



## INTROJECTING THE CORE ISLAMIC VALUES FOR RAISING THE EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOR

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### ABSTRACT

Managerial effectiveness in any organization reflects the quality of manpower used in it. The managers in the contemporary corporate environment may draw up a plan to inculcate the Islamic beliefs, intentions and inspirations among the workforce they engage. This will result in a healthy work culture and a behavior congenial for better performance in any organizational setup. Nobody dislikes sincerity, honesty and morality but the individual urge for doing *good* and forbidding the evils comes from within. The transformation at individual level is therefore required to protect the society and all its constituents from the adverse consequences of selfish and immoral attitude of people. It is the core belief of a Muslim that can only put him on morality. Introjecting the image of Almighty God as omnipotent, most merciful and benevolent and introjecting His love and authority influences the behavior incorporating in him ethical and moral values. A complete overhaul of human beings is possible in the light of teachings of *Qur'an* and *Hadith* through this consistent effort. The present paper signifies these core values and their effect on all the aspects of human behavior. To incorporate these values in work life some discreet actions have also been recommended in Islamic literature.

**Keywords:** Introjection, Managerial effectiveness, Transformation, Values

### INTRODUCTION

We all believe that in a civilized society ethics should be practiced not only in our private life but also in inter-personal, business and social dealings. The increasing reports of corruption in business, or in individual members involved in business, further emphasize the need to apply the moral standards more strictly in business situations. Compliance with these norms will on the one hand discipline the individuals and business organizations and on the other hand keep peace and harmony in the society, as the moral standards deal with matters that seriously injure or greatly benefit human beings. (Hart, 1961)

Moral Standards relate to the matters that are of serious consequence and are based on good reasons and impartial considerations (Rachels, 1986). In fact an ethical behavior raises the goodwill and reputation of business, which in turn opens up greater opportunities for the business. An ethical behavior is the best long-term business strategy for a company — a view that has become increasingly accepted during the last few years. (Peters & Waterman, 1982)

Substantial tangible and intangible costs of unethical workplace conduct have been found at the individual, group and organizational levels by Nash (as cited in Petrick & Quinn, 1997). The conclusion drawn by experts is that, without managerial ethical decision making, in the context of corrupt national environments, managers risk ruining their careers, their firm's reputation and the opportunity to compete in a free market on a level playing field (Petrick & Quinn, 1997). Apart from these serious implications, unethical practices will disturb the social harmony and cause a danger to mutual understanding, brotherhood and cooperation. In a nutshell, it can be said that business cannot survive without ethics, then, it is in the best interests of business to promote ethical behavior both among its own members as well as within its larger society. (Valasquez, 2002)



The literature on business ethics, very elaborately, discusses the origin, content and significance of moral values but also admits that people do not always live up to the moral standards they hold; that is, they do not always do what they believe is morally right. The moral or immoral behavior of people who make up a business organization is mainly influenced by:

- (i) Legal system under which they operate
- (ii) Organizational culture and environment in which they work
- (iii) Social setup and human relations under which they live
- (iv) Individual bent of mind and preferences

These influencers interact and affect each other also. The first three of them are external to the decision maker and form an environment in which he/she operates. However the fourth one being controlled by the decision maker offers an opportunity to raise the morals at work.

### **MORALITY FROM WITHIN**

Nobody dislikes sincerity, honesty and morality but the individual urge for doing *good* and forbidding the evils comes from within. The transformation at individual level is therefore required to protect the society and all its constituents from the adverse consequences of selfish and immoral attitude of people.

The question is how do we get people in our organizational setup who adhere to the moral standards even at the cost of their personal interests. Obviously people are not born with moral or immoral traits. They absorb the moral standards as children from a variety of influences and revise them as they mature (Valasquez, 2002). If the people are made to develop these standards with the help of a congenial atmosphere in their family, organization and neighborhood, the task of enforcement of the morality becomes much easier. Otherwise the organizational or even legal forces will not work effectively to control the situation if the people are not willingly cooperating for it.

