

Dr.A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's Address and interaction with the Students of ALLIANCE Business School

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Creative Leadership

"Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow.
Don't walk behind me, I may not lead.
Just walk beside me, And be my friend"

I am delighted to be with members of Alliance Business School (ABS) at Bangalore. My greetings to all of you. I have been visiting all the states and union territories of the country, many nations and have come across several innovative leaders and organizations. It is remarkable how the initiatives of individuals and there by organizations are touching human lives and contributing to national development. I am sure the education programme at Alliance Business School will also generate many creative leaders for the country who will accelerate the process of India transforming into a developed nation well before the year 2020. The topic I have selected for discussion is "Creative Leadership". Now I would like to discuss certain traits of leaders.

Qualities of Leadership

I have derived the following special traits of a leader based on my experience. A leader must have the following qualities:

1. Leader must have a vision.
2. Leader must have a passion to transform the vision into action.
3. Leader must be able to travel into an unexplored path.
4. Leader must know how to manage a success and failure.
5. Leader must have courage to take decision.
6. Leader should have Nobility in management.
7. Every action of the leader should be transparent.

8. Leader must work with integrity and succeed with integrity.
9. A Leader to have the intellectual capacity to accept that nation is bigger than himself or herself.

Dear Students, each one of you can individually identify minimum three qualities which I have described for practice in your life.

Evolution of Creative Leader

Let me now discuss the linkage between national economic development and creative leadership.

- A nation's Economic development is powered by competitiveness.
- Competitiveness is powered by knowledge power.
- Knowledge power is powered by Technology and innovation.
- Technology and innovation is powered by resource investment.
- Resource investment is powered by return on Investment.
- Return on investment is powered by revenue.
- Revenue is powered by Volume and repeat sales.
- Volume and repeat sales is powered by customer loyalty.
- Customer loyalty is powered by Quality and value of products.
- Quality and value of products is powered by Employee Productivity and innovation.
- Employee Productivity is powered by Employee Loyalty.
- Employee Loyalty is powered by employee satisfaction.
- Employee satisfaction is powered by working environment.
- Working Environment is powered by management stewardship.
- Management stewardship is powered by Creative leadership.

For success in all the missions, it is essential to have creative leaders. Creative leadership means exercising the vision to change the traditional role from the commander to the coach, manager to mentor, from director to delegator and from one who demands respect to one who facilitates self-respect. For a prosperous and developed India, the important thrust will be on the generation of a number of creative leaders through education, training and by experience.

I would like to discuss, how the leadership touched the human lives by the creative way of life in fields of political, scientific, technological and industrial areas.

Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela - the Great Political Leadership

I recall my traveling on 16th September 2004 in a train powered by steam engine in a first class compartment of 1900 vintage organized by Durban state of South Africa. When the train was moving from one station to another, Mahatma Gandhi's struggle against apartheid system in South Africa was going through my mind. The train halted at Pietermaritzburg, the station where the monster of apartheid bite Gandhiji on a cold winter night. He was evicted out of a first class compartment because of the colour of his skin. When I alighted at the Pietermaritzburg railway station, I saw a plaque in the railway station, which reads like this:

In the Vicinity of this plaque
M.K. GANDHI was evicted
from a first class
compartment on the night of

7 June 1893.

This incident changed
the course of his life.

He took up the fight
against racial oppression.

His active non-violence
started from that date.

This was the rebirth of Ahimsa Dharma after the Kalinga War in 300 B.C. Gandhiji later developed the Ahimsa Dharma, the doctrine of Satya graha and gave India a powerful tool to win independence.

Forgiveness gives greatness

When I was standing at the Pietermaritzburg railway station my thoughts were hovering on two scenes, which I experienced in South Africa. One scene was, in Robben Island where Dr. Nelson Mandela had been imprisoned for 26 years, in a very small cell, and the other scene was at the house of Dr. Nelson Mandela.

