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Learning the Basics of Leading from Teaching of Islam

Javed Iqbal Shah [*]

Abstract:

Over the years, the concept of leadership has gained unparallel significance in management literature. Though pivotal role of a leader has never been ignored in military organisations; they are the profit-oriented, competition-driven business organisations and business schools, which have given it a new meaning. It is being argued that what the contemporary organisations need, especially at the top and middle-level management, are leaders, not merely managers. The maxim of Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things," also points toward this trend. Throughout the human history, leaders have always played a vital role in everyday state of affairs. Be it in ancient China during the time of Sun Tzu, in Egypt, when prophet Yusuf (PBUH) was a prominent administrator, or more recently, in the Indian sub-continent during the times of Jinnah and Gandhi; leaders have always outlived their natural lives through their historic deeds. It is, therefore, quite natural for most of us to ponder about what is leadership; who are leaders and how they become so, and whether everyone, who aspires so, can also become a leader? In this paper, I shall make an endeavour to find answers to these questions and to learn the principles, whose application might make many of us leaders of un-matching acumen, vision and inspirational power.

The Concept of Leadership

There are hundreds of definitions of leadership, though much of the variation in defining leadership is semantic. Some of the confusion about the precise nature of leadership arises from the fact that it has been referred as "a function, a characteristic, a combination of traits, a position, a relationship, a person or a group of persons, a process, an

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ability, an influence, a method of guidance, and even mere supervision; some also broaden the term to include any action a purported leader might take."[1] In general terms, leadership has been defined as the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward common objectives. Robert Kreitner defines leadership as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational objectives.[2]

Leaders, Sub-leaders and Followers

Without followers, no one can claim to be a leader, yet followers and the concept of followership have not received sizeable attention from leaders, professionals or academicians. In between leaders and followers, there is another category, i.e. subordinate-leaders. This category has received even lesser attention in leadership and management literature. In organisations, both civil and military, sub-leaders are expected to assume leadership positions in their respective areas of responsibilities. Everyone knows that one cannot become a leader without first becoming a true follower. Therefore, due significance must be accorded to the concepts of sub-leaders and followers as well.

The success or failure of an organization, its strength or weakness, is directly related to the effectiveness of its sub-leaders cadre. Although a sub-leader may be aware of his responsibilities in his particular profession, he should also have fair knowledge of his obligations as leader of people working under him. Since sub-leaders are relatively closer to the majority of followers, they are in a better position to strongly influence their behaviour, which is necessary for successful mission accomplishment. The responsibilities of sub-leaders are significant and wide in scope, and are closely related to the

responsibilities of the leaders, differing only in degree. To fulfill these responsibilities, sub-leaders require recognition and status, authority and empowerment, and practical support from their leader.

- Recognition and Status: The status of a sub-leader represents his position or organizational rank. A sub-leader must function as an important link between the leader and the followers. In formal organisations, the organizational chart provides this information and identifies the chain of command. No one (including the leader himself) should violate the chain of command or allow others to do so without sufficient reason. Dealing directly with subordinates creates disorder, as does permitting the sub-leaders' subordinates to go over his head. Either of these actions represents a threat to the status of the sub-leader and ultimately erodes his authority.
- Authority and Empowerment: A leader should empower his sub-leaders to exercise their authority to carry out their responsibilities. Once given a job to do, a sub-leader must have sufficient authority to make decisions as to how the job will be performed, who will do it, and when it will be done within specified deadlines. Nothing hampers the development of leadership so much as having a superior making all the decisions. Such conditions also put sub-leaders in a position of responsibility without control over the operations.
- Practical Support: Finally, a leader should provide practical support to his sub-leaders to enable them to become fully capable leaders in days to come. Sub-leaders receive this

support in several ways. For instance, a leader reviews Sub-leaders' proficiency, achievement, and efficiency. Sub-leaders should view this evaluation as a constructive method of increasing their effectiveness as leaders. In addition, a leader should support sub-leaders by ensuring that they have an opportunity to attend professional courses and by suggesting areas or courses of study to improve their effectiveness to support mission accomplishment. A leader should also recognize their accomplishments and take appropriate actions for less than satisfactory performance.

As sub-leaders expect to receive support from their leader, so does the leader from them in return? A leader often requires sub-leaders' assistance to carry out his leadership responsibilities effectively. In order to provide such assistance, sub-leaders should display loyalty, integrity and leadership qualities.

