technology or financial resources. Technological innovations and resource allocation are outcomes of human process. Our success is not inevitable. Our ability to complete rests on our ability to organize human beings in such a way as to generate opportunity and results, rather than impasses, stagnation, bureaucracy and wasteful friction."

Heraclitus, the Greek Philosopher, said that man is the measure of all things. Niccolo Machiavelli's observation on importance of good soldiers i.e. people is also worth quoting. He said:

"I maintain, then, contrary to the general opinion that the sinews of war are not gold, but good soldiers, but good soldiers will always procure gold".

Soldiers, but good soldiers will always procure gold".

It is thus obvious that thought technology and system definitely make the hands and heads more efficient, the leaps in productivity and effectiveness of all organisations come by reaching the heard of people, by enlisting their unstinted co-operation. The problem is not technology, but people, Transfer of advanced technology is easy and can be borrowed. But the 'Software of People' development is difficult to be imported. Each society has to develop it on its own. Ideas can be borrowed and stolen. But the application has to be indigenous because the culture sprouts only in the indigenous soil. Drucker has pointed out that:

"Technology can be imported at low cost and with a minimum of cultural risk. Institutions, by contrast, need cultural roots to grow and to prosper. The Japanese made a deliberate decision a hundred years ago to concentrate their resources on social innovations, and to imitate, import and adapt technical innovations – with startling success."

Hi-tech would, therefore, require management to adopt 'hi-touch' of people and it is in this sphere the concept of management has to address itself and it is in this context that the concept has to be reconsidered and redefined.

### (a) Getting things done :

Traditionally, management has been defined as "getting things done through people". Initially, we are apt to applaud this notion of management especially in an environment in which so much remains stuck. But nothing can be so distant from truth. "Getting things done" necessarily involves commanding and obeying. Commanding injures the self-respect of one commanded and obeying degrades into cringing. This situation assumes 'man' as a mere long in organizational machine. Obviously it is not true and this sort of situation cannot evoke the best from the other person, who will acquire negative attitudes, along with a dismal fund of self-centeredness.

Indian tradition has always depreciated the element of force. Man is to be wooed, and not coerced into co-operation. He is to be drawn, not driven, persuaded, not compelled. People must use their intelligence, exercise their discrimination. Verse 63 of chapter XVIII of the Gita states thus:

"Vimrsyai tad asesena

yatha icchasi tatha kuru"

(Having reflected on it fully, do as thou choosiest).

### (b). "They 'want' to do:

Management is sometimes defined as "getting other people to do what 'you' want to do because 'they' want to do it". Implicit in this definition is the notion that 'people' are a flock of sheep – passive, walking lumps of mutton – with the manager as the human shepherd, and the manager can be successful by miracle-mongering or spell-binding or by false pretension. In his sixteenth-century treatise "The Prince", Machiavelli presents this point.

A prince "should seem to be all mercy, faith, integrity humanity, and religion. And nothing is more necessary than to seem to have this last quality, for man in general judge more by the eyes than by the hands, for everyone can see, but very few have to fed. Everybody sees what you appear to be, few feel what you are." The prince, however, "must have the mind so

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disposed that when it is needful to be otherwise you may be able to change to the opposite qualities, but it is necessary to be able to disguise this character well, and to be a great feigner and dissembler, and men are so simple and so ready to obey present necessities, that one who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived.”

Success of management through this skill can only be of use in short-term. Man has experienced knowledge and skill to understand. Moreover, a manager’s mission cannot become others mission unless and until all see that the mission has value for society and directly or indirectly – for themselves as well-“The Ass in the Tiger skin” story of the Panchatantra employee demonstrates sand disastrous consequences of adopting this view in the realm of management.

“However skillful in disguise,  
However frightful to the eyes  
Although in tiger-skin arrayed,  
The ass was killed – because he brayed”.

A manager like a true teacher should not assume a false responsibility. Management is not industrination.

### (c). Human Development:

No organization can become great, or achieve prosperity, without its people developing a sense of self-discipline, humanistic motive, an enlightened membership awareness, and willingness to do hard efficient, co-operative work. These cannot be brought about commanding or conspiring. Therefore, management’s concept must shift from exploitation of human resources together with other resourced to their development.

