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### **CONTENTS**

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1	Terrorism - Social Causes, Economic Impact in India and Possible Control Measures with Special Reference to Technology-driven Avenues.  B. L. Shivakumar	<u>1-27</u>
2	An Analysis On Consumer's Attitude Towards Apparel Private Label Brands – A Study In Chennai Region. R. SATHYA and Dr. S. SHEELA RANI	28-52
<u>3</u>	I Want To Be A Leader. Dr. Supriya Jha	<u>53-71</u>
4	Conceptualizing Student"S Perception On Academic And Personality Dimensions Using Gap Analysis.  Dr. Vijaya Mani, Geeta Santhosh and K Subhash babu	<u>72-92</u>
<u>5</u>	Impact of Global Financial Crisis on Indian Banking Sectors: Strategies for achieving sustainable growth.  Mr. Rabindra Ku Mohanty, Mr. Duryodhan Jena and Dr. Subhasmita Biswal	<u>93-107</u>
<u>6</u>	WTO: Revise Agreement on Trade Related Investment Measures. Dr. M. Sugunatha Reddy and Dr. B. Rama Bhupal Reddy	108-117
7	Office- Politics, a Game of Strategy through Communication Skills. By Dr. S. K. Singh	<u>118-135</u>
8	A Fixed Point Result By Using Altering Distance Function. Krishnapada Das, Indranil Bhaumik and Binayak S. Choudhury	136-153
2	India's E-Governance: Present Scenario and Future Planning. Sanjay Jangra	<u>154-166</u>
<u>10</u>	Power Quality: Problems, Protection And Solutions. S. Gupta and Neha Bajpai	<u>167-183</u>



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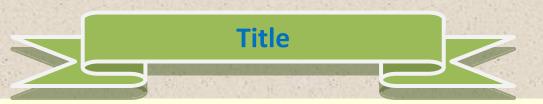
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# I WANT TO BE A LEADER

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### **Abstract:**

[Well, leaders are born, but only in land. You can be born with the traits of a leader but the right encouragement is a must for developing leadership skills. While developing leadership skills at an early stage has its advantages, it's never too late to start if you haven't yet discovered the leader in you! In this piece, let's take a look at the why and how of developing leadership skills. Successful management requires more than just assigning tasks to the team. It calls for a leader who can inspire team members to achieve their full potential. People want to be guided by a person they respect, someone who has a clear sense of direction. To be that person, there are certain things that you must BE, KNOW and DO. And that's what developing leadership skills is all about. Through this paper we will try to explore the attributes leaders are having and the techniques, methods and ways to develop it.]

**Key Words:** behaviour, organization, emotional intelligence, leader, employees

### **Introduction:**

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

John Quincy Adams (American 6th US President (1825-29),

Paramahamsa Sri Nithyananda says, Leadership is not a quality. It is an experience that an individual who has undergone personal growth and transformation radiates. He says, Leadership is a state not a status. Most of us achieve the status of a leader, but not the state. State is totally different from status. Status comes from society. When he use the word 'state' he mean our inner space. Our inner space should be matured enough to handle the responsibility, which we assume.



ISSN: 2249-5894

### **Development of leadership style, behaviour and skills:**

Leadership skills are based on leadership behaviour. Skills alone do not make leaders - style and behaviour do. If you are interested in leadership training and development - start with leadership behaviour. The growing awareness and demand for idealist principles in leadership are increasing the emphasis (in terms of leadership characteristics) on business ethics, corporate responsibility, emotional maturity, and personal integrity. For many people (staff, customers, suppliers, investors, commentators, visionaries, etc) these are becoming the most significant areas of attitude/behaviour/appreciation required in modern business and organisational leaders.