- Loyalty: Loyalty means that sub-leaders must stand behind their leader even though they might not always agree with or understand his decisions or actions. This does not mean that they should accept every decision or policy he makes. However, if a sub-leader does not agree to a policy or decision, he should discuss it with the leader in private. However, once the decision is finalized, sub-leaders should use all their abilities to implement the decision.
- Integrity: Integrity means honesty, honour, trustworthiness and incorruptibility. When a sub-leader tells his leader that he will accomplish a specific task, he is in fact conveying that the leader can trust him to complete the task correctly, honestly and in a reasonable amount of time.

- Leadership: Every genuine leader expects his sub-leaders to assume leadership responsibilities. He looks towards them to lead the followers to achieve the organisational objectives. Leaders look for such effective sub-leaders that people look up to and respect; and who set the example for others to follow.

Approaches to Leadership

Interest to study and understand leadership has led to use of different approaches at different times. Perhaps the oldest approach to comprehending this concept was the great man approach, which focused on different traits of great leaders, such as vision, enthusiasm, emotional stability, courage, wisdom, inspirational power, foresight, etc as essential pre-requisites. Later on, the focus of studying leadership shifted from traits of leaders to their styles, when Lewin, Lippitt, and White suggested that leaders adopt three styles in their behaviour with the followers, namely, autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. The leadership styles approach was soon found to be inadequate in understanding the phenomenon of leadership. This led to emergence of a number of theories and models on leadership, some of which include the Path-goal Model of Leadership and Hersey and Blanchard's Theory on Situational Leadership.

Even after studying several theories and approaches on leadership, most of us might still be uncertain about what entails leadership and how it influences the behaviour of followers. The main reason being that these approaches do not provide the unified picture of what constitutes leadership. More recently, a number of authors like Stephen Covey, Deepak Chopra, and Dr Wyne Dyre have attempted to present a unified concept of leadership. Each of these authors have

benefited from vast knowledge reservoir contained in Divine scriptures, life accounts of different sages and even from the experiences of contemporary leaders.

For almost 31 years, I have been a humble student of management, and have attempted to understand the concept of leadership, first from secular and later from Islamic points of view. Interestingly enough, I have not found much dichotomy between several contemporary management/leadership concepts and the corresponding principles enshrined in Holy Qur'an and recorded versions of Sunnah and Hadith of Holy Prophet, Muhammad (SAW). As I developed the habit of reciting Holy Qur'an, while understanding its message, I started noting down the verses, which contained a message, commandment or a principle related to management or leadership concepts. With the passage of time, a unified concept of leadership started forming shape, which now I refer as integrated approach to leadership.

Integrated Approach to Leadership

According to this approach, leadership is not confined merely to organizational setting; rather people play leadership roles in almost all spheres of the contemporary life. Further, leadership is neither an innate ability, art, function, a process, nor purely a human relationship; but a spiritual relationship, which first binds leaders with Allah (SWT), then with their companions in pursuit of common objectives. Thus, each one of us plays or is expected to play the role of a leader in our homes, work places, and in the community at large. Further, this approach beseeches leaders to apply the same principles while dealing with others, whether in home, work place or in the community. Thus, true leaders ought to have an integrated and well-rounded character, which emerges when one follows the requisite principles throughout one's life. Holy Qur'an

identifies these principles as positive character attributes, which Allah (SWT) recommends for his subjects to assume their role as leader of mankind. Following are some of the positive attributes, which Allah (SWT) enjoins his believers to adopt:-

a) Aim of Life:

Tell them: "My service and sacrifice, my life and my death, are all of them for God, the creator and Lord of all the worlds."[3]

b) Contemplative**:**

"Those who honour God in meditation, standing or sitting or lying on their sides who reflect and contemplate on the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say): "Not in vain have You made them."[4]

c) Visionary:

…The future is theirs who take heed for themselves.[5]

d) Wise and Courageous:

And when their prophet said to them: "God has raised Saul king over you," they said: "How can he be king over us when we have greater right to kingship than he, for he does not even possess abundant wealth?" "God has chosen him in preference to you," said the prophet, "and given him much more wisdom and prowess; and God gives authority to whomsoever He will: God is infinite and all-wise."[6]

e) Emotionally Intelligent:

Who expend both in joy and tribulation, who suppress their anger and pardon their fellowmen; and God loves those who are upright and do good.[7]

f) Role Model:

Will you enjoin good deeds on the others and forget your own selves? You also read the Scriptures, why do you then not understand?[8]

g) Consultative and Generous:

Who obey the commands of their Lord and fulfil their devotional obligations, whose affairs are settled by mutual consultation, who spend of what We have given them.[9]

h) Impartial:

