

Management 2000 Project

Preparing Our Professionals to Meet the Challenges of the New Millennium

Quazi Mahmud Ahmed

It is often said that there is no such thing as a poor country; there are only 'poorly-managed' countries. Japan's phoenix-like phenomenal development from the debris of the World War II is an excellent case in point. With an extremely poor natural resource base but with an excellent reservoir of human capital, Japan has become not only one of the richest nations but also one of the most respected ones in the world today.

The point is obvious. Our human burdens must be turned into human resources. The task ahead is not at all easy but we should

not have any doubt that this is the only way out of the abject poverty situation we are confronting in this country. All of us have our responsibilities to act in our individual and collective capacities and through proactive visions, programs and projects we should push our country forward.

Here at YEP Forum, we are committed to excel in each profession we are in whether we are business executives or teachers, whether we are doctors or in defense services—the idea is to give your best efforts and raise the standards of professionalism. It is against this backdrop that we have

taken up this publication series called Management 2000 Project: Preparing Our Professionals to Meet the Challenges of the New Millennium. Whatever profession you are in—be it engineering or journalism—you need to 'manage' a variety of resources: human, financial, physical and informational, among many others.

In other words, you need to know the essence of day-to-day management ideas that will make you more effective and efficient in your area of work. Here in these columns we want to pass on to you the tips, tools, techniques and insights on

management issues and opportunities so that you can apply these world-class ideas in your professional spheres.

Since relationship between leadership and management is one such topic that touches all our professions, we are pleased to shed some light on this very important aspect of management. However, so much can be said about leadership and management that we were at a loss as to what to keep and what to leave, but here is our less-than-perfect first effort to provide you with some materials on leadership and management that you can apply at your workplace.

Spotlight on Leadership Traits

Leadership research has not revealed a single trait that is possessed by all successful leaders, but a number of characteristics have been identified that are common to many of them.

Rafi Hossain

FOR many years leadership researchers have attempted to identify a set of traits that could be used to predict leadership success. Tall stature appeared to be a good predictor, as evident in Charles DeGaulle. However, the diminutive stature of his countryman, Napoleon, destroyed that assumption. Similarly, the slenderness of Abraham Lincoln was placed in question by the rotund Winston Churchill. In fact, contrary evidence has been found for all leadership characteristics identified to date. Therefore, the wise manager should be extremely cautious in rejecting an otherwise promising candidate for a leadership position merely because of the absence of a particular trait the manager feels is essential.

Although leadership research has not revealed a single trait that is possessed by all successful leaders, a number of characteristics have been identified that are common to many of them. These include verbal fluency, problem-solving ability, insight into group problems, flexibility, intelligence, acceptance of responsibility, social skills, and awareness of self and surroundings.

Verbal Fluency — Verbal fluency is more than the possession of an extensive vocabulary; it is the ability to communicate in the language of the led. Jimmy Hoffa and Winston Churchill communicated differently, however, they both had complete command of their audiences.

Ability to Solve Problems — The ability to solve the

problems of the led, or to contribute to their problem solving, is another characteristic of many effective leaders. Some leaders even contribute to problem solving by "not doing" rather than by "doing". Einstein's boss, for example, contributed to the implementation of the theory of relativity by not inhibiting Einstein and by preventing others from inhibiting him.

Awareness of Needs — The effective leaders understand the stated and unstated needs of the led and know how to satisfy those needs. For example, union members need a leader whom they can trust to communicate their needs for job security and job satisfaction. Likewise, a congregation needs a minister who understands and can articulate their spiritual needs.

Flexibility — A flexible leader is able to adapt the organization to meet changed needs with minimal unsettlement to the led. There is nothing more distressing or more destructive to creative problem solving than having a great idea summarily rejected because "That's not the way we do it here."

Intelligence — An effective leader need not be a genius. However, the members of the group should feel that the leader has the ability to help them fulfill their personal needs. A word of caution: there is a growing body of research which shows that the leader who is much more intelligent than the group will not be as effective as the leader who is perceived as just a bit more intelligent than the led.