Adaptability and vision - as might be demonstrated via project development scenarios or tasks - especially involving modern communications and knowledge technologies - are also critical for certain leadership roles, and provide unlimited scope for leadership development processes, methods and activities. Cultural diversity is another topical and very relevant area requiring leadership involvement, if not mastery. Large organisations particularly must recognise that the market-place, in terms of staff, customers and suppliers, is truly global now, and leaders must be able to function and appreciate and adapt to all aspects of cultural diversification. A leaders who fails to relate culturally well and widely and openly inevitably condemns the entire organisation to adopt the same narrow focus and bias exhibited by the leader. Bear in mind that different leadership jobs (and chairman) require different types of leaders - Churchill was fine for war but not good for peacetime re-building. There's a big difference between short-term return on investment versus long-term change. Each warrants a different type of leadership style, and actually very few leaders are able to adapt from one to the other. People who strive for these things generally come to be regarded and respected as a leader by their people:

- Integrity the most important requirement; without it everything else is for nothing.
- Having an effective appreciation and approach towards corporate responsibility, (Triple Bottom Line, Fair Trade, etc), so that the need to make profit is balanced with wider social and environmental responsibilities.
- Being very grown-up never getting emotionally negative with people no shouting or ranting, even if you feel very upset or angry.



### Volume 1, Issue 2



- Leading by example always be seen to be working harder and more determinedly than anyone else.
- Helping alongside your people when they need it.
- Fairness treating everyone equally and on merit.
- Being firm and clear in dealing with bad or unethical behaviour.
- Listening to and really understanding people, and show them that you understand (this doesn't mean you have to agree with everyone understanding is different to agreeing).
- Always taking the responsibility and blame for your people's mistakes.
- Always giving your people the credit for your successes.
- Never self-promoting.
- Backing-up and supporting your people.
- Being decisive even if the decision is to delegate or do nothing if appropriate but be seen to be making fair and balanced decisions.
- Asking for people's views, but remain neutral and objective.
- Being honest but sensitive in the way that you give bad news or criticism.
- Always doing what you say you will do keeping your promises.
- Working hard to become expert at what you do technically, and at understanding your people's technical abilities and challenges.
- Encouraging your people to grow, to learn and to take on as much as they want to, at a pace they can handle.
- Always accentuating the positive (say 'do it like this', not 'don't do it like that').
- Smiling and encouraging others to be happy and enjoy themselves.
- Relaxing breaking down the barriers and the leadership awe and giving your people and yourself time to get to know and respect each other.
- Taking notes and keeping good records.
- Planning and prioritising.

October 2011



- ISSN: 2249-5894
- Managing your time well and helping others to do so too.
- Involving your people in your thinking and especially in managing change.
- Reading good books, and taking advice from good people, to help develop your own understanding of yourself, and particularly of other people's weaknesses
- Achieve the company tasks and objectives, while maintaining your integrity, the trust of your people, are a balancing the corporate aims with the needs of the world beyond.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Leaders:**

Explaining and understanding the nature of good leadership is probably easier than practising it. Good leadership requires deep human qualities, beyond conventional notions of authority. In the modern age good leaders are an enabling force, helping people and organizations to perform and develop, which implies that a sophisticated alignment be achieved - of people's needs, and the aims of the organization. The traditional concept of a leader being the directing chief at the top of a hierarchy is nowadays a very incomplete appreciation of what true leadership must be. Effective leadership does not necessarily require great technical or intellectual capacity. These attributes might help, but they are not pivotal. Good leadership in the modern age more importantly requires attitudes and behaviours which characterize and relate to humanity. Leadership is centrally concerned with people. Of course leadership involves decisions and actions relating to all sorts of other things, but leadership is special compared to any other role because of its unique responsibility for people - i.e., the followers of the leader - in whatever context leadership is seen to operate. Many capabilities in life are a matter of acquiring skills and knowledge and then applying them in a reliable way. Leadership is quite different. Good leadership demands emotional strengths and behavioural characteristics which can draw deeply on a leader's mental and spiritual reserves.

- Self Awareness the ability to recognize and understand your own emotions, moods, and motivations. Self awareness is the talent of understanding who you are, which leaders must be able to do before they can begin to understand the motivation, moods, and emotions of others.
- Self Regulation the ability to control your own emotions, counterproductive impulses, and moods. Self regulation is the leadership quality of remaining in control of your emotions.



Volume 1, Issue 2

ISSN: 2249-5894

- Motivation a drive and passion that goes beyond money or status. Motivation and leadership
  are often tightly coupled when an organization is realizing above-average results.
- Empathy the ability to really understand another person's point of view. Empathy is different than sympathy, which is the emotion of feeling sorry for someone else.
- Social Skills the ability to manage relationships and networking. "Social skills" is used to
  describe a leader's ability to get along with others in the organization.

