

Dilemma: To Be or Not to Be

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Abstract

The case is about an Assistant Manager working in the plant of a leading steel manufacturing company of India. The protagonist while going to plant where he was posted witnessed an accident that took place before his eyes. He saw a car in high speed hitting a man, the driver was talking on the mobile phone. Immediately after the accident the car sped away. The man was thrown five meters away and was profusely bleeding. The passers-by including the protagonist stopped and saw the man, picked him up and took him to the dispensary for medical aid from where he was referred other hospital for higher treatment. The man's chances of survival was very low because he had suffered major head injury. The protagonist knew the person and the car which had hit the man but was in a dilemma because the culprit was his own boss! Should he complain or shouldn't he?

Key words: Performance appraisal, Motivation, Decision making

Introduction

India has come out as the fourth largest steel producing nation in the world, as per the recent release by World Steel Association in April 2011. In 2010, India was the 5th largest producer, after China, Japan, USA and Russia had recorded a growth of 11.3% in steel production as compared to 2009. Overall domestic crude steel production grew at a compounded annual growth rate of 8.4% during 2005-06 to 2009-10. The Indian steel industry accounted for around 5% of the world's total production in 2010. The total crude steel production in India for 2010-11 was around 69 million tonnes and was expected that the crude steel production in capacity in the India would increase to nearly 110 million tonne by 2012-13. Further, subject to the implementation of the proposed

expansion plans, India may become the second largest crude steel producer in the world by 2015-16.

There is a huge spur in the demand for steel in the country which is currently growing at the rate of over 9% The per capita consumption of steel is around 110 pounds as compared to 330 Pounds for the global average. This indicates that there is a lot of potential for increasing the steel consumption in India. There is an immense growth potential in Indian Steel Sector due to the massive infrastructure needs and expansion of industrial production. With capital investments of over Rs. 100,000 crore, the Indian steel industry provided direct/indirect employment to over 2 million people. Over the years, India produced international quality steel of almost all

grades/varieties and had also been a net exporter of steel, though in smaller quantities.

Organization

Bharat Steel Company Limited is the leading steel-making company in India. Bharat Steel Company Limited traces its origin to the determining years of an emerging India. It is an enterprise whose contribution and dedication towards building the nation has been persistent and historic. Since its inception in 1977, till date the company is trading onwards on the path of success achieving one feat after other. It is a fully integrated iron and steel maker, producing both basic and special steels for domestic construction, engineering, power, railway, automotive and defense industries and for sale in export markets. Bharat Steel Company Limited manufactures and sells a broad range of steel products, including hot and cold rolled sheets and coils, galvanized sheets, electrical sheets, structural, railway products, plates, bars and rods, stainless steel and other alloy steels. The company has the merit of being one of India's largest producers of iron ore and of having the country's second largest mines network. This gives Bharat Steel Company Limited a competitive edge in terms of captive availability of iron ore, limestone, and dolomite which are inputs for steel making. Bharat Steel Company Limited wide range of long and flat steel products are much in demand in the domestic as well as the international market. This vital responsibility is carried out by Bharat Steel Company

Limited's own Central Marketing Organization (CMO) that transacts business through its network of 17 Branch Sales Offices spread across the four regions, 15 Departmental Warehouses, 22 Consignment Agents and 17 Customer Contact Offices. CMO's domestic marketing effort is supplemented by its ever widening network of rural dealers who meet the demands of the smallest customers in the remotest corners of the country. With the total number of dealers over 500, Bharat Steel Company Limited's wide marketing spread ensures availability of quality steel in virtually all the districts of the country.

