

# PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT AND THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Shankar B. Chandekar♦

## 1. Introduction

Today, with the advent of globalization, liberalization and privatization, the world, indeed, has become a Monstrous Super Market. Business Managements are guided by the mechanistic view of life which encourages fierce competition and 'survival of the fittest'. Managerial excellence is mostly centred round the final goal of creating "surplus" and fetching "maximum profit" for the owners who are at the top of the management. There is, however an awakening all over the world about the drawbacks of the Modern Art and Science of Management. A Holistic View of Management is gradually emerging; and a welcome shift in paradigm is on the horizon.

This paper aims at introducing the Holistic Vision of Management enunciated in the *Bhagavad Gita* which is more comprehensive than the 'System View' or the 'Holistic View' of the management presented by the modern management theories and practice. The *Gita* concentrates on 'managing oneself and 'managing the Human Response' by imparting direct vision of Truth. An attempt has been made to bring out this most outstanding contribution of the *Gita* to the Modern Management Science.

Management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, effectively accomplish selected aims. As managers, people carry out the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling. Managers are entrusted with the responsibility of taking actions that will make it possible for individuals to make their best contribution to group objectives. Management thus applies to small and large organizations, to profit and not-for-profit enterprises, to manufacturing as well as service industries. So, the term "Management" refers to business, government agencies, hospitals, universities, churches, temples, and in its broad sense covers all business and non-business organizations. Effective managing is the concern of the Corporation President, the hospital administrator, the government first line executives and the heads of all institutions and enterprises, big or small.

---

♦Dr. Shankar B. Chandekar is President of Samdarshan Pratishtan, Pune.

## 2. Present Global Scenario

Today, tremendous strides of modern science and technology greatly dominate and decisively determine the life style, living standard and economy of people all over the world. In the blinding brilliance of globalisation and liberalization, hunger, homelessness, oppression, unemployment, illiteracy, disease, etc. have fallen out of public visibility and conscience. Governments of the world over have begun to pursue global capital as their paramount priority, and have gradually retreated from their primary responsibilities of securing social and economic justice to the weaker and deprived sections of then-people.

Mighty organizations like Multinational Corporations are guided by the mechanistic view of life which encourages fierce competition with mania of 'survival of the fittest'. They are motivated by the restless desire for accumulation of unlimited wealth and power at the cost of horrible exploitation of human and natural resources. These Corporations largely control the legislative process, distort information received by the public through media and determine, to a significant extent, the functioning of our education system and the direction of academic research. Corporate and business leaders are prominent on the board of trustees of academic institutions and foundations, where they inevitably use their influence to perpetuate a value system consistent with corporate interests.

The whole world now seems to be in a process of Westernization. Western competitive and self-assertive model of business management is being followed in almost all fields of life. General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) which was signed by World Trade Organisation (WTO) initiated the liberalization of trade in services. The GATS has classified services into 12 sectors and education is one of them which includes primary, secondary, higher, adult and other education services. So, education has become a big service industry. As a result, universities which were once supposed to be the centres of learning are now allured by the idea of salesmanship for their commercial presence all over the world. In such fierce competitive environment, talented and highly qualified individuals are motivated by an endless thirst for money and elusive social position.

Thus, the illusion of unlimited power nourished by astonishing scientific and technological achievements has produced the concurrent illusion of mistaking wealth and power for peace and happiness. The latter illusion is based on the failure to distinguish between knowledge and wisdom, between achievement and fulfilment in life. If modern

management is partial in thinking that wealth and power is the final goal of life, then it is committing a blunder. Science and technology are not to be blamed for it. It is not the fault of technology, but of its blind use. Not only technology but even religion could be harmful if its purpose is not fully understood. Instances to illustrate this can be recorded in volumes, but Hiroshima, Iraq, Moghul atrocities and Godhra could be readily cited. So, management science should be in a position to impart wisdom and vision to the top level modern managers in the world.

### **3. Indian Scenario**

Unfortunately, the present Indian management theories and practice, by and large, suffer from inherent inadequacies of transplanted system to an alien land. Most of our Management Schools work as factories for producing managers required for the task of creating “surplus” for their masters. In India, probability of managers belonging to an elite minority is higher than the developed countries like U.S.A. Pulin Garg and Indira Parikh during their research on Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad’s students found that the sampled respondents had minimal emotional reaction with their own culture. Most of them were products of western literature. During their course of study, they are not even made aware of the goals and commitments laid down in the Constitution of India.

