

Opportunities and Problems X

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Why Don't We ?

We were talking about educational films with particular reference to films relating to management education. As is fairly wellknown, most of the films in this area are made in the U. S. Other countries also make. At the moment we import them. The import of such films is not easy. Perhaps for this reason, we do not have any films in this country. Even the few films that are available are not available for the public. They are almost a private property.

The question, therefore, is very relevant that my friend asked, namely, "why don't we produce educational films, particularly management education films ? We can make it. We can make these films.

We have made great progress in film making. One of our largest industries is the film industry. Our record for documentaries also is pretty good.

We have a film institute. Some bright trained people are being turned out year after year.

We have also started making films in our own country.

When we have all these facilities, when we can make them, why don't we ?

Expertise is no problem

One of the problems could be management expertise. Even that is not a problem any more. We have a number of premier institutions in this country. We have a number of educationists in this field in the country. They can very easily collaborate with the technicians and make it.

What stands in the way ?

There are a few distributors of imported films in the country. Either because they have not thought along these lines, they have not initiated a move in this direction.

So long as it is more paying and less troublesome to import films and distribute in this country, we cannot reasonably expect them to take them to take the initiative.

Who else can ?

On the other hand, there is an opportunity that is lying before practically every businessman, every industrialist.

If hundred of the bigger companies, for that matter if hundred of the smaller companies in this country decide to make one film each, we will have hundred films in this country.

Making a film is expensive. But it is not as expensive as people probably imagine it to be. It costs approximately 1,000 rupees per minute of a film and for 30,000 to 40,000 rupees, we should be able to make a film for a half-an-hour run.

Maybe, we can make a film of a nature that is related to our business activity. If we do so, this could be a public-cum-customer relations project.

If, on the other hand, we cannot afford this type of a project and if we think it is a luxury, there is another project we can think of. We can make prints of these films and distribute to the interested people in the country. This way we can recover most of the cost if not all of the cost.

Ofcourse, in the process we can also give a few films to educational institutions.

What would films do ?

What films can do most of us do and, therefore, I wish to emphasise only one point.

Today, a large majority of the people do not do the right thing because they do not know what the right thing is.

There is ofcourse a small minority who do know what is right and what is fair and they choose not to do those things. To them neither the film nor any other medium of education will help.

Just because the minority will not benefit, should we start a majority ? Should we not use minority as an opportunity ? Should we not feel the gap that seem to keep them away from what they can as well do.

This is an opportunity which individually and as a group we can do. We do not require any assistance or permission or even funds from any external agency either from within the country or from outside the country.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Opportunities and Problems-IX

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The Alma Mater

One industrialist told me this. A few weeks back he visited his alma mater and met the Principal. He told the Principal this: I was the student of this college. I have done fairly well for myself and I think the time has come when I should do my bit for my alma mater. I am in a position and I am in a mood too. Can you please help me with a few suggestions?

Yes, but . . . The Principal told him that like many educational institutions, his college also can take help. This help, however, is badly needed in the unconventional areas, the areas where something has to be done, but cannot be done because of the paucity of funds. These are of an innovative and experimental nature.

In particular, the Principal pointed out that one of the areas which he has been exploring is the area of providing systematic and intensive help in personality development to selected students. This means money. This money cannot be found in the normal budgetary provision even assuming that there is money to go around for the normal expenses.

An offer

My friend told the Principal that he has founded a Charitable Trust and he has discretionary funds. He will be able to do

if only in a small way for any kind of project that the Principal thinks will be useful to the students of his alma mater.

An idea for many of us

This throws up an opportunity for many of us.

Whether we can help from our company funds or whether we need set up a special Trust for this purpose is of secondary importance.

What is important is that the alma mater is providing us an opportunity.

Even now we may be helping our alma mater or some school in our village or some college and the like with some scholarships.

What is highlighted by this little case history is that we should have a chat with the Principal and even if he does not come out, we should urge him to think in terms of new areas, areas that the children need so that they may be better prepared for the changing environment. A mere degree will not help the students any more. The student needs preparation for life. In many other ways, these preparations are best made in the schools and colleges. To so make the preparation, they need funds. These funds cannot be found through normal channels. Someone will have to provide the funds and instead of asking "why don't they", may we ask "why don't we"?

Opportunities and Problems - XII

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A reader writes

A reader writes : Are you not aware of the tax laws in this country ? As things stand today, is there any point in making money ? Have you got the freedom to make wealth in this country ? Don't you see that we are helmed on all sides ? Unless you have the blackmarketing tendencies, it is not at all possible to have what you deserve. Now unless we have enough, how can we use the many opportunities that you are talking about ? There is a virtual ceiling on your income and you are actually penalised for your ability to make money and still more money, make wealth and still more wealth in this country.