Islam offers an in-built solution to this problem. Islamic scholars as well as the literature guide us by focusing on reform at individual level. It's also a fact that no society undergoes a revolution without improving the overall quality of its members. That is why the *Prophets* in all the ages came with a mission of (in the language of the Holy Qur'an):

“A messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and *Al-Hikmah* (the wisdom), and verily, they had been before in manifest error”. (Qur'an, 28:Al-Jum'ah 2)

The history of all the divine messengers is a witness to the fact that they worked on the hearts of the people. It is further emphasized in the following words of *Holy Prophet* (p.b.u.h.):

“Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is the heart.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The heart acts as king and rules on all the organs of the body. The behavioral scientists are also focusing on human mind and probing into the orientations, emotions and beliefs that affect the human behavior.

### **ISLAMIC BELIEFS AS MOTIVATORS**

The beliefs held by workers set the motivators for them. A worker with Islamic beliefs draws his/her satisfaction in an organization not only by need fulfillment as defined by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, but more fundamentally, from the belief that he/she is a holder of '*amanah*' (Trustee of Allāh (swt) ) on earth. (Ahmad, 2001)



Purification of heart is, in fact, setting right all the parts of human body. The heart is rectified when it has the firm belief in Allāh (swt) 's greatness and develops the divine qualities like 'Taqwa' (Piety), 'Tawakkul' (trust in Allāh (swt) ) 'Qana't' (Contentment) 'Sabr' (Patience) 'Ikhlās' (purity of intention)etc. The composite of these qualities is called 'Imaan' (Islamic belief) and a Muslim proclaiming to believe monotheism is supposed to possess the above qualities. A person firm in these beliefs will never be tempted to do wrong even if that serves his/her personal interests.

All the above-mentioned properties are the offshoot of *Imaan*, which originate as a result of strong conviction(a firm belief on revelations), develop an internal force in people and monitor their behavior in all walks of their life. These qualities, if inculcated, make a perfect human being who serves as a role model for others as well. It is so crucial that a wrong deed or an undesirable performance reflects only the weakness of *Imaan* on the part of the doer.

*Imaan* guarantees the presence of a number of qualities in human beings. This view is expressed in a number of sayings of the *Holy Prophet* (p.b.u.h.). The following *Ahadith* (sayings of *Prophet* p.b.u.h.) are a few glaring examples:

“There is no faith in him who is not trustworthy and there is no religion in him who does not respect his covenant.” (Mishka't)

“None of you (truly) believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.” (Bukhari)

Not only are the thoughts, emotions and the ambitions affected, there is also a reform witnessed in the actions and the style of the believer. This view is reflected also in the following *Hadiths* (sayings of the *Holy Prophet* p.b.u.h.):

“Righteousness is good morality, and wrongdoing is that which wavers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about.” (Muslim)

“Let him who believes in Allāh (swt) and the Last Day either speak *good* or keep silent, and let him who believes in Allāh (swt) and the Last Day be generous to his neighbor, and let him who believes in Allāh (swt) and the Last Day be generous to his guest.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Islamic beliefs develop a power in human beings, which is drawn directly from Allāh (swt) the All-powerful and makes them do the wonders as we find the numerous incidents in Islamic history. It is interesting to note the miraculous effect of each of these internal qualities as mentioned in Islamic literature, especially in *Qur'an* and *Hadith*.

### **Taqwa(Piety) The Purifier**

It aims at creating the ceaseless and perpetual fear in human beings of the unseen power (the Almighty). This is a quality of fundamental nature that puts a person on right track. The creator has bestowed us with both the capacities viz.

“Then He showed him what is wrong for him and what is right for him.” (Qur'an, 30: Ash-Shams 8)

This is the most precious gift of all to man, the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong. A man's success, his prosperity, his salvation depends on himself \_ on his keeping his soul pure as Allāh (swt) made it; and his failure, his decline, his perdition depends on his soiling his soul by choosing evil. The force that forbids one from evils is the quality of being God-fearing which we call as 'Taqwa'. There is no other such powerful mechanism to make one law-abiding. That is why *Prophet Muhammad* (p.b.u.h)



in the process of improving mutual relationships among his '*Sahaba*' (companions of Prophet p.b.u.h.) invoked this very property saying:

“I counsel you to fear Allāh (swt) (may He be glorified)” (Abu Dawud & Tirmidhi)

The Holy books and the sayings of Prophets are full of such instructions. While stressing it the *holy Prophet* (p.b.u.h) said:

“Piety is right here – and he pointed to his breast saying this three times” (Muslim)

