

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
edited by
N. H. ATTREYA MA PhD
author, educator & consultant
on problem-solving and creative ideas

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3264 EVERY LITTLE COUNTS: In creating a climate for positive and enthusiastic contribution on the part of people at every level, every little counts.

One question we ask many people is this: What do your people do that keeps you in the positive direction? We reproduce below two answers we recently heard.

"In our company, at the entrance is a board that has a Birthday Greetings message. Some of our colleagues come and greet us. More importantly, our chief and, if he is not in station, his second in command, comes to us personally and greets us with flowers."

"In my company, there is a meeting once a month. They call it 'Open House'. All of us are welcome. It lasts for an hour. The Chief and the Division Heads keep us informed of important developments. We are all free to ask any question. The questions are freely and frankly answered. I have attended three meetings so far and I find them a pleasant experience."

An appeal to the readers to contribute to this feature: We may call it "In My Organization".

Any organizational practice you find worthwhile and has a contribution to taking people in the positive direction you may like to report.

My gut feeling is that so many heartwarming things are done in a number of organizations in our country. Either we have not sat down and reflected on their significance or we are not used to sharing.

Giving away company secrets is one thing and sharing managerial practices that have helped us is another. Corporate integrity requires us to keep company secrets confidential. Professional integrity requires us to share professional management practices.

Please drop us a post card briefly describing a practice you have experienced or observed. You need not give the name of the organization, if that is your preference.

3265 QUALITY EFFORTS IN U.S.A.: What they do elsewhere may remind us or activate us or warn us. We report below the findings of an analysis of quality programs in US industry. Respondents commented on the prevalence of quality programs, expected and actual benefits, and factors that influence decisions about quality. Alphastat Research Group (Belmont, MA), which did the survey, found the following:

- # Only 25% of US firms have total quality management programs.
- # The most commonly implemented QC programs are sample inspection and manual charting.
- # Although 73% of executives surveyed want to use data collection devices for real-time reaction or process monitoring, only 30% do so.
- # Some 64% feel their products do not have a bad quality image relative to foreign goods. Of those who report a negative image, 61% blame management for lacking foresight about customer interest in quality, while 50% say management did not anticipate foreign competition.
- # Fifty-two percent of respondents feel that quality is not necessary to sell goods.

The reason cited most often for the limited growth of QC is uncertainty about which program to implement. Nevertheless, manufacturers are budgeting more money in '91 for quality hardware and software than they spent in '89 and '90 combined, led by the electronics, machine tool, automotive, and instruments/medical devices industries.

3266 INNOVATIONS GALORE: Find a need and fill it. That is step No.1 in business growth. Here are samples of living this belief:

Camera on a Chip. A new video camera about the size of a postage stamp can be made for less than \$50. Researchers at Edinburgh University in Scotland have integrated an image sensor with other camera electronics on a single silicon chip, on which a tiny lens can be attached. The new camera is as much as 100 times less costly to produce than similar devices and makes possible the development of an inexpensive video telephone. Other potential applications include security, machine vision, medical imaging, robotics, and video toys.

(Source - VSLI Vision, Ltd., Technology Transfer Centre, University of Edinburgh, King's Buildings, Mayfield Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JL, Scotland.)

Laptop Printer. People using laptop computers can now print out their work on a laptop printer. The LT-20 portable printer introduced by Seikosha weighs just 5.3 pounds and fits easily under notebook sized computers. Its cut-sheet cassette can print 100 pages on a single

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battery charge, and it has a built-in letter-quality font. The manufacturer believes the new printer can increase productivity for mobile professionals.

(Source - Seikosha American Inc., 10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430.)

Relief from Migraines. Goggles like those worn by swimmers are now being used to flash patterns of light into the eyes of headache victims. Developed by Duncan Anderson, a British neurophysiologist at London's Hammersmith Hospital, the glasses offer a new treatment for millions of migraine sufferers around the world. The opaque lenses are silvered on the inside and fitted with small red light-emitting diodes. When a headache is imminent, the user dons the goggles and operates a small battery-powered control box to adjust the intensity of illumination needed to ease the pain. Anderson's studies found that 72% of migraine headaches were stopped by this method, and nearly all patients reported some relief from pain.

(Source - Migra Limited., 108 Hampstead Road, London NW1 2LS, England.)

Exercising While Driving. Don't worry if a traffic jam makes you late for your next workout. You can follow an exercise program specifically developed to tone your body and relieve stress while you drive. Karkicks, designed by Natalie Manor of Events Extraordinaire, Inc., is an audiotaped musical program for exercising in a confined space. Manor believes the program will benefit not only commuters, but also people who are bedridden or otherwise constricted.

(Source - Karkicks, P.O. Box 1508, Merrimack, New Hampshire 03054.)