Nowadays, though business ethics is taught in Business Schools, it is taught as a routine matter, and not as a commitment to social, and ecological awareness. Sampal Singh has identified three models of education prevalent in the field of management, viz., Professional’s Model, Pragmatist’s Model and Humanist’s Model. Professional’s Model is based on the assumption of the existence of a systematic body of knowledge supporting managerial practice. On the other hand, the exponents of Pragmatist’s model, probably equate management with street smartness, and hence over emphasize the importance of interpersonal communication and negotiation skills, working on computers, developing superficial leadership qualities and impressive personality. Humanist’s model, however, aims at offering prompt service to their customers. There may be many more models – some extol profit making, some achievement, and some others evaluate performance in terms of a social benefit oriented economy.

### **4. Towards a Paradigm Shift**

All these models now seem to be on the turning point. Recently, management gurus in India have started discovering profound principles of management theory and practice in our ancient literature. It is a matter of

great satisfaction that there is such an awakening. A welcome shift in paradigm is on the horizon.

In the Western world also this paradigm shift from mechanistic view of life to the systems view has been gradually taking place. E. F. Schumacher, the author of *Small Is Beautiful* maintains that man's current pursuit of profit and progress which promote giant organization and increased specialization has in fact resulted in gross economic inefficiency, environmental pollution and inhuman working conditions. With the emphasis on 'person' and not on the product, he points the way to the world in which capital serves Man instead of Man remaining a slave to capital. The universal prosperity in the modern sense cannot provide a foundation of peace, because such a prosperity often increases greed and envy, and destroys intelligence, happiness, serenity and thereby the peacefulness of man. A distinguished Scientist Fritjof Capra, in his celebrated books, *The Turning Point* and *The Web of Life*, explains the emergence of 'systems thinking' as a profound revolution in the history of Western scientific thought. In systems approach, the properties of the parts can be understood only from the organization of the whole. Systems view prepares the individual organization, big or small, to visualize its role and evaluate its performance in the context of a larger whole. This paradigm shift will make us redefine our concepts of Efficiency, Productivity and Profit, and transform our modern perspective of Managerial Excellence and Total Quality Management.

### **5. The Challenging Task**

Modern Manager is expected to be more creative and innovative. But his creativity depends on the stimulus of reward in cash or kind. It is more or less a 'conditioned response' promoted by Stimulus Response (SR) bond. Several corporates are now willing to create an atmosphere where creativity and innovation is encouraged. The official term for it is entrepreneurship. Conceptually, it means a situation where in a company uses the talents and dynamic abilities of its manager to develop innovative in-house project services. Such conditioned response has its limitations too. Though it helps creating 'surplus' for himself and for his company, it hardly makes any substantial contribution in the larger context of social equity and justice. Practically, all progress artistic, scientific, moral or spiritual is the contribution of individuals who did not work for "rewards". So, Human Response (HR) management for the well-being of "ALL" i.e. for the individual and the universe has been the most important and

challenging task before the art and science of management past and present. The *Bhagavad Gita* invites us to prepare ourselves for this challenging task.

Secondly, the crisis of our time is a crisis of character. Today we come across instances where highly qualified managers, executives, bureaucrats working on the most important positions are involved in corruption, misuse of their power and authority. Some are reluctant to perform their legitimate duty as a public servant on account of tremendous political pressures or threats from the underworld. This is the real challenge that threatens the art and science of management today. It is at this critical juncture that the *Bhagavad Gita* comes to our rescue by presenting the holistic vision of life and action for the enlightenment of an individual who is at the centre of all human endeavours.

## **6. The *Bhagavad Gita* as Art and Science of Management**

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a world classic, comprised of chapters 25 to 42 from the *Bhishma Parvan* of the Mahabharata, renumbered 1 to 18. It is a divine dialogue between the enlightened teacher and the most earnest truth seeker that succeeded in handling the most critical situation in life and action. Vyasa excels in his poetic strategy while presenting Krishna’s universal message of managerial excellence with utmost clarity and simplicity. It is a unique poem interwoven with profound philosophy and practical wisdom, and with a passionate longing for the direct vision of Truth. Arjuna represents a lionhearted manager suddenly caught in the crisis of delusion and dejection. Krishna stands firm as the infallible guide (*sarathi*), who with the scintillating strokes of his ‘Yoga of wisdom in action’ scattered the clouds of Arjuna’s dejection and prepared him for the task of fighting against the evil forces for the welfare of all beings.

