

Bhagwad Geeta and Management

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Abstract

Bhagwad Geeta is known world over as Holy Literature of Hindus. It is like Bible for Christians, Kuran for Islamis, Granthsaheb for Punjabis etc. Bhagwad Geeta was proved to be composed between fifth and fourth centuries BC1 (about 5000 years ago). Modern management concepts like vision, leadership, motivation, excellence in work, achieving goals, meaning of work, attitude towards work, nature of individual, decision making, planning etc are all discussed in the Bhagwad Geeta with sharp insight and fine analysis². Bhagwad Geeta (Bhagwad Geeta, in fact, means Eternal Song³) makes a forceful thrust on action and condemns inactivity in no uncertain terms. In fact it combines the best aspects of both the Eastern and the Western thought processes³. Powerful words of Bhagwad Geeta increase self-awareness, confidence, self-faith, one's own power, courage, strength, ability to manage stress & conflict, calmness, motivation, ethical behaviour, leadership and team skills, harmony, efficiency, decision making etc and improve overall management wisdom. Management of Stress & Controlling the Mind, Leadership, Anatomy & Behaviour of an Executive, Executive as a Yogi, Beware a Demon in You, Preventing Failure & Gaining Success in Business, Dynamic Action, Work Ethics and Knowledge Management are the broad concepts through references found in Bhagwad Geeta explaining almost all management principles & philosophies mentioned through this research article those can be taught, practised and reinforced. Not only Indian Corporate but Global Corporate can also understand and follow these concepts explained in a very lucid language. Most of these Modern Management concepts can be taught in B-schools even. Transformation of management systems



by preaching through such innovative methodology, development and good governance is possible.

BHAGWADGEETA AND MANAGEMENT

Management of Stress² (Chapter 1: Arjunvishad Yoga: Arjuna's Dilemma)

Stress is the curse of the human race in the 21st century. This leads to innumerable physical and mental ailment. Bhagwad Geeta explains in a very scientific way the source

of tension and how an executive can achieve inner satisfaction through a steady mind (Yoga...balanced mind...santulit man). The advice is simple, proven in practice and saves humanity from major crisis.

Controlling the Mind² (Chapter 6: Aatmsanyam Yoga: Self Control)

A successful manager should control his mind in such a way as to make it an instrument of positive dynamism. Such a person becomes eventually a friend of himself, and if the mind is not controlled he becomes his own enemy. In the process, a dedicated executive gives up pretty desires and achieves a higher mental status.

Highlighting role of mind, Bhagwad Geeta goes on to explain the need for a balanced approach to life through yogic practices.

Leadership² (Chapter 15: Purushottam Yoga: Best Person)

Bhagwad Geeta advocates a moral platform for the leader to adopt. He is expected to lead from the front or from within with an equipoise mind. He must possess high degree of competence and must strive to work for maximizing gain for all concerned beneficiaries. He virtually performs a penance through a confluence of mind, body and communication.

Executive Behaviour² (Chapter 14: Guntrayavibhag Yoga: 3 Parentheses of Behaviour)

All human beings possess distinct individual characteristics. Bhagwad Geeta explains this behaviour under 3

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parenthesis: Nobility (Sattva), Greed (Rajas) & Laziness (Tamas). These gunas control his behaviour. At one point of time one attribute surfaces suppressing the rest and hence people tend to behave differently at various point of time. Behaviour is explained by two divides: Divine (sur) and Demonic (asura). Bhagwad Geeta advises executives, mired in endless challenges, to develop right behavioural pattern and focus on the task in hand with utmost concentration.

Anatomy of an Executive² (Chapter 17: Shraddhatrayvibhag Yoga: Division of Qualities)

The mindset of an executive determines his approach to business. Bhagwad Geeta divides it as Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These 3 parentheses embrace all human beings. The actions can be identified based on these attributes. A fair understanding of this division helps entities to improve their performance and aids immensely in their business actions.

