

Lord Ram: An Ideal leader

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Abstract

Lord Ram was the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Lord Ram is the symbol of Curtsy, Virtue, Ethics, Principals, Rules, Dharma, Compassion, Love, Courage and Values. Lord Ram is also known as “Mariyada Purushottam”. Lord Ram was a great king, an obedient son, loving husband and caring brother. But what set him apart from others kings are his leadership abilities which were displayed throughout his life. In the Epic Ramayan, Lord Ram can be seen as an ideal leader displaying all his leadership qualities. Lord Ram during his life span showed various abilities/qualities that one must learn and practice to become a successful leader.

Keywords: Lord Ram, Curtsy, Virtue, Ethics, Principals, Rules, Dharma, Compassion, Love, Courage , Values, Mariyada Purushottam, Epic Ramayan



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Introduction

Throughout his life span Lord Ram showed numerous characteristics of a true complete leader. At various occasions he displayed different leadership qualities depending upon the demand of the situation. Studying and following the life of Lord Ram can help one in learning and developing leadership qualities and becoming an ideal leader.

Lord Ram was an obedient son, a smart student, a caring brother, a loving husband and an ideal leader.

Lord Ram exhibits exceptional qualities of behavior which makes him called as “Mariyada Purushottam”.

Mariyada: Ethics, Moral, Principles, Rules, Customs.

Purushottam: The Best amongst all men.

Leadership can be hard to define and it means different things to different people.

Leaders set direction, build an inspiring vision, and create something new. Leadership is about knowing where you are and mapping out where you need to go to "win" as a team or an organization. To do this leaders create an inspiring vision, and then motivate and inspire the team members by connecting them with that vision, in other words make the team believe that their individual vision is linked with the team's vision and if the team delivers the joint vision their individual vision will be achieved automatically. Thus leaders manage delivery of the vision, either directly or indirectly, and build and coach their teams to make them ever stronger and capable. During this processes of achieving goal, leader identifies the strength & weakness of his team members, upgrade his and his team members skills if needed, give his team members responsibility and authority and makes the optimum utilization of resources to achieve the desired goal. A leader believes in his and his teams capabilities and under no circumstances let the moral get down.

Various leadership qualities that made Lord Ram an ideal leader were displayed at different occasions of his life. Few among those are as under.

Learner

A leader must believe in the fact that learning is an ongoing process. At no time he must feel that he knows everything. No one can give the best results without knowing/learning the basic and new skills. Skills needed to do your job efficiently. Along with intelligence one must have a disciplined approach towards learning.

Lord Ram was an obedient student who spent no time in learning Vedas and archery in Mehrishi Vishvamitra ashram during his child hood. Also during his journey in finding Sita and serving Ayodhya as a king Lord Ram never missed any opportunity of upgrading his knowledge. He

showed the same respect and dignity towards all the Mehrishis that he showed during his childhood.

Equanimity

A true leader is one who accepts the good and the bad with equanimity. When the time gets tough, the tough gets going. There are times when the going gets tough. One cant shrug his shoulders and run away from the situation.

At times there will be situations that would take you for a surprise. Situations that may demand something extra ordinary from you.

As a leader control over your emotions is very important. You don't show weakness by feeling and displaying emotions. A leader will not succumb to the emotional distress. (In life there will be situations where you are emotionally distressed and drained).

When King Dashrath informed Lord Ram about his promise to queen Keikeyi and what queen Keikeyi wished, Lord Ram calmly joint his and bowed his head saying he would adhere to what they wished. There was no doubt or complain in the mind of Lord Ram showing humility at its best. The decision taken by this father was not right as he Lord Ram was going to be declared as king on the very same day, but he accepted his father's orders. When one accepts what's given to him in any situation, one can view things positively.

Lord Ram knew about the difficulties he would have to face living in the forest for 14 years. Yet he accepted the life of a hermit just as he had accepted living like a prince with equanimity.

