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# A Glimpse Into Factual Success Mantras Of Business

Public & Private Sectors -II

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In continuation to my article on the same subject published in *The Hitavada* on 17th Dec 2023, I wish to dig a bit deeper into the working styles within the public sectors. The focus stays with the Human Resources and their working environment, how the ecosystems of professional performance are different between the PSUs and Private sector corporates. PSUs are undergoing a major change in the current times and they are under constant pressure to improve and deliver, but it should not be interpreted that they lack self-motivation. On the contrary, they are a very highly motivated lot.

As one of my many personal experiences, way back in 2003, when I was based in Oman heading a local construction company, I had setup a Joint Venture with Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd to bid and work together on a forthcoming gas based Power Plant project being developed in Oman. BHEL was to be the majority partner in the JV, as their scope included providing the design and supply of key equipment like Gas Turbine, Generators and major electrical equipment, while my organisation would execute the construction with supply of Balance of Plant equipment and materials. I thus had an opportunity to observe their working at very close quarters and deal with their key personnel very closely. I had prior experience of working in Engineers India Ltd for more than ten years, and had a feel of the challenges of working within PSUs.

The team exuded a sense of pride for their organisation, and that was the first thing that hit me. They wanted the flag of BHEL to fly high, and were very careful that no adverse comment could be directed towards them. They worked very diligently, very late hours, and went into details as required. I did not notice any high-headedness at all, and of course, I had to be careful not to have unreasonable expectations from them. It was up to me and my team to understand their working ecosystem and constraints, and help them with the required inputs to help our joint work progress effectively. The respect we developed for each other was mutual, and worked with a one-team approach that would work towards meeting expectations of two very different organisations.

The project leadership team of BHEL displayed a very high sense of commitment, and they would follow up our discussions to prepare internal notes for approval, as their requirements of compliance were very stringent and had to successfully pass their internal norms of delegation of authority, the inter-departmental checks and balances, and also the ever vigilant Vigilance Department. I could see them burn midnight oil preparing these notes for approval and then patiently follow up with phone calls urging their "approvers" to understand the situation and give them the green light. Matters came to a head when we went for the bid – the client had set an online live Reverse Auction where all competitors would be bidding to win, and drop their final prices based on the other competitor's low bid.

One can only imagine how cumbersome it would be for a PSU to drop their bid prices considering the

limits and regulations imposed on financial authorities of executives. Hats-off to the team, they had their CMD along with the relevant functional and Vigilance heads available during the Reverse Auction Bid process fully briefed about what were their expectations from the bosses. The reverse bidding exercise lasted an exhausting two and half hours, and the bidders would have dropped their prices at least 20 times during the session, and BHEL was on top of the game. The bid was finally won by our JV team. The spirit displayed by BHEL was super impressive, and they were committed to win. Who says that PSUs are slackers?

I saw the same in various instances, as recently as in Numaligarh Refinery of Oil India Ltd, where I witnessed the team working into late hours

to ensure that their mega-project of refinery expansion gets completed on schedule. Challenges facing PSUs are of a very diverse nature, from within the organisation and outside the organisation. They all put in long hours very patiently understanding that their pathways to successful activity completion is more cumbersome than in the Private Sector. In the Private Sector also there are bosses, but the level of authority and delegation is more flexible in general, and also they are not bound by enforced adherence to GeM, GPPC and other such initiatives being launched by the government that are to be applied across all PSUs. Many of these initiatives are thrust upon organisations, and

in my assessment they are done with an undue sense of urgency which creates avoidable obstacles for the working teams that is working towards very tight deadlines. Such initiatives should be given a period of review, training and then implementation, so as to ensure that they are mature enough to be applied and also there are trained resources at all levels to handle issues that emanate from such new initiatives.

Looking elsewhere, we must acknowledge the successful launch of Chandrayaan by ISRO, and also recollect how the first rocket was launched in Thumba in 1963. These were a bunch of highly self-motivated persons including Dr Vikram Sarabhai, Dr Homi Bhabha, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam who broke all barriers, overcame all hurdles to initiate the journey of India into the realm of space. They used a bullock cart and bicycle to transport the sophisticated rocket! The passion for their commitment fired them to do the near-impossible.

Our governmental organisations are scripting major success stories due to the motivated human resources, and let us not forget our esteemed defence services who are also government employees, and they display the highest sense of commitment towards duty by staking their lives for the nation.

What are their motivational drivers?

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