3267 EMPLOYEE-INITIATED PERFORMANCE: "Millions of people who run companies know they should be conducting annual employee appraisals, but they're not doing it." Roger Flax of Motivational Systems, outlines an answer, in Inc. magazine.

It is that of an employee-initiated appraisal, in which employees are told they can ask for a review from their managers. The on-demand appraisal isn't meant to replace a conventional semi-annual review, but it promotes an attitude of self-management among workers and often makes critiques more honest.

Employees can ask for as many reviews as they feel they need.

Here are the seven questions Flax instructs employees to ask in their self-initiated appraisals:

1. Can you rate my performance from 1 to 10?
2. What do you feel are the strongest elements of my work?
3. What are the weakest elements?
4. Why didn't I get a 10 (highest rating)?
5. Where do you think I can go in my job or career in the next 18 months to four years?
6. What skills, training, or education do I need to get to that point?
7. What specifically can we agree on that I can do, beginning tomorrow?

3268 FORECASTING: Spyros Makridakis (author of "Forecasting, Planning, and Strategy for the 21st Century" - The Free Press/Macmillan. 1990.293 pages) offers eight essential steps in making good future-oriented decisions:

1. A thorough knowledge of the forces that shape the future and the extent of their predictability must be acquired.
2. Future uncertainty must be understood and taken into account.
3. Decision makers must be aware of the biases and limitations of their judgment.
4. The factors that contribute to success and those that delay or avoid failure must be understood and exploited.
5. The advantages and limitations of planning as a way of preparing to deal with future events must be comprehended, and the implications involved when the future turns out differently from what was planned for must be accepted.
6. More-realistic and effective approaches for formulating strategies, both competitive and noncompetitive, must be developed and put into practice.
7. Creative new ways of solving existing problems and generating original ideas must be constantly sought and implemented.
8. Managers must be aware of the value of management theories and the help to be derived from such theories in better managing their organizations.

3269 MANAGING THE FUTURE: A steady diet of change threatens to give both large and small U.S. businesses heartburn in the 1990s. "The biggest challenge most businesses face is not the threat of a hostile takeover or foreign competition, but change," says Robert B. Tucker in his recent book - **MANAGING THE FUTURE-10 Driving Forces of Change for the '90s** - G.P. Putnam's Sons. 1991. 233 pages.

He notes "Today, increasing numbers of businesses are devastated by changes they failed to notice, failed to truly understand and failed to creatively respond to." "You must understand that the greatest challenge you face in the next decade is the oncoming, overwhelming, accelerating pace of change."

Tucker identifies 10 driving forces of change and what businesses need to do about them:

- a. **Speed**--reducing the elapsed time at every step of the operation in order to gain competitive advantage.
- b. **Convenience**--rethinking operations to make products, services, and procedures convenient.
- c. **Age waves**--creatively responding (with new products and services) to demographic changes such as the aging of the baby-boom generation in the United States.

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- d. **Choice**--exploiting the "have it your way" imperative by anticipating new choice demands and implementing them before competitors do.
- e. **Lifestyle**--benefiting from changes in the way Americans live (more working women, more singleperson households, an increased emphasis on health) by offering new products, services, and methods.
- f. **Discounting**--anticipating an era of increased price competition and adjusting both prices and services accordingly.
- g. **Value-Adding**--creating alternatives to price competition by enhancing goods and services (for example, hotels with fitness centers, full secretarial services, etc.).
- h. **Customer Service**--building competitive advantage by building customer loyalty through a high level of service and attention.
- i. **Techno-Edge**--using technology to increase speed, add convenience, and up productivity.
- j. **Quality**--quality of goods and services (as perceived by customers) will give businesses a competitive edge.

The author adds: Future-managing companies exploit the changes in their customers' lives, in their markets and in the larger society, rather than simply reaching to them or waiting to see what others do.

3270 4 WAYS TO UPDATE YOUR PC: ALTHOUGH THE COMPUTER INDUSTRY has been doing its best to convince you that your 12-month-old computer is a has-been, you may be able to get a few more years of faithful service with one or more modest upgrades.

Add a hard disk. Adding a hard disk is one of the best moves you can make, since it speeds up your access to software and data files. Look for a 40-megabyte (or larger) drive; smaller ones aren't that much cheaper.

Add memory. At least a full complement of memory---640 kilobytes--is necessary to run newer programs, while Microsoft Windows and Lotus 1-2-3 version 3.1, need at least 1 megabyte (1,000 kilobytes).

Get better software. Software can enhance performance, too. PC-Kwik Power Pa, from Multisoft, for example, speeds up operation overall.

Update your monitor. If you plan to use the newer graphical programs, boost your graphics capability by installing a avideo-graphics-array (VGA) card and monitor.

