

Management Ideas



FOR STILL BETTER
RESULTS
RELATIONS
REPUTATION

a monthly newsletter to key executive-leaders
on practices, possibilities and ideas generally
for stepped up performance
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on problem-solving and creative ideas

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3117 THE COMPETITIVE EDGE: In the Book "The Leading Edge", (Tata McGraw-Hill Rs:45/-) Mark Potts & Peter Behr describe in detail how some of the noted Chief Executive Officers turned their companies around - what they did and how they did.

This is how the authors summarise the lessons that emerge.

Managements that have the guts are making over their corporations into dynamic entities that are hardly recognizable when compared to their earlier incarnations-with tremendous consequences for managers, employers, suppliers, customers, and the national economy. Those able to comprehend, accept, and lead these changes will be the most successful managers in years to come.

Examining the major companies that have undergone or are undergoing transformations reveals several major common philosophies. These are not technical business-school recipes for success; instead, they are strategies that have evolved within the top management of these companies as reactions to the fundamental changes underway in the world's business environment. In many cases they represent not only a change in the company's lines of business or management and manufacturing processes but also of that elusive quality known by the buzzword "corporate culture"-the very spirit with which a company's human relationships and values are infused.

The Lessons that emerge are:

- * Anticipate changes in your competitive surroundings and be prepared to react quickly to them. This requires both a broad view of larger market forces and a flexible, decentralized environment that allows quick decision-making at all levels of the company--and especially at those levels closest to customers and clients.
- * Know your company's strengths and take advantage of them. Do what you do best. Stick to your basic business, or logical extensions of them, and, when possible, seek out and exploit high-quality market niches in which your company has some sort of unique advantage.
- * Recognize that technology is a powerful weapon for corporate change, both as a source of new products and services and as a way of dramatically increasing productivity. Embrace it with enthusiasm and realism by applying it to existing businesses, using it to create new businesses, and bringing its fruits to market as quickly as possible.
- * When possible, enter into mutually beneficial alliances with other companies at home and abroad, thus increasing your competitive ability, adding technology or other know-how, joining complementary strengths, or providing access to new market.
- * Create a partnership between management and employees through respect, trust, and candor, recognizing that a secure group of employees will accept and take advantage of change.
- * Take calculated risks in an attempt to improve your company's competitive position, and foster an environment that encourages risk-taking by others--through compensation plans, in-company entrepreneurial programs, and reluctance to punish failure after valiant attempts to improve the company meet with failure.
- * Managing in today's more competitive world and being able to adapt to the constantly changing environment demands a new kind of leader: someone, who is not just a manager, but who also has the vision to understand what is changing in the business world and can adapt quickly to take advantage of that change.
- * Never lose sight of the future. At the same time, don't forget the present. Ideally, balance long-term advantages and goals against short-term performance pressures to create a business that is strong today--and will be stronger tomorrow.

3118 IF GOOD SLEEP IS YOUR PROBLEM: The better Sleep Council says...even though you've been doing it all your life, there are better ways to sleep. How well you do it affects your mood, your health, and even your career.

Here's how:

- A good night's sleep starts in the morning, believe it or not. Plan to start keeping regular hours. Rise at the same time no matter what time you went to sleep.
- Exercise regularly. Hiking, biking, running, and just plain walking will help you sleep better and deeper.
- Don't smoke. Studies show you'll sleep better. If you can't quit yet, don't smoke for a couple of hours before retiring.
- Drink in moderation. Alcohol after dinner doesn't help you sleep. The opposite is true.
- Don't nap during the day. For healthy people, especially insomniacs, napping makes sleep problems worse.
- Don't stuff yourself or starve before bed. If you feel hungry, just eat a light snack like an apple or some crackers and a glass of milk.
- Get a comfortable bed. If yours has been in use for 10 years or more, it may not be giving the support you need. Actually lie down on a mattress before you buy it. And make sure it's big enough. The traditional double bed is too small for two people.

3119 FACING THE TELEVISION CAMERA: Sooner than later, many of us will be facing the television camera. We would like to present a fair and favourable image of ourselves and our organization. Here are a few tips from Schorr and Howard Co., a New York public relations firm.

GETTING READY

1. DO be well-prepared. Be certain of your facts so that you can enter the interview with confidence.
2. DO wear a soft colored, conservatively styled suit or dress. Stay away from white shirts or blouses, striking colors, bold patterns and flashy jewelry.
3. DO bring along a visual or demonstration device. A chart, photo or product to which you can point during the interview will provide action and help you tell your story. Talking heads make for dull television.

