

THE LEARNING BLAZE : IGNITING MINDS

ABOUT BOMBAY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Bombay Management Association (BMA), stepping into its dynamic 71st year, continues to be the go-to platform for elite business leaders. With its legacy of exclusive forums, visionary insights, and high-impact networking, BMA has consistently empowered industry frontrunners to master challenges and seize global opportunities. This milestone reaffirms BMA's commitment to shaping visionary leadership and driving transformative change at the forefront of the business world.

LEADING WITH SPIRITUALITY: THE POWER OF AUTHENTICITY, SELF- AWARENESS, AND INNER PEACE

A leader doesn't necessarily need to be spiritual in the traditional sense, but a sense of inner peace, **mindfulness**, and **self-awareness** can significantly enhance their leadership qualities. Spirituality, in this context, doesn't mean religious affiliation but rather an understanding of one's deeper values, purpose, and connection to others. Leaders who embrace such qualities often lead with authenticity, empathy, and a focus on the well-being of others.

Inner peace is especially important for leaders because it enables clear thinking, emotional stability, and better decision-making. A leader at peace with themselves is more likely to inspire calm, confidence, and collaboration within their team, creating a positive, productive environment.

Continue on Page-2

... LEADING WITH SPIRITUALITY: THE POWER OF AUTHENTICITY, SELF-AWARENESS, AND INNER PEACE

Authenticity in leadership is incredibly important because it builds trust, fosters genuine relationships, and creates a culture of openness and respect. When leaders are authentic, they are true to themselves and their values, rather than trying to conform to external expectations or adopt a persona they think others want to see. Moreover, authenticity promotes accountability. When leaders are clear about their own values and limitations, it sets a positive example for others to be accountable for their own actions as well.

Self-awareness in leadership refers to a leader's ability to understand their own strengths, weaknesses, emotions, values, and how their actions impact others. When leaders are self-aware, they are more in tune with their reactions, biases, and triggers, allowing them to respond thoughtfully rather than impulsively. This emotional intelligence helps them navigate difficult situations with composure, manage stress, and maintain clarity in decision-making.

As a leader, **blending and bending** together are vital for creating a collaborative and adaptive environment. Blending, with your team means actively listening to their ideas and perspectives, integrating their input into the vision and strategy. Bending, on the other hand, is about flexibility—being open to change, adapting when new challenges arise, and adjusting the vision if needed. When you blend with your team's ideas and bend to the evolving needs of the situation, you create a dynamic, inclusive leadership style.

"While no leader is perfect, the journey toward becoming one is invaluable and worth every effort." Let's dwell and introspect on how embracing spirituality, authenticity, and self-awareness can truly shape leadership, which is not about power but a profound responsibility, setting the right example of what it means to be a true leader.

LEADERS WALKING THE WALK: NOT JUST TALKING THE TALK

this insightful Q&A feature brings you the perspectives of eminent industry leaders who exemplify the power of "walking the talk." These leaders share their experiences, challenges, and strategies for leading with authenticity and integrity. Their valuable insights offer a glimpse into what it truly means to lead by example, inspire change, and build trust in today's dynamic business environment.



HOW DO LEADERS EFFECTIVELY NAVIGATE CRITICAL SITUATIONS THAT DEMAND QUICK RESPONSES ?

The real test of a leader and team is in crisis. In war every moment and every situation are critical because of the dynamic situation and all the imponderables. Yet, Indian Army has sailed through as a winner always and in every situation, commanding the respect of this nation and recognised as the last bastion or saviour in the most critical situation.....

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

- Article by- LT. GEN. JK Sharma



WHAT ARE SOME KEY SKILLS OR BEHAVIOURS THAT DEFINE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP?

In my view, an effective leader must possess several key qualities to inspire and drive success. First and foremost, inspiration is crucial. A leader's primary role is to inspire and then motivate individuals and teams to achieve set goals—whether within an organization, a community, or a nation...

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

- Article by- HARISH PRABHU,

Founder: Finessense Advisors Pvt Ltd, Mumbai



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO EMERGING LEADERS LOOKING TO MAKE A TANGIBLE IMPACT?

Its an evolutionary process of becoming a leader. Impact requires over a period of time :

- Observation
- :Watching good leaders and taking lessons, and also watching areas where impact is not made by leaders and understanding why so.

