

Acharya Mahapragya's Management Mantra

The word 'management' has emerged as the key word today in almost all branches of knowledge – be it science, humanities, business, religion, spirituality etc. Success in life is impossible without recourse to some or the management *sutra* or *mantra* as is often used by management *gurus*. Thousands of institutes of management have sprung up across the globe. Modern business thrives on the acumen and ingenuity of the executives produced by these institutes which continue to study, observe and research the practices, strategies and devices that have enabled business companies and individuals across the world to make strides. Earlier some traditional practices were quietly followed by business houses for managing and organizing their family businesses. Unlike the modern strategies for business administration they were radically different in that they emphasized integrity, purity of means, truthfulness and transparency in their behaviour. Acharya Mahapragya, the most celebrated thinker of the present times and a highly revered spiritual leader, is an admirer of the scientific basis of the modern concept of management. He has studied its principles and also keeps abreast of the latest developments in this area. He is of the view that success in a business venture or in an endeavour that a person undertakes to make it to the top depends on the judicious combination of the legacy of the tools of management inherited naturally from our ancestors and the strategies evolved by management institutes.

In the days gone by business was not controlled by kings and emperors. They only kept an eye on the activities of businesspersons lest they should violate business commitments and indulge in dishonest practices. They were free to manage their businesses the way they liked so long as they refrained from resorting to exploitation and unfair means. The business community itself betrayed an exemplary sense of social responsibility. As a result business flourished and more or less people had stress-free life. In sharp contrast to it modern business schools lay emphasis on the tactics that lure consumers away from a particular brand of a company, encourage them to buy their products and augment their appetite for limitless consumption. Adherence to ethical norms is not at all important for them. They are not taught to exercise control over greed and refrain from manipulative and devious tactics.

Now the question that arises is what management *mantra* a ruler of the pre-Christi an era adopted to manage his kingdom, a businessman used to manage his business and a citizen followed to manage himself and his family. There were no business schools to impart training in management. To this Acharya Mahapragya's reply is that their secret of success lay in their art of self-management, their ability to control emotions and their innate faith in ethics. Farther away the individuals and society moved from *dharma* degeneration began at all levels. If prosperity doesn't bring happiness in life, what use is it?

In a globalized economy businesses are growing and expanding fast and one finds management *mantras* galore. Before I analyze the *mantras* developed by experts in the classrooms of these elitist business schools I would like to remind my readers of the fact ever since civilization came into existence management skills in individuals also grew. These traditional norms of management based on practical experiences of individuals governed by their innate ethical norms not only helped people to achieve singular

successes in their businesses or careers but also brought happiness to them. They made them emotionally competent and balanced.

What dismays Acharya Mahapragya is that ethical norms are being thrown to the winds and the sole objective of companies and individuals is the multiplication of profit even at the cost of other companies. The present race for profit is propelled by greed, jealousy, rivalry and fickle fame. The CEOs of companies nurse secret desires to destroy one another. They seek prosperity in someone's destruction. The by-products of these unethical business rivalries are conflicts, riots and violence. They only aim at amassing wealth and being ranked as the richest persons of the world. But they forget that they have a collective responsibility to see that their race for wealth doesn't destroy environment, their industries do not release excessive greenhouse gases which widen holes in ozone layers triggering global warming and that they take care of the most vulnerable groups pushed by their unbridled greed to abject poverty. The gale of globalization, says Mahapragya, might deprive the planet of its sustainability itself, if a brake is not applied against it by limiting individual ambitions for wealth.

The mystic Jalaludin Rumi has rightly said that 'life of this planet is nothing but the harmony of the opposites'. The modern business school can not shut their eyes to realistics. They must also reorient and train the students of management science in the way to find harmony. The ancient universities like Nalanda and Taxshila were in fact management schools, the students produced by these institutes proved to be the most successful prime ministers of various princely states. We have to unearth the methodology the ancient Gurukuls and universities used to produce exceptionally capable state managers. They in fact knew the way to find harmony in the opposites. It is an art of sustainable living.

Another by-product of the modern management tools is the worst form of stress that grip the business executives who are not able to cope with the demands by their bosses. The rate of stress related deaths among these executives is alarming. We have to reverse this trend and redefine the principles of management in the context of global issues that thereafter our survival in the third millennium.

