

# What CEO'S can learn from Shane Warne?

By Mr. P R Rastogi and Dr. N H Athreya

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The winner in the recently concluded Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty 20 cricket matches is Rajasthan Royals (RR). What is special about this team? Why did its many handicaps not matter? Why was it so consistently winning? Have we a lesson or two for the corporate world?

One of the distinguishing factors of differentiations of RR was that it did not have a coach like all other teams. Its captain, Shane Warne an international cricket retiree, acted as both captain and coach. That gave the power of unity of command. That made the team pull in the same appropriate direction and at the same needed tempo.

As the league progressed, RR performance surprised most commentators. By the time all the league matches were over, RR was at the top of the table, winning as many as 11 of the 14 matches. Finally, RR emerged as the winner of the first IPL tournament.

In life as in cricket, winners aren't always the strongest but the smartest. Warne has earned applaud for his inspirational leadership in this tournament,

So what has been the Warne's brand of leadership? He believes that the all-conquering team needs a great man manager and a motivator. People who have known Warne say that he has a great eye for spotting talent. He makes his players realise how good they really are. When asked on his style of working, Warne said "My strength is that I can understand people well; I am a good judge of knowing when someone is feeling flat, when a player is too excited,"

Warne recognized very early in the tournament that building a winning team of players, coming from different cultures and backgrounds required a strong inspirational common goal – one that was bigger than just winning a few games of cricket. Recognising this, he started implementing actions for realising it right from the start. There was a clear mapping of strengths and weaknesses for each player and yet everyone was made to feel comfortable.

Said Warne " We had informal meetings over breakfast or in the team bus or beside the pool and tried to stay away from the boardroom atmosphere, Sometimes you have to put your arm around the guy; It was about ensuring that the players were most comfortable with what they were doing on and off the field," he added.

Warne said: "One of the biggest reasons a cricketer under performs is the fear of failure and we have taken it away from our players". Warne practiced the leadership philosophy that encouraged players to take risks and make decisions on the field. "If players fell after walking on the edge then we were there to hold them and help them. We let players play there game fearlessly,"

Team spirit was being seen as their hallmark. And the process started right at the beginning: at the planning stage. 'In Warne's army all were equal'

## **Learnings for CEO**

Are there any learnings for our CEOs from Shane Warne's leadership? We think there are.

The CEO's role in leading business in turbulent times is becoming more and more challenging. The CEO has to balance the complex role of leading the organisation and provide return on corporate assets, amidst conflicting environmental demands.

The business organisations are gradually migrating from production and financial architecture to human capital architecture. Management guru Sumanta Ghosal said: "The most important challenge for business is to recognize that money is not the critical resource, it is the people."

While organizations are quick to acquire the latest technology, their management practices continue to be driven by a traditional perspective about people as warm bodies-not keen minds. Organizations want their employees to embrace change quickly, but they are loath to address the issue of how they can help their people to do their jobs better. The CEO need to remember that organizations do not think and act: employees do. One of the urgent opportunities for the CEO is to re look at the development of human capital and think adopting the role of becoming organisational coach for the people. Translating "People first" should become their key strategic priority.

## **Develop internal share of mind**

The first goal for the CEO should, therefore, be the total involvement of all employees in the company's business. A high internal share of mind is a pre-requisite to a high external share-of market It has to be realized that the challenge lies not in coming up with change initiatives, but in implementing and in getting people to internalise these. The benefit of such an approach is evident: total awareness and the commitment of everyone concerned.

Organizational leadership is all about accomplishing the vision. The vision and mission statement of a company signifies a much larger purpose of work. Hence, it is imperative that its development must involve people and touch their self esteem and pride. Besides clear

understanding, this serves to motivate and inspire people to work collectively and for a common purpose.

A good vision statement should seek to stretch the individual and organizational capabilities and this can be possible only when the vision development involves all employees and touches their self esteem and pride. Lack of involvement could lead to weak acceptance and commitment in practicing the values. The vision should be focused around main stakeholders: customers, suppliers, shareholders, employees and business press. It should be simple, directional, self inspiring and achievable.

The clear advantage of such a participative process in vision development is significant; each employee thinks he or she has developed the vision, which leads to ownership and accountability. Once the feeling is developed among employees, the vision becomes internalized and then translating them into management practices and linking it to individual performance becomes much easier.