Acceptance of Responsibility — The willingness to accept responsibility is another characteristic of many successful leaders. A group likes to know that the leader is getting the job done. Leaders must deliver unless the group is willing to "protect" the leader by taking on those leadership tasks which the leader fails to carry through.

Social Skills — Members of a group should not be put down in the eyes of their colleagues. A leader with tact, diplomacy, and the ability to relate to the group is valued by group members and therefore contributes to better performance.

Awareness of Self and Surroundings — Self-insight, sympathetic understanding, and keen awareness of the surrounding environment have all been found to be associated with effective leadership. Self-insight is a rare quality which is often mistaken for weakness. In fact, it is the rarest and probably the most important of all leadership qualities. If we are shaped by our experiences, yet do not understand how these experiences shaped our thinking, then we cannot understand the basis for our decisions.

Recommendations for Management — It is important to emphasize that when looking closely at people, one should realize that each person has a host of individual human characteristics. Different people have different human characteristics in varying degrees. These different characteristics make up the entire person or personality, and it is the entire

person who is selected for a leadership position. It is extremely rare, if not impossible, for a person to possess all the leadership characteristics identified in this article; have them fully developed to the peak of perfection; and, in addition, have the technical background, education, training, and experience necessary to master a particular job.

The characteristics outlined in this article are desirable leadership characteristics which managers should keep in mind when selecting and developing leaders. However, they are no panacea and should be used only for the insight they provide, not as predictors in the complex responsibility of matching a leader to a particular leadership position.

Leadership effectiveness depends upon the personal characteristics of the individual, the character of the task assigned, and the place of the individual in the organizational hierarchy.

The challenge of management is to select people with character who have genuine interest in managing and who also have the potential for developing those positive characteristics which have not fully matured. Management bears the responsibility of positive leadership skills. This is accomplished by assigning increased management responsibility, by consistently and regularly reinforcing positive leadership skills, and by quickly and quietly nipping negative techniques before they become habits.

A Checklist of Qualities That Make A Good Boss

A study showed that subordinates have strong and surprisingly consistent opinions, not only on what makes a good manager, but on just how well their own boss is doing.

Ratna Amin Shoma

A successful manager has ten qualities that are the same in a wide range of industries and occupations — whether in Bangladesh, Belgium or in Brazil.

So says Harbridge House, a Boston consulting firm, which drew its profile of a successful manager from interviews with more than five thousand employers that it serves.

The answers were consistent "regardless of the age or sex of the manager, or the industry, size location, organisational structure or corporate culture of the company," says Ernest Glickman, Harbridge executive vice president.

Employees are asked what qualities they think their own bosses need. They also are asked how their bosses measure up. The answers help the consulting firm shape its management training programmes to the specific needs of each organisation.

In each company a questionnaire is developed listing as many as fifty manager qualities. Employees are asked to pick from the list the qualities they consider most important for a manager to be effective. Then they are asked to rate their own boss against the list.

Despite the diversity of occupations and the differ-

ences in individual managers, the study showed that the men and women who reported on their bosses hold strong and surprisingly consistent opinions, not only on what makes a good manager, but on just how well their own bosses are doing.

This is what a good manager must do, the study concludes:

1. Provide clear direction. An effective manager needs to establish clear goals and standards for people. He must communicate group goals, not just individual goals. He must involve people in setting these goals, and not simply dictate them himself. He must be clear and thorough in delegating responsibility.

2. Encourage open communication. The manager must be candid in dealing with people. He must be honest, direct and to the point. "People want straight information from their bosses," the study says, "and managers must establish a climate of openness and trust."

3. Be willing to coach and to support people. This means being helpful to others, working constructively to correct performance problems and going to bat for subordinates with superiors. This last practice "was consistently rated as one of

the most important aspects of effective leadership," says Robert Stringer, senior vice president of Harbridge, who supervised the survey.

4. Provide objective recognition. The manager must recognize people for good performance more often than criticizing them for performance problems. Rewards must be related to the excellence of job performance, not to seniority or personal relationships. "Most managers don't realize how much criticism they give," the study says. "They do it to be helpful, but positive recognition is what really motivates people."

