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Dynamics of Leadership

M S Kurhade*

"The best leaders have a purpose to begin with, because they cherish a cause which must be fulfilled, a goal that must be reached, notwithstanding the difficulties on the way and the conflicts they involve themselves in." - James Callaghan.

Fame is the spur for some, as power is for some others. There are still others who live for what people say. They are tossed by every wind of opinion and public fancy. There are a few others who steer a clear course. 'I desire to so conduct the affairs of this administration, said Abraham Lincoln, that if, at the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall at least have one friend left and that friend shall be down inside of me.'

A purposeful leader does not regard public opinion as a settled fact. He has the will to shape it. The world it is said, stands aside to let a man of conviction pass by. Purpose precedes true leadership. Leadership is necessary to serve a purpose. Purpose needs will-power but also flexibility. It is amazing how, when a leader sets out to do anything, those closest to him will try to prevent him out of a sense of loyalty and caution. He should know when to be flexible and when to follow through.

"No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself and get the credit for doing it." - Andrew Carnegie.

Leadership although largely talked about, has been described as one of the least understood concepts across all cultures and civilizations. Over the years, many researchers have stressed the prevalence of this misunderstanding stating that the existence of several flawed assumptions or myths, concerning leadership often interferes with individuals conception of what leadership is all about.

"Leadership is a matter of intelligence, trustworthiness, humaneness, courage and discipline. Reliance on intelligence alone results in weakness. Fixation on trust results in folly. Dependence on the strength of courage results in violence. Excessive discipline and sternness in command result in cruelty. When one has all five virtues together, each appropriate to its function, then one can be a leader." - Sun Tzu.

A leader need to know the art of dealing with those subordinate to him, but he also needs to spare some thought for those equal to him. Men with leadership qualities rather enjoy the attention they get and are loathe to share the limelight. When a leader fails to train others due to fear of losing control, the fire of enthusiasm dims in the circle around him. The organization loses its fervor.

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