Manager be a Yogi² (Chapter 12: Bhakti Yoga: Devotion, 10: Vibhuti Yoga: God's Manifestation)

Management teams function amidst the forces of internal and external environment surrounding them. Wisdom lies in segregating the peripheral issues from the core reality. Bhagwad Geeta advocates a set of empirical guidelines for the beleaguered (stressed) executive to function as a Yogi detached yet dynamic. This sophisticated managerial thought is explained by Bhagwad Geeta in a very contemporary fashion.

Beware of demon in you² (Chapter 16: Daivasursampdwibhag Yoga: Divine and Demonic Nature)

Success in business can open the doors for the devil residing in the innermost recesses of executive's mind. Greed surfaces belittling positive attributes. Slowly, the dynamic executive gets manipulated by the trickeries of the devil. Values are destroyed and ethics decay. Bhagwad Geeta rings timely bells of caution for managerial hierarchies to keep the asura away. Today's happenings in the corporate world underscore the pressing need for this advice.

Preventing Failure in Business² (Chapter 13: KshetraKshetradnyavibhag Yoga: Purush/ HR and Prakriti)

The executives who run business ultimately decide its fate. Hence it is essential to know the negative employee and apply timely measures to correct his behaviour. Personalities of such people have to be watched carefully and such human resources to be treated with great care.

Dynamic Action² (Chapter 11: Vishrupdarshan Yoga: Global Presence)

Management is the process of continuous action at various levels of entity. But no text has analysed actions in depth the way the Bhagwad Geeta does. Bhagwad Geeta explains the universal urge for activity, its logic, approach and role. It goes into the very anatomy of actions and explains how tensions arise. The wisdom bears stunning relevance for contemporary corporations. It explains the importance of 'doing' and not losing hope.

Success in Business² (Chapter 8: AksharBrahma Yoga: Eternal Being)

Businessmen always seek success in their endeavours. Bhagwad Geeta provides succinct prescription for achieving this. It elucidates the anatomy of success vividly. The function of positive actions is emphasized throughout. Seizing the right opportunity, rising up to the challenges, soliciting right guidance etc are all part of forceful advice offered to the stressed executive.

Work Ethics² (Chapter ³: Karma Yoga, 5: Karmasanyas Yoga: Renunciation with Knowledge)

Executive shall approach his work with total commitment. He should focus on the details of the task, uncluttered by concerns of the ultimate results. This approach leads to sustained glory and success for entity as well as individual. This is the greatest message of Bhagwad Geeta for 21st century management. Its universal appeal stems from its endearing relevance to the current era.

Knowledge Management² (Chapter 2: Sankhya Buddhi Yoga: Transcendental Knowledge, Chapter 4: DnyanKarmaSanyas Yoga: Knowledge, Chapter 9: Rajvidya Rajguhya Yoga: Supreme Knowledge)

Knowledge era has ushered in the concept of Learning Organization. Management gurus have emphasized upon continuous learning and practicing the right mix of action and detachment. Bhagwad Geeta has advocated these concepts through endearing (appealing) and subtle (delicate) nuances. In this process, it explains the hypothesis of corporate action and develops the theory on an unique modern platform.

CLOSING REMARKS

It is difficult and impractical to encompass Bhagwad Geeta in limited words. This research article is an attempt to summarise management principles & philosophies which are very vivid through preaching of Bhagwad Geeta.

At the end of Bhagwad Geeta Arjuna confesses that his



delusion and ignorance are destroyed and he stands free from doubt (18.73). On the similar lines, executives, managers and leaders in corporate and students from B-schools can learn through Bhagwad Geeta and get enlightened. Thus by transformation of management systems by preaching through Bhagwad Geeta - an innovative methodology, development and good governance is possible.

Please note that the article does not intend to promote any religion or any religious philosophy but only tries to bring to the notice that the management thoughts, principles and philosophies those are taught today are already existing in the Bhagwad Geeta.

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