5. Establish on-going controls. This means following up on important issues and actions and giving subordinates feedback on how they are doing.

6. Select the right people to staff the organisation.

7. Understand the financial implications of decisions. This quality is considered important even for functional managers who do not have responsibility for the bottom line.

8. Encourage innovation and new ideas. Employees rate this quality important in even the most traditional or conservative organisations.

9. Give subordinates clear-cut decisions when they are needed. "Employees want a say in things," the

report says, "but they don't want endless debate. There's a time to get on with things, and the best managers know when that time comes."

10. Consistently demonstrate a high level of integrity. The study shows that most employees want to work for a manager they can respect.

For the study, Harbridge House used computerised data acquired during research for clients.

The consultant firm regularly conducts anonymous polls of employees as part of a programme of improving the effectiveness of managers.

Stringer says: "When you start getting thousands of employees in a disparate group of organisations coming up with essentially the same profile of a successful manager, you can safely conclude there is some validity to the information they are giving you."

In view of how often managers themselves disagree on questions of management style, Stringer says he was impressed by the near-unanimity of the answers given by employees.

Is there one quality that stood out above all others in employee's responses? "It's amazing," he says, "how important open and honest communication is to employees."

Motivation Misconceptions in Bangladesh

Farhan-ul-Enam

IN the earlier days of industries and economic growth, there was no existence of the concept of motivation. Labourers were referred to as 'hands' and their employers were happy with them as long as they accomplished their assigned tasks. They were not allowed to do anything of their own accord. They had absolutely no opportunity for creativity or ingenuity.

The concept of motivation came into being when employees started demanding more than their regular share of work and pay. They wanted something beyond mere material needs. Thus motivation came into being.

Motivation is completely an inner feeling. It comprises of an individual's drives, desire and wishes. In an under developed nation such as Bangladesh, motivation is almost like a 'culture shock'. It had taken a long time for managers in Bangladesh to understand and embed the concept of motivation into their employees and organisations. This time gap can be explained given the fact that most employees in this nation are more concerned with satisfying their basic needs (food, clothing etc.). This is often the characteristic of most under developed nations such as India and Pakistan. However, when these basic needs are met the employees move onto a higher level of need where they seek for more than just their regular wages. At this point managers often find themselves in a situation where their subordinates are producing less and are less enthusiastic about their work. This is when the role of motivation comes into play.

One may easily ask the question: why a sudden change in the need level. This can be explained by effectively using Maslow's need Hierarchy which clearly states that when one need level is fulfilled people move onto the next level. Also basic economics tells us that the 'more we get, the more we want'. This is why most of us want status and recognition after obtaining

money. According to the conventional method of motivation, managers in Bangladesh often increase the wages or other benefits when employees show disinterest in their work. These managers fail to realise that their subordinates are looking for more. This method might work for a certain period of time, but eventually managers will not be able to increase the pay and employees will not respond to the pay rise. Managers in Bangladesh must realise at this point that these employees want achievement, recognition and a chance for creative work.

In 1959, Goodrich and Sherwood surveyed 200 human resource executives and their results are still valid today. The factors that the executives listed as extremely important for employee motivation were responsibility and autonomy, respected and recognition from superiors, a sense of well being on the job, and the opportunity to have

one's ideas adopted. Managers in this country must increase these motivational factors after their attempts to increase motivation through money has failed.

The conventional method of motivation can be used in the government sectors in Bangladesh, the productivity level is already almost zero. For this reason the employees in this sector can be motivated by increasing their pay. As it is the people working in these sectors waste their entire day drinking tea and gossiping with each other. If they are made to feel a part of the organisation they will be more enthusiastic about their work.

The managers of this country should realise that individual is unique in their own way. They must understand that they must use different motivational techniques to motivate each of their employees. As long as they feel that money cannot be the only motivator they will be successful in the game of 'motivation.'

context of continuing relationship — trying hard to make the other party a winner in its own and others' eyes.