Cape Town is famous for its Table Mountain; it has got three peaks called Table Peak, Devil Peak, and Fake Peak. Between the Peaks it was a beautiful sight throughout the day, sometimes-dark clouds and sometimes white clouds embracing the peaks. Table Mountain is very close to the seacoast of the Atlantic Ocean. I flew by helicopter to Robben Island from Cape Town in 10 minutes. When we reached the Island, except sea roaring, the whole island was silent symbolizing the thought: this is the place the freedom of individuals was chained. Mr. Ahmed Kathrada, a South African, who was a co-prisoner with Dr. Nelson Mandela, received us at the Island. What surprised me was, in a tiny room where sleeping and all human needs have to be fulfilled. It has to be remembered that Dr. Nelson Mandela, a 6 feet tall man, was imprisoned in that room for 26 years fighting against the apartheid. The major part of his life was spent in this silent Island. He used to be taken for quarrying in the nearby mountain for a few hours in bright sun. This is the time part of his sight got damaged. In spite of his body being tortured he revealed to the world his indomitable spirit. This is the time he evolved a manuscript of freedom in tiny letters every day, when the jail wardens went to sleep. This small tiny lettered manuscript finally became the famous book of Mandela "A long walk to freedom".

It was a great event for me to meet him in his house in Johannesburg. What a moving reception, the man at the age of 86 gave with all smiles. Dear friends, when I entered Dr. Nelson Mandela's house, I saw his three dimensional form with cheerfulness: the mighty man who got the freedom for South Africa from the tyranny of apartheid. When I was leaving from his house he came to the portico to give me a send off and while walking he discarded his walking stick and I became his support. While walking I asked him, Dr. Mandela can you please tell me about the pioneers of anti apartheid movement in South Africa? He responded spontaneously, of course one of the great pioneers of South Africa's freedom movement was M.K. Gandhi. India gave us M.K. Gandhi, we gave you back Mahatma Gandhi after two decades. Mahatma Gandhi was an apostle of Non-Violence. That is indeed the tradition of India - to enrich whichever nation we go, our foremost responsibility is to enrich that nation. Enriching the nation is not only in financial terms, but enrich with knowledge, enrich with sweat above all enrich with honour and self-dignity.

Nelson Mandela when he became the President of South Africa he gave the people who specialized in apartheid and ill-treated and put him in the jail for 26 years, freedom to move, freedom to live in South

Africa as equal citizens. Dear friends, a big lesson that we learnt from this personality Dr. Nelson Mandela is beautifully captured in one of the Thirukkural written 2200 years before by the Poet Saint Thiruvalluvar:

Which means, for those who do ill to you, the best punishment is to return good to them. Two political leaders Mahatma Gandhiji and Dr. Nelson Mandela indeed transformed India and South Africa into independent and democratic nations of more than 1/6th of World population. This leadership has paved the way for many nations towards freedom movement.

You can do an exercise and find out what are the common unique qualities of leadership in Mahatma Gandhiji and Dr. Nelson Mandela.

Now let me present to you how a Space Visionary made a change in our lives.

Indian Space Science Visionary

Let me share with you, India's great visionary in space science and space technologies Prof. Vikram Sarabhai, who was my Guru. Very rarely, in the life journey, great human beings influence one's life. I was fortunate to work with Prof. Vikram Sarabhai for seven years. While working closely with him, I saw the dawn of the vision for the space programme in a one page statement. Witnessing the evolution of this one page by many years of ceaseless work by a cosmic ray physicist, a great scientific mind was really a great learning for me. Also I was thrilled to see the famous vision statement of Prof Vikram Sarabhai made in the year 1970 which states "India with her mighty scientific knowledge and power house of young, should build her own huge rocket systems (satellite launch vehicles) and also build her own communication, remote sensing and meteorological spacecraft and launch from her own soil to enrich the Indian life in satellite communication, remote sensing and meteorology." When I look at this vision statement now, I am overwhelmed to see the results of this statement. Today, India can build any type of satellite launch vehicle, any type of spacecraft and launch from Indian soil and also it has all the capability with its mighty facilities and powerful human resource. The ICT has made tremendous contribution towards the high performance onboard computers and advanced embedded software systems in the Indian launch vehicles and spacecraft programmes. Through space technology and space science, India can be a partner in the world space programme to enrich the planet earth and further exploration. I witnessed this personally in Hyderabad some time back when I saw my self how the international community in space is applauding the Indian capabilities in bringing the benefits of this high technology to common people. Today, India can build any type of satellite launch vehicle, any type of spacecraft and launch from Indian soil and also it has all the capability with its mighty facilities and powerful human resource because of the vision of Prof. Vikram Sarabhai.

