

BHAGWAT GITA: UNWRAPPING THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

In the title "Bhagwat Gita – Unwrapping The Leadership Skills", it consists two major issues that is 'Bhagwat Gita' & 'Unwrapping Leadership Skills'. The reason behind choosing this topic in my opinion, that Bhagwat Gita is the first ever book on leadership or motivation. All the modern theories on leadership or leadership styles, they have not been invented rather than they have been discovered by someone from Bhagwat Gita. The aim is to combine the western scientific attitude with the eastern wisdom and not to reject any eastern philosophy and literature as primitive. The point that is tried to understand that, in the modern world we do have leadership skill books and management gurus in reality those theories, those books, those ideas, they have not been invented but they have been discovered from somewhere and sources have not been given due credit for what they owe. In Bhagwat Gita lord 'Krishna' has used different leadership styles different management ideas to motivate 'Arjuna' for 'Karma' (to perform/ act). 'Unwrapping Leadership skills' the meaning is that leadership skills cannot be taught, leadership skills cannot be learn. These are qualities that are present in everyone. It is only that we need to realize that we possess those and we need to unwrap them. We need to conscious those qualities which are residing within us. In the paper "Bhagwat Gita – Unwrapping The Leadership Skills" it is discussed that modern leadership skills, leadership principles and theories are derived from Bhagwat Gita with also discussed that, What is Leadership? What skills are needed to be a great leader? and What is the connection between Bhagwat Gita and leadership that other wants to follow?.

KEYWORDS: Bhagwat Gita, Lord 'Krishna', Motivation, Management, Unwrapping Leadership Skills.

Introduction

Hinduism describes 33 million deities. With the gods in the Hindu religion is considered sacred saints, who have special significance. Three of these dev Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh is called the Trinity and they are considered as creator, operator and extinctive of nature gradually.

God Vishnu incarnates on Earth from time to time to eradicate evil forces, to restore the dharma and to liberate the worthy ones or devotees from the cycle of births and deaths. Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki are some famous incarnates. Krishana is complete incarnate of Vishnu speaks in the *Bhagavad Geeta*, Chapter 4 Shloka 8:

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुश्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

It means for the protection of the devotees and the annihilation of the miscreants and to fully establish righteousness, I appear millennium after millennium.

5000 years ago, a great king Vichitrviroy died. Because, his eldest son Dhritarashtra was unable to handle the state load due to blindness by birth, his younger son Pandu handled the state load. After the death of Pandu his five sons who were known as the Pandavas became the successor of the state as per rules. But they were children, so Dhritarashtra himself handled the state load. 100 sons of

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Dhritarashtra who were known as the Kauravas. When the Pandavas became enough capable to hold the state, they didn't want the entire state, however it was their right. They wanted to share the state with their cousins, thus the state was divided between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. But the eldest Kaurava Duryodhana was not satisfied with his part. He wanted to undergo the entire state itself. He created several conspiracies to kill the Pandavas, but he failed. Then he acquired the whole state against the law and flunked out to Pandavas from the state. Then the Pandavas demanded for five villages, but Duryodhana refused them and said that five villages are so far he couldn't not give land equal to the tip of the needle to them. To resolve the fight for land Lord Krishna proposed to solve it peacefully & non-violently, but Duryodhana rejected the proposal of Shri Krishna & declared war against Pandavas and thus the great battle of Mahabharata was inevitable. In the preparation of war both Arjuna & Duryodhana went up to Lord Krishna to ask for the help. Lord Krishna doesn't decline anybody who came to ask for the help, whether it be a gentleman or a villain. Lord Krishna offered to stay entirely on one side and stay himself on the other side as a guide. Duryodhana chose the army of Lord Krishna while Arjuna was eager to get into Krishna as a guide. Thus Lord Sri Krishna became the guiding and charioteer to Arjuna in the battle.