Management is, therefore, all about man and about his development, not merely his body, mind or intellect but his heart. It is when heart responds to heart that a static organization becomes transformed into dynamic one. To use Julian Huxley terms, management is a science of discovering human possibilities and potentialities and an art of their greater fulfilment- the fuller realization of more possibilities by organization collectively and more of its component members individually.

### (d). Human ‘Response’ Development:

The concept of management as human development is very near to truth. However, it should be noted that man is potentially divine and all virtues outlined above are natural to him. Virtues and values are as such not be developed but elicited. Swami Vivekananda said:

“Teach yourselves, teach everyone, his real nature. Call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity.”

True, in the ultimate analysis, it is the man who has realized his ‘inner-self’ and ‘inner-urge’ to develop himself in order to build in him competence, confidence, capability and credibility. Management is to ‘arouse’ inner-self of man.

Albert Schweitzer thus commented:

“I do not believe that we can put into anyone ideas which are not in him anyway. As a rule there are in everyone good ideas, like hinder, but much of this hinder catches fire only when it meets some flams or spark from outside.”

In tending that fire, management is to become spark or flame. Management is to man, what a match – stick is to ammunition. So long match-stick does not touch ammunition, there is no explosion, So long management does not touch ‘man’ there is no overflow of human possibilities. Management therefore, can be defined as ‘human response development’. This does not merely refers to positivists skills but also normative values, not in Machiavellian sense but in true moral and spiritual dimensions. Without it, management can be termed. As ‘good management’ but never as ‘management for good’. It needs grasping that unless healthy normative values are active within positivistic skills, mere skills will always run the risk of nefarious application, e.g., Shakuni’s diabolical game of dice in the Mahabharata.

Management may be defined as an art of human response development by application of normative values. And the test of management, is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is there already.

And this art India developed ages ago in her Upanisads and the Gita, and has continued to foster, up to our times, as Vedanta and Yoga, as the ‘Adhyatma-Vidya’ or science of man in depth. This science gives is ‘knowledge of contents and not mere knowledge of structural form. This is true management.

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“Yatra Yogesvarah Krisno  
Yatra Partho Dharnur –Dharah;  
Tatra Sri Vijayo Bhutin  
Dhruva nitor-motir-mama.”

(Wherever there is Krishna, the master of Yoga, and Arjuna, the wilder of the bow, there (in that organization) shall be found wealth victory, general welfare, and unwavering justice and ethical sense this is my conviction).

This verse has great lessons to give. To achieve total human welfare, the confluence of two energies is required; the first is the energy of Yoga-vision and knowledge; and the second is the energy of intense and efficient action, represented by Arjuna, the hero of action. This represents combination of contemplation and action, vision and implementation. Herbert Spencer calls it as “Uniting Philanthropic Energy with Philosophic calm”. When this is achieved, all management will achieve the highest level of practical efficiency and will have as this fruits:

- (a). Sri - Economics prosperity/profit.
- (b) Vijaya - Victory means success accompanying every project, every endeavor. The failures or the low-level performance of many of our national projects and undertakings can be traced on to the absence of that confluence of hard work and character energy with knowledge- energy.
- (c ). Bhutih - General welfare flowing from the above two
- Dhruva Nitin - Constant justice and ethical sense. This is the value called dharma which holds the scale even between individuals and individuals between groups and groups

When Plato prophesied that there would be no good government in the world until philosophers became kings, he meant that human perfection was a sort of marriage between high thought and just action.

In Indian organizational context it would mean integration of various roles of normative spiritual values. As such, in every organization, there should be individuals who possess the entrepreneurial and integrating qualities (Brahmin-Vasya) which can guide a united organization to new directions. There should be individuals who can translate these new actions into operative systems (khatriya) which should produce results. And there should be performers who can put the system into action and set an example for efficient operation (Sudras). The Vajasaneyi Samhita declares:

“That holy world I fain would know, wherein the priesthood and the kingship move together in one accord.”

Extending the above further, it can be said:

“That holy world i fain would know, wherein the priesthoods, the kingship, the entrepreneurship and the servitude move together in one accord.”

The principle of ‘together ship’ is Dharma, normative and spiritual values, the development of which brings success to all human endeavor, Management can become management for good only by developing goodness in man, and as declared by Swami Vivekananda.

“The basis of all systems, social or political rests upon the goodness of man”. And human response development is the true definition of management “Man making is the only true task of management.”

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