O you who believe, be custodians of justice (and) witnesses for God, even though against yourselves or your parents or your relatives. Whether a man be rich or poor, God is his greater well wisher than you. So follow not the behests of lust lest you swerve from justice; and if you prevaricate or avoid (giving evidence), God is cognizant of all that you do.[10]

i) Trustworthy:

…so give in full measure and full weight; do not keep back from people what is theirs, and do not corrupt the land after it has been reformed. This is best for you if you believe.[11]

j) Humble:

Devotees of Ar-Rahman are those who walk with humility on the earth, and when they are addressed by the ignorant, say: "Peace."[12]

There are some traits for which Allah (SWT) has shown disapproval, therefore, an integrated leader should take heed to save him from these attributes; for e.g.,

a) Arrogant:

And do not strut about the land with insolence: Surely you cannot cleave the earth, nor attain the height of mountains in stature.[13]

b) Miser or Extravagant:

Who are miserly and bid others to be so, and hide what God has given them in His largesse. We have prepared for unbelievers a shameful punishment. Those who spend of their wealth to show off and do not believe in God and the Last Day, take Satan as companion, and how evil a companion (they have)![14]

c) Usurer:

Those who live on interest will not rise (on Doomsday) but like a man possessed of the devil and demented. This because they that trading is like usury. But trade has been sanctioned and usury forbidden by God. Those who are warned by their Lord and desist will keep (what they have taken of interest) already, and the matter will rest with God. But those who revert back to it again are the residents of Hell where they will abide for ever. God takes away (gain) from usury, but adds (profit) to charity; and God does not love the ungrateful and sinners.[15]

d) Ridiculer and Slanderer:

O you who believe, men should not laugh at other men, for it may be they are better than them; and women should not laugh at other women, for they may perhaps be better than them. Do not slander one another nor give one another nick names. After believing, it is bad to give (another) a bad name. Those who do not repent behave wickedly.[16]

e) Backbiter:

O you who believe, avoid most suspicions: Some suspicions are indeed sins. So do not pry into others' secrets and do not backbite. Would any of you like to eat a dead brother's flesh? You would surely be revolted by it. Then fear God. He is certainly forgiving and kind.[17]

Essential Characteristics of an Integrated Leader

There are certain features of human character, which distinguishes a leader from a non-leader. Therefore, before an integrated person assumes leadership role, he must cultivate the following characteristics in order to be a successful leader:-

Aim of Life

Aim of life of a leader would have a profound effect on his success, happiness and acceptance as a leader. However, what aim of life should a leader have, is a mind-boggling question since no one can tell a prospective leader about his aim of life. Before we can further probe into this question, we must, first of all, be aware of the philosophy of a leader about life itself. Does he believe that he has come into this world by chance or by intelligent selection by some Supreme Force? Does he believe in life after death? Does he believe in the Day of Judgement? Straight-forward answers to these questions would largely determine what will be his aim of life.

If you believe that you have been sent to this world with a purpose and that there would be an eternal life hereafter and that there would be a Day of Judgement, then your aim of life would be considerably different from a person who believes that his present life is a result of mere chance of mating of two dots of his parents. As a

Muslim, we can get guidance from the Holy Qur'an about the purpose of our lives. Allah (Subhana Wa Ta'ala) says in the holy book: -

> *Tell them: "My service and sacrifice, my life and my death, are all of them for God, the creator and Lord of the worlds."*[18]
>
> *"I have not created the jinns and men but to worship Me."*[19]

From the above verses, it becomes clear that our main aim of life in this world should be to do each and every thing to please Allah (SWT). Worship of Allah, in its wider sense, means leading and living a life according to the Commandments of our Creator, rather than merely saying five times prayers, fasting during the month of "Ramzan", pilgrimage to Mecca, etc. Worshipping Allah means that our behaviour to our seniors, colleagues, subordinates, relatives or strangers, our conduct in our homes, factories, offices or any other place and our manners on the roads, in markets, and in Courts of Law would be to seek approval of Allah (SWT). In brief, submission to God and service to humankind should be the goal of our life.

Creativity

No Muslim can deny that Allah (SWT) is the greatest Creator, who manifested each and every thing in this universe from the state of nothingness and who created man from clay. And Allah (SWT) has endowed this quality of creativity in abundance to man. Have you ever pondered about the origin of our thoughts, even the most bizarre ones? Did you create them or they just appeared from nowhere? Did you ever experience the joy of reaching the solution to a complex problem through some thoughts, which seemed to descend directly from the Heavens? A

leader, who has aligned himself with his aim of life, would experience abundance of creativity in his mind and soul. This creativity, first of all, would appear in the shape of mere thoughts, but later on, these thoughts would be converted into plans of actions, which would further manifest in the form of new roads, buildings, schools, hospitals, factories, business centres, and so on. In essence, there is no end or limit on the power of creativity of great leaders. In this care, man so to say, is a co-worker with God Almighty.

