

# Corporate Culture in Ancient India

---

Ever since the ancient times human beings lived and survived as a society. The trait of co-operation has contributed more than anything else to the present highly developed stage of civilisation. The decline in the Indian society during and after the medieval age owes a lot to the unorganized fragmented society. But the things were quite different in the past, known as golden age of Indian Civilization. The harmonious cooperation between various sections of the society, in political, social and religious matters was remarkable.

The Indian society of yore was ideal in several respects. The flow of noble tendencies in the society used to help cultivate auspicious virtues in the people since their childhood.... The system of 'Shodash Sanskars' devised by the Rishis was a perfect mode of psychological conditioning for appropriate nurturing, development and orientation of these tendencies. Thus, almost every family was producing divinely refined personalities and every sphere of knowledge and development – ranging from the science of spirituality to the science of matter, agriculture to literature, health and education to religion and culture etc, was blessed by excellent talents.

That was the time when India was recognized as a universal guide, super civilized and enlightened nation. The treasure of knowledge and all round prosperity here had attracted people from all corners of the globe. This land was like the best place of pilgrimage and a global centre of excellence for the whole world. The principle of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" – treating the whole world as a single large family, was adopted in every walk of life.

In the ancient times, the sadhus and brahmins used to devote their lives for selfless service of the society. Whole world was like a family for them. Every living being was dear to them.... Such was the influence of religious inspirations that the **Grihastha** – married couples engaged in the transaction of worldly duties, too used to dedicate precious amount of their time and material resources for altruist purposes and used to participate in the mass education programmes. Materialistic, mental and spiritual progress of the fellow beings was desired by every citizen of India.... Selfishness and possessive mentality had no place in the society those days.... This marvellous inculcation of religious disciplines in people's minds and sentimental cores had bestowed the honor of "better than heavens..." on the Indian society of the Vedic Age. This was the time when every inhabitant of this land was endowed with divine qualities. Which is why India was described in the scriptures as the land where **33 billion manifestations of God** came into existence....."

It is a pity that a sizable fraction of the Indian society today is still living in the state of ignorance and religious misconceptions influenced in the medieval era. Over eight million fake sadhus and swamis are flourishing on the alms offered by such people in the name of religion. The word Brahmin has become a symbol of castism... The sadhus have exploited people's faith and abandoned the liberation and rise of the present state of Indian society from the sorry state of cultural slavery and religious corruption.... Even many of the learned and materialistically progressive and forward looking people are seen wandering around some of the rich and mighty sadhus of this category....

The sadhus and Brahmins (sages and saintly scholars) of the ancient Indian society used to constantly tour around different parts of the country for the noble purpose of social welfare and development via educating the people through the multi-disciplinary system of religion. An altruist service of this kind is needed for lasting peace and progress in modern human society as well. Actually this is the ideal kind of sanyasa (literally meaning

renunciation of worldly attachments for holy purposes) that could be easily adopted by people who have fulfilled their responsibilities towards their dependents.

## Corporate Challenges

In the current scenario corporate challenges can be broadly classified as Value based issues like honesty, respect and sense of belonging and ethical issues like tax evasion, wrong accounting and negligence of ecosystem. In this context, successful organizations are different from excellent organizations. Success may be of one dimensions but excellence is of multiple dimensional in the company. The philosophy, corporate social responsibility and outlook of the policy makers unconsciously creates a culture of the organization known as corporate culture.

### Major Hurdles in achieving excellence

Lack of spirituality leads to many problems:

Agyan (Ignorance),

Ashakti (lack of vitality),

Abhav (lack of resources).

To meet the challenge posed by corporate life and to achieve long lasting success, spiritual outlook should form an essential part of day to day life.

## Stress Management

These days, stress is even more rampant than it was in 1983, when Time magazine declared it to be “the epidemic of the eighties.” Stress is growing and so is the health care cost for treatment of stressed employees.

But what exactly stress is? Classically it is defined as - 'a non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it or to an external stimuli.' Generally speaking, “**stress**” refers to two simultaneous events: an external stimulus called a **stressor**, and the emotional and physical responses to that **stimulus** (fear, anxiety, surging heart rate and blood pressure, fast breathing, muscle tension, and so on). Stress is not always harmful. Good stressors (a ski run, a poetry contest) inspire you to achieve. In fact it is the spice of life. Only thing is that, one has to learn - how to cope with stress?

