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LESSONS FOR MANAGERS  
IN  
BAGAWAD GEETA

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Bagawad Geeta is an immortal divine doctrine uttered by the Lord SriKrishna. It conveys the highest truth and spiritual teachings of eternal value. It has universal message to the entire humankind and has all time relevance irrespective of the context. The glory of Geeta is beyond the power of description. Only through faith, devotion and reverence one can understand the teachings of Geeta. However, a sincere attempt has been made to understand Geeta from the Management Science perspective.

Of the two principal teachings of Geeta namely, *Sankhya yoga* and *Karma yoga*, the later is more suitable for householders and those engaged in worldly pursuits. The message of Geeta is centred around *Karma yoga*. It is the practical Vedanta. Lord exhorted the householders to practice the same with constant meditation and devotion to God.

In the domain of Management the teachings of Geeta manifest in many dimensions. The principal message of Geeta is **action**, because man is bound by karma. Only through action duty is performed and perfection is achieved. Maintaining world order is possible only through action. Therefore one has to do one's duty, irrespective of the nature of work. What is more important is devotion to duty. Only through performance of duty wealth is created. Laziness and idleness are therefore immoral.

There is no such thing as high and low in the nature of work performed. In the opinion of **Swami Vivekananda** “The scavenger in the street is quite as great and glorious as the king on his throne”. **Egoism** is inherent in every human being. Geeta advises thus: Always do the duty without egoism. Dedicate all actions to God without the feeling of self. Only then you are freed from the binding effects of all action, either good or evil.

**Swami Chinmayananda says:**

“If we try to digest properly the impression of Geeta’s advice in the light of Vedic lore, it becomes amply clear how actions performed without egoistic desire purges the mind of its deep seated impression and make it increasingly subtle in its purification and preparation for greater fights into the infinite beyond. “

While doing duty efficiently with devotion, one should do the same **without attachment** to the fruits or benefits, you have the right to work only and not to the fruits thereof. Perhaps it is easier said than done.

**Swami Vivekananda says:**

“It is the most difficult thing in this world, to work and not care for the result, to help a man and never think he ought to be grateful, to do some good work and at the sametime never look to see whether it brings you name or fame or nothing at all”

He who is unattached to everything (sthita prajna) and meeting with good and evil with steady wisdom neither rejoices nor recoils; his mind is stable.(Chapter II verse 57)

**Efficiency** in action is attained through placidity of mind. The mind in its neutral or equilibrium state is unaffected by all ebbs and flows, success and failures. Relinquishing attachment, indifferent to success and failure is equanimity.

“Endowed with equanimity one sheds in this life both good and evil. Therefore exert yourself, for this yoga is equanimity. Skill in action lies in the practice of this yoga” (Chapter II verse 50)

Therefore always efficiently do your duty without attachment. Doing work without attachment, man attains the supreme (Chapter III verse 19)

In the arena of **decision making** valuable lessons can be learnt from the teachings of Geeta. **Objectivity** and **righteousness** are the two essential elements of decision making. The two aspects of mind namely the objective aspect and the subjective aspect should be synthesised so that the decisions become more clear and supports skilled action. Objective mind draws stimuli from sense objects, external factors and happenings in the environment. The subjective mind is influenced by the impressions already created in the mind through past actions and experiences. Expectations create anxiety and fear which ultimately affects objectivity. Right **attitude of mind** is the necessary prerequisite for decision making.

In the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Arjuna was overtaken by infatuation and grief and refused to fight against the great Acharyas like Bishma and Drona and his own kith and kin. Sri Krishna exhorted Arjuna: yield not to unmanliness and shake off the paltry faint-heartedness. He advised Arjuna that fighting the war is the duty of kshatriya and you are fighting a righteous war about which you should be proud. If you do not wage the righteous war, you are abandoning your duty, losing your reputation you will incur a sin. Give up the feelings of pleasure and pain and do not be grieved for dead or living. Wise men treat pleasure and pain alike. This discourse of Sri Krishna removed all subjective factors in the mind of Arjuna who ultimately resolved to fight.

**Mental balance** is the most desirable quality of a manager or leader. Mind by its nature is unsteady, restless, turbulent and difficult to control. One has to control the mind with constant practice of concentration and dispassion.

The man dwelling in sense objects develop attachments:

from attachment springs up desire,

from desires ensues anger,

from anger arises, infatuation,

from infatuation confusion of memory,

from confusion of memory, loss of reason

from loss of reason one goes to complete ruin (Chapter II verse 62&63)

But the self controlled practisant, while enjoying the various sense objects through his senses, which are disciplined and free from likes and dislikes, attains placidity of mind (Chapter II verse 64)

**Concentration** and focussed mind are the basic requirement for making rational decisions. Those who have fickle and unsteady mind should practice concentration and fix it constantly in the contemplation of self. Mind by its very nature is restless and unsteady and cannot constantly think of one object. Only by practice concentration can be attained. Meditation is one effective method of disciplining the mind.

“Restraining the restless and fidgety mind from all those objects after which it runs one should repeatedly concentrate on God” (Chapter VI verse 26)

## **Human Values**

Success in any human endeavour, especially in the field of management is attained through human qualities and human values. According to Geeta, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are the nature born qualities. An ideal human being should cultivate sattva qualities.

“*Sattva* being immaculate, is illuminating and flawless, it binds through self identification happiness and wisdom” (Chapter XIV verse 6)

Absence of pride, dispassion towards materials, non – violence, forgiveness, service, purity and self- control are the human qualities advocated in Geeta. Ultimately good human beings alone constitute good citizens, good leaders, good society and the human kind has to nurture these qualities.

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