*Taqwa* is a purifier that acts in human beings as an internal guardian. Higher is the level of piety in someone, more will be the resistance from the evils. That is why most of the Islamic worships are aimed at creating this quality of ‘piety’. *Qur’an* in very explicit terms mentions it:

“O you who believe! Observing fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become the pious” (Qur’an, 2:Al-Baqarah 183)

“Take *Sadaqah* (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it.” (Qur’an 9:At-Taubah 103)

There are similar other verses in the *Holy Qur’an* that assert the requirement of piety such that it appears to be a real asset. What will govern a person’s ethical behavior is the level of *Taqwa* (piety) in him. Depending on which level his *Nafs* (internal state) is at and whether he is winning or losing the battle against temptation and evil, he may be more or less prone towards behaving ethically (Beekun, R.I.-1996). A person if attains piety, will be guided in all matters by probity and this substantially improves his/her work performance as well.

### ***Tawakkul* (Trust in Allāh (swt) ) for Affluence**

If a believer in monotheism has full trust in Allāh (swt) – the Almighty, he will be the most affluent person on earth as he draws strength from Him. Instead of having trust on money, material or possessions if one trusts in only Allāh (swt) , this makes the believer feel the richest without anything. In this meaning, *the Prophet* (p.b.u.h) said:

“True riches (*Ghina*) do not consist in abundance of wealth, but result from a contented mind.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

To make a believer affluent (in this meaning) the *Holy Qur’an* puts stress on this quality in the following verses:

“Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allāh (swt) , certainly, Allāh (swt) loves those who put their trust (in Him)”. (Qur’an, 4:A’le Imran 159)

“And whosoever puts his trust in Allāh (swt) , then He will suffice him.” (Qur’an, 28:At-Tala’q 3)

Any matter requiring concentration, adherence, devotion and passion is dependent on trust and confidence on the cause. If a person has full trust in Almighty Allāh (swt) he will have more devotion and will act more responsibly.

A famous trader among the '*Sahaba*' (companions of *Holy Prophet* p.b.u.h.) was Zubair bin Awwam. Once someone asked him: “How is it that you made so much profit from trade?” He replied: “I never



purchased faulty things for trade and never desired to make profit. But Allāh (swt) grants profit to whomsoever He wishes.” (Zakariya, 1993) This is a simple example how the trust in Allāh (swt) makes a person mentally as well as materially rich and prosperous.

### ***Qana’*(Contentment)The Satisfier**

To be consistently honest, punctual and committed to work, the quality of contentment helps to a great extent. If we depend solely on our individual capacities and the results do not match with our efforts we are bound to get disappointed. We may also get misguided by some devilish thinking that all our failures might be the result of our piety and obedience. Here comes the Islamic teaching of contentment to our rescue. A Muslim has been told to have ‘*Radha bil Qadha*’ i.e. to be satisfied with the decision of Allāh (swt) . This is what the *holy Prophet* (p.b.u.h.) said in his following quotes:

“Successful is the person who embraces Islam, is given a humble provision and who remains content with what Allāh (swt) has given to him” (Muslim)

“Know that if the Nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would benefit you only with something that Allāh (swt) had already prescribed for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with anything, they would harm you only with something Allāh (swt) had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.” (At-Tirmidhi)

This property of contentment saves a person from undue stress leading to frustration. After taking his/her utmost care and preparation, such a person will leave the result on the will of Allāh (swt) and be satisfied with the outcome on which he/she has no control. This keeps the energy and momentum preserved and such a person is never depressed and disheartened.

### ***Sabr* (Patience) The Controller**

Patience prevents a person from getting overpowered by emotions or evil desires. Nobody is capable of thinking and behaving rationally without putting a check on desires and emotions. The property of *Sabr* offers this control. The patience, in Islam, aims at preventing the people from prohibited things and keeps them steadfast on obedience. The inbuilt property of *Sabr* will therefore develop perseverance in the behavior of the workforce and make their performance consistent with the desired standards.