Lord Ram displayed the best example of calmness at the time when Sita was kidnaped by Ravana, he kept his cool and never let the fear of losing Sita over power him. At all points and circumstances lord ram was confident of getting Sita back.

Courage, Character & Ethics

A Leader can never compromise on code of conduct and ethics. Integrity is another aspect that should never be questioned. The day a leader's integrity is questioned, he has lost all that he has accumulated by way of qualities and respect.

As a leader one must respect the task assigned to him. He must display courage and character while handling and completing the task.

Lord Ram, was taken by Meharshi Vishwamitra to king Janak Palace for Sita Syamvar wherein, he very easily could string the Lord Shiva Bow. Before touching the bow Lord Ram bowed and took blessings, the significance is not just the physical strength or courage but the character that Lord Ram showed during the entire process of Sita Syamvar.

During the battle with Ravan, there was a time when Ravan was rendered weapon less and was all alone. Shri Ram stopped fighting and told Ravan that the war/ battle can be continued when he was armed again.

Making Allies

At times it's not possible to overcome circumstances fighting alone. There would be times when you need to identify and make strong allies to get the desired result. As leaders you should identify and build a strong network of allies. A strong second line is a strategic requirement in today's world.

Shri Ram understood that searching for Sita alone was a difficult task. He went ahead looking for her and on the way he identified and made strong allies with Sugriva and Vibhishana. Rest is the history and known fact that the allies and friendship with Sugriva and Vibhushan helped Shri Ram find Sita and conquer Ravan.

Clarity in vision

Having a vision is extremely important. A visionary leader is one who sees the potential future goals and make a successful road map to achieve those goals. He has very clear idea as to how the future will look. He sets concrete steps to bring the goal to reality.

Lord Ram was very clear about what he wanted. The goals and objectives and the way he would go about achieving them was very clear. The vision was to get Sita back and there was clarity in that vision and the road map to achieve that vision. It was the clarity of this vision that made Lord Ram make allies with Sugriva and Vibhishana.

Optimum utilization of resources

A team consists of many individuals with different talents. Every member of the team has their own strength and weaknesses. A leader identifies the potential in each team member and uses it effectively in realizing the ultimate goal. A leader is flexible enough to switch the rolls of the team member when required. Depending upon the circumstances complete authority may be given to the team members. A leader will never underestimate the power of his team.

Lord Ram understood the potential of his team members. Lord Ram judged the power and capability of Hanuman and gave him the entire responsibility on occasions like going to Lanka to find Sita & during the time of getting sanjivani booti for Laxman. Lord Rama was also aware of the talent of Nal & Nil the two brothers and gave them free hand responsibility to build the bridge over sea to Lanka. Lord Ram rightly identified the immense strength, power and knowledge of Bali putra Angad and sent him as Raj Doot, to Lanka.

Self-Belief

As a leader one should always believe in himself. If you can't believe in your ability, your strengths, then how will your team believe in you? The minute your self-belief is shaken, you can be assured that your team will stop believing in you. Under no circumstances a leader allows the conditions to overpower him. A leader may have various thoughts running in his mind but at no time he will make his team feel. A leader will always keep him confident and reflect the same in his team.

Not once did Shri Ram ever doubt that he would not get Sita. He believed in himself and he believed in his ability to get the best out of his army of monkeys. At times of the injury of his beloved brother Laxman Lord Ram was shattered in & out but he kept his self-belief and confidence high.

Planning

A Leader plans to achieve an optimum balance of needs and demands with the available resources in order to obtain the set goal. Leader identifies the goal or objectives, formulate the strategies to achieve them, arrange or create the means required and implement, direct and monitor all in proper sequence. When you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Planning is a key skill required of every leader. Detail planning is to be done at each and every stage of every activity.

Lord Ram gave the best example of perfect planning. Right from organizing and directing a search party to get information about Sita to the final war strategies Lord Ram planned things minutely. Getting advice from the elders in the team like Jambavat and Vibhishan, trusting the young, energetic and powerful Hanuman, Sugriva, Angad and brother Laxman in the war strategy. Dividing the vanar sena into four troops and assigning different responsibility to all four troops everything was well planned.