When the army of Pandavas and Kauravas gathered in Kurukshetra for war, Arjuna told Krishna to take him into the center of the battle field so he could see both the forces. As Krishna took his chariot between the two armies, Arjuna looked at both the armies and put down his bow. Arjuna was nervous, he was unable to perform. All that time he was saying that he needs his kingdom back but when the actual thing happened when he faced the reality of the world when he faced the real problem, he was unable to fight, unable to perform and he was suffering from performance anxiety and this happens with everyone. When we want something by heart, but when the time comes we suffer from lack of confidence.

Arjuna was in a great dilemma that on one side he needs his kingdom back and on the other hand he has to battle with his own uncle, brothers, friends, mentors, and well-wishers, and he asked Krishna to guide him that what he should do? Then Lord Krishna, who is a great leader, realized his situation and he took all different styles, all different approaches to convince Arjuna and motivated him to perform his duty. This narrative framework of dialogues between Pandava prince Arjuna and his guide and charioteer Krishna was famed as Bhagwat Geeta. It answers all mysterious questions of life.

What is Leadership?

The word "leadership" can bring to mind a variety of images. For example:

- A political leader, pursuing a passionate, personal cause.
- An explorer, cutting a path through the jungle for the rest of his group to follow.
- An executive, developing her company's strategy to beat the competition.

Many of the management gurus gave their definition of leadership as follows:

- According to Peter Drucker, "The only definition of leader is someone who has followers."
- According to Warren Bennis, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision to reality."
- According to Bill Gates: "As we look into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others."
- According to John C. Maxwell, "Leadership is Influence – nothing more, nothing less"

I think that all these definitions of leadership are incomplete & don't clarify the actual meaning of leadership. The definition should be universal and it should be very accurate and it should be practical & applicable in all situations.

Peter Drucker says leader is someone who has followers, is that right? Any one has the followers for all wrong reasons and that doesn't make him a leader. Warren Bennis says Leadership is the capacity to translate the vision to reality. Is that right? Everyone has a vision and that vision can be translated into reality. If I have a vision that I should have a vegetable garden and I can transform my vision into reality by planting a few plants but that doesn't make me a leader. Bill Gates says leaders will be those who empower others. Is that right? We empower every one. We empower our domestic helpers, we empower our children, we empower in the organization in a team to our subordinates does that make us a leader. John C. Maxwell says leadership is Influence. Is that right? Again that's not right. Leadership is Influence it is true but that is not true that just influence makes us a leader. Everyone is able to influence someone at some point but that doesn't make him a leader.

According to Oxford Dictionary," The action of leading a group of people or an organization, or the ability to do this."

In the definition most important point is 'Lead'. The most relivent points in this definition are:

- Be in charge or command of
- Organize and direct
- Set a process in motion

Be a reason or motive for others to act or change, and that is precise what leadership is.

It is not one definition to that is appropriate to define leadership. In reality the leadership is the combination of everything. Leadership In my opinion it actually combines Peters Drucker's view, It combines Warren Bennis's view, it combines Bill Gates's view, it combines John C Maxwell's view and in collection into totality it defines leadership, No one definition can be used to define leadership. Leaderships is also a process to creating social influence which maximizes the efforts of others towards achievement of a goal. Those who ever is able to maximize someone's efforts to achieve a goal and he is able to create that influence is a Leader.

Lord Krishna: A Great Leader

The art of getting things done through people, efficiently and effectively, this is the essence of Management. When it comes to that Lord Krishna comes out as one of the greatest Manager, the greatest planner and crisis Manager of all times. He is a master strategist and tactful leader adopting who adopts different leadership styles according to situation and people he has to deal with. But above all the manner in which he manages to brainwash Arjun and get him to do the job expected of him – is exemplary. It is equally noticeable that - he is not hands on – in the sense does not pick up weapons himself but instead makes his team perform their respective task. Isn't this what management is not to do everything yourself but to get others to achieve their goals.

Lord Shri Krishna has 64 different skills, but from the leadership point of view and which could be unwrapped are skills are as follows:

- **Common Sense:** Any management or leadership book has not describes Common Sense (except Bhagwat Geeta). Common sence is very essential Leadership Skill. The Cambridge Dictionary defines Common Sense as the basic level of Practical knowledge and judgment that we all need to help us live in a reasonable and safe way. The world practical here is very important. Practical means acquired through practice and action not theory not gain by any intellectual.