Commonly stress refers to our internal reaction to negative, threatening, or worrisome situations-a looming performance report, role ambiguity in organization, a dismissive superior, rush-hour traffic, and so on. Oxford Dictionary defines stress as a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy.

Accumulated over time, negative stress can depress you, burn you out, make you sick, or even kill you. This is because, as our research shows, negative stress is both an emotional and a physiological habit.

### How to identify stress

How to identify stress? In the human context, stress is synonymous with goal striving. It is by and large a matter of perception. Therefore it is impossible to measure stress completely because 1:- it never stops, and 2:- the complexity of

stress – involving psychological and emotional and spiritual components does not allow complete disclosure of all processes. However with the help of some behaviour signals and mood signals we can identify stress levels.

| <i>Behavioural Signals</i>                    | <i>Mood Signals</i>         |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Biting Nails, Clenching Fists, Clenching Jaws | Anxiety                     |
| Drumming Fingers                              | Depression                  |
| Grinding Teeth                                | Frustration                 |
| Hunching Shoulders                            | Habitual Anger or Hostility |
| Picking At Facial Skin                        | Helplessness                |
| Tapping Feet                                  | Hopelessness                |
| Two Jobs At A Time                            | Irritability                |
| Touching Hair Often                           | Restlessness                |
| Too Hurried Or Loud Talking                   |                             |
| Too Conscious About Being On Time             |                             |

## Causes of Stress

Due to inability in coping with internal or external threats one falls prey to stress.

- Much stress today is occurring through emotions such as aggressions, impatience and fear kindling the body's stress responses.
- Other causes could be unhealthy diet, smoking, drugs, improper work pattern and financial insecurity.

But the most basic cause of stress, anxiety and depression is conflict of inner being - resulting from lack of **noble aims** and **ideals** in life, negligence of sentiments, life not in communion with Nature.

## Types of Stress

Stress can be classified into two major types

**Eustress** : EU means good. Manageable levels of stress, for reasonable duration, mobilise your resources and get you going on tackling the tasks and problems in your life. Eustress can be defined as a pleasant or curative stress. Stress experienced and coped. We can't always avoid stress, in fact, sometimes we don't want to. Often, it is controlled stress that gives us our competitive edge in performance related activities like athletics, giving a speech, or acting. For any performance-related activity, there is an optimal amount of stress. If you appearing for an exam or interview for a job, you will benefit from a certain amount of stress. It is stress that let you maintain your focus and provide you the '**competitive edge**' that will help you respond quickly. Some stressors can cause both good and bad stress. Exercise is most often a good stressor. But overtraining can cause injury and illness. To continue to exercise when your body is fatigued or weak, can result in a variety of overuse injuries and predispose you to illness.

**Distress:** Improperly coped stress leading to catastrophe. dys means bad. Distress can arise to overburden or under-utilization gives rise to burnout stress syndrome (Boss) and Rust out stress syndrome (Ross). Factors causing distress :

- Work Demands
- Death of nearer and dearer ones
- Crowded and polluted places
- Financial troubles

### How to manage stress

At one point or the other everybody suffers from stress. Relationship demands, physical as well as mental health problems, pressure at workplaces, traffic snarls, meeting deadlines, growing-up tensions—all of these conditions and situations are valid causes of stress.

One problem with all stress management techniques is that while you are into it like getting relaxed on a vacation or taking time out from work to involve in physical activity or some yoga, once you return back to work, the body response again put them to stress some time under more stress than previously experienced.

Study of human nature remained the main area of interest of rishis, who dwell deep into human psyche and experienced the true nature of Self - immortal, indestructible and ever blissful. The physical body merely being the instrument of the Self must be used as a tool to experience that ever blissful existence and elevate the level of consciousness.

### Reinforcement of thoughts:

Switch your thoughts from - I can never win to I am on my way. I am never good enough to Of course I am a success! There is something wrong with me to I am all right the way I am.

The famous character in 'Kathopnishad' Nachiketa says - 'I am superior to many - I am inferior to some, still I can do something.'