### **Translate business goals into individual targets**

Every organization sets operational goals and priorities but the essence of goal setting is how well the goals are understood by all employees. They are interested to know what has to be done and how? This can be best done by bringing active involvement, improved visibility and accountability of the goal setting process.

The goals have to be realistic and attainable. Organizations have to continuously evaluate the goal achievement and commend good performance. Goals have to be reviewed periodically and corrective action should be taken in line with existing reality.

The entire goal setting process should create a strong linkage between company goals, functional goals and individual goals. Most organizations generally have performance appraisal system but opportunity lies in not taking it as an annual ritual but transforming the entire process of performance management into a dynamic activity, closely linked to changing business opportunities as well to the problems.

### **Measure the progress and develop the people**

While organizations must strive to go for all round executions of goals but should maintain the balance between empowerment and control. It is a common experience in organizations that the appraisal system becomes a controlling mechanism, with employee development getting into background. The focus of every effective review and appraisal system should be more developmental; identifying the improvement areas for knowledge and skill improvement and role effectiveness and focusing more on self-measurement.

## **Strengthen internal communication**

Effective communication plays an important role in building and developing employee motivation. Every organization knows the power of effective communication with people inside and outside the organization and its implementation should be an integral part of the management priority.

Employees are interested to receive the information they want rather than that which someone is willing to give them. Even more important is, the manner and the form that such communication takes place in an organization. The pillars of effective communication has to be a two way process. Organizations must rely on both formal and informal systems and should give specific attention to face to face communication.

The communication has to be relevant, simple, fast and as far as possible direct. In particular, the value of listening and feeling should be given as much importance as much to facts. This is not merely to monitor progress but to involve the employees and strengthen their self development. Initiatives like this can help to break the relationship barrier, develop confidence; can develop business consciousness among employees and enhanced performance too.

## **Celebrate the success**

Taking advantage of the cultural riches of social environment of India, organizations can make working place rich not only economically but also emotionally. Every organization should know the power of celebration for continuous and increasing success and should use every opportunity, to publicly celebrate success- individual and group success- big and small. The involvement of family can have a dramatic impact on the motivation and such opportunities can be used for spreading the message of equality, human dignity and employee's participation.

## **Conclusion**

It is said that a successful team beats with one heart. In the changing business environment, realigning organizational energy, effective utilization and development of human resource are the key opportunities for sustainable competitive advantage. The right way to develop organizational capability is to look internally at your people and implement effective steps to improve their motivation, knowledge and skills. The CEO need to remember that in the market place they are running a race. To win the race, deployment and development of people could become the key differential.

Mumbai, Thursday, July 17, 2008

## What CEOs can learn from Shane Warne...

*The surprise win of the Rajasthan Royals in the IPL can be attributed to its captain whose management mantras are worth learning*

PR Rastogi & N H Atthreya

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One of the distinguishing factors of differentiations of RR was that it did not have a coach like all other teams. Its captain, Shane Warne, an international cricket retiree, acted as both captain and coach. That gave the power of unity of command. That made the team pull in the same appropriate direction and at the same needed tempo.

As the league progressed, RR's performance surprised most commentators. By the time all the league matches were over, RR was at the top of the table, winning as many as 11 of the 14 matches. Finally, RR emerged as the winner of the first IPL tournament.

Rajasthan Royals winning the IPL has once again confirmed that winners aren't always the strongest but the smartest. Warne has earned applause for his inspirational leadership in this tournament.

So what has been Warne's brand of leadership? As reported, he believes that the all-winning team needs a great man manager and a motivator. People who have known Warne say that he has a great eye for talent. He makes his players realise how good they really are. When asked about his style of working, Warne said, "My strength is that I can understand people well. I am a



### Team building

Warne recognised that building a winning team of players coming from different cultures required a strong common goal

good judge who knows when someone is feeling flat, when a player is too excited."

According to reports, Warne recognised very early in the tournament that building a winning team of players coming from different cultures required a strong inspirational common goal—one that was bigger than just winning a few matches. Recognising this, he worked towards realising this goal right from the start. There was a clear mapping of strengths and weaknesses of each player and yet everyone was made to feel comfortable.