Technology Leader - Prof. Satish Dhawan: Leadership, failure management

Three decades ago, while I was working at ISRO, I had the best of education, which won't come from any university or management education. I will narrate that incident. I was given a task by Prof. Satish Dhawan the then Chairman, ISRO to develop the first satellite launch vehicle SLV-3, to put ROHINI Satellite in orbit. This was one of the largest high technology space programmes undertaken in 1973. The whole space technology community, men and women, were geared up for this task. Thousands of scientists, engineers and technicians worked resulting in the realization of the first SLV-3 launch on 10th August 1979. SLV-3 took off in the early hours and the first stage worked beautifully. But the mission could not achieve its objectives, as the control system in 2nd stage malfunctioned. There was a press conference at Sriharikota, after the event. Prof. Dhawan took me to the press conference. And there he

announced that he takes responsibility for not achieving the mission, even though I was the project director and the mission director. When we launched SLV-3 on 18th July 1980, successfully injecting the Rohini Satellite in to the orbit, again there was a press conference and Prof. Dhawan put me in the front to share the success story with the press. This success generated great happiness among all my team members. What we learn from this event is that the leader gives the credit for success to those who worked for it, and leader absorbs and owns the responsibility for the failure. This is the quality of leadership. The space community in India has the fortune to work with such leaders, which resulted in many accomplishments. This management style is an important message for all the scientific, technological, industrial and even political teams

Science Leadership - Sir CV Raman - Value of Science

When I am in the midst of students of management and teachers and scholars, I thought of sharing with you an incident about Sir CV Raman Nobel Laureate in Physics for discovering Raman Effect. Raman was in the first batch of Bharat Ratna Award winners. The award ceremony was to take place in the last week of January, soon after the Republic Day celebrations of 1954. The then President Dr. Rajendra Prasad wrote to Raman inviting him to be the personal guest in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, when Raman came to Delhi for the award ceremony. Sir CV Raman wrote a polite letter, regretting his inability to go. Raman had a noble reason for his inability to attend the investiture ceremony. He explained to the President that he was guiding a Ph.D. student and that thesis was positively due by the last day of January. The student was valiantly trying to wrap it all up and Raman felt, he had to be by the side of the research student, see that the thesis was finished, sign the thesis as the guide and then have it submitted. Here was a scientist who gave up the pomp of a glittering ceremony associated with the highest honour, because he felt that his duty required him to be by the side of the student. It is this unique trait of giving value to science that builds science. This is one experience, how leadership can be given for the growth of science.

Leadership in Industry Jamsetji Nauroji Tata Vision leads to progress

Let me share the meeting between Swami Vivekananda and Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata during a ship journey. It happened in 1893. A ship was sailing from Japan to USA. There were hundreds of people in that ship including two significant personalities. Swami Vivekananda and Jamsetji Tata were in that ship. Swamiji asked Jamsetji for what mission he was traveling. Jamsetji said that he wanted to bring steel industry to India. Swami Vivekananda blessed him. He suggested steel technology had two components one is steel science and the other is manufacturing technology. What can you bring to this country in material technology you will have to build material science within the country? Jamsetji was thinking and thinking and made a decision. Earlier when Jamsetji went to London he asked for technology transfer for Steel Plant. UK steel manufacturers looked at Jamsetji and said that if Indians make steel, Britishers will eat it. Jamsetji crossed the Atlantic Ocean, talked to Americans and brought manufacturing technology for steel. And the Tata Steel was established in Jamshedpur. He seeded and worked for the steel plant. Jamsetji is not there now, but 7 million tones per annum steel is rolling out. The visionary Jamsetji gave one portion of his asset for starting a science institute today known as Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore. The message I would like to convey to this audience, dream gives vision, vision gives thoughts and thought leads to actions. Jamsetji brought two establishments to this country first one was steel plant and the other was an educational research institution based on the vision of Swami Vivekananda.

Jamsetji with the blessing of Swamiji paved the way for the establishment of Indian Institute of Science in 1909. The Indian Institute of Science born out of a vision of great minds is the foremost scientific research institution providing post graduate education. This institution as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda dreamt, has one of the best material science labs, providing the best of research results for development and production of material for various R&D labs and industries.