The *Holy Qur’an* recommends this quality with repetition and stress in the following verses:

“Therefore be patient as did the Messengers of strong will”. (Qur’an, 26:Al-Ahqaf 35)

“O you who believe! Seek help in patience and the prayer. Truly! Allāh (swt) is with the patient”. (Qur’an, 2:Al-Baqarah 153)

There are several other verses in *Holy Qur’an* and the specific instructions in *Hadith* that educate the mankind for tolerance, perseverance and good manners with the weapon of patience. For adverse circumstances and in the times of atrocities, a number of verses of *Holy Qur’an* enjoin patience. For example see the following verse:

“And endure you patiently (O Muhammad) your patience is not but from Allāh (swt) . And grieve not over them, and be not distressed because of what they plot”. (Qur’an, 14:An-Nahl 127)

Maturity, stability, perseverance and tolerance levels are raised by the quality of ‘*sabr*’ (patience) and the person is able to control his/her feelings and emotions at the workplace for better performance. If the workforce in any organization is made up of majority of such people individual work performance and the



team work both will distinctly be improved. That way this asset supports a healthy interpersonal and organizational behavior.

### ***Ikhlas*(Purity Of Intention) The Moving Force**

This is the property that changes the direction of a person. Instead of working for name, fame and wealth, the ultimate aim of sincerity is to seek the pleasure of Allāh (swt) \_ the Almighty. This is the axis around which the whole set of Islamic practices revolve. This property moves the mankind. The person without *Ikhlas* may be money minded, selfish and self centered or if guided by *Ikhlas* may be most dutiful, hardworking and devoted without any external control because of his/her intense desire to seek the pleasure of Almighty Allāh (swt) . The most popular *Hadith* (saying of *Holy Prophet* p.b.u.h.)states it very clearly:

“Actions are but by intention and every man shall have but that which he intended” (Bukhari & Muslim)

When a person is guided by such pure intentions, no material attractions or any amount of vested interests can deviate him/ her from the right path. This quality ensures the person to be really good. If an action is guided by pure intention, it is consistent and it is also insensitive to the result in the sense that how others or the society responds to it. Such people do neither expect any reward or appreciation, nor does criticism affect them, as is the state of the *Prophets* narrated in the *Holy Qur'an* in the following words:

“No reward do I ask for it; my reward is only from the Lord of the worlds.” (Qur'an, 19: Ash-shora 109)

“We feed you for the sake of Allāh (swt) alone. No reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.” (Qur'an, 29:Al-Insan 9)

Only pure and legitimate ends move a sincere person. No selfish motives can interfere in it. Sincerity raises the value of a person such that he/she becomes an asset and source of organizational goodwill and progress. Everybody is desirous of having sincere people around him/her. Observing Islamic ethics produces such people in abundance who are always helping, courteous and generous to others. Who will not like to have such people all around?

### ***Risalat* (Prophethood) The Disciplinarian**

One part of *Imaan* is concerned with the attachment and faith in Almighty *Allāh (swt)* whereas the other part is related with the belief that the *Prophet*, the role model for the followers, guides towards the best course of action leading to the greatest and eternal success. That is why the *Holy Qur'an*, on several places, attaches the obedience to Allāh (swt) with the obedience to *His Prophet* (p.b.u.h.). A few of the following verses clearly say this:

“And obey Allāh (swt) and His Messenger, and do not dispute.” (Qur'an, 10:Anfal 46)

“Say (O Muhammad) if you love Allāh (swt) then follow me, Allāh (swt) will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allāh (swt) is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur'an, 3:A'le-Imran 31)

*Qur'an* and *Hadiths* repeatedly command obedience to *Almighty* and *His Prophet*. This teaching resulted in developing a team that was completely obedient and loyal to the path of their role model\_ the Messenger of Allāh (swt) . *Risa'lat* (the Prophethood) has produced a highly disciplined and committed lot of members that can be used for a mission involving any level of difficulty provided the availability of such role models.



*Risa'lat* (the Prophethood) if believed and practiced completely, it will develop three qualities in a Muslim i.e.: (a) obedience, (b) commitment, and (c) steadfastness.

If these things are adopted in private life, the work life would also not be free from these qualities that would lead to an excellent work performance. An obedient person will by instinct be disciplined and conformist and will need little supervision and monitoring.

