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MANAGING PEOPLE IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

A Collection of Lectures and
Speeches



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**MANAGING PEOPLE
IN THE BUSINESS
WORLD**

**A Collection of
articles on
managing a
business
successfully**

By

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INTRODUCTION

This presentation is a collection of various professional articles and lectures that I have been giving to my clients and managerial staff over the last five years. The views expressed are related to my four decades of involvement in managing and administering a variety of business organizations in four different countries.

I was not born as a manager but became a manager of people and places through my experiences of different businesses and the realities of various workplaces. I am indebted to the people I interacted with because I refined and modified my thinking from their encounters, problems, failures and successes.

Over the years I discovered that business management had an apparent complexity but it also had an apparent simplicity. It is complex as far as organizing, coordinating, commanding and controlling are concerned. It becomes

simple if we as managerial personnel begin to realize that the target keeps moving, events and people do not always conform long enough to be planned and controlled. Therefore, it is vital that our business leaders involve themselves in continual experimentation with new and workable approaches to solve the old and new problems.

I was once told that I will grow and learn to be a successful manager by careful observation, proper practising, clear thinking and rethinking, effective experimenting and continually questioning, so I began to follow the maxim: “Try it, fix it, do it.”

After reading my views people should carefully observe their own business realities and then take a step to either change or review the strategies that they are already using. If your managerial style works without my ideas then good luck to you. - Ram Lakhnan Prasad.

Success for Everyone.

Success for anyone has multiple explanations. Different people look at their success differently. If you have worked for over fifty years in the human services areas of various businesses, educational and political fields like I have done, you have the capacity to measure and provide some valid explanations for the success of people in their respective organisations.

Many wise people have asked some very valid questions on this topic. Is there a power that can reveal hidden veins of riches and uncover treasures of which we never dreamed? Is there a force that we can call upon to give health, happiness and spiritual enlightenment? When we talk of a power or a force we look at our success spiritually but it can be considered generally as well. We know fully well that all our success in life does not altogether depend and impinge on our

ability and training because it also depends on our determination to grasp the existing or arising opportunities that are presented to us.

Those of us who have had meaningful interactions in business, social and political life can categorically say that opportunities come by creation and not by chance. If we are ready to create opportunities for us then our paths of success become smooth, controllable and manageable. Since we have created them, we can earn the benefits out of them and use them to our best advantage.

If we are determined to use all the available outward means as well as all our natural abilities to overcome and manage every obstacle that come in our path we will then gradually utilise and develop the unlimited potential that lies within us to succeed in any aspect of life. We just have to think positively and generate our will-power. These internal

human gifts will make us see all our successes revealed for us.

We alone are totally responsible for all our actions, words, thoughts and deeds. It is believed that we demonstrate our success or failure according to our daily activities. If our mind is always looking in the negative direction then an occasional positive thought is definitely not enough to give us the success that we envisage. However, if we set our minds to think well and ponder rightly then we will definitely be able to plan our future properly and find our goals and objectives even if we face multiple dark spots in our life.

This power of positive thinking can be achieved by everyone through constant effort and proper practice but it requires volition or will power. We need to establish mechanical as well as conscious will and be determined to be constructive in all our efforts and endeavours. If we search hard within us

we will find the needed talents and strengths to combat any weaknesses and shortcomings. If we take advantage of all the opportunities that knock at our door then we will be able to devote our entire energy to mastering one thing at a time and move towards success step by step.

Almost all successful people have tried to attempt simple tasks first and then as their confidence strengthens they have become more dynamic and aimed for more difficult accomplishments. Those successful people neither scattered their energies nor left something half done to begin any new venture. They have often made wise selections and refused to submit to failure. This led them to success for them. We can learn a lot from many of such examples.



Moving Ahead in the Corporate World

I have been thinking about the new profile of an achiever in the working world and have made multiple attempts to finalise the issue but every time an additional aspect finds its way into that important statement. However, this time I am determined to complete this task somehow even if the idea sounds very basic and ordinary.

It is an accepted fact in our commercial and industrial world that today's work place is a lot more exhilarating, demanding, challenging and customer-driven than ever before so there is no doubt in my mind that the people who are in the workforce and want to get ahead and to rise to the top have to be high achievers.

I wish to go back to the basics of human qualities as means and methods of

achievement. These may sound and look obvious but often a reminder creates a miracle to change and adjust our attitude.

My high school teacher gave me a description of a high achiever as an individual who is fully committed to team work, is always prepared to take risk, is a balanced thinker, is a continuous skill builder and is ready and eager to produce good results at all times. He told me a few specific things that make us high achievers like quality, skill, attitude and inspiration.

Ever since then, I have been adding my own thoughts to the profile of a high achiever for the business world. Whether we are working in high-tech or low-tech, in service sectors or manufacturing areas, and whether we are accountants, sales persons, plant operators, engineers, market researchers or managers, and supervisors, and whether we are Chiefs or just ordinary Indians,

clerks or switchboard operators, we need to look at and check our essential biography or profile as an achiever if we want to move ahead successfully in this tough and competitive world.

In my many years of working as a teacher, administrator, curriculum developer, examiner and human resource practitioner I have heard members of corporations not only talking about their missions, strategies and objectives but they have been generating reams of written material, lectures, reports and memos spelling out what they wanted their people to know about their plans and policies.

Sometimes all these just end up being words piled upon words, with blame games pointing at failed associates. So what should be done? We need actions and attitudes that we can clearly measure and that can help us get there with ease and understanding. In order to achieve our goal we need specific means,

behaviour benchmarks and design-oriented quality that tell us that we are on the right path and are fully engaged in the correct processes.

Let me pose a few relevant questions. Are we more entrepreneurial than we were this time a year ago? Just how much value have we added to ourselves in the past three months? Have we mastered decision making? These and similar other questions call us to move towards the global drift and do some skill building and renewal because everyday our work is becoming more demanding than ever.

My suggestion is that we in the business world should learn to sharpen our executive, individual and corporate instincts and seriously view and adjust our own biography or profile if we want to move ahead. Who are we? Where are we? What are we doing? How are we performing our duties? When are we changing?

As I said in the beginning, now I will look at various basic and simple human qualities and attitudes that we can add to our profile and become high achievers as time moves on.

Our smiles and frowns convey very vital attitude about our work life and are important aspects of the high achievers. Our genuine and authentic smile is an encourager that quietly says, “Go ahead and tell me. Go ahead, do it. I believe in you. I am counting on your ability to do better.” A high achiever has to have the right kind of smile and be a spendthrift in this aspect.

On the other hand, frown, although it is appropriate in some instances, does a lot of damage because it depicts an attitude of an intimidator or discourager. So while the smile of a high achiever conveys an upbeat attitude about performance, our frowns may project the opposite, so let us take stock and adjust our disposition.

Then there is merit in a good handshake. My wife spoke at a wedding in Vancouver once and said that hand-in-hand contact is an expression of encounter, involvement and the good beginning of intimacy but it requires firmness. A weak handshake can show that we are moving away from people whereas a very firm handshake cannot be taken as persuasive but dominating. A high achiever gradually learns to resolve and adjust the handshake style accordingly to convey friendliness toward others and make them feel friendly toward self.

Many prominent workers have found that it pays to accept their weaknesses and character flaws. So it is often wise to accept that we have made a mistake and have learnt something from that error. If we do not acknowledge our limitations, we most certainly will doubt our strengths.

I know that a high achiever by trying to make the visitors and subordinates feel

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