Enthusiasm

An integrated leader ought to be enthusiastic about what he does. He must believe in what he intends to do, and what he wants his people to do. Enthusiasm of a leader is usually contagious. Inspired leaders usually inspire others to follow the suit; they inject spirit in their companions to perform at their optimum level. In order to transfer their enthusiasm, leaders should frequently talk to their people on formal as well as on informal occasions. They should talk about the capability and capacity of their people. They should talk about the future and how they are going to that visualised future with the active support of their companions. They should talk about the mutual benefits, which would accrue in the future. The leader should give new hope, new vision and vigor to his people. This will bring the best out of them.

Kindness

Enthusiasm alone would not open the door of success unless the leader is also kind-hearted, especially in dealing with the employees working at the lower levels of the hierarchical structure of the organisation. Kindness generates feelings of mutual liking, respect and caring attitudes among leader and his companions. Feelings of kindness leave their mark

in multi-dimensional manner. Regarding effects of kindness among human beings, Dr Wayne W Dyer says:-

> *"The positive effect of kindness on the immune system and on the increased production of serotonin in the brain has been proven in the research studies. Serotonin is a naturally occurring substance in the body that makes us feel more comfortable, peaceful and even blissful…Research has shown that a simple act of kindness directed toward another improves the functioning of the immune system and stimulates the production of serotonin in both the recipient of the kindness and the person extending the kindness. Even more amazing is the persons observing the act of kindness have similar beneficial results."*[20]

Love

It is said, "Choose the occupation you love, and then you don't have to work anymore." The reason being that when you love something or someone; working for that something or someone does not appear tiresome or boring. Rather, each moment spent in pursuing that "love affair" becomes precious and life-generating. And, when a leader loves his companions, and they love him in return, the leader-follower relationship transforms from "master-slave" to "beloved-lover". In the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW), we see the beautiful manifestation of this relationship. That is why; the followers of Islam during the life of the Prophet, Muhammad (SAW) were called as his companions, not mere followers or slaves. Following saying of the Prophet (SAW) sums up the essence of this relationship:-

> *"The best rulers are those whom you like and who like you, who pray for you and for whom you pray, and the worst public*

> *servants are those whom you dislike and who dislike you and whom you curse and who curse you…"*[21]

Connectedness

As Muslims, we believe that the mankind was created from single soul, i.e. from Adam (PBUH), thus, all the people of this world are connected with each other. We might have different colour of skin, different features, different statures and different religions or creeds, but we all belong to a single human race. Thus, every integrated leader is connected with his companions, not in the manner of master-slave relationship, but in the true sense of leader-companion relationship. When people feel that they are not subservient to the system or to the organisation in a perpetual subordinate position; but they are connected with the system / organisation, their level of motivation, commitment and loyalty would be un-matching. When leader and his companions feel connected with each other and with the Creator of the Heaven and Earth, they seldom lose heart while facing some difficulties or challenges. Rather in hours of stress and distress, they feel connected with the Source more strongly.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, as an essential character trait is so important for a leader that Daniel Goleman, the author of the ground-breaking book, *Emotional Intelligence*, asserts that the most effective leaders are endowed with a high degree of emotional intelligence. He proceeds on to clarify that it does not imply that IQ and technical skills required of a leader are irrelevant; they do matter, but mainly as the entry level requirements for executive postings.[22] A leader is usually required to work long hours and lead busy life. Apart from physical endurance, he

needs emotional stability to respond to the most trying situations with calm, composure and maturity. Leaders' lives are often laden with several crises, some of which need immediate attention, while others require a carefully chalked-out plan of action. A true leader ought to use his skills in *self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills*, while responding to myriad testing situations.[23]

Assuming Charge as a Leader

In most of the professions, many of us want to be appointed to a post of our liking. There is nothing wrong in such aspirations if one sincerely thinks that one is capable of making a meaningful contribution in the said post. Before we proceed further, let's get guidance from a saying of the prophet, Muhammad (SAW) about assuming leadership roles and succeeding in the personal, professional and spiritual life: -

> *"Do not ask to be appointed to an office, for if you are called to it without your asking; you will receive divine help in discharging its responsibilities."*[24]

From the above-stated saying of the holy prophet, two points emerge prominently; that one should not seek authority and office. Second, if one is appointed to an office without one's asking, then he would certainly receive help from Allah (SWT) in performing the duties according to His commandments. Working on these lines, we shall focus on the following areas, where leaders ought to make their contributions:-

- Thinking from Mind as well as from Heart.
- Understanding the Internal as well as the External Environment.
- Cultivating Relationships Within as well as Without the Organisation.

