

People management and Vedanta

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Updated on: Sunday, June 02, 2019, 01:56 AM IST

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People come in all hues.

They present an ever- changing kaleidoscope of images.

How is a manager, a leader to deal with this diverse crowd? Is there any secret of people management? Vedanta reveals this

great secret. Vedanta is the ancient philosophy of India.

Written at a time when the best brains occupied themselves with investigating philosophical truths, and then filtered through the best intellects down the ages, Indians have inherited a tradition of distilled wisdom.

The secrets of life and living, investigated and reinvestigated, have created a digest of sublime knowledge.

To this body of research today, we can address many of our puzzling questions.

What makes for a great leader, a great motivator of men? The simple Vedantic answer is a higher ideal.

When a person is imbued with a higher vision, a nobler cause, and works for it, the people follow. A noble cause, a higher ideal is an unselfish goal. It is a goal that takes into consideration the welfare of others, one that caters to a wider circle. It is for the benefit of a larger group. If we examine history we find the truth of this statement.

Gandhi got a whole country to follow him. Not by offering pays and perks.

Not by appealing to their self- interest. He was imbued with a higher vision.

Churchill took the country to war. To a man, the British fought. And what were they offered? Blood and toil and sweat and tears. Lee Iacocca started Chryslers turnaround by making his salary \$ 1.

When in 2009, Citigroup received federal assistance from Congress, CEO Vikram Pandit told his board, " my salary should be \$ 1 per year with no bonus until we return to profitability." So he took his \$ 1 salary until Citigroup returned to profitability in 2010. Such men can lead. Not afraid to bite the bullet they inspire others to follow suit. They can generate the co- operation and motivation of their fellows.

A verse in Sanskrit talks of the power that a higher ideal will generate: the mute will speak and the lame will scale mountains.

Along with working for a higher ideal a person must learn to assess his colleagues properly. What are their strengths and weaknesses.

What are their behaviour patterns. Once one is clear about this, one knows what can be expected from each.

Every person has his swadharma, his nature. He will perform function by this. When one understands this, people do not become a source of irritation. One knows how to deal with them. When one knows that a snake is poisonous one does not pick it up and cuddle it. But one can play with a kitten. Similarly when one knows ones colleagues one knows where to place a person, what job to entrust to him, what cannot be expected from him. One is able to get the best possible performance from ones team.

With these dual aspects – higher ideal and correct assessment – one can make the most of the people resource.

One creates harmony in the team. And creates miracles in performance.

Published on: Monday, August 13, 2012, 05:30 AM IST