Management and Leadership

Leadership is an important aspect of management, but it is not the whole story. The primary role of leader is to influence others to voluntarily seek defined objectives (preferably with enthusiasm). Managers hold formal positions, whereas anyone can use his or her informal influence while acting as a leader. Managers achieve results by directing the activities of others, whereas leaders create a vision and inspire others to achieve this vision and to stretch themselves beyond their normal capabilities. Because there is a difference between management and leadership, strong leaders may be weak managers if poor planning causes their group to move in the wrong directions. On the contrary, a person can be a weak leader and still be an effective manager, especially if he/she happens to be managing people who have a vivid understanding of their jobs and roles. This set of circumstances is less likely hence we expect managers to have high leadership ability among other skills.

Followership — The Way To Leadership

Being an effective follower is a testing ground for future leaders, a place where employees are closely observed to see if they exhibit potential for leadership. Skillful performance in current roles unlocks the door to future leadership opportunities. We have long known that many managers can't lead a horse to water and many subordinates can't follow a parade. In addition to having leaders who can lead, successful organizations need followers who can follow. Effective subordinates can also prepare themselves for promotion by developing their conceptual and leadership skills. In fact it's probably fair to say that all organizations have far more followers than leaders, so ineffective followers may be more of a handicap to an organization than ineffective leaders.

Team Building

Management theme of the future — Team work

GLOBALLY team participation is given priority since teams managed effectively work as a cohesive group towards a common goal. The result is that they are extremely productive and are bred into achieving organizational objectives. They make things happen. Although the whole idea is group participation, an effective team leader is required for giving a well-delineated and achievable vision for a purpose. Whether a team is self managed or not, it still needs leadership. The best kind of leader will usually understand how teams develop and how best to support them through their natural evolution. Inputs are taken from everyone, but the leader gives guidance. He also has to be there to decide on what final approach to take. In other words he vets the options available to arrive at the more productive one.

It may be noted that leadership traits are in a select few who demonstrate willingness and has an ability to accommodate the needs of the group. He has the rare quality of being able to generate interest in all and be respected for his abilities, be a coach and counselor, a leader who is receptive to the notion of empowerment. Leaders are always people who are able to express themselves fully, whether in public meetings, team briefings or in one-to-one encounters.

With the growth in electronic communication, especially with the promises of the new millennium, multinational multicultural and multilingual teams are drawn from different countries and welded together through electronic media with the team-mates hardly ever meeting face-to-face. There is also evidence that the people who most succeed in organizational life tend to be those best able to communicate and use their self-expression. To help your team arrive at inspiring goals, you will need to spend time listening, questioning, building agreement, offering participation in decision making and releasing people's full potential.

Behind most exceptional teams is a shared vision and a common set of values. An important reason someone will work very hard is because they feel that you as a leader value them as a person, not as a cog in the wheel. You do this by treating each person with respect and by persisting in demanding that this is how team members treat each other.

Each team member's response to an appeal for a special effort depends on their deciding 'what's in it for me?' It could be respect and approval, the challenge, the kudos, the money, the chance to do what no one else has done, the joy of competing and so on.

Discover what each person and the team as a whole really wants and you have the key to unlocking their potential and sustaining that special effort.



What People Expect of Their Leaders

What do you look for and admire in your leaders? have produced strikingly consistent answers over seven years of surveys:

• Honest	87%
• Competent	74%
• Forward looking	67%
• Inspiring	61%
• Intelligent	46%
• Fair-minded	42%
• Broad-minded	38%
• Courageous	35%
• Straightforward	33%
• Imaginative	32%
• Dependable	31%

Source: Establishing the Credibility Factor, Best Practice magazine, January 1994.

TIPS

- To be a successful team leader, you should:
- Take responsibility for the team's performance.
- Be yourself
- Develop a guiding purpose that excites you and others.
- Be persistent in pursuing your guiding purpose
- Expand your own self-expression
- Listen to your inner voice
- Learn from those who can help you
- Make things happen that you can care about
- Not ascribe success or failure to external circumstances nor take sole credit for it.