The *Bhagavad Gita* emphasizes the importance of managing oneself whereas most of the modern management theories and practices deal with the problems of managing the raw materials, manpower, finances, infrastructure and other external factors. The *Gita* clearly points out the strategic role which managing oneself plays in the well being of the individual and the society. The ultimate goal of human endeavour according to the *Gita* is *sarvabhutahitharata*: ‘welfare of all beings,’ and that is to be achieved through selfless action. This goal is more sublime, much superior than the Western ideal of ‘greatest happiness of the greatest number’ which is to be achieved through altruistic action. The value system in the *Gita* emerges from realization of the Self whereas the value

system in the modern management theories arises from the tendency of self-glorification and self-assertion.

The poetic strategy adopted by Vyasa is noteworthy. The dialogue opens with the question of Dhritarashtra, the blind king who was greatly responsible for the injustice done to the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra persisted in attitude and actions that led to disaster because he had a seriously impoverished concept of his identity, his self, equating it with material possessions. The self can turn selfish, covet and appropriate the wealth, even the bare subsistence of others. Dhritarashtra represents this type of evil and unrighteous thought processes. The word Dhritarashtra uses for 'my people' is *mamakah* also means people who are obsessively preoccupied with a narrow sense of 'I' and 'mine', and are utterly self-centred and selfish. The word also implies those thought processes which imbibe the sense of vanity, ego and attachment.

But this does not exhaust Vyasa's subtlety, for although Arjuna in his sudden flood of compassion would seem to us to be at the opposite pole from being a *mamakah* type Vyasa wants us, as Krishna to Arjuna, to probe his mood deeper to understand the complex ontological and psychological realities deep-hidden in this crisis. First of all, was it Arjuna's genuine selflessness (expansion of the self) that was behind his decision of withdrawal from the battle? On a much earlier occasion when all negotiations had failed and war was found to be inevitable, Arjuna accepted to fight against the evil forces. If he did not feel compassion then, if even on the battlefield just a few minute before the arrows started flying he arrogantly wanted to see the veterans whom he would vanquish, can this flood of emotion that unexpectedly overwhelmed him be regarded as genuine compassion? All the psychosomatic symptoms mentioned with precision in the following *sloka*:

When I see all my kinsmen who have come here on this battlefield,  
my heart aches, life-force withers from my limbs.  
Tongue dries within and my mouth is parched;  
My whole body quivers and my hair shudders in horror.  
The great bow Gandiva slips from my hand, and my skin burns within;  
I am no longer able to stand firm because my mind is whirling.

(Gita 1.28-30)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सोऽस्मिन् युद्धेऽस्मिन् ममैव हि रथेऽस्मिन् खड्गोऽस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन्  
खड्गोऽस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन् अस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन् अस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन्  
अस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन् अस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन् अस्मिन् खड्गेऽस्मिन्

This shows that it was a traumatic shock, a failure of morale when he saw Bhishma and Drona intent to fight whom he loved and adored most. This is the most critical situation where managerial skill and excellence of almost all great managers fail.

This Arjuna’s crisis of dejection shows that Arjuna too was not completely free from the human weakness of *mamakah*: i.e., ‘I’ and ‘Mine’. Yet he wants to justify his withdrawal from the war against evil by putting forth lame excuses supported by traditional ethics of the orthodox preachers and priests. The verses from 31 to 45 in the first chapter show that overpowered by bookish and hearsay learning of the *Shruti* Arjuna was altogether lost in confusion about his *Svadharmā* or *Svakarma* – his duty as a Kshatriya. Vyasa’s mature poetic wisdom depicts this confused state of mind in the most appropriate words as *klaibya* (unmanliness) *kshudram hrudayadvarbalyam* (petty faintheartedness), *prajnavad* (ignorance of the learned), *mohakalila* (turbidity of delusion), and *srutivipratipanna bhudhi* (understanding bewildered by scholastic learning of scriptures). But one of the most positive and outstanding characteristics of the heroic Arjuna is that he is aware of his ignorance and weakness. Moreover he is humble and curious enough to receive the light of wisdom and vision from the enlightened seer like Krishna. Arjuna prays:

With my very being tainted by the vice of faint-heartedness  
And my mind puzzled with regard to duty, I am asking you;  
Tell me that which is decidedly good; I am your disciple.