- Making Persistent Efforts.

Thinking From Mind / Heart

The power of thoughts can be judged from the following saying:-

"Change your thoughts and you change your world."[25]

Following steps, if taken seriously and persistently, are likely to revolutionise our thinking and actions:-

(a) Think Ahead: The quality of thinking ahead of the time separates a leader from a common man. A leader must give due time to think about the future, his own future and the future of the organisation, he is supposed to lead. As a leader, you can also learn to think ahead; try out the following actions:-

- Dream about the future with open eyes and share your dreams with your spouse, seniors, colleagues and subordinates.
- Do not reject an idea on the basis of your present level of knowledge that it would be impossible to implement.
- Sell your ideas, dreams and vision to your team members and try to get their enthusiastic support.
- Lest you deviate from the right path, remind yourself daily of your aim of life by reciting the following verse:-

"My service and sacrifice, my life and my death, are all of them for God, the creator and Lord of all the worlds.[26]

(b) Think Clearly: In many situations, our thinking rather than the environment prevents us to act positively. In

our daily lives, whatever we do or accomplish first takes shape in form of our thoughts. Thus, if we are habitual of giving too much attention to the darker side of a future event, we would tend to be pessimistic, hence reluctant to take any action. We can learn to think clearly by adopting the following steps: -

- Always try to see the brighter side of every happening, even when apparent circumstances present a bleak picture.
- Don't see who is speaking; listen what he is speaking about?

Don't assume that the information that came to you first is fully reliable and correct. Wait for more information from other sources too.

- Don't label people on the basis of their nationality, ethnic origin or religion. Try to know each person as individual.

(c) Avoid Negative Self-talk:

"If you think you can, you can. If you think you can't, you are right."[27]

Thought process in our mind plays a vital role in determining our behaviour toward our own capabilities and toward the world outside. It is usually said that our thoughts make what we are, or what we shall ultimately become. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that as a leader, you avoid negative self-talk. You can do so by adopting the following advisements: -

- Say *al-Hamdo-lilla, I feel great,* when asked about how you feel.
- Stop finding faults in people (including your own self); rather start finding out the potential and the ways of using it.
- Stop chewing or mumbling your words; rather learn to speak by making full use of your mouth.
- Avoid the company of de-motivated, demoralised and superseded people. Try to spend more time with those, who are making valuable contributions in their area of activity.

(d) Avoid Arrogance and Boasting: Many a people in the human history have been wasted by the disease of arrogance and boasting. To prevent arrogance, we must focus on our origin and try to answer the following questions:-

- How were we created from an embryo?
- How vulnerable were we in our infancy?
- How were we raised by our parents / guardians?
- What we would become when we grow very old?
- What would be our destiny, when we leave this world?

We can get rid of arrogance and boasting by:-

- Reciting Holy Qur'an regularly and contemplating especially on verses about Recognising that our faculties and talents are gift of Allah and can we do anything if He decides to get back His favours? [28]

- Avoiding self-praise and focusing on praising the genuine performance of others.
- Adopting the habit of feeling into the skin of other people, especially those, who are in the state of distress.

[It may be under-scored that pride & pessimism are the two attributes of Satan. Both are different forms of atheism. A true Muslim is expected to avoid both these variants of satanic traits]

Understanding the Internal/External Environment

A leader must understand the environment, in which he and his organisation would be supposed to function. For this purpose, a small, yet comprehensive exercise of the famous SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis can be a useful idea to start with. A leader must first of all identify the strong as well as weak points of his organisation in fields like human resources (i.e. their level of motivation, expertise, perceptions to change, etc.), material resources (including land, building, equipment, materials, financial state, etc), technological level on which the company is operating, state of the leadership / management competence and commitment, etc. This exercise would enable the leader to identify strong and weak areas of his organisation. Secondly, the leader must proceed on to comprehend the potential threats to his organisation. Following questions would certainly facilitate threat perception of the leader:-

- Who are our customers? What is the degree of their loyalty to us? How is it going to change / remain stable in the years to come?