Organizing

A leader identifies the process and defines the essential relationship among people, task and activities in such a way that all the resources are integrated and coordinated to accomplish its objectives/goals.

Leader does not get daunted because of lack of perfect resources. A real leader will take the available resources and make the optimum utilization to them and achieve the desired goal.

Ravan had a super powerful army with numerous mighty devils like brother Kumbkaran and son Indrajeet. On the other hand Lord Ram had just his brother with him. Lord Ram timely allies with vanar raj Sugriva brought a rough and tough vanar sena on his side. Young and powerful warriors like Hanuman, Angad, Nul and Nil were also part of vanar Raj Sugriva sena. Lord Ram organised these available resources and successfully achieved the goal.

Respecting the team's opinion

There is no rule which says that only the leader should do all the thinking and no one in the team is allowed to give their suggestions. In fact for successful planning, it is vital that a leader encourages his team to think and give valuable inputs. A remarkable trait in real leaders is that they respect their teams opinion and thought process, nurture it and let it blossom. It doesn't matter who in the team, gives the idea. If the idea or the advice is worth it, a leader should respect the individual and accept the advice.

Despite knowing the fact that Vibhisan was the younger brother of his rival Ravan, Lord Ram accepted Vibhishan under his protection and even took advice from him time and again. Lord Ram used Vibhishan's knowledge and made assessments about Ravan's strength. The trust shown by Lord Ram in Vibhishan motivated Vibishan and made him all the more active and give valuable advice. Never once did Lord Ram underestimate Ravan's power or strength.

Execution

Planning is the process of thinking about the future activities required to be done in order to achieve the goal. It is the first and the foremost step taken by a leader to achieve the desired goal. It involves creation and execution of plan and skills and infrastructure required to execute the plan. Planning without execution is probably the most wasteful aspect of management. There is no point in planning if the same cannot be executed. And execution has to be perfect lest all the detailed planning is pointless. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure that the team executes the plans, to foresee any deviations and to take corrective measures accordingly.

Lord Ram was exceptionally good at planning things in perfection to achieve the goal of rescuing Sita. Lord Ram personally monitored the execution of the detailed plans made by him. Lord Ram along with Lakshman worked on the skills of this team and made the army competent enough for the war by teaching the army of Sugriv and the tribal chiefs the art of warfare. Though the bridge was constructed by Nal & Nil (a descendent of Vishwakarma), Lord Ram oversaw the work at each step of construction.

Crisis Management

Handling the crisis with composure and confidence is a critical quality a leader has to imbibe. Crises are one thing a leader is sure of facing during the course of his leadership. There can be multiple crises too. The quality of crises management surfaces only when a leader faces crisis situation. It is not necessary that a leader can provide solutions every time when there are crisis. A leader must trust the expertise of his team and expect them to support him at the time of any crisis.

During his journey to rescue Sita, Lord Ram faced many crises situations. Brother Lakshman's serious injury in battle was probably one of the most challenging crises situations faced by Lord



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Ram as he was not only emotionally attached with Laxman, also his victory over mighty Ravan was largely dependent on Laxman. During this crises Lord Ram was calm, composed and confident. With the advice of Vibhishan Lord Ram sent Hanuman to get the Sanjivani plant which eventually saved Lakshman's life. Lord Ram showed his dependency upon Vibishan and Hanuman.

Conclusion

Right from his childhood till being crowned as the king of Ayodhya & further, Lord Ram displayed the qualities of an ideal leader. At all stages of his life Lord Ram successfully handled all favorable and unfavorable situations to get the desired result. Lord Ram identified the strength & weakness of his team members & used them effectively. At no time and situation in his life Lord Ram was seen as getting disappointed. Lord Ram always showed courage and character in handling situations.

The leadership qualities displayed by Lord Ram throughout his life still stands relevant and should be learned and practice by one & all to become a successful leader.

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