In Bhagwat Geeta chapter 2 Krishna used a very common sense approach in which he used two theories in that which is identified as Risk perception theory in modern management. He told to Arjuna that you are not afraid of killing people but you are afraid to kill in this battle. He said if you win this battle you get a kingdom, if you lose the battle and you die then you will be remembered in the history as a greatest hero ever, but if you run away from this battle you will be doomed in the history of humanity. Your reputation will go down. And the risk if he die, he die, because death is unavoidable. He do, he die. If he don't do, he still die. So why not make best what he have. If he is standing in the battle field why not make the best what you have. That is what he explained in Chapter 2 Verse 47

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर् मा ते संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

It means, you certainly have the right for prescribed activities but never at anytime in their results. You should never be motivated by the results of the action, nor should there be any attachment in not doing your prescribed activities.

- **Communication:** In management or leadership, communication plays most important role to motivate followers. In the communication process five things are important i.e. sender, receiver, message, medium and feedback. The most important thing in communication is active listening. We have two ears and one mouth so in that percentage listening is 66% important. For effective leadership communication (i) give people ownership/importance (ii) do what you say and say what you do (iii) think before you speak (iv) talk less, say more (v) be courteous that is explained in chapter 17 verse 15

अनुद्वेगकरंवाक्यंसत्यंप्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनंचैव वाङ्मयं तपउच्चयते ॥15॥

It means truthful speech which is inoffensive to others, pleasing and beneficial as well as regular recitation of the Vedic scriptures is declared austerity to speech.

- **Commitment:** it means steadfastness. Freedom from fickleness. Thinking something now, thinking another thing after some time and thinking a third thing tomorrow and never having any concept of the final aim of life. Commitment is firm. This is commitment is something that drives your vision forward. When everyone in the world fails and it is commitment which whispers let's try ones more. It is written in the Chapter 16 verse 2 mention that commitment is a quality when one born in the divine nature.

Promise is expression of interest and commitment is a promise to keep the promise no matter what and it shows by Bhishma. Who took a oath that he will never fight a woman and transgender. On the 10th day of Mahabharat when Bhishma were killing thousands of soldiers of Pandavas army and it was very difficult for Pandava to kill Bhishma. So the Krishna went to Bhishma and asked him how to kill you. Then Bhishma told them about his oath. Then Arjuna took himself behind the Shikandi who was transgender they went in front of Bhishma. Then Bhishma told that he is ready to die but he couldn't break his commitment and he chooses to die, thus thousands of arrows pinned his body and he died.

- **Competence:** If we don't know about the fire, It is ignorance. If we know the Fire and what are the properties of fire it is Knowledge. If we know what to do with fire, when to do, and what not to do with fire that becomes virtue. Now, How to light the fire? How to ignite the fire that is competence. The combination of knowledge, virtue and competence is wisdom. It also means Competence in performance of action. How to do something in at most perfection .That is what explained in Chapter 2 Verse 50

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीहउभेसुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद् योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसुकौशलम् ॥50॥

it means, one endowed with spiritual intelligence can get rid of both positive & negative reactions in this very life: therefore be diligent in the science of uniting the individual consciousness with the ultimate consciousness; in all activities the science of uniting the individual consciousness with the ultimate consciousness is superlative genius.

- **Confidence:** Confidence is the belief or faith in yourself. It is the state of feeling certain about the truth of something. In the Chapter 6 verse 5, it is mentioned about the how to build the confidence. If we think that we could do anything then we can do, but if we think we cannot do than definitely we can't do.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैवहात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैवरिपुरात्मनः ॥5॥

It means, the condition being must be delivered from mental nature by the realized mind. The conditioned being must not become degraded; since this very mind is the friend of the conditioned being as well as the enemy of the conditioned being.