Pray, instruct me, who have put myself into your hands. (B.G. 2.7)<sup>2</sup>

Such purity of heart is the essential characteristic of a great manager. Without such magnanimity and piety the individual will try to deceive

afēhQūuēç xšēçēifā Woxiēē uēYcēāē mēEUS½ifā |  
Iē cē zēYIēēprēuēxjēēiēē pēçēiēiūē cē qēā qēIēē ||  
d»½javEma - svajana - k»½³a yuyutsu - samupasthitam |  
sšdanti mama g; tr; ³i mukha - ca pari¼u½yati |  
vEpathu¾ca ¾arirē mē rōmaharṣaśca jāyatē ||  
g; ³çšva - stra - satE hast; ttvakcaiva paridahyatE |  
na ca śaknōmyavasthātum bhramatīva ca mē mana; ||  
²MuēēnrēSēwēēWūēxūēpēēuēē mēNūIqē iuēēç kēçēixēçqēRiçāēēē |  
rēçNūēē xréēI³ēIçēç oēWū iēIqēā IzēwrēxifēAWçzēēIkē qēēç iuēēç mēēē³ēçç ||  
kārpaṇyadōṣōpahatasvabhāvaḥ pṛcchāmi tvām dharmasammūdhacētāḥ |  
yacchreya; sy; nni¾cita - brÀhi tanmE ¾i½yastEÉha - ¾; dhi m; - tv; - prapannam ||

others, and even himself by scriptural rationalizations, claiming noble motivations for acts indulged in from inferior impulses.

### **7. The *Gita's* Basic Principle of Management: Know Thyself**

For overcoming these human frailties and inferior impulses the *Gita* emphasizes the need for realization of Self through direct vision of Truth. The *Gita* wants us to transcend the ego-centric little individual self and expand it to the higher consciousness of the Eternal Self; and ultimately identify ourselves with the Supreme Self, that is, *Purushottama*. This is what is meant by being *atmavan*, possessing the Real Self, or 'Know Thyself.' No action is a genuine act of the self unless it is performed in the wakefulness of the Supreme consciousness. Such action is called in the *Gita* as *akarm*, the Selfless action. It is also termed as *svakarm* (one's own action), *svadharm* (one's own duty), *svabhavajakarm* (action according to one's own nature or birth) or *varnakarm* (caste duty). The art and science of merging the ego-centric little individual self (*jivabhava*) into the Universal Self is named as *atmayoga*, *budhiyoga*, *svakarmayoga*, *svakarmayoga*, *rajavidya*, *adhyatmavidya* or *purushottama yoga* in the *Gita*.

### **8. The *Gita's* Theory of Management: *Purushottama Yoga***

The *Gita* develops and presents a profound theory of this *Purushottama Yoga* in the last five Slokas of Chapter XV. The *Gita* finds the Absolute reality in the vision of the *Purushottama*. He is both *Kshara* and *Akshara*, Mutable and Immutable, and, yet he is other because he is more and greater than either of these opposites. *Purushottama*, The Supreme Self, is capable of being both at once. This *Purushottama* consciousness is the highest peak of enlightenment where the individual perceives himself as the 'Whole Unified Universe'. Whosoever is awakened in this Supreme consciousness is no longer bewildered by the world of *dvandha* (dualities) and *moha* (delusion); and stands firm in the performance of selfless action for the welfare of the world. The technique applied for attainment of this Yoga as mentioned in the XI Chapter is *divyachakshu* which means imparting the direct vision of Truth to the aspirant. The *Gita* calls it *jnanavijnanasamhitam* (wisdom fused with vision).

Krishna unfolds this theory of trinity, i.e., *Kshara*, *Akshara* and *Purushottama* by revealing all the aspects of life and existence: empirical, rational and spiritual as follows:

Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space, Mind, Reason and Ego:





This Supreme Yoga is defined in the aphoristic style as harmony between the individual and the universe (*samatvam yoga uchyate*); Performing *Svakarma* (selfless action) in unison with this *Atma Yoga* is excellence in action. It is divine wisdom in action. This unified vision of Yoga is the central concept of the *Gita* around which all empirical, rational, and spiritual perceptions of life and action are skilfully interwoven. This vision of *Purushottama Yoga* goes far beyond the ‘systems view’ or the ‘holistic view’ of the universe presented by modern scientists. It is even deeper than the ‘deep ecological view’ advocated by environmentalists. It is indeed, more sublime than the cult-oriented mysticism of the spiritualists. This *Samatva Yoga* is often mistaken for Patanjali’s Yoga System. It has also been misinterpreted by the traditional Vedantins as *Jnanyoga* limited to subjective knowledge *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brhaman) or *Ayamatma Brahman* (This Self is Brahman). It is beyond all these sectarian views. It unfolds all aspects of the universe and set them in harmony. It awakens in us our Universal Form: *Viswarupa*, i.e., *Sarvam khalu idam Brahman* (All here is Brhaman).