### **Difference between Leadership and Management:**

Leadership and management are commonly seen as the same thing, which they are not. Leadership is also misunderstood to mean directing and instructing people and making important decisions on behalf of an organization. Effective leadership is much more than these. Good leaders are followed chiefly because people trust and respect them, rather than the skills they possess. Leadership is about behaviour first, skills second.

This is a simple way to see how leadership is different to management:

- Management is mostly about processes.
- Leadership is mostly about behaviour.

We could extend this to say:

- Management relies heavily on tangible measurable capabilities such as effective planning; the
  use of organizational systems; and the use of appropriate communications methods.
- Leadership involves many management skills, but generally as a secondary or background function of true leadership. Leadership instead relies most strongly on less tangible and less measurable things like trust, inspiration, attitude, decision-making, and personal character. These are not processes or skills or even necessarily the result of experience. They are facets of humanity, and are enabled mainly by the leader's character and especially his/her emotional reserves.

Another way to see leadership compared with management, is that leadership does not crucially depend on the type of management methods and processes a leaders uses; leadership instead



Volume 1, Issue 2

ISSN: 2249-5894

primarily depends on the ways in which the leader uses management methods and processes. Good leadership depends on attitudinal qualities, not management processes.

Examples of highly significant leadership qualities

- integrity
- honesty
- humility
- courage
- commitment
- sincerity
- passion
- confidence
- positivity
- wisdom
- determination
- compassion
- sensitivity

People with these sorts of behaviours and attitudes tend to attract followers. Followers are naturally drawn to people who exhibit strength and can inspire belief in others. These qualities tend to produce a charismatic effect. Charisma tends to result from effective leadership and the qualities which enable effective leadership. Charisma is by itself no guarantee of effective leadership. Some people are born more naturally to leadership than others. Most people don't seek to be a leader, but many more people are able to lead, in one way or another and in one situation or another, than they realize. People who want to be a leader can develop leadership ability. Leadership is not the exclusive preserve of the wealthy and educated. Leadership is a matter of personal conviction and believing strongly in a cause or aim, whatever it is, Leadership sometimes comes to people later in life, and this is no bad thing. Humanity tends to be generational characteristic. There is no real obstacle to people who seek to become leaders if

### <u>IJPSS</u>

Volume 1, Issue 2



leadership is approached with proper integrity. Anyone can be a leader if he/she is suitably driven to a particular cause. And many qualities of effective leadership, like confidence and charisma, continue to grow from experience in the leadership role. Even initially surprised modest leaders can become great ones, and sometimes the greatest ones. Leadership can be performed with different styles. Some leaders have one style, which is right for certain situations and wrong for others. Some leaders can adapt and use different leadership styles for given situations. Adaptability of style is an increasingly significant aspect of leadership, because the world is increasingly complex and dynamic. Adaptability stems from objectivity, which in turn stems from emotional security and emotional maturity. Again these strengths are not dependent on wealth or education, or skills or processes.

Good leaders typically have a keen understanding of relationships within quite large and complex systems and networks. This may be from an intuitive angle, or a technical/learned angle, or both.

People new to leadership (and supervision and management) often feel under pressure to lead in a particularly dominant way. Sometimes this pressure on a new leader to impose their authority on the team comes from above. Dominant leadership is rarely appropriate however, especially for mature teams. Misreading this situation, and attempting to be overly dominant, can then cause problems for a new leader. Resistance from the team becomes a problem, and a cycle of negative behaviors and reducing performance begins. Much of leadership is counter-intuitive. Leadership is often more about serving than leading. Besides which, individuals and teams tend not to resist or push against something in which they have a strong involvement/ownership/sense of control. People tend to respond well to thanks, encouragement, recognition, inclusiveness, etc. Tough, overly dominant leadership gives teams a lot to push against and resist. It also prevents a sense of ownership and self-control among the people being led. And it also inhibits the positive rewards and incentives (thanks, recognition, encouragement, etc) vital for teams and individuals to cope with change, and to enjoy themselves. Leaders of course need to be able to make tough decisions when required, but most importantly leaders should concentrate on enabling the team to thrive, which is actually a 'serving' role, not the dominant 'leading' role commonly associated with leadership.