### ***Aakhirat*(The Life Hereafter) The Better Return**

In the opinion of experts, from the ethical perspective and according to Islam, there is a constant relationship between belief, work and reward in this life and in the Hereafter (Ahmad, 2006b). Short term benefits can be sacrificed for the long term gains; ordinary objectives can be forgone for superordinate goals; similarly material worldly gains can be neglected in view of getting abundantly in the life hereafter (*Aakhirat*). This belief is the part of *Imaan* for a Muslim. See the following verses of the *Holy Qur'an*:

“Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.” (Qur'an, 30: Al-Aa'la 17)

“Say: short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is better for him who fears Allāh (swt) .” (Qur'an, 5:An-Nisa 77)

“Nay, you prefer the life of this world. Although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.” (Qur'an, 30:Al-Ala 16-17)

In fact we cannot imagine good morals without the concept of '*Aakhirat*'. All human beings by nature are self-seeking and greedy. They desire a return for every part of their contribution. If nothing appears after an effort, people will tend to adopt the unfair means. Desire for personal gains will overlook bigger and larger common interests. If therefore someone does not intend to gain any material interest in this world and believes in bigger rewards in the life hereafter, this will make the most difficult tasks easy and enjoying for him. The biographies of '*Prophets*' and '*Sahaba*' (the companions of *Holy Prophet* p.b.u.h.) are full of such examples. Repeated references to such tendencies are given in the verses of *Holy Qur'an*.

The full faith on '*Aakhirat*' will make a Muslim kind hearted and helping to others without seeking any return, appreciation or even thanks from others. A consistent and continued habit of giving away '*Sadaqa*' (charity) is difficult to acquire especially if it involves a sacrifice of own needs. The belief in '*Aakhirat*' can do such wonders which is evident from the history of the lives of '*Sahaba*' (the companions of *Holy Prophet* p.b.u.h.). The motivation factor works here without any material offer or threat. The believer is moved more forcibly by the rewards and punishments of the life hereafter. This phenomenon can be utilized by the managers as well to raise the work performance by permeating this spirit in the workforce.

### **INTROJECTION**

The set of core Islamic values offer an opportunity to raise the organizational performance. Having said this we face a question that how far and by what means do we utilize this untapped opportunity. This becomes a more pertinent question in view of the dismal ethical reputation of many businesses from the Muslim world. Incorporating the Islamic traits at the workplace will require, at the outset, willingness on the part of the decision makers for it. As the *Holy Qur'an* clearly states it:

“Verily never will Allāh (swt) change the condition of a people until they change it themselves.” (Qur'an, 13:Ar-Ra'd 11)



Muslims in all capacities should not only have a familiarity and attachment with Islamic value system but should also have a desire to incorporate them in all walks of their life including the workplace.

To introject means incorporating (attitudes or ideas) into one's personality unconsciously. Introjection is a term drawn from the field of Psychoanalysis, which refers to the process by which one incorporates in his ego system the picture of an object as he conceives the object to be. To have a belief of permanent nature that encompasses one's attitude and behavior in all spheres of life requires an introjection. The introjection of God's love and authority influences a Muslim's behavior incorporating ethical and moral values of Islam. (Ahmad, 2006a)

Introjection being a complex phenomenon involves a multi-pronged effort at three levels viz.

- (i) at Home
- (ii) at Societal level
- (iii) at Organizational level

### **Introjection at Home**

A child's religious orientation is influenced by the kind of family relationship that exists at home. (Ahmad, 2006a) Individuals start to form ethical standards as children; so they need to be shaped up from a young age. They are likely to develop high ethical standards if they perceive other family members as consistently adhering to high standards, and they are rewarded for ethical behavior but punished for being untruthful, stealing etc. (Beekun, 1996). The *Holy Qur'an* and *Hadith* books, therefore, warn us on this issue in the following words:

“O you who believe! Ward off yourself and your families against a Fire (Hell)” (Qur'an, 28:At-Tahrem 6).

“Every child is born on the (true) nature (of God) but his/her parents make him/her either a Christian, Jew, or Magian” (Bukhari & Muslim).

“Command your children to pray when they become seven years old, and discipline them for it when they become ten years old; and arrange their beds (to sleep) separately.” (Abu-Dawud)

Nurturing the family for introjecting the Islamic values is, therefore, the duty of the elders of the family. However the organization a person works in also affects the family life. A sound leadership at work will help the members in imbibing the good habits at the family level.