TALK TO THE HEART : GENUINELY GET TO LOVE YOUR TEAM, YOUR WORK AND YOUR GOALS. CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

- ARTICLE BY- RAVI KRISHNAMURTHY



LEADERS WALKING THE WALK: NOT JUST TALKING THE TALK

Exclusive



LT. GEN. JK SHARMA

Ati Vashisht Sewa Medal, Vashisht Sewa Medal PhD (Veteran)
Chief Defence Advisor Govt of Uttar Pradesh
Chair of Excellence DRDO

How do leaders effectively navigate critical situations that demand quick responses ?

In Army, there is an unwritten but sacrosanct dictum, "All the operational/war plans are demolished after the first round is fired". Because there are multiple factors of enemy and his response, terrain, weather and multitudes of own comrades pregnant of unpredictability creating uncertainty and making the fog of war even denser. However, we continue with planning and go to war only to win; because losers in war are either dead men or humiliated, and humiliation is far worse than death for a soldier. This confidence emanates from deeply profound absolute faith in the leadership and the men, who, form a knitted team.

The real test of a leader and team is in crisis. In war every moment and every situation are critical because of the dynamic situation and all the imponderables. Yet, Indian Army has sailed through as a winner always and in every situation, commanding the respect of this nation and recognised as the last bastion or saviour in the most critical situation.

Why so? The answer to this lies in the character of the organisation and men which is built brick by brick with training, comradeship and a sense of belonging and ownership. It's all about being in command of the situation, everywhere and every moment. While the leadership relates to leading, combat situation is about command.

Where you smell the blood of your buddy or men mixed with dust, its not just about leading.

The commander and the men, or the leader and the lead are in a state of equanimity.

The leader is as susceptible to the action of the enemy as his men. They are all together, facing the same dangers of bullets coming from the front.

The men also know this. Yet all of them are looking up to him for direction and comfort of HE(the leader) being responsible to not only ensure victory but also an assurance of taking them back alive from the battle.

That is what command is all about and makes all the difference. There are numerous such real-life examples from the battles fought by the Indian Army since Independence, where officers and men, the Commander and the commanded or the Leader and the lead could ensure the sanctity of Mother India in equanimity and yet in full play/responsibility of their role. This establishes all the tenets of honesty to a purpose, confidence in your own self and the men you command, empathy, equanimity, decisiveness in chaos, loyalty to men and vice versa, courage-physical and moral and above all character epitomised in inviolable honesty and integrity. Only when your nation, men, their welfare and a thought about their kith and kin is all before self, command of brave men in its truest sense is possible.

Leadership in Action is all about being in Command of a situation, with the men and material at your disposal, in the most chaotic and most adverse conditions with conviction that we will come out as a winner, irrespective of what or who the opponent is.

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HARISH PRABHU

Founder: Finessense Advisors Pvt
Ltd, Mumbai

How do leaders effectively navigate critical situations that demand quick responses ?

Sustained inspiration has a profound impact on morale, enabling people to undertake and surpass even the most challenging objectives.

Secondly, leading by example is essential. In a corporate setting, leaders are constantly observed by employees, board members, shareholders, and other stakeholders. Their work ethic, behavior, and decisions set the tone for the entire organization. A leader must embody the values they expect from others, essentially becoming a role model for the team.

Effective communication is another critical trait. Clearly articulating goals, providing constructive feedback, and ensuring transparency in decision-making can significantly enhance organizational effectiveness.

Miscommunication often leads to inefficiencies, whereas clarity fosters alignment and progress.

Additionally, empowerment is key to building a strong leadership culture. By fostering an extended leadership team at all levels, leaders create a ripple effect, accelerating organizational growth and enhancing decision-making capabilities across the board.

Finally, decisiveness distinguishes great leaders. While discussions and debates with stakeholders are valuable, a leader must ultimately make decisions independently, carefully analyzing diverse perspectives before arriving at a well-informed conclusion. Decisive leaders navigate uncertainty with confidence, ensuring timely and effective outcomes.

Great leaders inspire, lead by example, communicate with clarity, empower others, and make bold decisions—not by consensus, but with conviction.

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RAVI KRISHNAMURTHY

Retired - Ex president,
SBI Life

What advice would you give to emerging leaders looking to make a tangible impact?

It's an evolutionary process of becoming a leader. Impact requires over a period of time :

·**Observation** :Watching good leaders and taking lessons, and also watching areas where impact is not made by leaders and understanding why so.