Volume 1, Issue 2



Today ethical leadership is more important than ever. The world is more transparent and connected than it has ever been. The actions and philosophies of organisations are scrutinized by the media and the general public as never before. This coincides with massively increased awareness and interest among people everywhere in corporate responsibility and the many related concepts, such as social and community responsibility. The modern leader needs to understand and aspire to leading people and achieving greatness in all these areas.

For leadership to work well, people (employees and interested outsiders) must be able to connect their expectations, aims and activities to a basic purpose or philosophy of the organization. This foundational philosophy should provide vital reference points for employees' decisions and actions - an increasingly significant factor in modern 'empowered' organizations. Seeing a clear philosophy and purpose is also essential for staff, customers and outsiders in assessing crucial organizational characteristics such as integrity, ethics, fairness, quality and performance. A clear philosophy is vital to the 'psychological contract' - whether stated or unstated (almost always unstated) - on which people (employees, customers or observers) tend to judge their relationships and transactions. As a leader your responsibility extends beyond leading the people. True leadership also includes - as far as your situation allows - the responsibility to protect or refine fundamental purpose and philosophy.

#### Some Examples

Jack Welch, respected business leader and writer is quoted as proposing these fundamental leadership principles (notably these principles are expanded in his 2001 book 'Jack: Straight From The Gut'):

- 1. There is only one way the straight way. It sets the tone of the organization.
- 2. Be open to the best of what everyone, everywhere, has to offer; transfer learning across your organisation.
- 3. Get the right people in the right jobs it is more important than developing a strategy.
- 4. An informal atmosphere is a competitive advantage.
- 5. Make sure everybody counts and everybody knows they count.



### Volume 1, Issue 2



- 6. Legitimate self-confidence is a winner the true test of self-confidence is the courage to be open.
- 7. Business has to be fun celebrations energise and organisation.
- 8. Never underestimate the other guy.
- 9. Understand where real value is added and put your best people there.
- 10. Know when to meddle and when to let go this is pure instinct.

As a leader, your main priority is to get the job done, whatever the job is. Leaders make things happen by:

- knowing your objectives and having a plan how to achieve them
- building a team committed to achieving the objectives
- helping each team member to give their best efforts

As a leader you must know yourself. Know your own strengths and weaknesses, so that you can build the best team around you.

Plan carefully, with your people where appropriate, how you will achieve your aims. You may have to redefine or develop your own new aims and priorities. Leadership can be daunting for many people simply because no-one else is issuing the aims - leadership often means you have to create your own from a blank sheet of paper. Set and agree clear standards. Keep the right balance between 'doing' yourself and managing others 'to do'.

Build teams. Ensure you look after people and that communications and relationships are good. Select good people and help them to develop. Develop people via training and experience, particularly by agreeing objectives and responsibilities that will interest and stretch them, and always support people while they strive to improve and take on extra tasks. Follow the rules about delegation closely - this process is crucial. Ensure that your managers are applying the same principles. Good leadership principles must cascade down through the whole organisation. This means that if you are leading a large organisation you must check that the processes for managing, communicating and developing people are in place and working properly. Communication is critical. Listen, consult, involve, and explain why as well as what needs to be done.



### Volume 1, Issue 2

ISSN: 2249-5894

"... Praise loudly, blame softly." (Catherine the Great). Follow this maxim.

If you seek one single most important behavior that will rapidly earn you respect and trust among your people, this is it: Always give your people the credit for your achievements and successes. Never take the credit yourself - even if it's all down to you, which would be unlikely anyway. You must however take the blame and accept responsibility for any failings or mistakes that your people make. Never never publicly blame another person for a failing. Their failing is your responsibility - true leadership offers is no hiding place for a true leader.

Accentuate the positive. Express things in terms of what should be done, not what should not be done. If you accentuate the negative, people are more likely to veer towards it. Have faith in people to do great things - given space and air and time, everyone can achieve more than they hope for. Provide people with relevant interesting opportunities, with proper measures and rewards and they will more than repay your faith.

Take difficult decisions bravely, and be truthful and sensitive when you implement them.

Constantly seek to learn from the people around you - they will teach you more about yourself than anything else. They will also tell you 90% of what you need to know to achieve your business goals. Embrace change, but not for change's sake. Begin to plan your own succession as soon as you take up your new post, and in this regard, ensure that the only promises you ever make are those that you can guarantee to deliver.

