

# MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

## Opportunities and Problems - XVI

N. H. ATTHREYA  
Management Consultant.

### Have you heard this ?

According to an expert, we in India retain **only 3% of our rainfall**. The rest we let go to the sea.

A recent news item says that in Bombay alone **40% of the water goes waste because of leaking pipes**.

The first I heard personally and the expert explained giving facts and figures.

The second I read in a Bombay daily. It is possible that there was a printing error. Having heard the first, however, I am tempted to believe the second.

### Water a national asset a crucial asset

What a crucial asset water is we have noted this year.

No stretch of imagination can explain the place of water in man's life and work. One has to go and live **at least for twenty four hours** in a remote place in India where water is scarce.

Water scarcity breaks the pride of our country, the backbone of our country, namely, the peasantry of our country.

### One opportunity

If one or more of the well to do business houses can adopt the cause of the conservation of water, **there is work for years**.

Think of the information that has to be collected.

Think of the education that has to be done.

Think of the waste that can be prevented by sustained and concerted action.

All this means talent, money and organisation.

All this also means nation building.

### If not nationally

One need not wait to do this job nationally. One can do it locally, wherever he lives and works.

In fact, local effort will get better results than the so-called national efforts, at least in this field.

The 3% figures and the 40% figure can be visibly altered and favourably altered **within a few years** in a village, a town or a city.

### The other opportunity

We saw so far an opportunity that relates to awareness and the accompanying action.

The other opportunity is to retain as much of the rain water as falls in a locality. There is sufficient technical information to say **what can be done**. Only, there is not sufficient enterprise to do what is socially useful. Those who are enterprising in one area can use their talent in another area — provided **they see an opportunity** in such an area. The prayer is : Let them see !

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# MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

## Opportunities and Problems XVII

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### A Japanese Story

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In Tetsugen's time the holy, Buddhist books in Chinese had never been published in Japanese, and Tetsugen thought they should be prepared so for his own countrymen. He planned to have several thousand copies printed from hand-engraved wood-blocks, and went from town to town to collect donations so this great work could go ahead. After ten years he had the money needed, and started to have the blocks cut.

Just then the Uji river flooded, and there was famine in the land. Tetsugen took the money he had collected, and bought rice for the starving people. Then he started out to collect his funds again. Whether the donation was a little one or in coins of gold, he was equally grateful. After some years, he had the money again.

Then an epidemic passed over the country. Thousands of families were left without support. So Tetsugen spent all the money he had collected, helping the helpless. When it was all gone, he started collecting it again.

Finally his great project was accomplished, and he died content. Tetsugen's edition of the holy books in Japanese can

still be seen. But those who know, say that the first two editions, which have never been seen, far surpass the third.

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### A Priority

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This story leads us to think of our priorities.

One of our current priorities is providing relief to the drought hit — **without delay.**

What can you and I do about it ?

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### What one did

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Shri L. N. Godbole is a company executive.

At a tea meeting, he discussed the problem with this fellow executives at UNICHEM LABORATORIES LTD., Jogeshwari.

Together they said they would be able to help a few families.

To give the help a **personal touch**, they wanted to actively participate in choosing the families.

This meant a certain amount of touring. Also, availing of the guidance of voluntary agencies.

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**"Why not us too"**

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The non-executive personnel came to know of it. They asked : **why not we too participate ?** And who will say 'No' to such a suggestion ?

Within a few days, concerted action started.

They are pooling **2000 rupees per month.**

They are **helping 45 families now**, The families helped are the lowliest of the lowly.

This is **compassion in action.**

**This company's lead, this executive's lead can be followed by the thousands of companies that are in Bombay and other cities.**

I do not want to attach any big label like 'social responsibility of business' to such acts. I will only describe it as '**graceful sharing**' with whom we 'need not' share.

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## Opportunities and Problems IXX

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### A natural advantage

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Those who have inherited a business have a natural advantage. Just as a doctor's son has an advantage over a non-doctor's son just as an agriculturist's son has an advantage over a non-agriculturist's son, a businessman's son has an advantage over a non-businessman's son, if he wishes to follow his father's profession.

Formally and informally, at the tea table and at friends' meetings, the son comes to know of the ramifications, opportunities and problems of the business.

The son develops almost an intuitive knack for handling the problems of business.

Backed by knowledge, contacts and traditional experience, the son of the father is in a better position to be the chief executive of the company than anybody else.

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### The Prince of Wales

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The British tradition is that even the Prince of Wales is to be groomed for succession.

The grooming is so exacting that a journalist pointed out that many princes would like to opt out and be a commoner!

The son of a businessman is also in a sense a Prince of Wales. There is a "kingdom" to take over and make it more prosperous.

**Most sons and most parents seem to take the succession for granted.**

So taking for granted worked in other times. In tomorrow's times, would it work?

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### An irreverent age

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It is not unlikely that someone may pose the question: "Apart from being the son of the father, what qualifications has he to run the business? Since business affects society, is it safe to leave the business in the hands of a mere owner manager?"

In this irreverent age, such questions are to be expected.

**Before they are asked**, the owner managers can become professional managers.

Facilities are available in this country and abroad.

With a little guidance and effort, the owner manager can become a professional manager much faster and much better than other managers.

If the son does not want to lose "the throne" and the father does not want to lose "the kingdom", both have to move now or face possible repentance tomorrow.

Repentance is a sign of mediocrity and our businessmen and industrialists are **not** mediocre.