- Who are our competitors and what are they doing to enhance their position?
- What are the governmental regulations, whose compliance put pressure on our organisation?
- What is the state of the relationship between our organisation and the notable suppliers and how is it going to transform in the years to come?
- What cultural sensitivities might jeopardise the progress / operations of our organisation?

After noting down the strengths and weaknesses of one's organisation, and comprehending the level of threats, the leader can now foresee the opportunities present in the environment. Following questions might help the leader in recognising the opportunities present out there:-

- How can we make our customers more loyal to us? By improving the quality of our products / services? By responding responsibly and swiftly towards their grievances / suggestions? By developing personal relationships between our sales teams and our valued customers? etc.
- How can we respond proactively towards our competitors' challenges? By making our R & D more agile and creative? By grooming our managers, leaders and employees in managing "change"?
- How can we use the apparently threatening governmental regulations to our advantage? By linking various employees facilities / bonuses with productivity improvement? By forming more cordial relations with our employees?

- How can we make the relationship with our suppliers mutually beneficial? By formulating win-win solutions?
- How can we address the genuine cultural sensitivities?

In order to comprehend the environment, in which a leader has to operate, following actions are recommended:-

(a) Get Familiar with the Physical Environment: As soon as you take charge of a new organisation, get yourself familiar with the physical environment by taking the following actions:-

- Ask your 2 i/c to make a comprehensive briefing on the organisation.
- Take round of the plant, building, offices, parking lot, toilets, etc to get an idea of the conditions of the physical facilities.
- Don't be surprised if you find a lot of white-wash, fresh paint, and freshly cleaned places.
- Don't leave out backyards, old stores, stationery stores, big switch boards, state of electric / gas appliances / fittings.
- If you find time and energy, try to have a look on roof tops of especially old buildings.

(b) Get Familiar with the Technological Milieu**:** After that you have attained a fair knowledge of the physical environment of your organisation, now is the time, to get more information about its technological milieu. Answers to the following questions would certainly help you to get sufficient knowledge in this area:-

- What is the technological level of different machines / equipment of your organisation vis-à-vis your competitors?
- What is the general attitude of the personnel towards state-of-the-art technology?
- What is the present level of technological proficiency of your people? If it is deficient, are employees aware of it? And more importantly, are they willing to contribute their share in making improvements in this area?
- How do your people (including your close team-members) view change as an important management tool?

(c) Get Familiar with the Human Resource Environment: While getting information about the HR environment, don't forget reminding yourself that you are going to deal with people, who have physiological, psychological as well as spiritual needs that ought to be fulfilled. Answers to the following questions would certainly facilitate better understanding of HR environment:-

- Are you giving competitive compensation package in your organisation and are the people working with you happy with it?
- How far the psychological needs of the employees are being addressed?
- Does the management of the organisation give enough attention to fulfilment of spiritual needs of people?

- Are you giving sufficient attention to human resource development?

Cultivating Relationships

Human relationships cannot be developed overnight; like crops, they ought to be cultivated. As it would be useless to sow the seeds without first preparing the soil; we cannot form long-term relationships with other people just by being overtly friendly and by mastering some fast human relations techniques. In the process of cultivating relationships, we would have to bring the desirable and long-lasting changes in our character. To do that, following actions might help you:-

a) Be a Likeable Character

"In their sympathy and love and kindliness the righteous are like the limbs of a single body; if one of them ails the whole body is feverish and troubled."[29]

Most of people form an opinion of others just on the basis of their appearance and initial talk. Therefore, one must try to develop good rapport with the people. Following advisements might help you to become a likeable character:-

- "*When you feel friendly towards another ask him his name, the name of his father and who his people are, for all these exchanges promote friendliness."*[30]
- Spend more time in listening to other people than telling them your own viewpoints.
- When urge for boasting becomes unbearable, quietly remind yourself of the following saying of a sage:-

"I never learned anything while I was talking."

- Search for common topics or interests to share ideas and learn from one another's experiences instead of boasting off your knowledge and power of expression.

(b) Control Your Anger

"The bravest of you is he who controls himself when he is in temper, and the most forbearing is he who forgives when he has the power to exact retribution."[31]

The people around are usually not served well if you, as a leader, are not capable of controlling your anger. You can learn to manage your temper if you:-

- Stop talking when you feel yourself in temper. If you can't stop talking or don't want to, at least reduce your speech delivery.
- When feeling angry, stop walking, especially towards the person, who has offended you. If you still feel angry, sit down. If you are still in temper, lie down on the floor. And, if you are still feeling angry, lie down on your stomach, try to clutch the earth with your hands and pray loudly to Allah for help.
- When feeling angry, start performing ablution.
- Remind yourself that anger is the quality of the Satan, and when two people display anger, Satan immediately takes control of the situation by beating his drum to fire the rage.

