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Business Daily from THE HINDU group of publications

Monday, Jul 12, 2010

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## Selfless leadership – An Indian perspective

*Qualities that single out the selfless for leadership roles..*



Unique perspective: A distinctly Indian definition of leadership can be found in the country's cultural foundations.

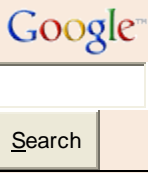
Mohit Kishore

Most leadership theories (with a few exceptions, of course) are variants of a 'hero' based ideal. In other words, the leader is a heroic individual of some sort who summons his followers to accomplish great things.

Additionally, there is a tendency to glorify leadership as an achievement or a sort of reward for one's performance in a specific sphere of life.

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<b>Stocks</b>	This has led to a situation where society tends to confer leadership upon individuals simply because they are able to function effectively in their individual roles without evaluating whether the individual truly possesses the skill to lead others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotes</li> <li>• SE Diary</li> <li>• Scoreboard</li> <li>• Open-End Mutual Fund</li> </ul>	<p>Any system that follows such a pattern of leader selection is bound to create a society of unfulfilled 'followers'.</p> <p>An Indian definition of leadership</p> <p>Is there a distinctly Indian definition of leadership? The answer to this may be found in India's cultural foundations. The central idea of the Indian philosophical tradition is the idea of selflessness.</p>
<b>Foreign Exchange</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rates</li> </ul>	<p>An individual begins on his path of spiritual evolution with the initial ego-centric belief that he is distinct and special in relation to others, but as he progresses further he realises that while the particularities of his existence or station in life may be distinct from others, the underlying conscious principle is the same.</p>
<b>Shipping</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ports</li> </ul>	<p>Krishna's demonstration of his own cosmic form (containing the entire universe within it) to Arjuna in the Gita essentially reinforces the same idea of a universal consciousness that cuts across all beings.</p> <p>It may be argued that an individual who is able to perceive this unique combination of specificity and universality in other human beings is the one who is best suited to lead others.</p>
<b>Archives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yesterday</li> <li>• Datewise</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• In Focus</li> </ul>	<p>In other words, an individual with a greater degree of selflessness is the ideal candidate to be a leader of other human beings.</p> <p>Ideals of a selfless leader</p> <p>A leader whose foundation is the idea of selflessness manifests this in many forms in his relationship with followers.</p>
	<p>Freedom: The first ideal of such an enlightened leader would be 'freedom'. A selfless leader would allow other individuals to operate with a high degree of freedom while providing an outline of what needs to be accomplished.</p> <p>How the follower navigates his way towards the outcome is entirely left to his creative faculties. This approach contradicts the traditional organisational way of getting things accomplished — fear and conformity to pre-defined safe paths.</p>
<b>Group Sites</b>	
	<p>Fear and conformity-based leadership styles are essentially expressions of a control-based tendency</p>

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which, in turn, stems from an inherent ego-based foundation which demands that all outcomes bear the stamp of the leader.

A selfless leader, on the other hand, will demonstrate a lesser tendency to control simply due to the absence of any desire in him to stamp his individual personality on everything that his team produces.

Follower evolution centricity: A selfless leader would be constantly conscious of the specific evolutionary state of his follower, and would constantly try to raise him to higher levels of selflessness.

Thus, the role of such a leader is not only to create outcomes through his team, but also to raise followers to his own state of being. In fact, all outcomes are in the distant future, and all that can be done in the present is really to ensure that people working towards those outcomes are raised to higher levels of consciousness (which is essentially the ideal of Karma Yoga).

Enlightened doer-ship: An enlightened leader would constantly reinforce the idea of enlightened doer-ship. This means that credit-seeking would be a shunned practice. This returns once again to the Vedantic ideal that the idea of a specific doer is an ego-centric idea.

Ego-centric behaviour in any team pursuit rapidly diminishes the motivation and performance of other players in addition to creating a zero sum situation where people perceive that for one person to win, another has to lose.

This does not mean that skilled performers are not rewarded — it only means that rewards are structured on a non-zero-sum, non-relative basis.

One may even argue that skilled performance is its own reward and per se does not need any other reward to reinforce that behaviour!

In conclusion, it must be pointed out that a selfless leadership based organisation does not completely shun individualism. In fact, it celebrates individualism in a different manner — through the freedom it offers to its members to creatively express themselves towards the accomplishment of outcomes.

All it does though is to check individualism that is expressed in the desire to possess greater control and power.

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