### **8. Threefold Value System**

The Supreme consciousness, I am the whole unified universe, (*ahameva idam sarvam, vasudevah sarvamiti*) is the main source of all human values. It inspires us with death defying courage and vitality, magnanimity and piety, sensitiveness and intelligence which are the basic constituents of human character. It reveals that Action, Wisdom and Devotion (*karma, jnan ani bhakti*) constitute a threefold unity which emancipates man from corruption of thought and action. It educates man how to be in harmony with himself and his environment. It creates the ability to reflect on the critical, social, economical, political, religious, spiritual and educational issues facing humanity and to find out practical solutions. It does not underestimate science and technology; nor does it over-glorify spiritualism (mysticism), but maintains a balance between the two. It is here that science and mysticism meet to commit for development of human resources. This wisdom and vision when properly understood, digested and transformed into action can really help us to provide effective and efficient management, creative and innovative managers and enlightened leadership, which is the need of the day.

The principles of management which we find scattered throughout the eighteen chapters of the *Gita* are centred round this Yoga of wisdom in

action. Some of the well-known principles related to managerial functions and excellence are elaborated here.

### **9. Management by Objectives (MBO)**

Modern Management practitioners do not make clear distinction between the terms goals and objectives. According to the *Gita*, the goal, i.e., the final destination of all human endeavour, is *sarvabhuthahiteratha*, welfare of all beings. This final goal should never be overlooked while setting varied objectives for the various programmes and activities undertaken by managements. *Gita*'s principle of *yoga karmasu kausalam* is often misquoted and misinterpreted as 'excellence in action,' or 'a skilful completion of a given task.' But the *Gita* wants us to give a serious thought to the consequences or results brought about by successful completion of a particular task.

For instance, on 11 September, 2001 when highly talented but flawed human guided missiles were manoeuvred on an almost impossible trajectory at unimaginable speeds, they accurately pierced the pre-determined floors of the World Trade Centre in New York with the precision of a Rolex chronometer. The heat and explosions melted the sturdy steel and reduced human bone and bodies to mountains of ash! And thereafter with the strategy adopted in retaliation of the terrorist attack the U.S.A. may have lost more than it has gained! No doubt both the parties were at their best in executing their managerial skill and excellence. This cannot be considered as an instance of *yoga karmasu kausalam*; for, the *Gita* ideal means planning, organizing, leading, controlling, executing, and performing all activities and programmes in conformity with wisdom and vision of *Purushottoma* consciousness. It stands for devotion (*bhakti*), i.e., quality assurance. The action flowing from desire and the consequences of the action on the world and the reflexive consequences on themselves are to be in considered in this holistic vision.

The paradox of modern management is that it allows Bill Gates to be the richest man in the world; and at the same time it compels a poor Indian farmer to commit suicide for want of mere subsistence, or on account of his debt. The Principle of *sarvabhuthahiteratha* alone can help us to bridge the ever-widening gap between the haves and have not. According to the *Gita* every work is to be performed in a spirit of sacrifice which aims at welfare of all beings; in a spirit of worship of the Universal Lord – *Vishwarupa*. They are the great thieves who do not help turning this cosmic wheel of Sacrifice. This concept of Sacrifice is explained in the *Gita*.

## 10. Factors Responsible for Success and Control of Overall Performance

Some management experts boast that nothing is impossible and success always is within their control. They say ‘nothing succeeds like success,’ and become over-ambitious, overconfident and triumphalistic and ultimately ruin themselves. The *Gita*’s approach is realistic. The *Gita* invites our attention to all those factors which are collectively responsible for the accomplishment of all actions:

The seat of action (*adhishtand*), the doer (*Kartd*), the instruments (*Karanam*) of various sorts, the several different operations (*cheshta*), and the fifth, providence (*daivam*).<sup>4</sup>

Whatever action, right or wrong, a man undertakes to do with his body, speech and mind; success or failure of that undertaking depends upon these five factors. The seat of action is the frame of body, life and mind which is the base or standing ground for the self, the doer, or the agent. The instruments are primarily the motor organs, the sense organs and all other external instruments essential for the task. *Cheshta* are the various patterns of co-ordinated operation for the realization of objectives. *Daivam* is a complex term with subtle related shades of meaning. Basically it specifies the overall texture of Nature which is interwoven with cause-effect relationship. Secondly *Daivam* means the vast action of the Cosmic Order (*khsara gati*) which is beyond the control of human beings, even with the greatest foresight in planning his action. This factor should not be ignored while evaluating one’s performance. It is not fate, fortune or luck factor of the popular belief which intends to nullify the role of the person as agent. The agent enjoys full freedom for attaining *Purusharthas: Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*. The *Gita* encourages the individual (agent) to manage and integrate himself first.

