

## How to create a harmonious work environment?

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### Abstract

For the development of any individual, family, society, country or whole world three things are required viz, right understanding (knowledge), right relations (behaviour) and physical facilities (money). It is clear from existing problems at all levels right from the individual to the whole world that one or two of the above are missing or even if three are present, their priority order is not clear. Natural freedom is there to every individual to set their own order of priority, however, there seems to be more confusion in setting the same. Due to this confusion, several problems are emerging, viz., 1) unrealistic targets are being set and thereby pressure in individuals is building, 2) unhealthy competition among colleagues and 3) poor relationships at home and at work places. In this circumstances, how can one create a harmonious work environment with the following objectives:

- To create an environment where everybody shares the same vision
- To create an environment where everybody feels the ownership
- To create an environment where everybody strives for excellence
- To create an environment where everybody admits their mistake/short-coming

### Experience with students

Most of the students who join M.Tech in Computer Aided Structural Engineering (CASE) at IIIT Hyderabad till the recent past, joined only for jobs. It became difficult to manage the batch because of lack of understanding that our goals are different or sometimes the goal is same but the paths are different. I was assuming that the students want to do masters and after which they select suitable job depending on their interest and expertise. However, what I found was students tended to study only those things which the highest paying jobs require. Current situation of students is that they do not want to contribute their clear productive time in 2nd year on a good project even after they were offered a job. Most of the times they are opting to learn all the technologies which the company (in which they are going to join) is using because they can be in the forefront in the competition of job appraisals in future. Now the difficult task was how to make students realise that doing a good project is not only important to them but also important for the development of society.

Attending Jeevan Vidya Workshop (here after vidya) brought about a great change in my thinking. I thought that all CASE students must attend vidya and get the same kind of impact what I got. However, it became difficult for me to convince students for attending the same. Then I realised that instead of asking somebody to attend, I must practice it and through relationship only I can make an impact on my surrounding environment. For the past 2 years, I was seriously observing myself as to what qualities of mine are liked by others and when are they comfortable/uncomfortable with me. First, I discussed the content of vidya with my family members and later with students. I discussed the content in the format which suits students' daily environment. This had a magical impact on students and also on me. Earlier, I was struggling to manage just 10 to 15 students and now there are nearly 50 students who interact with me professionally as well as personally. Managing such a large number became very smooth because I am getting things done with relationship rather than position.

After attending vidya it was revealing to me that everybody wants to make the other person happy, however due to lack of competence, we make other person unhappy. If the other person starts thinking that we are intentionally making him/her unhappy then this is the crux of the trouble. What I noticed is if I doubt the

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intention of the other person then a sense of negativity is developing inside me towards that person and if I doubt the competence of the other person then a feeling of responsibility is developing. By attending vidya, I grasped the concept that feeling that the other person want to make me happy is the trust I have on him. Once we understand this, later it is only the question of increasing the competence of the other person. Competence can be increased by doing the right evaluation of the other person. In a sense by re- specting (sammaan) them, neither by over-evaluating that they know everything nor by under-evaluating them that they don't know anything. In my case, I started appreciating what the students already know and gave respect to their goals rather than telling that their goals not proper. This gave me a platform where we start on common understand- ing rather than on negative note. Just by doing this, students attitude has drastically changed and infact they started interacting with me more closely and requesting for advise regarding their career. I understood that in student-teacher relationship teacher has the greater responsibility. Teacher has a responsibility to evaluate the competence level of students and thereby create an environment where growth of student is possible.

मेरे मायके में व्यापार एवं गीता, रामायण की कथा का अभ्यास रहा। कुछ सही करने की इच्छा थी। विवाह के बाद पति के साथ सभी सामाजिक कार्यों में भागीदारी की, किन्तु तृप्ति नहीं मिली। जीवन विद्या का शिविर करने के बाद बहुत सारी शंकाएं दूर हो गईं। पहले शरीर को ही सब कुछ मानकर जीना होता था किन्तु अब जीवन की ओर ध्यान चला गया है। व्यापार में गलतियों कम हो गईं। अब जीने में काफी उत्साह बना रहता है। परिवार में पहले से अच्छा तालमेल है। मानव को छोड़ अन्य प्रकृति पूरकता में सजी है, अंते मैं भी न्याय पूर्वक पूरकता में जीने का प्रयास कर रही हूँ। साथ ही समझने, जीने, समझाने के लिए लगातार कोशिश है। गांव की महिलाओं एवं स्कूल के बच्चों में इन प्रयासों से काफी गुणात्मक परिवर्तन आया है। स्कूल के बच्चों में श्रेष्ठताओं के लिए आकर्षण बढ़ा है। वर्तमान में भोजन की आवश्यकता की अधिकांश वस्तुएं घी, तेल, सब्जी, अनाज, एवं मसाले कृषि कार्य द्वारा स्वयं उत्पादित करती हूँ। केवल गोबर खाद के प्रयोग से व्यापार लाभ की बजाय उत्पादन और श्रम की ओर ध्यान गया है।