This is true

It is true that the tax provisions in this country do not permit one to retain the best part of what he earns. In fact, at

a particular stage the law of diminishing return applies and it becomes almost pointless to earn, say, more than 4000 rupees per month or 50,000 rupees per year say. It is all true. This is true, may be, for a number of reasons. But the fact remains one feels cheated that the more he earns, the less he earns and after a particular income, whatever he makes is taken away by the tax department.

Options

Under such a situation we have a couple of options. One option is that the moment we make a certain amount, we stop earning. That way we need not have the discomfort of being taxed at the highest level. According to this option, we limit our income, we limit our earning capacity.

So that we may limit our earning capacity, we may work less, we may risk less, we may struggle less, and we may take less initiative.

Another option may be to really examine what is permitted today

We are not permitted to retain all that we earn beyond a particular point. At the same time, we are **not** prevented from spending what we earn on others. We are not prevented from spending the amount on a number of causes and institutions, technological, educational and social.

In other words, what we are prevented from is having things for ourselves and spending things on ourselves. We are **not** prevented from making a lot of money and spending them on others.

A personal choice

We have to choose as individuals.

But one choice is that we do not forego our unique capacity to make wealth and still more wealth. As on date, there are plenty of opportunities in this country to make more wealth and still more wealth.

In other words, the opportunities are plenty and the capacities unusual.

It is upto us to combine these existing opportunities in this country and also the existing capacity in us. If you can use these two, we can make money and still more money.

The Constraint

The constraint, however, is that we may argue that I will make more money and I will use the opportunity, only if I can retain practically all that I earn, certainly a large portion of what I earn.

If you put this condition we have got only two options. One is to become a social leper — namely becoming a blackmarketeer. The other option is that we limit our exertion and thereby we limit our income.

Are we fair ?

If you take the later option, are we fair to ourselves ? What is our unique capacity ? Our unique capacity, the capacity that very few people have in this country, is the capacity to convert sand into gold.

Would you be fair to ourselves ? Leave along the rest in using this unique talent ? Are we fair to the gardeners to deny this _____ ?

What gives pleasure ?

This is a philosophical question : What gives pleasure ? Is it having money that gives pleasure or is it having the freedom to spend that money that gives pleasure ? If having the freedom to spend money gives pleasure, than all that we need is to ask a further question namely : Is spending on oneself is pleasure or spending on others is pleasure ?

Spending on oneself certainly gives pleasure, but it is a limited pleasure. Spending on others gives pleasure, but here it could be unlimited.

The question, therefore, we may ask is : Do we want to exercise the freedom that we have now — the freedom to spend or to _____ activities or by taking devious approaches that are not permitted either by law or by society.

A point to ponder

My submission is that instead of an external imposition, we may voluntarily put a ceiling to the income that we would like to have for ourselves. I am suggesting a limited ceiling in income for ourselves.

Having done this once, why not we spend the special energies, capacities, talents we have in doing one or two things ?

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Opportunities and Problems-XIII

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A Reader writes

I have worked for industry for nearly twenty years. My children are settled. I would like to devote my time for a good cause.

Can you kindly help me with a thought-starter ?

One thought starter

An executive, almost in your situation, has tackled the problem in the following way :

His name is Mr. A. M. Elijah. Mr. Elijah is in his early fifties. When he found that his children were settled and when he also found that his needs are few, he probably felt that he will spend the rest of his active career for a cause.

He continues to be a Board Director in a few companies; but the rest of the time he devotes for the creativity movement in our country.

Creativity Development

He has organised a non-profit organisation, the Institute of Creative Develop-

ment (B3, Lal Deval Co-operative, Synagogue Street, Poona-1).

Even during the first year of its inception, he has done substantial work for this cause.

The periodical bulletin he brings out is extremely informative.

He has already taken up a couple of research projects in the area.

In addition, he gives talks and conducts seminars on aspects of creativity in many parts of India.

A labour of love

The essential point is that since his personal needs are fulfilled, he finds it desirable and possible to devote his time and talents for a cause.

It is likely that only a few in the country can be so happily situated. The point, however, is that those who are so situated (as the reader referred to in the earlier part) can take up one or two other causes like creativity and play godfather and the wet-nurse. Such an opportunity availed of may mean a lot of personal satisfaction in the years to come.