Equipped with technical and managerial expertise and know-how in steel making gained over the years, Bharat Steel Company Limited is forging ahead reaching one milestone after other. The company has immensely contributed to the development of administrative expertise in the country. Bharat Steel Company Limited has a well-equipped Research and Development Centre for Iron and Steel at Bokaro which helps to produce quality steel and develop new technologies for the steel industry. Besides, the company has its own in-house Centre for Engineering and Technology, Management Training Institute and Safety Organization. Almost all Bharat Steel Company Limited's plants and major units are ISO Certified. It has immensely benefitted the communities amidst which its manufacturing plants and units' operate. The tagline of the company which is "men of steel Will make steel" is indicative of the fact that

the company through the hard work and dedication has grown in power. The vision of the company is to be a world class organization by upholding ethical standards in the business by providing challenging career opportunities for advancement and growth. Bharat Steel Company today is one of the widest manufacturers of steel products with an annual turnover of 40, 237crore in financial year 2011-2012. It has three integrated steel plants located at Bokaro, Burnpur and Birbil. The credo of the Company is to be a valued world class corporation and the leader in Indian steel business in excellence, efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

Locale: Cold Rolling Plant at Bokaro

Bokaro plant is hailed as the company's first Swadeshi plant, built with maximum indigenous content in terms of equipment, material and know-how. Bokaro plant is designed to produce flat products like Hot Rolled Coils, Hot Rolled Plates, Hot Rolled Sheets, Cold Rolled Coils, Cold Rolled Sheets, Tin Mill Black Plates and Galvanized Plain and Corrugated Sheets. Bokaro has provided a strong raw material base for a variety of modern engineering industries including automobile, pipe and tube, LPG cylinder, barrel and drum producing industries. Bokaro plant gives immense value to its people as the pivot of all organizational activities. Bokaro plant is working towards becoming a one-stop-shop for world-class flat steel in India. The plant can produce low-nickel stainless steel in the form of coils and

sheets with an installed capacity of 10,000 tonnes / year in Cold Rolling Mill. Cold Rolling Mill complex of the Plant is equipped with the most modern stainless steel production lines, sourced from leading manufacturers of the world. Coil build up line, bell anneal furnaces continuous annealing and pickling lines, strip grinding line, slitting and shearing lines to produce coils /sheets with precise dimensional tolerance and flatness with superior metallurgical characteristics.

Protagonist

Vikas Parasher is an electrical engineer working as an Assistant Manager in Bokaro Plant of Bharat Steel Company Limited. He is posted in the Cold Rolling Mill of the Bokaro Plant of the Company. The primary purpose of this mill is to produce thin gauge sheets of superior surface finish and desirable product properties. The material flow of this mill is complex and so are the duties and responsibilities of Vikas which include managing the staff, allotment of duties to them and ensuing incessant supply of electricity. He has to be alert and any delay on his part can prove to be costly to the plant. Being an able engineer he has been placed in the General shift and his duty starts at 30 am and ends at 6pm. He travels mostly on his Bike and it takes about half an hour to reach the plant which is 20 kms away from his official residence.

Originally from Meerut, the 23 year old Vikas is the sole bread earner of the family, as his

father Shri Parmeshwar was school teacher at a Government School. Vikas had lost his father in an accident. Vikas had then just taken his admission in an engineering college and was in the first year of his engineering. His mother Vimla Parasher had struggled against all odds to help Vikas continue with his studies. She used to work a fruit vendor and support Vikas's study. He has a younger sister of marriageable age who was doing her graduation

Situation

It was the 13th day of the month of February, 2013; the sun shown timidly in the sky. It was 7.30 am in the morning that Vikas Parasher got a call from the office that there had been a short circuit in the plant and he should reach plant immediately. As he was almost ready to leave for office, he expedited his process of getting ready short cut his breakfast and rushed to Plant. As he entered the plant he witnessed the same rush of traffic as he usually met at the hour. Some cars and bikes at medium speed at 40km/hr thronged the gate. Suddenly he saw a blazing silver car at high speed overtook him. He had almost lost control but somehow regained his balance. Vikas wanted to hurl abuses but he stopped because he saw that the man on the driver's seat was his own Boss. He was talking over mobile phone. Vikas was shunned to see the car hit a man who floated in the air like a football, immediately after the accident the car sped away. The man was thrown five meters away and was profusely bleeding. The

passers-by including the Vikas stopped and saw the man, picked him up and took him to the dispensary for medical aid from where he was referred other hospital for higher treatment. The man's chances of survival was very low because he had suffered major head injuries. The protagonist knew the person and the car which had hit the man but was in a dilemma because the culprit was his own boss!