Talk to the heart : Genuinely get to love your team, your work and your goals. Understanding the context of the situation and knowing the pulse of the team so that you are passionate about your job and the task on hand and the team you are entrusted with. The talk must reach the core of the heart not necessarily the brain. Many a times we think of the points to reach the brain but if we reach the heart then the brain can easily understand. some times think out the solutions themselves. Good leaders create circumstances for their team to think out the "How" part once the "What" and "Why" part is effectively stimulated in the heart of the team members

A sense of Humour: This creates a good impact and lightens the environment to enable muscle relaxation a vital need for the heart to get involved in the task at hand. Leaders must invoke the heart for effective team response.

Empowerment: Periodically show-casing select team members ideas and their unique methods which led to the success and sometimes come-back stories. Leaders thereby listen more ...many times silence is a great impactful communication . Leaders in some sessions just listen to participants' stories and the impact gets communicated without saying a word.

Decision-making: Hard decisions causing discomfort to self and team but for overall long term good . This is highly impactful if such decisions are taken in time. Leaders also need to take supportive action including enablements from top and external sources in time. This gives credibility to leaders that they take responsibility for the impact as much as the team takes and are leaders are willing to plough in for the team.

Creative Leadership: Adjusting leadership style to suit different situations and team needs. Different roles and different teams at different contexts need different styles. Also it helps reduce predictability of style thus creating some newness of expectations and also better responses. Here creative leadership helps a lot thus giving newness of style and ideas bringing fun and freshness to the team.

**WORTH
GOING
THROUGH!**

FROM COMMAND TO COLLABORATION: WHAT LEADERSHIP CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

Leadership, over time, has evolved in response to shifting social, technological, and economic landscapes. Yet, while the styles and approaches may differ, there are timeless principles that both past and present generations of leaders can learn from each other. Today's generation can benefit from the wisdom of their predecessors, while those in leadership today can adopt some of the strengths that were more common in past leadership styles.

Let's explore what each generation can teach the other!

**Full Article on
Next Page**

What Today's Generation Can Learn from the Glory Of Past ?

1 The Value of Authority and Clear Direction

Then: Leaders of the past often held strong, clear authority. This didn't necessarily mean authoritarianism, but rather a sense of decisiveness and clarity about direction. In industries where speed and consistency were crucial—such as in manufacturing or military—clear instructions and a firm hand were necessary.

Lesson for Today: While modern leadership emphasizes collaboration, having a decisive leader who can make tough decisions and provide clear guidance during crises is still valuable.



2 The Importance of Discipline and Work Ethic

Then: Leaders in earlier times, particularly in more traditional or industrial settings, placed a heavy emphasis on discipline and hard work. This approach encouraged focus, consistency, and a strong commitment to goals.

Lesson for Today: The culture of “hustle” has transformed into a more balanced approach to work-life integration in today's world. However, leaders today can still benefit from instilling a sense of discipline in their teams—expecting professionalism and ensuring that work is performed with dedication and responsibility.



3 Strong Sense of Duty and Responsibility

Then: Past leaders, particularly during times of war or economic hardship, often had a strong sense of duty to their people or organizations. Leadership was about service to others, with personal sacrifice sometimes involved.

Lesson for Today: Although modern leadership focuses more on empowerment and personal growth, the sense of responsibility to the greater good remains crucial. Today's leaders can continue by fostering a deep commitment to the welfare of the larger community.



4 Hierarchy and Structure

Then: Leadership in the past often relied on clear hierarchies and organizational structures. This helped to maintain order and accountability, especially in large corporations or during times of war.

Lesson for Today: While today's leaders tend to favour flatter organizational structures, there are moments when clear hierarchies and defined roles can enhance accountability and avoid confusion. Modern leaders can learn when and where a structured approach is most beneficial.



What Past Generations of Leaders Can Learn from Trailblazers?



Embracing Inclusivity and Diversity

Now: Today's leaders place a high value on diversity and inclusivity, understanding that a variety of perspectives leads to stronger decision-making, creativity, and innovation. Gender, racial, and cultural diversity are seen as strengths that can drive success.

Lesson for the Past: Historically, leadership in many fields was exclusionary. Leaders today can encourage diversity by creating more inclusive environments that fosters fairness, boosts performance and morale

Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Now: One of the defining features of modern leadership is emotional intelligence—the ability to understand, manage, and connect with people on an emotional level. Today's leaders are often more attuned to the emotional well-being of their teams.