### Holistic Approach:

- Change in dietary pattern:- Tryptophan Rich Food, Vegetarian Diet.
- Subtler exercises:- '**ASANS**' (Postures) & '**PRAGYA YOG**'.
- PRANAYAM:- Churning of Vital energy.
- Proper reading habits:- "**SWADHYAY**" for Self- Introspection.
- Proper relaxation:- "**SHAVASAN**", Yog Nidra.
- Music Therapy
- Mantra Chikitsa.
- Pulverized herbal powders:- "**Aoushadhi Chikitsa**".
- Homa therapy, Yagna.
- Avoid isolation, become part of society and devote time for social & selfless service. Try to socialise yourself more often.

#### Yoga Philosophy adds .....

- Ability to let go, forgive & forget .
- Ability to switch off the mind (**Dhyan**) or slow it down (**Dharana**).
- Ability to see things in proper perspective, no super ego, no self pity.
- Optimism, No Hypochondria.
- No guilt complex .
- Ability to live in present in the here and now, neither in past nor in future. Remember past is a canceled check.
- No obsessions & phobias.
- Do not become compulsive eater, smoker or drinker. Do not become workaholic.

#### Quick reminder

- Control Your Anger
- Breathe properly
- Slow Down Your Respiration
- Get Some Fresh Air
- Avoid Hunger and Dehydration
- Do a Quick Posture Check Every Time
- Recharge at the Day's End
- Meditateion

### Pathway to Success :

#### Constructive Ambition

Harbouring high ambitions is a natural human tendency. Ordinary persons with materialistic bent of mind remain engaged in gratification of senses only. Longing for good food, cloths, company etc. Drag ordinary beings into a vicious circle of showmanship, aggressive competition and a split personality. Expensive family and community feasts are held mainly to advertise personal affluence. Showmanship in ambitious persons induces them to publish their names in newspapers, take important seats during public functions and even undertake pilgrimages to demonstrate their superlative faith. A new trend of **Ego-surfing** has emerged in this age of internet. Also known as vanity searching, **ego-searching**, **ego-surfing** is the practice of searching for one's own name, on popular internet Search engines , to see what results appear.

It is much easier and more beneficial to develop one's own potential and capabilities, but most of the persons are found ever busy in demonstrating superiority over others. Most of the time, resources and talent is being wasted in establishing one-upmanship in society.

But while doing so one tends to forget that this world is full of great talent each excelling the other in status. Even with the best of efforts, one would find one's own achievement overshadowed in comparison sooner or later. The euphoria of achievement is also momentary. Thereafter one finds it difficult even to retain the burden of additional responsibility for retaining the acquired status. In this world who has the time to remember other's achievements, when it is not possible to retain the memory of even one's own past ?? Serious contemplation on such aspects points to only one conclusion high ambitions for mundane things do not bring lasting success. There is no sense in losing one's energy in return for false sense of gratification.

## Integration of Spirituality and Ethics in Business

Economics today dominates all aspects of our social life. It has assumed unusual importance in our lives. In the ancient age, economic activities were limited to plain sustenance and maintenance of law and order. But now its scope has widened and it encompasses almost every sphere of our life. Health, culture, language, literature, fine arts, science and public tastes all are influenced by economics.

- When money and material possession take central stage in our life, ethics and moral issues takes a back seat. The day is not far when the individual will be reduced to being a mere living machine, a commodity for business. In such a situation it is the responsibility of corporate houses to have a broad outlook and embrace spirituality in policy making with Ethics in business assuming more and more importance.
- In the ancient age, the '**Brahmins**' (men of devout austerity) the learned and the **Rishis** (Saints) guided the masses. They used to be persons of high morals and ideals. So the people had before them ideals of good conduct which they followed in their everyday life.

The corporate personnel are the most influential entity in the society today. They have to shoulder the responsibility to give direction to the society that were once done by the saints and Rishis in ancient societies. Unless that happened, from whom the common masses derive inspiration? When the person at the helm of society have a weak character, they cannot be a source of inspiration or a model worth imitation for the ordinary people. If the light house is dark, from what source would people seek the right path. The need for persons with high ideals at the top of corporate ladder is being felt in national as well as international circles. Much of the misery and frustration among the common men all over the world can be ascribed to the dearth of such persons. The corporate houses hold the key to progress and development of the society. They have at their disposal the best brains, able advisors, technology and scientific research and so much more. All that is wanting is a generous approach and human feelings that transcend national boundaries.