Constraints: The Family

Vikas Parasher was the sole bread winner for the family. He wanted that the culprit should be booked but was in doubt. His sister who was younger to him was doing her graduation. If he spoke the truth he would have to face numerous problems like getting involved in the entanglement of police and law. Emotionally he would have to face problems because the case might keep him busy. And he would not be able to devote singularly to finding a suitable groom for his sister. Further both his family members were staying away from him and they would feel anxious and tensed.

The organization: Performance Appraisal System

Vikas was in a fix because if he divulged the details and whereabouts of the culprit he would suffer. His Boss would never forgive him. Further his boss would have to face disciplinary action leading to suspension if the charge was proved. His Boss was supposed to appraise his performance and the Boss would

rate him low. The Boss would ultimately take his revenge and his chances of promotion would be marred.

Vikas had joined the organization as an Assistant Manager three years back and his promotion was due. In order to get the promotion which was in spirit a time bound promotion he had to secure a 100 points in three years time. The performance rating system was O, A, B, C. Getting an 'O' meant 40 points, 'A' stood for 30 points, 'B' for 20 points and 'C' for 10 points. Vikas had got one 'O' and one 'A' in last two years totaling to 70 points. He needed an 'A' at least to make it 100 points and secure his seat as Deputy Manager. The current Boss would rate him and the General Manager would review. The precedent was that generally the General Manager would not change the rating given by the Boss. And the Boss in all probability would take his revenge. Many thoughts flooded in his mind. It was difficult to decide.

Amidst this confusion Vikas called up his friend Mahesh Dattani who said that Vikas should not get himself involved in these cases and cited an example wherein a similar incident had occurred and the person who choose to speak against the authority and had to suffer the wrath of management.

The Decision

Vikas was the witness who recognized the car and the driver. He was asked to provide the details in to the police. He thought about the man who was injured and was battling for life.

He was a Piece Rated worker. He would definitely be benefitted if the culprit was hooked and booked. He had heard his friend's advice silently and he had thought of his mother and sister. He decided to remain mum and slowly stood up to leave when he felt soft hands holding his hand; he turned aside to see two tear laden eyes looking at him, pleading him to support the right. He closed his eyes tight. He reopened his eyes and his eyes caught the sight of the wallpaper on which the credo of the Company was written in bold "We uphold highest ethical standards in conduct of our business and value the opportunity and responsibility to make a meaningful difference in people's lives".

His looked down at the girl who was holding his hands and he was reminded of his own sister. Vikas at once decided to speak for the right and provided the details of the incident to the Police and authorities.

Teaching Notes

Synopsis

The case is drawn from a real life incident and the dilemma faced by Vikas Parasher who works as an Assistant Manager working in the plant of a leading steel manufacturing company Bharat Steel Company Limited. Vikas while going to plant where he was posted saw a car in high speed hitting a man. Immediately after the accident the car sped away. The man was thrown five meters away and was profusely bleeding. The passers-by including the protagonist stopped and saw the

man, picked him up and took him to the dispensary for medical aid from where he was referred other hospital for higher treatment. The man's chances of survival was very low because he had suffered major head injury. The protagonist knew the person and the car which had hit the man but was in a dilemma because the culprit was his own boss. But Vikas choose to speak the truth.

Discussion Questions

1. What motivated Vikas to take this decision? How would it affect Vikas' career prospects?
2. Was Vikas right in supporting the truth? If you were in the place of Vikas what would you do? If such an incident occurred in your organization what do you think that most people would do?
3. Do you agree that "behaviour is a function of consequence", if yes why?

Courses for which the case holds relevance

1. Organization Behaviour: Motivation, Social learning theory, Self perception theory
2. HRM: Performance appraisal

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