

COVER STORY

Spirituality, Productivity and Effective Management

Transforming a Business

Organizational transformation begins with personal transformation.

“The desire for spirituality in the workplace is a natural extension of the current tendency of adults to use spirituality to get through the challenges of their everyday lives.”

Christine Raymond,
General Manager and
Executive Editor of spirituality.com

The 21st Century faces unseen challenges, poses more pressure and puts in high demands for success, both at the personal and organizational levels. Issues like ethical behavior, norms in the workplace, ac-

countability, customs and social values, and the competing interests are becoming more and more important. The current challenges of this century definitely call for personal and organizational transformations.

Sean Voisen, *Vice-President of Operations for the eLuminate Consulting Group*, defines “Spirituality at Work” as, “Allowing every member of an organization the time and resources to explore his or her own true self – desires, passions, ideas and purpose – and the freedom to express this true self in a more authentic manner.” He

further elaborates the concept as a means of transforming a business into something much more than a business; it means transforming it into a life-long learning community. The crux is that *organizational transformation begins with personal transformation*.

How Spirituality can Provide Better Productivity at Work?

Case 1: Flexible Holiday System at Sony: A Forward Step to Spirituality at Work

According to the definition given by Sean Voisen, spirituality at work implies using of a company’s resources to explore the true self of an employee—desires, passions, ideas and purpose. Akio Morita, Sony’s co-founder, is a classical example in this regard.

Morita said, “No theory or plan or government policy will make a business a success; that can only be done by people. The most important mission for a Japanese manager is to develop a healthy relationship with his employees, to create a family-like feeling within the corporation, a feeling that employees and managers share the same fate.” He included equality, minimal pay differentials between the management and the employees, which created a better work environment and made his employees feel that both the management and employees share the same fortune. Further, he introduced the “Flexible Holiday system”, which allowed Sony employees including management, to take consecutive holidays according



to their preferences which really benefited the employees in deciding his/her holiday duration. This flexible holiday scheme led to the better productivity of the employees and better association with the organization.

In order to promote such employee-friendly schemes, organizations should take appropriate steps to arrange for annual excursion trips, more flexible working hours, and closer communication network with the help of seminars, discussions and sports.

Case 2: DESS Technologies, Mumbai

DESS Technologies, is a service provider in the area of imaging and workflow management. During its induction program, the company provides each employee with a manual which provides details about the company, its mission, employment policy, hours of operation/work, employee hiring policies, holidays, paid leaves, professional standards and business conduct, etc.

The purpose of providing this employee manual is to make the system transparent, so that the company resources and personal growth can be matched, while the employee is associated with the organization. In Sean Voisen's words, "It is an important and apparent spirituality at work." He becomes as he is directed and a transformation is needed at every stage; be it childhood, adolescence or middle-age, a person transforms himself in order to fit into the surrounding environment. Similarly in an organization, a person transforms himself as he's promoted to various positions in the same/different organization. After all, there is nothing permanent in this world; the word "change" and Darwin's theory

of the "survival of the fittest", will always prove right. If one wants to be competitive in this 21st Century, one should have the attitude to change and transform according to environment. Acquiring the right attitude to transform oneself, will result in increasing one's productivity at the workplace.

Spirituality and Effective Management

In simple words, management may be defined as an efficient and organized way of performing activities. It is a process of aligning resources (both material and human), towards getting a committed workforce for achieving a common target effectively (i.e. by performing the right acts), and maximizing the social benefits. This underlies the notion of success. Recent researches in the field of management science have shown that the success is highly (positively) correlated with the emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is now becoming the index for a worker's success. Emotional intelligence and spirituality are again

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strongly linked. This is so because a spiritually enlightened person is more balanced and emotionally uplifted. Balance becomes the key factor in personal as well as organizational success. There is a saying: "A successful person is that who balances the personal and organizational goals." Putting a spiritual and dedicated person at work results in decreasing the costs of a company, better order processing, inventory management, better customer service, etc. Thus, the spiritual component in the managerial activity should be taken as an integral part of the profession. This works in the best interest of the company and self, thus ensuring a

long, a fulfilling association between the employee and the employer. The key to successful management lies in "Creating a movement that puts the soul to the business." Although these ideas are theoretically sound, it's too hard to apply it. Putting spirituality at the workplace is the biggest challenge for any human resource manager. But there seems no second option, if the desire to succeed exists in any organization (or individual) in the current global village.

Conclusion

Spirituality in the workplace, is the call of the hour. In a world where natural resources are shrinking, cultures are fusing, believes are changing and pressure is mounting to unseen heights, organizations need to come up with more flexible, and thus, more enlightened plans of management. Organizational success now heavily depends on team work, which in turn depends on individuals at different levels of the organizational hierarchy. Individuals need to be personally encouraged. Moral values and ethical management should be equally important in any organization. Giving value to individual creativity, better communication, respecting personal believes, cooperation and support at times of needs (e.g., during a family crises), timely breaks, sharing of passion and drive towards work should all form part and parcel of an organization. Maximum utilization of potential is possible only when work is done, not just for the sake of fulfillment of needs, but for the sake of satisfaction; when the inner energies are unleashed to their maximum, to give, both individual and organization, their maximum value in terms of satisfaction. Human being is a spiritual creature, irrespective of his/her believes or even disbelieves and spirituality is a process of exploration of the "inner self"; both for the individual and the organization. Therefore, spirituality in the work place, is needed more than ever before. 🌟

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