Leadership in Management of billions

The Indian management professionals coming out of various reputed institutions have become internationally famous. They serve many corporate houses of Indian and multinational firms. The question however is whether that is adequate enough, for vision India 2020? Can MBAs provide managerial leadership for the billion people of India? The Indian vision will be achieved by the synergy and team work of private sector, public sector, state and central governments, NGOs and citizens. How can creative leadership be generated to address all the segments and make the Management leadership for the billions.

In this context, now let me describe my visualization of the distinctive profile of India by 2020.

Distinctive Profile of India by 2020

1. A Nation where the rural and urban divide has reduced to a thin line.
2. A Nation where there is an equitable distribution and adequate access to energy and quality water.
3. A Nation where agriculture, industry and service sector work together in symphony.
4. A Nation where education with value system is not denied to any meritorious candidates because of societal or economic discrimination.
5. A Nation, which is the best destination for the most talented scholars, scientists, and investors.
6. A Nation where the best of health care is available to all.
7. A Nation where the governance is responsive, transparent and corruption free.
8. A Nation where poverty has been totally eradicated, illiteracy removed and crimes against women and children are absent and none in the society feels alienated.
9. A Nation that is prosperous, healthy, secure, devoid of terrorism, peaceful and happy and continues with a sustainable growth path.
10. A Nation that is one of the best places to live in and is proud of its leadership.

Integrated Action for developed India

To achieve the distinctive profile of India, we have the mission of transforming India into a developed nation. We have identified five areas where India has a core competence for integrated action: (1) Agriculture and food processing (2) Education and Healthcare (3) Information and Communication Technology (4) Infrastructure: Reliable and Quality Electric power, Surface transport and Infrastructure for all parts of the country. (5) Self-reliance in critical technologies. These five areas are closely inter-related and if progressed in a coordinated way, will lead to food, economic and national security. The major mission is the development of infrastructure for bringing rural prosperity are through Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) through creation of three connectivities namely physical, electronic, knowledge leading to economic connectivity. The number of PURA for the whole country is estimated to be 7000. Educational institutions can participate in evolving road map for development of PURAs in their region. Being from Alliance Business School, Bangalore I would suggest, you can take up development of PURA complexes in the outskirts of Bangalore as a project assignment like it is being done by Periyar Maniammai University in Thanjavur and Pravara Trust, Loni - Maharashtra.

Conclusion

I was reading a book, "Empires of the Mind" by Denis Waitley. This book gives, what type of the new world which we are heading towards? What was yesterday and what is today. I have modified certain points of the author to suit our conditions. I have also added a third line what will relate to action of Alliance Business School.

"What worked yesterday, won't work today". Let us discuss.

1. Yesterday – natural resources defined power

Today - knowledge is power

Educational Institutions will be a powerhouse for knowledge generation and dissemination.

2. Yesterday - Hierarchy was the model

Today- synergy is the mandate

Educational Institutions will be enabler of intersection of multiple faculties towards mission goals

3. Yesterday – leaders commanded and controlled

Today – leaders empower and coach

Potential Leaders will be empowered through exposure to the needs of sustainable development

4. Yesterday - shareholders came first

Today – customers come first

For educational institutions customers are people particularly rural citizens.

5. Yesterday - employees took order

Today – teams make decision

Educational Institutions can inject team spirit bringing students and teachers of multiple faculties and industries.

6. Yesterday - seniority signified status

Today – creativity drive status

Educational Institutions is the breeding laboratories for creativity

7. Yesterday – production determined availability

Today – Competitiveness is the key

Competitiveness is powered by research and innovation and educational institutions have to promote innovation in every activity of the student.

8. Yesterday - value was extra

Today – value is everything

Value addition through technology is very important for the growth of economy.

9. Yesterday – everyone was a competitor

Today – everyone is a customer

Education system must build the concept of cooperative competition among the students.

10. Yesterday - profits were earned through expediency

Today – Work with integrity and succeed with integrity.

Injection of value system is an important component of education.

Dear friends, with this thought, let me convey my best wishes to all the members of Alliance Business School Bangalore success in their educational mission.

May God bless you.