*Rising Trends
Of the 1990s*

- Environmental cleanup
- Waste disposal
- Health-care services
- Biotechnology
- Retirement communities and nursing homes
- Home entertainment
- Space commercialization
- Infrastructure rehabilitation
- Health and convenience foods
- Space-age materials
- Time-saving devices
- Cost-saving devices
- Highway and air-traffic congestion
- Recordable compact discs
- Computers playing more-central role
- Telecommunications, fax machines, electronic mail
- Information services
- Golf, bicycling, walking, cross-training
- Energy prices
- Service sector
- Pharmaceuticals
- Childcare
- Eldercare
- Alternative fuels
- Flexible compensation
- Flexible work hours
- Digitalization
- Foreign competition
- Children's goods
- AIDS cases
- Elementary-school and high-school enrollments
- Continuing education
- Taxes
- Cellular telephones

*Moderating or
Declining Trends
Of the 1990s*

- Alcohol consumption
- Tobacco use
- Vinyl LPs
- College enrollments
- Real estate
- Early retirement offers
- Network TV audiences
- Births
- Economic growth rate
- Defense industry
- Convenience stores
- Inflation
- Jogging, aerobics
- Manufacturing jobs
- Pesticides
- Consumer electronics
- Video rental stores
- Mainframe computers
- Divorce
- Job promotions
- Job security
- Messenger services

3271 RISING AND FALLING TRENDS OF THE NINETIES: Though aimed at the American audience, the book "The Complete Financial Guide to the 1990s" by Gary L. Klott has relevance worldwide. It provides useful information for investment, career guidance, business development and retirement planning.

Says Klott:"The 1990s will require an entirely new perspective, new strategies, and new skills, because the decade ahead promises to be far different from the one just past.

The occupations, investments, and businesses that offer the best opportunities will be different ones from those of the past.

Following are some of the trends he examines in this book. The others are indicated in the following chart.

* Flextime, job-sharing, and working from the home will become far more common in the 1990s.

* Technological advances ranging from biotechnology and space-age materials to superconductivity will bring about profound changes in our lives -- and will provide exciting opportunities for investors.

* The middle-aging of the babyboom generation, the growing impact of working women, and the shrinking number of young adults will bring about major changes in the work force.

The books referred to in this issue are easily had from The Futurist Bookstore WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY 4916 Saint Elmo Avenue Bethesda, Maryland 20814 U.S.A. Members of World Future Society get a special discount. The annual membership fee is only. \$30.

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COMPLAIN NOT
ABOUT DARKNESS.
LIGHT A CANDLE

Hopeful & Helpful

Positively Exciting

Personally Useful

Good News From Anywhere

Inspiring multiplier models and exemplary acts of excellence are found all over the country. They are hardly written up.

Many miss the point that the positively exciting is also news.

Also, adequate efforts are not made to bring useful information to the literate public.

There is a case for collecting and spreading hopeful and helpful information and news.

May I invite our Readers to join me in this quest and share their discoveries and findings through these columns?

NH ATTHREYA Editor

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Dr. N.H. Atthreya,
EDITOR - Management Ideas,
PB No. 11269, Bombay 400 020.

WORTH ADMIRING: The Indian tradition has Swan as its bird of wisdom. When diluted milk is placed before it, the bird takes the milk, so the story goes, and leaves the water alone. The story has a pointer. Every country, every society, every organization has its milk of life.

Tommy T.B. Koh, till recently Ambassador to the U.S. from Singapore, talks of five things he admires about U.S.A.

First, no other country has welcomed as many refugees and immigrants and none has assimilated them so easily as America. Since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, the U.S. has welcomed over 850,000 Indochinese refugees to her shores. Many of the children of these refugees, often of humble origin, have topped their classes in schools and have been awarded scholarships to study at America's elite colleges and universities. The Asian-American community is the fastest growing community in America. Because of their devotion to hardwork, the high value they attach to education and the availability of opportunities, the Asian Americans will provide America with a new infusion of brainpower, especially in the areas in which the United States is in danger of losing its lead, mathematics, science and engineering. Not all the countries in the world accept immigrants. Of those which do, none is able to match the manner in which the United States assimilates them. In some countries, the immigrant, his son and even his grandson will always be treated as outsiders. In the United States, the moment a person becomes a U.S. citizen, he or she is treated just like any other American. The absence of an aristocracy or an aristocratic past frees America of social barriers against upward mobility. As a result, it is possible for an American child, no matter what his ethnic origin and how adverse his family circumstances, to aspire to fulfill the American Dream.