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In general, what I observed in students is they have a great potential but lack proper direction. If this goes unattended, they tend to utilize their time in many unnecessary things. Not so important things become urgent and very important things get least priority. If this becomes a habit than they tend to learn tricks for managing the academics. Later, administration has to start thinking of setting some rules to control the situation. Surely students don't like rules to be imposed on them. Rule which disturbs personal freedom may succeed for some time but not always. Instead of this, in my opinion, every faculty member has to take responsibility to discuss some social issues and problems in surrounding environment. We have had many discussions in smaller groups in our centre about how to contribute for the development of the country. The answer that has emerged is that by solving the assignments sincerely and doing good projects, person becomes stronger and thereby the country. As a result of this discussion, students started doing projects sincerely, students who are receiving GATE scholarship became more aware about their responsibility in devoting 10 hours of work per week. Also, most of the students are working now during day time only, eating 3 meals a days and have realised that they have capability to earn much more than their family requirements. This has helped me in moving towards the objects of setting up harmonious work environment.

### Experience with staff:

In my absense, one of our sta\_ members started leaving early from the o\_ce. I noticed that and after few instances, I called him and asked whether he is comfortable in doing so. He admitted that he was always under fear whenever he does so thinking that I will notice. I told him that whenever situation demands, he can leave early or come late. here is no need to feel guilty. I also said that he should give high priority to family and its needs and asked him to take seriously the vision of the centre/institute not the rules. This changed his attitude towards work and now whenever he is leaving early or coming late, he is informing me. Not that this is a great achievement but I feel we are working in more relationship rather on hierarchy.

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### **Expericne with relatives:**

We have a friend-cum-relative. We call him kaka. Kaka is very e\_cient person and has good knack of managing the work. Last month his niece (elder brother's daughter) was getting married. Just 3 days before the marriage kaka came to our house and telling that he is not given importance for doing the arrangements for the marriage ceremony. Kaka and his brother are not in good terms from many years. Because of this, kaka was thinking that his elder brother is deliberately insulting him by keeping him away from arrangements. He was also telling that he will attend marriage like a distant relative and not as a family member. I clearly understood that this problem has emerged from poor relationship. I told him that it is his own assumption that his elder brother is deliberately keeping him away from the ceremony. I also told him that his brother lacks competence in dealing with him and not the intention. This I could convince this by asking him the reverse question "do you want to make your brother unhappy?" he said NO and again I asked "are you making your brother unhappy?" with this it became clear to him and he promised me that he will talk to his brother. Later I heard from my mother who attended the marriage that kaka spoke to his brother and expressed that he had wrong assumptions on him. Kaka's brother was very happy on kaka's realization and involved him fully in marriage ceremony arrangements. My mother said that ceremony went on with lot of fun and hapiness and people thanked me for the discussion I had with kaka.

### **Expericne with children:**

I have two kids Ganesh (5 yrs) and Dinesh (2 yrs). Daily I play with my kids in the morning and also in the evening. On Ganesh's 4th birthday I gifted him a bicycle. One day he was asking me to keep his bicycle inside home. I said I shall do that later and insisted him to \_rst brush his teeth, take bath and go to school. He was strongly insisting me to keep bicycle inside. Then I shouted at him and said made him ready to school by force. He was not happy and I was also not happy by doing so. That day he brought his lunch box back without eating. I felt very bad about my behaviour with him. Actually I was under pressure due to some other things and it came out as anger on my son. That day I did not do any work with interest. All the time I was thinking how to say sorry to my on and see his smiling face. In the evening, I spoke to him with lot of a\_ection, then he said "you only told me that if I keep bicycle outside, somebody will steal it, so I insisted in keeping it inside". I really felt low by hearing those word from him. He was right, actually it is me who conditioned him wrongly and later I am the one who is not comfortable with that. What I clearly understood, is we all are conditioned for so many things in our life and we are getting su\_ocated due to our own activities. I found vidya as a powerful framework which can help in removing this conditioning and make us swatantra human being. Now I am feeling great freedom in my thoughts and sometimes in actions also.

### **Conclusions**

I had several experiences in the recent past where I am getting more and more convinced that right understanding, right relations and physical facilities is the correct order of priority. If the order is not clear then majority of our energy is just getting wasted in reaching this order or priority. Once the order is set properly, it make every person live with great freedom and they can work on larger goals of life sincerely.