According to Stephen R Covey 'The author of the 7 Highly Effective People and Principle – Centred Leadership – co-chairman of Franklin Covey, we build a primary greatness into our personality and character by affirming people and believing in their capacity to grow and by blessing them even when they are cursing or judging us. As we give grace to others, we receive more grace ourselves'.

Acharya Mahapragya also advises the students of management to cultivate grace within ourselves and share it with others. Sometime back a group by Malte W Wilkes visited Acharya Mahapragya in Ladnun. Later Mr. Malte Walkies wrote to me asking me request Acharya Mahapragya on his behalf to write some *sutras* that may enable modern managers to achieve success in their careers without causing stress. Acharya Mahapragya acceded to my request and laid down seven rules for a successful manager.

I would like to reproduce them for the benefit of leader.

1. **Non-absolutist Attitude** (*anekant dristi*)

The first principle to be a successful manager is non-absolutist attitude. The truth derived from an absolutist view makes a problem more complicated and it cannot solve it. The manager who looks at a problem from a relative standpoint can make progress in the process of development. The manager who looks at it from a biased angle cannot succeed in his work. A biased person does not see what is rational but is inclined towards that which is irrational. In activities relating to industry and business several persons work together. They do not have the same views. On account of their divergent views an environment of opposition crops up. In a situation like this what is imperative for a manager is concord and conciliation. One angle of the philosophy of non-absolutism (*anekant*) is that the opposite views can be reconciled, an environment of peaceful co-existence can be created.

2. **Good Behaviour**

The second principle to be a successful manager is good behaviour. How does a businessman behave with another businessman? One can assess the success or failure of a person merely on the basis of his amiable or temperamental disposition. Courteous, sincere and compassionate behaviour attracts the heart of another person who becomes instrumental in a manager's progress.

3. **Alertness or Vigilance**

The third principle to be a successful manager is alertness or vigilance. It has three dimensions i.e.

- (1) Review of the past -- introspection of the mistakes made in the past,
- (2) Self-criticism of the present. For example:
 - (i) What did I do today?
 - (ii) What remains to be done for me today?
 - (iii) What is that which I can do but I am not doing on account of lethargy or laziness?
 - (iv) Does someone observe my lethargy or do I observe my lapse myself?
 - (v) What is that weakness which I cannot give up?
- (3) Pledge of the future – one should pledge oneself so that one may not make a mistake in the future. There are three elements which weaken a person's resolution:
 - (i) Fickleness of mind,
 - (ii) Intolerance,
 - (iii) Unrestrained sensual desires. One should remain on one's guard against them.

(4) **Control Over Impulsive Acts**

The fourth principle to be a good and successful manager is exercising control over one's impulsive acts. The manager who is not able to control his impulsive behaviour will not be able to get the work done by his subordinates. He will also make mutual and human relationships bitter.

(5) **Self-restraint**

The fifth principle to be a good and successful manager is self-restraint. Addiction to sensual pleasures and fickleness of mind create obstacles in one's professional competence. It is imperative for a manager to restrain his sensual desires and mind. The manager who doesn't practise how to restrain his senses and mind cannot fulfill his responsibilities properly and for him even the door to corruption opens.

(6) **Human Solidarity**

The sixth principle to be a good and successful manager is human solidarity. '*I am a social creature. I am not alone*' – this trend of thinking awakens one's consciousness. "Just as my rights are dear to me, similarly others also like to uphold their rights, hence I shouldn't be an impediment in the way of the right of others' livelihood."

(7) **Freeing Oneself from Tension**

The seventh principle to be a good and successful manager is to free oneself from tension. The person who doesn't know how to live in the present invites tension knowingly or unknowingly. Memory is good but inessential memory causes tension, hence it is imperative to restrain one's memory too. Imagination is essential but unnecessary imagination creates tension hence it is imperative for a manager to restrain his imagination too.

The greatest cause of tension today is the reactive violence. Many times it happens that a subordinate official murders his superior officer. Its cause lies in reactive violence. He who doesn't react angrily to a situation and doesn't give his subordinates a chance to react angrily becomes highly successful.

Mahapragya's *mantra* of management as elucidated above was published in their email newsletter subscribed to by all management school, management professors, experts and business executives of Germany. Mr. Malte Wilkes wrote after a year that thanking Acharya Mahapragya for the very good elucidation. It had a high rate of click.

I feel that Mahapragya's management *mantra* as expounded above will prove to be a universal management *mantra*. If practised these *sutras* of management can save the planet for destruction.

– **Dr. S. L. Gandhi**
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