Second, America is a nation of warm-hearted and generous people who have shared their wealth, technology and markets with others. Between 1945 and 1986, the United States gave a total of \$344 billion in economic assistance to other countries. No other country has been as generous in sharing its technology with other countries. Senator Jay Rockefeller (Democrat-West Virginia) has estimated that Japan has been able to purchase all the technology she wanted from the United States for between \$10 billion and \$17 billion. This has enabled Japan to catch up with the U.S. and, in some areas, even to surpass the U.S. in the technological race. American capital, technology and markets have enabled the

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economies of East and Southeast Asia to grow and prosper.

Third, America is a nation of volunteers. More than 80 million Americans volunteer some of their time to a cause. The average time spent is 5 hours a week. Half of all private high schools in the United States, including the two my sons attended, require a specified number of hours spent in community service as a graduation requirement.

Fourth, there is a strong tradition in America of giving to charity. The term "charity" includes churches, hospitals, schools, colleges, universities, public libraries, museums, symphonies, operas, ballets etc. In 1987, American corporations, foundations, and individuals gave a total of \$93 billion to charity. In 1988, the figure exceeded \$100 billion. As a proportion of their incomes, the poor gave more to charity than the rich.

Fifth, there is a strong spirit of entrepreneurship in America. Since 1980, 19 million new jobs have been created in America. About 75 percent of these jobs have been created by small businesses. Americans are willing to take risks. The society encourages the spirit of entrepreneurship by rewarding those who succeed and, just as importantly, by not penalizing those who fail. There is no social stigma which is attached to failure. The society gives the entrepreneur as many chances as he or she has the courage and the resources to try until he or she succeeds.

*** ALACRITY FOUNDATIONS PVT. LTD., is a construction company that went into operation in 1981, with a corporate philosophy* based on human values.

The chief (Mr. Amol Karnad) reports: "It pays to be decent. We have now 25% of the share of the business in Madras city. We don't bribe and, more importantly, nobody expects bribe from us." Hats off!

*

1. The quality of life of the individual is truly enhanced only when the quality of life of the society in which he lives is improved.
2. Professional fulfilment for any institution is attainable only when it accepts public accountability for its contribution to social/national causes.
3. A business mission can be worthwhile and enduring only if it is in line with national goals and priorities.
4. In the conduct of business, integrity - 'not knowingly to do harm' - is the only moral touchstone and excellence the only performance touchstone.
5. Business development can be integrated with social/national development only if there is uncompromising respect for laws and regulations and faithful compliance therewith.

M M C SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT*

P.O. Box No. 11269, Bombay 400 020

Third Floor, Court Chambers, New Marine Lines, BOMBAY 400 020

FOUNDED 1956

N. H. ATTHREYA Ph. D.

Director

Phones: 208 04 46

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MINIMEMO

JUST TO KEEP YOU INFORMED. IF ANY OF THESE ITEMS CAN INTEREST YOU OR ANY OF YOUR ASSOCIATES, PLEASE WRITE TO US. WE WILL BE DELIGHTED TO SEND IN DETAILS.

1. Since 1963, we have been publishing readable, practical **books** and here are some titles (all authored by N.H. Atthreya):

<i>A Creative Approach To Discipline</i>	<i>Rs. 20.00</i>
<i>Public Speaking: Committee Meetings</i>	<i>Rs. 30.00</i>
<i>The Power of Listening</i>	<i>Rs.180.00</i>
<i>What Makes People Give Their Best</i>	<i>Rs. 96.00</i>
<i>The Corporate Art of Caring For The Customer</i>	<i>Rs.180.00</i>
<i>Winners' Ways To Performance Excellence</i>	<i>Rs.600.00</i>
<i>Professional Office Assistant</i>	<i>Rs. 19.50</i>
<i>Professional Secretary</i>	<i>Rs. 19.50</i>

2. Since 1963, we have been publishing a **monthly**, MANAGEMENT IDEAS, which is a selection of some of the tested practices here and abroad, to enhance results, relations and reputation. Current annual subscription: Rs.190/-
3. Since 1956, the School has been designing and administering training and development **programmes**, in-house and customized, to empower people at all levels.
4. The School specialises in **Action Research** approach.
5. The School has recently set up a **Technical Problem Solving Laboratory** to help solve problems of competition, cost, rejection, value and the like, through VALUE ENGINEERING AND APPLIED CREATIVITY Technologies.
6. The School is extending **franchises** to professionals to set up similar facilities in key cities of India.
7. The School is the educational wing of Modern Management Counsel (estd. 1955), a professional **consulting** firm, specialising in problem solving and possibility exploration.
8. In 1960, the counsel pioneered professional **personnel selection** consultancy services.
9. An associate of ours - SELECT BOOKS - can help you get a subscription to **Executive Book Summaries** (USA) on rupee payment. This brings you periodically summaries of 30 books, selected from 1600 management and administration books published worldwide. The current annual subscription is Rs.4865/-.
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