4. Do get acquainted with the interviewer during the setup period. In the five to 15 minutes while members of the crew are setting up camera and light stands, discreetly find out how much expertise the interviewer has on the subject under discussion.

ON-CAMERA

5. DON'T be rushed when the camera starts rolling. Stop and think when a question is asked. The station is paying for the film, you aren't. When your answer is worked out, start talking.

6. DON'T use notes or prompter cards. They give the impression of being unprepared. The only exception; if you have to read a technical report or legal document.

7. DO concentrate on being yourself. Don't try and act out a part or affect a personality or style that is not you.

8. DO pretend that you are talking to just one person. Don't try to speak as if you were giving a speech to a large audience in an auditorium.

9. DO appear relaxed. Avoid nonverbal signs of tension such as clenched fists, gripping the arm of the chair, tightly holding one hand with the other.

10. DO maintain eye contact with the host and other guests.

11. DO smile. A poker face is deadly.

12. DO remember you are on-camera all the time. Don't mop your brow or chat with your neighbor when you are not being interviewed.

13. DO listen carefully to the interviewer. Don't hesitate to challenge and don't give credence to something said in error by remaining silent.

14. DON'T lose sight of your objective or let the interviewer intimidate you. Take the initiative sometimes. Ask questions. Volunteer information.

15. DO stick to the subject. Don't ramble. But if questions are too narrowly focused, don't hesitate to expand your answers.

16. DON'T wax expert outside your field.

17. DON'T jump to your feet at the end of the program. Assume you are on camera until the floor director walks in and says the show is over.

BUSINESS IS NEWS

The businessperson is fair game for the unblinking, unwavering, all-seeing eye of the television camera. If you are an executive with a newsworthy company, sooner or later you may find yourself

on a news program, panel discussion or talk show.

Consumerism, regulation, environment are issues that are pushing the camera right into the conference room.

On the other hand, if your company is seeking to present its point-of-view, an aggressive effort may be required to be invited to participate on TV.

In either case, you will be subject to probing questions and intensive scrutiny.

But TV's inquiring eye is a unique opportunity to communicate. For when a business message is communicated well, by a spokesperson who is prepared, informed and confident, the results can be significant. The preceding "do's and don'ts" will help you to prepare for a successful on-camera experience.

3120 CONSUMERS' CAUSE: Udupi,,,Karnataka has over the past seven years, developed a multiplier model. The town has a Consumers' Forum, and a Consumers' Education & Protection Foundation. The address is: Consumers' Forum, Udupi-576 101 Karnataka.

The success story of the Udupi effort has been graphically and delightfully told in the book: "Servants, Not Masters" by K.P.S. Kamath, M.D (Price:Rs.15/- Publisher: Consumers' Forum, Udupi 576 101.) The book has been rightly subtitled as "A Guide for Consumer Activists in India". The book carries valuable pointers. What has been made possible in one town (Udupi) can be made possible in one thousand other towns in India.

3121 LAUGHING MATTER?

Employer: "We're looking for a responsible Man."

Applicant: "I'm just the man you're looking for. Everywhere else I worked, when something went wrong, they always said I was responsible."

A POINT TO PONDER:

The human animal distinguishes himself by his infinite capacity for making ends of his means.

- Harold D.Lasewell



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Sheltered with compassion and care

MADRAS

'Udavam Karangal' ("Helping hands") is a shelter for orphaned children, dying destitute old women and mental patients. This shelter where the ruling forces are compassion and understanding care is managed by a group of young men and women.

The seeds for such a venture were sown some 20 years ago. One day in Mysore a group of students came across a victim of a road accident lying in a pool of blood and admitted him to a hospital. One of them, Vidyakar, informed his family in Madras and then stayed with the victim for three days till his relatives arrived. When he went home, Vidyakar's family refused to let him in since he had stayed away for a few days.

Vidyakar had been having a rather unhappy time at home with both his father and brothers harassing him; he also did not do very well in his studies. He had been longing to get away. He came to Madras and met one Ramakrishnan, who became his mentor from that day.