Lesson for the Past: Earlier leadership often prioritized results and efficiency over emotional considerations. The past generation of leaders could benefit from incorporating emotional intelligence into their leadership practices to build more connected and supportive teams.



Adapting to Change and Innovation

Now: Today's leaders are operating in an era of rapid technological advancements and cultural shifts. Adaptability, a willingness to experiment, and an openness to new ideas are key characteristics of effective leadership today.

Lesson for the Past: Learning to embrace change and stay agile in the face of technological and societal shifts is an essential lesson for the past generation of leaders.



Work-Life Balance and Employee Well-Being

Now: Today's leaders are more focused on creating environments that promote well-being, work-life balance, and mental health. This is especially important in light of global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where many employees have come to expect greater flexibility and support.

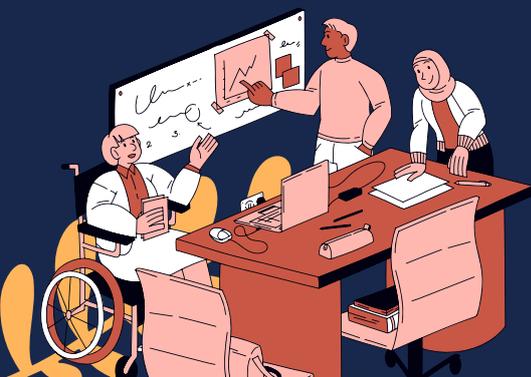
Lesson for the Past: Past leadership often emphasized long hours, sacrifice, and endurance at work, sometimes at the expense of employees' personal lives. Traditional leaders can understand the importance of worklife balance and how it leads to greater job satisfaction and long-term productivity.



Collaboration Over Competition

Now: Modern leadership thrives on collaboration, whether it's within teams or across organizations. This shift toward collective problemsolving and collective success has been greatly enhanced by technology and connectivity.

Lesson for the Past: Leadership in the past often leaned toward competition and individual achievement. While competition can drive performance, past leaders could benefit from incorporating more collaborative approaches, recognizing that teamwork often yields more sustainable and innovative results.



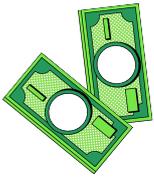
DID YOU KNOW?

LEADERSHIP ACTUALLY CHANGES YOUR BRAIN

RESEARCH FROM NEUROSCIENCE OF LEADERSHIP SHOWS THAT WHEN PEOPLE TAKE ON LEADERSHIP ROLES, THEIR BRAIN STRUCTURE CAN CHANGE! LEADERS EXPERIENCE A GROWTH IN AREAS OF THE BRAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR STRATEGIC THINKING, EMPATHY, AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION. IT'S LIKE YOUR BRAIN GETS A LEADERSHIP UPGRADE JUST BY BEING IN CHARGE!

FUN FACT: SO IF YOU'VE EVER WONDERED WHETHER LEADERSHIP IS A "MIND GAME," IT LITERALLY IS—YOU'RE CHANGING YOUR BRAIN BY TAKING THE REINS.





FUNTELLIGENT

word search



Find the following adjectives hidden in the grid that describe leadership in action:

E	M	P	A	T	H	I	C	F	X	T	R	V	P	P
I	J	Q	O	Z	V	R	E	S	I	L	I	E	N	T
N	D	T	I	S	I	D	H	B	W	K	L	T	Y	F
S	X	T	B	E	L	B	A	T	P	A	D	A	P	N
P	I	R	N	I	T	R	M	L	G	A	B	N	T	J
I	V	D	D	E	C	I	S	I	V	E	N	A	D	W
R	R	W	U	T	Z	E	Q	S	E	M	C	E	Y	I
A	S	S	E	R	T	I	V	E	I	D	O	R	H	J
T	R	N	S	F	H	J	T	M	K	A	A	S	O	E
I	N	N	O	V	A	T	I	V	E	N	T	W	P	D
O	E	T	H	A	L	T	T	N	O	K	O	A	P	W
N	O	L	K	I	B	P	H	I	N	R	Z	P	I	W
A	K	F	O	Q	A	R	S	T	R	A	T	E	G	Y
L	H	Y	M	O	T	I	V	A	T	I	O	N	A	L
M	I	M	T	E	V	I	S	R	Q	Z	I	L	I	X

Empathetic

Decisive

Inspirational

Visionary

Strategy

Resilient

Assertive

Motivational

Innovative

Adaptable