Dhoni's leadership style represents teamwork, empowerment and confidence. Dhoni's style is not just aggressive, it is more rational. Even in the absence of seniors, he could lead the team to success. Leaders need to be assertive yet humble and must rarely allow their personal egos to be an obstacle for the success of their organization and that's what M.S. Dhoni showing us through his current leadership style.

What more Dhoni has exemplified that a leader has to be a consistent performer himself and that is demonstrated in the way he has been entrusted with the crown of captain ship at such an young age. His 'people management' skills tell us, he is truly a great leader. When team members see their leader calm in extreme situations, they will not be rattled. It will enable them to focus on their work and do what is expected of them. Dhoni was always calm - whether the bowler started

<u>IJPSS</u>

Volume 1, Issue 2

ISSN: 2249-5894

off the last over in the finals with a wide ball or the batsman played a series of dot balls in a slog over.

In short, Dhoni gives the following Leadership tips for every aspiring Leader:

- 1. We should be a performer and we should demonstrate the same to our team. Performance is itself the most effective communication down the line.
- 2. Leader has to be humble in way to consider part and parcel of the team and not above the team.
- 3. Give genuine respect and trust to the team members.
- 4. Allow them to experiment and take risk.
- 5. In case of failure, encourage him / her to introspect and do it next time with more vigour and better planning.
- 6. Make every one in the team feel that, even though we are leaders, we are just one among them.
- 7. We should also believe in the ones who failed in the Team. At crucial times a team member who was not able to deliver might do miracles.
- 8. As a leader, be calm in extreme situations and lead the team from front.
- 9. Share the credit of success with your team members and praise them in public.
- 10. Above all believe in every member in the team.

In a nutshell Dhoni's story is all about an ordinary man doing extraordinary things and a role model for every aspiring leader. Each one of us could use this model, pattern and design to create our leadership journey. Fire in the Belly, Sweetness in Words and a Cool Head, Dhoni has arrived with a New Leadership style.

### Golden Rule at Work:

As leaders, we have a choice either to lead by example or by extortion. Leadership by its nature bestows us with powers and many of us lead by enforcing the powers and influence we have. But we forget the fact that leadership by extortion don't make people to follow us but probably chase



### Volume 1, Issue 2

ISSN: 2249-5894

them away from us. When we set a good example through values, we illustrate the behavior we expect from others as they interact with each other and conduct their business.

We all have read the saying, "practice what you preach, do not preach what you do not practice". The statement explains it all when it comes to effectively leading by example. If we want to be efficient leaders, we need to "walk the talk" and not only "talk the talk". Interestingly, there are two types of leaders: Those that lead by their words, and those who lead by their actions. The ones who lead by their actions are leaders who lead by example, or getting people to follow them based on what they do, and not what they tell others to do. Effective leadership does not come easy. An effective leader is someone who earns respect, not someone who demands it.

A leader has a vision. Leaders see a problem that needs to be fixed or a goal that needs to be achieved. It may be something that no one else sees or simply something that no one else wants to tackle. Whatever it is, it is the focus of the leaders attention and they attack it with a single-minded determination.

It is said that, great leadership takes strength of character and a firm commitment to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason. Which means, doing what we say, when we say it. If our team can't trust us, we'll probably never lead them to greatness. I am sure, leading - and living - by example isn't as hard as it might sound. It's really the easiest path. If our team knows that we'll also do whatever we expect from them, they'll likely work hard to help us achieve our goals. Perhaps the single most important leadership skill you can practice nearly every day is treating others the way you wish to be treated. Unfortunately, among the chaos we find at work, this is not always as easy as it sounds.

### **Conclusion:**

Developing any skill takes practice; especially if you've never done something like this before in your career. Remember your goal here - you want to be a better leader, and that can take time . Finally, don't be afraid of making mistakes. Good leaders take calculated risks, and therefore will make mistakes. Learning from those mistakes is a valuable lesson in leadership. To be a successful leader, we need other people's intelligence and other people's cooperation. We need





to be able to attract into our life and work the help, assistance, influence and active involvement of lots of other people in achieving our goals.

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