### **Introjection at Societal Level**

People may behave unethically in certain situations due to the effect of the society they belong to. A person's religious orientation is so much influenced by his/her social interaction that he/she is totally changed in a course of time by this effect. The person is, in fact, recognized by the company he keeps. Its significance is also asserted in the following quotes of *Qur'an* and *Hadith*:

“Restrain thyself along with those who call upon their Lord at morning and evening, seeking His pleasure.” (Qur'an, 15:Al-Kahf 28)

“A person will be considered to be with one whom he loves.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

A person is likely to follow the faith of his friend, so look whom you befriend.” (Abu-Dawud & Tirmizi)

“The case of a good companion and that of a bad companion is like that of one who has *musk* (perfume) and of one who blows a furnace (or an ironsmith). The owner of *musk* might give you some as gift, or you





might buy some from him, or at least you might smell its fragrance. As regards the other, he might set your clothes a fire, or at least you will breathe fumes from the furnace.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Cleansing the society and the neighborhood from the evils and promoting the religious values is a duty of business organizations as is the task of keeping the environment clean, hygienic and pollution free in the general interest. An organization with a better track record in ethics and public welfare will set an example for the society. The managers of high performing organizations will play a catalyst role in the society for the purpose.

### **Introjection at Organizational Level**

The organizational policy, managerial attitude and the work culture lead the workforce to an ethical or unethical performance. It is because the people adapt to the organizational culture and award-punishment system encouraging or discouraging a certain kind of work performance.

Islamic morality will persist only on the support of congenial environment constantly introjecting a desired code of conduct among the employees of the organization. To ensure the adoption of right approach on the part of all the stakeholders and the voluntary groups for introjecting the core Islamic values, we have to find the tools and techniques whose efficiency may be established. The target group will be very broad to include the workers, managers, volunteers, entrepreneurs, artisans, trainers and educators and the investors. They all would be the promoters as well as the addressees of such a campaign.

A few of the means of raising the Islamic beliefs and the tidings for taking an active part in this drive have been recommended in *Qur'an* and *Hadith* in the following words:

“Help you one another in virtue and piety; but do not help one another in sin and transgression” (Qur'an, 6:Al-Maidah 2).

“And remind, for verily, the reminding profits the believers” (Qur'an, 27:Ad-Dhariyat 55).

“They only are the (true) believers whose hearts feel tremor when Allāh (swt) is mentioned, and when the revelations of Allāh (swt) are recited unto them, they find their faith strengthened, and who trust in their Lord.” (Qur'an 9:Al-Anfal 02)

“Every one of you is protector and guardian and is responsible for the action of those persons who are committed to his charge.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

“The recompense of one who directs somebody to do good deed will be equal to the reward of the latter.” (Muslim)

“Keep on renewing your *Imaan*. ‘O Prophet of Allāh (swt) ! How should we renew our *Imaan*?’ Enquired the *Sahaba*. Recite ‘*La Ilaha IllAllāh (swt) u*’ very often, was the reply.” (Masnad Ahmad)

Working with the core Islamic beliefs of ‘*Tawheed*’, ‘*Risa'lat*’ and ‘*Aakhirat*’ in training and orientation sessions on regular basis for managers and the workers will gradually improve their sincerity and commitment level. All the team members should be charged with Islamic spirit, should be guided by seeking the pleasure of Almighty Allāh (swt) and should be motivated by rewards in the life hereafter. Due weightage should be given to morality in work performance through appreciation, reward and punishment system in the organization.



The managers should emerge as caring and compassionate leaders whom the employees are willing to trust upon and follow. A confidence building relationship with the workforce and proper guidance and counseling to them will influence the positive outcome on their part. This will be possible only when the people leading the organization act as role models in practicing the morality. Actions speak louder than the words.

Such a struggle, if initiated in an organized way, will develop a correct Islamic perspective among all and help greatly in raising the managerial effectiveness and shall also draw the favors of Almighty Allāh (swt) in achieving the results.

### **STRIKING A BALANCE**

In the process of focusing on Islamic beliefs and value system, we should not lose sight from the rational and scientific approach of managing the organizational matters. Islam does not encourage irrationality and superstition. As is evident in the following quote of a *Hadith*:

“There is no wisdom better than prudence, nor any piety better than refraining from the unlawful, nor any nobility better than polite manners.”