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# What CEOs can learn from Shane Warne

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According to reports, Warne used to have informal meetings over breakfast or in the team bus or beside the pool and tried to stay away from the boardroom atmosphere. It was about ensuring that the players were most comfortable with what they were doing on and off the field.

J Snape, the performance coach of the team, said, "One of the biggest reasons a cricketer underperforms is the fear of failure and we have taken it away from our players." Warne practised the leadership philosophy that encouraged players to take risks and make decisions on the field.

By all accounts, team spirit was being seen as the hallmark of RR. And the process started right at the beginning - the planning stage. In Warne's team, all players were considered equal.

## Learnings for CEOs

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The CEO's job in leading business through turbulent times is becoming more and more challenging. The CEO has to balance the complex role of leading the organisation and provide returns on corporate assets, amid conflicting environmental demands.

Business organisations are gradually migrating from production and financial architecture to human capital architecture. Management guru Sumanta Ghosal said, "The challenge for businesses is to recognise that the critical resource is not money is not - it is the people."

While organisations are quick to acquire the latest technology, their management practices continue to be driven by a traditional perspective about people as warm bodies, not keen minds. Organisations want their employees to embrace change quickly, but they are loath to address the issue of how they can help their people do their jobs better. The CEO need to remember that organisations don't think and act, employees do. One of the urgent opportunities for the CEO is to take another look at the development of human capital and think of adopting the role of an organisational coach for the people. Translating to 'people first' should become the CEO's key strategic priority.

## Develop internal share of mind

The first goal for the CEO should, therefore, be the total involvement of all employees in the company's business. A high internal share of mind is a prerequisite to a high external share of the market. One has to realise that the challenge lies not in coming up with change initiatives, but in implementing them and getting people to internalise these. The benefit of such an approach is evident: total awareness and the commitment of everyone concerned.

Organisational leadership is all about accomplishing the vision. The vision and mission statement of a company signifies a much larger purpose of work. Hence, it is imperative that its development involves people and touches their self-esteem and pride. Besides clear understanding, this serves to motivate and inspire people to work collectively and for a common purpose.

A good vision statement should seek to stretch individual and organisational capabilities and this can be possible only when the vision development involves all employees. Lack of involvement could lead to weak acceptance and commitment in practicing the values. The vision should be focused on main stakeholders: customers, suppliers, shareholders, employees and business press. It should be simple, directional, self-inspiring and achievable.

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The goals have to be realistic and attainable. Organisations have to continuously evaluate the goal's achievement and commend good performances. Goals have to be reviewed periodically and corrective action should be taken.

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## Measure the progress and develop the people

While organisations must strive for execution of goals, they should maintain balance between empowerment and control. Common experience in organisations that praisal system becomes a controlling mechanism with employee development fading into the ground. The focus of every effective review appraisal system should be more development - identifying the areas for knowledge and improvement and role effectiveness and focus more on self-measurement.

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Employees are interested in receiving information they want rather than that imposed on someone is willing to give them. Even more important is the manner and the form in which such communication takes place in an organisation. The pillar of effective communication should be a two-way process. Organisations must give both formal and informal systems and give specific attention to face-to-face communication.

The communication has to be relevant, swift and as far as possible, direct. In particular value of listening and feeling should be given much importance as much facts. This is not only to monitor progress but to involve the employees and strengthen their self-development. Initiatives like these can help break the relationship barrier: develop confidence. This can develop business consciousness among employees and enhance performance too.

## Celebrate success

Taking advantage of the cultural richness of India, organisations should make the workplace rich not only economically but also emotionally. Every organisation should know the power of celebration for continuously increasing success and should use every opportunity to publicly celebrate success - individual, group success - big and small. The involvement of family can have a dramatic impact on motivation and such opportunities can be used for spreading the message of equality, human dignity and importance of employee participation.

## Conclusion

It is said that a successful team beats with one heart. In the changing business environment, aligning organisational energy, effective utilisation and development of human resources are key opportunities for sustainable competitive advantage. The right way to develop organisational capability is to look internally at your people and implement effective steps to improve their motivation, knowledge and skills. The CEO need to remember that in the marketplace the competition is running a race. In winning the race, deployment and development of people could become the differentiator.

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