- Ask yourself if you would display your anger the same way, even if the opponent were more powerful than you?

(c) Hold your Companions in High Esteem

You are guaranteed the best results from your companions when they have high level of self-respect. You can enhance their self-respect by trying out the following advisements:-

- Listen to your companions and show interest in what they say.
- Ask for forgiveness when your companion feels hurt due to your unreasonable behaviour. Remember, asking forgiveness from an employee working under you would not lower your stature as an integrated leader; rather you would receive more respect.
- Thank people, who help you and appreciate their performance, when they accomplish some important goals or projects. One method of praising the performance of your companions is to write letters of appreciation to them.
- Make it a habit to invite suggestions from your companions and implement those which are practicable.

Making Persistent Efforts

In order to accomplish your common goals, it is essential that you and your team make concerted efforts. Taking appropriate actions in the following areas would certainly help you in achieving success:-

a) Be Visionary and Share your Vision with your Companions:

Not only that a leader must be able to forecast about the future; but he must also have a vision. As a leader, you must share your vision about the organisation with your people and inspire enthusiasm in them about achieving the important milestones. In order to be visionary, you must be willing to invest your time and energy on broadening your knowledge-base. You can achieve this by acting on the following advisements:-

- Set some time everyday to read a book, professional journal or selected articles in newspapers.
- Learn to visualise the future, where you want to take you and your organisation.
- Get inspiration from visionary people, who are contributing meaningfully in their areas of responsibility.
- Start your day with recitation of Holy Qur'an and try to understand its message. Remember that ultimate peace comes from within and from connection with Allah (SWT).

(b) Set Specific, yet Challenging Goals:

Setting specific and challenging goals for yourself implies that you want to steer your efforts to a logical and desired outcome. It also means that you want to exercise some control over your life. You can achieve your goals by:-

- Setting goals, which appear to be difficult and pose a challenge to your faculties. Remember that

challenging goals usually lead to utilization of your fullest potential.

- Asking these questions: "How can I make the lives of my seniors easy and worth-living? How can I make the lives of my companions easy and worth-living? How can I make the lives of my customers easy and worth-living?
- Writing down your goals and display them at such a place, where your can see and ponder about these everyday.

(c) Increase your Knowledge:

"Acquire knowledge and for the sake of knowledge acquire dignity and peace of mind; and be humble and respectful towards your teacher."[32]

Education is a continuous process, therefore, your pursuit for knowledge should continue regardless of your age, gender or designation. You can increase your knowledge by:-

- Becoming avid reader of books, journals and other motivational literature.
- Making a personal development programme in a particular field and making efforts to fulfil it.
- Spending time with learned and well-read people.
- Reciting, *"My Lord, Increase my knowledge."*[33]

(d) Act Ethically:

And do not consume each other's wealth in vain, nor offer it to men in authority with intent of usurping unlawfully and knowingly a part of the wealth of others.[34]

Unethical behaviour not only violates the law it also disobeys the commands of Allah and his messenger. Unethical behaviour emerges from the belief that nobody will know about it, or that everybody is doing it; what is wrong if I do it. You can overcome the temptation of acting unethically by adopting the following advisements:-

- Ask two questions before deciding about a grey area, where the distinction between the right and the wrong is not so clear to you: Is it legal within the framework of my organization/country? Will I be able to stand before Allah and answer about my behaviour on the Day of Judgement? If answers to both the questions are in affirmative, go for it; otherwise avoid it.
- Recall the pangs of conscience you felt last time you acted unethically.
- Recite surah At-Takathur more frequently and ponder about its relevance.

(e) Stop Delaying Taking Actions:

Many people develop the habit of delaying in making decisions or they do not take action in time. They seemed to have developed the habit of procrastination. If you are one of such people, you can change this habit; just try the following advisements:-

- When a new task seems huge one, start action on it immediately.

- Stop worrying about how uncomfortable you'll feel while doing an undesirable task; start thinking about how relieved you'll feel when the job is done.
- Appreciate that you reduce your stress level by doing things in time.
- To accomplish more by doing less, choose your deputies carefully and delegate the tasks, which they are capable of handling.
- Get regular feedback from your deputies about the delegated tasks.