By one’s self should one rise oneself, and not allow oneself to fall; for the self alone is the friend of the self, and self alone is the self’s enemy.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Aiké, éiÉç iÉjÉÉ MüiÉÉi MüUhéç cÉ néjÉflauÉkÉqÉç |  
 luÉluÉkÉÉqÉ néjÉYcáÉ Saeç cÉaÉÉÉÉ négçqÉqÉç || (*Gita* 18, 14)  
 adhi½h; na<sup>-</sup> tath; kart; kara<sup>3a</sup> ca p»thagvidham |  
 vividh; ¾ca p»thakcÉ½; daiva<sup>-</sup> caiv; tra pa<sup>2</sup>camam ||

<sup>5</sup> Aiké, éiÉç iÉjÉÉ MüiÉÉi MüUhéç cÉ néjÉflauÉkÉqÉç |

luÉluÉkÉÉqÉ néjÉYcáÉ Saeç cÉaÉÉÉÉ négçqÉqÉç || (*Gita* 18, 14)

Again and again, the *Gita* motivates man for performing selfless action.  
 For action alone have you authority; none concerning its fruits.  
 Let not the desire for the fruits of action be your motivation.  
 Nor should you desire to abstain from action.  
 Act in unison with wisdom and vision of the Atma-Yoga without  
 attachment, unswayed by success or failure.  
 This equanimity of mind and intellect is Yoga.<sup>6</sup>  
 Therefore perform ever the action which needs to be done, without  
 attachment.  
 For by performing *Svakarma* in passionless restraint one attains the  
 Supreme State.<sup>7</sup>

### 11. Planning with Vision

Planning is the basic process by which we decide our goals and objectives, and the ways and means to achieve them. Planning involves what is to be done, when it is to be done, where it is to be done, how it is to be done and who is to do it. Hence it is the beginning of the process of management. It identifies the purpose or mission of the organization, strategies, policies and procedures to be adopted, programmes and activities to be undertaken for fulfilment of the mission. Along with information and knowledge planning requires wisdom and vision. The moving force behind every master plan and strategy is vision.

In any management planning cannot be done in isolation. Every management is the inseparable part of bigger organizations that is society,

---

adhi½h; na<sup>-</sup> tath; kart; kara<sup>3</sup>a<sup>-</sup> ca p»thagvidham|  
 vividh; ¾ca p»thakcE½; daiva<sup>-</sup> caiv; tra pa<sup>2</sup>camam ||  
<sup>6</sup>MüqÉhrÉaÉÉÍkÉMüÉUxiÉa qÉÉ TüÉÉaÉni MüSÉcÉÍÉ |  
 qÉÉ MüqÉiTüSÉ WáÉÉpÉÉÉi iÉa xÉ...jxiÉMüqÉÍhÉ ||  
 rÉÉaÉxjÉÉ MÜÁ MüqÉÍhÉ xÉ...jÉÉÉüÉÉ KÉÍÉÉÉÉ |  
 ÍxÉSkÉÍxÉSkÉÉÉ xÉqÉÉa pÉÜüÉÉ xÉqÉiuÉç rÉÉaÉ EcrÉiÉa || (*Gita* 2, 47-48)  
 karma<sup>3</sup>yÉv; dhik; rastÉ m; phalÉ½u kad; cana |  
 m; karmaphala hÉturbhurmi tÉ sa±gšstvakarma<sup>3</sup>i ||  
 yögasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgamtyaktavā dhanamjaya |  
 siddhyasiddhyōḥ samō bhūtvā samatvaṁ yōga ucyatē ||  
<sup>7</sup>iÉxqÉÉSxÉÉüÉÉ xÉiÉiÉç MüÉrÉç MüqÉi xÉqÉÉcÉU |  
 AxÉÉüÉa ½ÉcÉUIMüqÉi mÉUqÉÉmiÉÉa iÉÉ mÉÁWÉÉ || (*Gita* 3, 19)  
 tasm; dasakta| satata<sup>-</sup> k; ryam karma sam; cara |  
 asaktō hyācarankarma paramāpnōti puruṣaḥ ||

nation, world, natural environment and ultimately of the universe. So the *Gita* advises us to make our short-term and long term planning in harmony with the divine traits which develop awareness of belonging to the universe. It is holistic planning which should be done in a spirit of sacrifice. The *Gita* advises us not to disregard this vision of Truth.