- **Conviction:** Geeta defines isfirmness in singleness of purpose & focusd aim to the exclusion of all others. Commitment and conviction are two different things. Commitment is to a cause, when we are committed to a cause it is commitment. When we are committed to a vision it is conviction. Like we are committed to marriage we are committed to the relationship and the origin of both is different. Commitment originates from intellect, where as conviction originates from ego. Chapter 13 verse 6 explains the conviction as

महाभूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणिदशैकं च पंच चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥6॥

It means, the major element of earth, water, air, fire and ether; the false ego, spiritual intelligence the unmanifest elements in material nature, the ten senses along with the mind and the five objects of the sense.

- **Character:** Character is an essential attribute of leadership. Character is sum total of values. It is a combination of humanity, honesty, compassion, integrity, righteousness. According to Albert Einstein that most people say that intellect makes you a scientist but they are wrong it is not intellect that makes you great, it is your character that makes you great. In Chapter 14, 17 and 18 describes about character. Again Character is classify into 3 i.e. Stavik Character, Rajsik Character and Tamsik Character. In Chapter 14 verse 11, Arjuna Ask to Krishna What is the attributes of Satvik Character? So Krishna told Satvik person has calmness in his personality. He has quite aura around that person and he has brightness of his face. That is a mark of that person in Satvik Character. When Pandavas decided to organize the Rajsooya Yagya, they invied all the kings & Hrishis and Munies from all over Bharat Varsha. When Yudhisthir said to Krishna to stand at the gate and welcome every one. So Krishna refuse to accept that duty. The duty what he wanted to wash the feet of every person who comes to the Rajsooya Yagya.
- **Courage:** Courage is be courageous be fearless, courage is a strength to stand against injustice, not become victims of injustice. Boldness is courage in a searching what is truth and defending Righteousness. Lord Krishna is always stood for Dharma and fought for justice. Fighting with Kansa or siding with Pandavas in Mahabharat war, that justifies his ability as a courageous man. In the chapter 7 verse 10 shows that he was fearless.

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थसनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मितेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥10॥

It means, he says O Arjuna, try to understand me as the eternal origin of the living entities. I am the wisdom of the spirituality intelligent and the powers of the powerful.

- **Clarity:** In Chapter 17 verse 14 to 15 it has mentioned 3 type of clarity. i.e. (i) Clarity of thought (ii) Clarity of speech (iii) Clarity of action when all these 3 are aligned together, the person is able to achieve anything that he sets in his minds. So our thoughts are should be align your speech, and what we speech and thoughts it should be aligned what is our action. We should not be away round what we say something, what we speak something and what we act. It should all be in confirmative and uniform.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनंचैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥15॥

It means, Truthful speech which is inoffensive to others, pleasing & beneficial as well as regular recitation of the vedic scriptures is declared austerity of speech.

- **Coach:** Coach is someone who can coach. A coach is someone who is friend, philosopher and a guide all rolled into one. Krishna is perfect example of being a coach. Krishna has ability to coach. In all 18 chapters he is trying to coach Arjuna to fight the war because that's his duty, and why his duty? Because he has accepted swadharna i.e. fight a battle to fight a war. As a coach Krishna is motivating to Arjuna to overcome his fear and helping him to clearing Arjunas doubt. It is cleared in Chapter 18 verse 73

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मिगतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनंतवम् ॥73॥

It means, Arjuna Said: my illusion has been dispelled, O Krishna by your grace realization is restored to me; I am stable and all my doubts are removed. I shall execute your command.

Conclusion

Bhagwat Gita lighted many qualities of lord Krishna who makes him a great leader. The biggest feature of our nature, that every person born on this earth itself is different. Each person has its own identity and specialty. It is not necessary that a person who has some competencies, similar should be found in others. Lord Krishna was the most competent hence they known and regarded as the most pleasant personality. The competencies that Lord Shri Krishna has that are not in every one but some skills of leadership are owned by everyone and people couldn't recognize them. It is just like musk couldn't identify the smell coming from itself. Similarly the people don't recognize their inner leadership skills and the intention here is to unlock these leadership skills through Bhagwat Gita.

