



From Learning Organization to Enlightened Organization

*The mantra of 'LIFE'
discussed in previous
editorials at two levels*

The *mantra* of 'LIFE', discussed in the editorial in Vol. 4, Nos. 1 & 2 (Learning, Innovation, Flexibility and Entrepreneurship), deals with operating characteristics of a living system. The next higher order 'LIFE' is proposed with four ingredients in the editorial in Vol. 5, No. 1 (Love, Inspiration, Fun and Enlightenment) which deals with emotional and spiritual vitality of any organization.

*Learning is the basic
ingredient that leads to
enlightenment*

Learning, a basic ingredient, coupled with other ingredients of organizational vitalization, leads to enlightenment. The process begins with infusing a learning culture in the organization. This leads to creating a 'learning organization' that develops the ability to renew and adapt continuously to the changing conditions and requirements as a living system. The notable organizations in this regard include GE, Ford and Federal Express. A learning organization is characterized by shared vision, personal mastery, team learning, ability to question mental models and systems thinking. The learning coupled with innovation, flexibility and entrepreneurship contribute to the operational and intellectual vitality of the organization.

*An 'enlightened
organization' would be
fulfilling the self-
actualization needs of
employees*

The next higher vitality levels are emotional and spiritual; they relate to maturity of the organization and may constantly inspire the individuals working in it. It would be fulfilling the self-actualization needs of employees and would ultimately/eventually result into an 'enlightened organization'. An enlightened organization provides a congenial environment to all the stakeholders so that they can ultimately realize their highest level needs within the work environment.

*An enlightened manager/
organization is liberated
and can practice flexibility
in a true sense*

The ultimate objective of any living system is to be enlightened by a continuous quest for learning the truth. Each step towards the reality shapes enlightened managers who, in turn, collectively create/build an enlightened organization. An enlightened manager/ organization is liberated from the forces of nature and can practice flexibility in a true sense. He/she is able to realize that "I am a part of the whole and not the sole doer". Such an enlightened individual (or collectivity of individuals) will be able to develop an insight that "how some forces of nature act upon the other forces of nature and doesn't become their slave", as propounded in *Bhagvad Gita*. Such enlightened managers will have holistic thinking in true sense and can contribute proactively in realization of the higher goals of the organization as well as towards the whole organizational ecology.

*The various disciplines of
learning organization
would contribute to the
respective disciplines of the
enlightened organization*

The learning organization is the foundation that transcends into an enlightened organization by integrating various processes/ingredients of organizational vitalization. The various disciplines of learning organization would contribute to the respective disciplines of the enlightened organization. The shared vision, in the context of learning organization, involves all the stakeholders who pave the way to evolve the enlightened foresight. Another discipline of learning organization is personal mastery, which if practiced to its perfection will manifest into the enlightened self. A learning organization practices team learning which will contribute to development of deep understanding in a collective manner and would lead to evolution of an enlightened society. The deep learning by questioning the mental models with each experience and refining the assumptions will manifest into deep enlightenment at all levels. Finally, the systems thinking that integrates various disciplines of the learning organization will transcend into the enlightened whole that generates true freedom and liberty.

*Learning organization
provides the fertile soil for
reaping the fruits in the form
of an enlightened
organization*

In the next evolutionary cycle, there is a need to crystallize the concept and practice of enlightened organization reflecting upon the well established paradigm of learning organization. The learning organization provides the fertile soil for reaping the fruits in the form of an enlightened organization as a win-win proposition.

Sushil

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