Even the learned and most smart manager who is ignorant of the holistic vision, having no certitude, flounders in doubt and darkness and ultimately perishes. For, neither this world nor the world to come, nor happiness is ever for the man who doubts.<sup>8</sup>

## 12. Organizing

The *Gita* enunciates the concept of *Lokasamgraha* maintaining harmony in the fourfold social order (*caturvarnya*) of the society according to the nature and functions of *Gunas*. This is often mistaken for caste system in India or class system in the developed countries. But it is the integrated vision of the society which visualizes healthy and harmonious development of its four major systems; namely, Education (Teachers community), Defence (Warriors community), Agriculture, Commerce and Industry (Farmers and business community), and Manual Labour (Workers community). Development and prosperity of a nation depend upon their full co-operation and harmony. Unhealthy competition amongst these systems or ailment in any of these systems will paralyze effective functioning of the whole system and ultimately spoil the individual and social health. This is the most sound principle based on the *Gita's* holistic vision that the 'whole universe is a living organism' (*purusha idm sarvam*)

## 13. Controlling

The *Gita's* focus is on the conquest of the self. It does not believe in unnatural severe austerities or restraints for controlling the mind. It believes in sublimating the senses rather than suppressing the senses:

Whenever the mind unsteady and restless strays away from the *Purushottama* consciousness, let him ever and forever lead it to the sweetness and light of the Self.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> अथैतन्मोक्षमार्गं चतुर्वर्ण्यं ब्रह्मविद्यायां  
 कृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ॥ (Gita 4, 40)  
 अज्ञानं कर्मणोऽपि नानाकारं साधुना यत्प्रयत्नं  
 नानाम लोकोऽस्ति नापि सुखं समसाद्य तमाना ॥  
<sup>9</sup> रीतिं रीतिं चित्तं चित्तं चित्तं चित्तं चित्तं



Yield not to impotence, bow not to coward fit;  
 This does not befit your manly fortitude;  
 Shake off this paltry faint-heartedness, O Parantapa!  
 Arise to perform thy warrior's duty with undaunted spirits.<sup>12</sup>  
 Even if you may be the most sinful of all sinners;  
 With your reason bewildered by scriptural learning;  
 Embark this boat of wisdom divine;  
 Which shall bear you safe across the ocean of evil.<sup>13</sup>  
 'Therefore, O great warrior!  
 Kill this detrimental doubt born of ignorance that lies hidden in your heart  
 With the sword of wisdom; be steadfast in *Atmayoga*;  
 And arise perform your task with fearless mind.<sup>14</sup>

## 16. Conquest of the Self

The example of leadership and motivation propounded in the Gita will ever remain a guiding star for humankind. Arjuna, one of the greatest warriors of his time, was totally confused and dejected just before the commencement of the war and he refused to take any action. He became intellectually and spiritually weak and was overpowered by indecisiveness which arose from the forgetfulness of his Real Self. When Arjuna asked, "What is it that impels man to sin, even against his will, as if compelling him by force?" Krishna replied:

It is Kama – the subtle ego-centric desire, it is *Krodha* (*Kama* itself turns into *Krodha*) born of *Rajoguna*.

It is all-consuming, all polluting. Know it as man's greatest enemy on earth.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Ysāreṇa qē xqē aṭqē nējī lāā uērrēnē ± iā |

āēṣiḥ wīsrēstāṣrēḥ irēūuāā ē nēuqēnē ||

klaibya mī sma gama | pī rtha naitattvayyupapadyatē |

kṣudraṁ hrdayadaurbalyaṁ tyaktavōttiṣṭha paramtapa || (*Gita* 2, 3)

<sup>13</sup>Aīnē cāṣixē nēnāprē xēūāprē nēnēmū ēqē |

xēūēḥ yēēlēmstūfānē uēēēlēḥ xēqēūwrēlxē ||

api cēdasi pī pēbhya | sarvebhya | pī pakṣtama | |

sarva j<sup>2</sup>ī naplavēnaiva vājina sa tariḥyasi || (*Gita* 4, 36)