(As-Sahih: *Ibne-Habban*)

Inconsistencies in one's apparent devotion and behavior at workplace often cause great confusion as a religious orientation is supposed to raise the morality in overall behavior. Although no person is infallible but the strength in Islamic beliefs does compel the Muslim to sincerely try to comply with the moral code revealed by Almighty Allāh (swt). To have harmony in the whole life, the balance is to be maintained to avoid the conflicts, anxiety and the disorders. The *Holy Qur'an* promises the rewards with the highest place in heaven for the people who strike a balance saying:

“And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but hold a medium (way) between those (extremes).” (Qur'an 19:Al-Furqan 67)

Similar message is very clearly conveyed in the following sayings of *Prophet* (p.b.u.h.):

“Those persons who go to extremes were killed and destroyed. He repeated this thrice.” (Muslim)

“The practicing of religion is easy and nobody indulges in extremes in matters of faith, but one who is overpowered by the same. Therefore be moderate and practice the same in proportion to your capacity, have good tidings and seek Allāh (swt) 's help through extra prayers in the morning and evening and some parts of the night” (Bukhari).

A wrong interpretation of any of the Islamic beliefs may be dangerous. For example, a misunderstanding of '*tawakkul*' (Trust in Allāh (swt)) may lead to drinking of poison or jumping off a high mountain or refraining from all food and drink. None has the strength to withstand these, as these deeds are '*Haraam*' (prohibited) and against the words of Allāh (swt): “Do not cast yourself into destruction” (Qur'an, 2:Al-Baqra 195).

Drawing from the popular *Hadith*: “Tie your camel and then depend on Allāh (swt)” it can be concluded that the best form of '*Tawakkul*' is that where a person makes proper provisions, takes precautionary measures, but still does not trust on anyone except Allāh (swt) (Zakariya, 1993).

In the context of providing a good leadership at workplace, a manager is supposed to adopt a middle path and develop a balanced personality. The experts have recommended that such a manager is:



“Strong but not violent, lenient but not weak, and generous but not extravagant (Ahmad, 2001).

### MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES

Managers, today, may be the *gurus* in the matters of business but not in ethics and religion. They may be totally unacceptable as preachers. A social and economic divide in the society may also not permit them to act as role models for the workforce.

Another obstruction in the way of introjecting Islamic values is their personal life and adherence to the religious duties in addition to the managerial responsibilities. The problem gets more complex if the people under them are drawn from cross cultural and multi religious background who may not welcome everything coming with an Islamic tag.

The organizational metamorphosis taking place today is unique. The Muslim governments, organizations or the individuals may represent varying degrees of Islamic values whereas many high performing non-Muslim units may possess many Islamic traits more than what many Muslims appear to have. We have in fact no basis to equate Islam with Muslims. This discrepancy has led to substantially reduce the credibility of Islamic values in the eyes of non-Muslims.

In the given circumstances the managers need to raise themselves above the sectoral, regional or class considerations in the larger interest of the society and the business so that the delicate fabric of the society is not disturbed. They should work for the cause of those core Islamic values (sometimes without attaching the name of Islam with it) which are in the larger interest of the society and the business and promote those standards vigorously. The following guiding principles should be adopted by the managers to provide an exemplary leadership to the workforce:

- a) The managers should demonstrate a neutral, impartial and transparent attitude for others.
- b) They should be broad minded, kind hearted and caring for those who work with them.
- c) They should develop a trustful relationship with all the workers such that each one of them considers them as their well-wisher.
- d) They should say and do what is right (without hypocrisy) and should stand by it.
- e) They should always support and promote saying and doing *good* and forbidding the evils.

Conforming to these moral standards is the real challenge before the managers today for allowing them to introject the Islamic values among the people of all kinds.

### CONCLUSIONS

- ✦ The quality of manpower engaged in an organization determines the performance level at work.
- ✦ The transformation at individual level leads to better work performance that safeguards the interests of all the stakeholders and the society in general.
- ✦ The individual urge for doing *good* and avoiding the unethical practices is greatly influenced by the set of beliefs and the motivators they hold.
- ✦ Islamic core values and beliefs completely overhaul a person and improve his/her behavior at work.
- ✦ All the cross sections of Muslim entrepreneurs, managers, employees, traders, artisans, investors and volunteers should be subjected to this empowerment in order to raise their performance.
- ✦ Muslim managers and leaders should evolve a system to inculcate Islamic values and practices at their workplace.
- ✦ The tools of training, counseling, award and incentives should effectively be used to introject the Islamic values in organizations.
- ✦ The managers should emerge as caring leaders and develop a trustful relationship with workers to encourage morality in work performance. They should act as role models for others.



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