(f) Discipline your People: Some leaders are made to believe that it is one of their duties to protect their people even in cases of breach of discipline. Remember, you would be doing disservice to your yourself and your organisation besides spoiling the life of a defaulter by looking away from his undisciplined behaviour. You can discipline your people if you:-

- Make it clear from the outset that you would not tolerate indiscipline in your organisation.
- Follow your assertions with your conduct.
- Be impartial and equitable while dealing with different people.
- Recite verse 135 – 4, An-Nisa for guidance.

> *O you who believe, be custodians of justice (and) witnesses for God, even though against yourselves or your parents or your relatives. Whether a man be rich or poor, God is his greater well wisher than you. So follow not the*

> *behests of lust lest you swerve from justice; and if you prevaricate or avoid (giving evidence), God is cognizant of all that you do.*[35]

Conclusion

There have been several approaches to studying the concept of leadership, among which Leadership Traits, Styles of Leaders, Path-goal Model and Hersey and Blanchard's approaches are noteworthy. After studying these approaches, many of us might still be uncertain about what entails leadership and how it influences the behaviour of followers. The main reason being that these approaches do not provide the unified picture of what constitutes leadership. This led us to make an endeavour to understand leadership from integrated point of view. According to the Integrated Approach to Leadership, we consider leadership as a phenomenon, which binds together a leader with his Allah (SWT), and with his companions according to the commandments of Allah and his prophet (SAW). From Holy Qur'an, we have identified several positive attributes of an integrated human being, which Allah (SWT) recommends for a true believer. Then we described the essential characteristics of an integrated leader, which would help him in performing his responsibilities. And last of all, we recommended actions in four key areas, namely, Thinking from Mind/Heart, Understanding the Environment, Cultivating Relationships and Making Persistent Efforts.

End notes:

[1] Owen B Hardy, "Leadership and the Hospital Administration," *Hospital Administration 13* Winter 1968, p. 35
[2] Robert Kreitner, *Management,* 6th Ed,[Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1995, p 469
[3] Al-Quran; [162 – 6, Al-An'am]
[4] Al-Quran; [191 – 3, Al-Imran]
[5] Al-Quran; [128 – 7, Al-A'raf]
[6] Al-Quran; [247 – 2, Al-Baqarah]
[7] Al-Quran; [134 – 3, Al-Imran]
[8] Al-Quran; [44 – 2, Al-Baqarah]
[9] Al-Quran; [38 – 42, Ash-Shura]
[10] Al-Quran; [135 – 4, An-Nisa]
[11] Al-Quran; [85 – 7, Al-A'raf]
[12] Al-Quran; [63 – 25, Al-Furqan]
[13] Al-Quran; [37 – 17, Bani Isra'il]
[14] Al-Quran; [37-38 – 4, An-Nisa]
[15] Al-Quran; [275-276 – 2, Al-Baqarah]
[16] Al-Quran; [11 – 49, Al-Hujurat]
[17] Al-Quran; [12 – 49, Al-Hujurat]
[18] Al-Quran; [162, 6 – Al-An' am]
[19] Al-Quran; [56, 51 – Adh-Dhariyat]
[20] Dr Wayne W Dyer, The Power of Intention – Change the Way You Look at Things and the Things You Look at Will Change, Carlsbad: Hey House, Inc., 2004, p. 25
[21] [Muslim]
[22] Robert L Taylor, Rosenbach, William E. (Editors), Military Leadership – In Pursuit of Excellence, Westview Press, 2005, pp53-54
[23] Ibid;
[24] Sahih Muslim quoted by Syed Fakir Waheeduddin, (compiler) in *The Treasure* (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), Karachi: Lion Art Press Ltd, 1968
[25] Norman Vincent Paele
[26] [162 – 6, Al-An'am]
[27] Mary Kay Ash quoted by Sam Deep, Lyle Sussman in *Yes, You Can, Reading*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1996
[28] Aslam Bazmi, "Arrogance – An Invisible Foe," Parwaz, Journal of PAF Academy, Risalpur, 2002, p. 20
[29] Sahih Bokhari quoted by Syed Fakir Waheeduddin, (compiler) in The Treasure (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), Karachi: Lion Art Press Ltd, 1968
[30] Tirmizi quoted by Syed Fakir Waheeduddin, (compiler) in The Treasure (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), Karachi: Lion Art Press Ltd, 1968

[31] Ibid; Jamia Saghir
[32] Abu-Daud quoted by Syed Fakir Waheeduddin, (compiler) in *The Treasure* (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), Karachi: Lion Art Press Ltd, 1968
[33] Al-Qur'an
[34] Al-Quran; [188 – 2, Al-Baqarah]
[35] Al-Quran; [135 – 4, An-Nisa]

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