<sup>14</sup>iēxqēṣyēēlēxēqēpēḥ wāxjēḥ yēēlēēlxēlēēqēlē |

īnū uēāēḥ xēqērēḥ rēāēqēlēē ēā ē pēūlē ||

tasmī daj<sup>2</sup>ī nasambhāta hṣttha j<sup>2</sup>ī nī sinī tmana | |

chittvainaṁ saṁsāyaṁ yōgamātiṣṭhōttiṣṭha bhārata || (*Gita* 4, 42)



The senses, mind and reason are said to be *Kama*'s hiding places. Enveloping wisdom by distorting these, it bewilders man. Therefore mastering first the senses, Krishna, the enlightened leader wants us to kill this *Kama*, the destroyer of wisdom and vision. So long as a leader or a manager is ego-centred, under the sway of his *Kama* he is not in a position to lead or make proper decision and. According to the *Gita*, it is most essential for a leader to understand the nature and functions of *Kama*:

The senses control the body;  
 but the senses themselves are controlled by the mind;  
 greater than mind is the reason;  
 but greater than even reason is he (Kama – the egocentric self)  
 Thus realizing him to be greater than reason;  
 And setting him in harmony with the Supreme Self;  
 By wisdom and vision of Yoga, destroy, O mighty armed;  
 The enemy in the form of *Kama*, formidable to encounter.<sup>16</sup>

For development of leadership qualities this conquest of the self is the basic requirement.

### 17. Decision Making

Modern manager faces many dilemmas as Arjuna faced before the commencement of the battle of Mahabharata. The holistic vision of the *Gita* develops an ability to analyze as well as synthesize all aspects of a particular situation to arrive at a particular decision. The man of steadfast wisdom can hardly commit blunders. That is why the *Gita* gives full freedom to a leader and a manager for decision-making.

<sup>15</sup> Mūḡē Luē Cūēkē Luē Ueēāēīhēxēqēp uēē |  
 qēwīzēīēā qēwānēmqēē luēSkṛēāēīqēwū uēēUhēqēç ||  
 kāma ēva krōdha ēva rajōguṇasamudbhavaḥ |  
 mahāśānō mahāpāpmā viddhyēnamīha vairīṇam || (*Gita* 3, 37)

<sup>16</sup> CīSīrēēīhē mēUēhrēēwūīSīrēprēē mēUç qēīēē |  
 qēīēxēxīēn mēUē oēīrēā oēīpē mēUīēxīēn xēē ||  
 Luēç oēīkSē mēUç oēīSkūēē xēçīēprēēīqēēīēqēēīqēēīē |  
 eēīwū zēēē qēwāoēēwāā MūēqēĀnēç SōēxēSçqēç ||  
 indriy; <sup>3</sup>i par; <sup>3</sup>y; hurindriyēbhya; para<sup>-</sup> mana; |  
 manasastu parā buddhiryō buddhē; paratastu sa; ||  
 ēva<sup>-</sup> budhdē; para<sup>-</sup> buddhv; sa<sup>-</sup> stabhy; tm; nam; tman; |  
 jahi śatruṁ mahābāhō kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam || (*Gita* 3, 42-43)

I have imparted you the direct vision of Truth which is more secret than hidden mysteries.

Ponder it in the silence of your heart, and then in freedom do thy will.<sup>17</sup> Here the *Gita* excels in its approach to all prevalent principles of modern management.

### 18. Conclusion

The *Gita*'s holistic vision of the *Purushottama Yoga* ushers in the dawn of a new Management Era which will ensure (a) economic and social justice to all people in the world, (b) healthy social and political order in the individual nations and in the world, and (c) ecological harmony and a sense of belonging to the universe. If this vision is introduced in our Management Schools, we can produce enlightened managers and leaders. One generation of enlightened managers and leaders can transform this world by bringing into it a generation of fearless and selfless individuals having noble character.

---

<sup>17</sup>Cl iē qā ¥ēē lēqēē Zrēē iēç aēñzē Saēñzē iēUç qērēē |  
 ùēqēzrēāē Szēñē rēj ēcNúxē iējēē MñÃ ||  
 iti mē j<sup>2</sup>i namj khyj ta<sup>-</sup> guhyj dguhyatara<sup>-</sup> mayj |  
 vim»yaitada¥ē½ē<sup>3</sup>a yathēcchasi tathj kuru || (*Gita* 18, 63)