Vidyakar always had a tendency to help people in trouble and Ramakrishnan realised this quality and started moulding him in social work. Initially he sent him back to Mysore to continue his education. 'Uncle' as Ramakrishnan is referred to by Vidyakar, sent him to college and he finished his M.A. Social Work with specialisation in psychiatric social work at the Madras School of Social Work. After this he worked for a while at the Institute of Mental Health. But the way the patients were treated there made him unhappy.

Vidyakar then worked for sometime at the German Leprosy Hospital and then started training in counselling in psychology at Christian Medical College, Vellore. He also spent some time with Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity. He decided to work independently and finally his uncle helped him start 'Udavam Karangal' on March 10, 1984.

Vidyakar hung a board outside his uncle's automobile workshop and would sit there counselling and guiding people and suggesting referrals. As more and more people started coming to him for help and since there was not much privacy at the shop, he rented a place at Anna Nagar, where the shelter continues to operate today. The service is totally free of cost.

'Udavam Karangal' and its sister units "Karunalayam" and "Thayagam" are managed by a bunch of young people, who have decided to extend their helping hands along with Vidyakar to the unfortunate and underprivileged orphaned children.

One day in 1984, a rickshaw-puller brought a seven-month-old baby to Vidyakar, saying that he found it abandoned outside a cinema theatre. The child had to be treated at the Children's Hospital for two weeks. During that time it became very attached to Vidyakar and he decided to bring up the child on his own. He had always felt sorry for the children in many of the orphanages, where though they received food and shelter, they did not get emotional security. It was no easy task to bring up a small baby on his own. Slowly more abandoned children were brought to him.

At 'Udavam Karangal' there are children



Vidyakar with the children of the orphanage.

ranging from 20 days to 12 years. They are referred to Vidyakar by police, hospitals, social welfare organisations, slum leaders and auto-rickshaw drivers. They are usually children of those who had died in liquor tragedies, or of unwed mothers. Extreme care is taken in cooperating with the police to restore the children to their families. Only when the efforts are futile do these children become permanent inmates.

At present there are 58 children in the shelter. Those below five years live with the older women at 'Thayagam'. The other children attend the Corporation School nearby.

Harassment: Vidyakar and his friends live true to their motto 'Together with my suffering neighbour'. They give shelter to poor mental patients, mostly schizophrenics, who have been abandoned by their families. The unmanageable cases are initially admitted in the mental hospital and when they are better brought back to live at "Karunalayam" for the rest of their lives. Anti-social elements exploit these patients — such women are often sexually assaulted; the men also face a similar treatment. All young female patients at Karunalayam are sterilised to save them from sexual harassment. The male patients are housed in a different place and they do their own cooking. Totally, there are now 17 such patients.

It has not been easy to start and run 'Udavam Karangal'. But philanthropists offer help and the rent for the building is now paid by a philanthropist.

There are 16 men and women working here. No one is paid any salary. Vidyakar's first volunteer was Venkatesh, whom he had met earlier when he was counselling at the leprosy hospital.

The children call Vidyakar 'Appa'. There is no religious or caste distinction among the inmates.

Spending time: Assistance to Udavam Karangal has not been just in the form of

money. There are many people who do not have any money to give but have enough time to spare and they spend time with the children, teach them songs or game and help them with their lessons.

Vocational training for the handicapped in composing, bookwork, printing machine operation, binding is offered at the shelter and women of the slums are helped to learn tailoring at a nominal fee after which they are found placement at export garment units.

Destitute women are referred here by social workers. At present only emergency shelter is given. In the meantime, their problems are looked into and if possible they are sent back to their families. Failing this they are placed in one of the homes for destitute women. Plans are afoot to start a home for destitute women here under the name 'Sumaithangi', where any women can come and seek help or just share her feelings.

'Thayagam' was started to give shelter to dying, destitute women. This is basically a hospice. Some women do get better after taking good food and medicines. These women help in taking care of children below five years of age paving the way for inter-generation relationship. Another scheme is being planned to start a home for terminally ill cancer patients.

Managed by youth: The special feature about "Udavam Karangal" and its other units is that they are all organised and managed by youth independently, not associated with any Government agency, religious groups or any particular organisation. They are run on public charity and donations from philanthropists and service organisations.

Vidyakar was selected by a Swiss agency last year as the best social worker from India to attend a seminar in Israel on 'Social changes in Third World countries'.

"Udavam Karangal" is indebted to the free services of a doctor and a psychiatrist. — L.V.