

## Commerce

**KEYWORDS :** Spirituality, Management, positive psychology and Spiritual power.



## Spirituality and Management- Integration

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### ABSTRACT

*Going far from ourselves takes us nowhere. It is very much important to be in touch with ourselves to connect with others. Being a part of corporate world a person has to interact with others and more importantly, being a manager, a person has to orient others' efforts towards a common goal through motivation and leadership, where he faces challenge of managing people with different personality traits such as different backgrounds, values, beliefs, status, culture, religions and temperaments. Playing a liaison between organization and employees, he has to meet contradictions. For this, managers feel the need to integrate spirituality with management. Today, when business organizations have to be socially responsible, such integration paves the way for sustenance, growth and authentic happiness at personal and organizational level. Spirituality is concerned with understanding life's deeper motivations and an emotional connection with God. On review of literature, it is proved that spirituality in management is no new concept, but it is gaining importance as the business is getting more global. The paper attempts to highlight the need and implications of spirituality integration with management.*

### Introduction

Management is understood as an art of getting things through others, which means it is an interpersonal in nature. As a manager, one has to communicate, guide, direct, lead, supervise and control others. To succeed in managing people, a manager has to integrate spirituality with art of management. This integration let his deepest value to bear on his work and thus a feeling of deep fulfillment. Spirituality is not synonymous with religion. Religion is an institutional connotation and involves practicing rituals and attending services whereas spirituality is more of life's deeper motivations and emotional connection to God. Even then religious emotions pave the way for spirituality.

Spirituality is a perspective which represents the quality of human existence, personal values and beliefs, relationships with others, connection to the natural world and beyond. Spiritually aware managers share some common concerns despite of their different religions and spiritual paths.

Donald W. McCormick states in his article on 'Spirituality and Management' that 94% Americans believe in Universal spirit and their relationship with God influences their work lives more than any other factor. Doing work as a form of service, being compassionate with one's subordinates, religious names of firms and slogans on order forms, are some of the illustrative behaviors of managers who want to be spiritual.

Though during 20th century business leadership has remained dispassionate and devoid of spirituality, but today, when managers have to be socially responsible, spirituality brings them compassion and consideration for other people in the organization and society at large. But this does not mean that the concept of spirituality is new in management. Dating back to 18th and 19th centuries some big businesses was founded on spiritual principles/ basis, for example the early huge Cadbury and Rowntree British enterprises. These were founded by Quakers and run on for more compassionate principles than we would consider normal in business today. {Source: Sir Adrian Cadbury's talk on Beliefs and Business, 2003}

Today we have co-operatives, employee owned organizations, Micro finance institutions and mutuals which are supporting the ideas of caring and sharing over profit and are giving themselves competitive edge through a more caring philosophy. Management is to be cyclical and that is occurring i.e. spirituality is back in business management.

### How spirituality helps business management?

The traditional standard behavior such as tough minded decision making and competitive aggression has no attraction today

but traits such as warmth, nurturing, affection and intuition (which are the features of spirituality) are recognized. If managers and superiors are open and welcoming, bottom line personnel feel comfortable. People are more comfortable and happy when they are allowed and encouraged to connect on a deeper level with others and entire organization work well when personnel are happy.

### How to practice spirituality at workplace:

**Work on inclusion:** Though unhealthy competition and free market methods raise overall performance but discourage building strengths in depth for self sufficiency throughout the organization. So ability to work in partnership, collaborate with others, compassion, empathy and listening skills are to be encouraged, rewarded and leveraged.

**Do good to others as Nishkaam karma:** Follow the instinct to do good to others with no expectations of anything in return. Treat the colleagues ahead of you in day to day works, collaborations on an honest level. Such positive and genuine efforts will have a lasting impact. Spirituality led force does seem to keep checks and balances.

**Be intuitive:** Intuition is a power which comes out of practicing paying attention to one's own and others' feelings. Intuition supports decision making skills. When we practice on human value basis while being rational of course, we tend to be more introvert and instinctive. So being spiritual results in strong intuitions and being intuitive leads to spirituality. To be more centered and restore natural balances meditation helps. Meditations helps heightens your connection to your intuition. It involves relaxing your body so as to relax mind and it helps find yourself grounded and attuned to your feelings.

**Be yourself and confident:** Value yourself, your inner worth and appreciate what you have to offer and be open with others who may have different strengths to share. Self confidence results in competency and humble nature and alleviates jealousy and competitive thoughts. Relax and lighten up instead of taking yourself seriously. Having strength to enjoy a laugh at your own expense will exude confidence. Avoid gossip and judge no one. If required then focus on behavior and causes rather than subjective criticism. Be confident and first to initiate contact. Never ignore someone because you think they ignored you first, because everyone longs for the other person to initiate content and give them a big smile. Then they will try it too because they feel it is safe and good. So put yourself out there and approach people as people in a genuinely friendly manner.

**Follow the ideal of Non-attachment:** Spirituality in managing

organizations can be best practiced if follow the ideal of non-attachment. Non-attachment is not about surrender of the objects of the world but a state where egocentric desires and fascination for objects of world ends and the person understands the meaning of compassion, humanity and purpose of life. Authentic happiness results from doing good things and not from achieving rewards personally or for the organization.

**Challenges in being spiritual at workplace:**

**Organizational culture:** When organizational culture demands for hard- hearted decision making based on purely economic criterion, then it becomes a challenge for managers to feel and express compassion. They can follow their instinct and leave rest on their spiritual faith. It will be balanced by the spiritual power.

**Choice of right livelihood:** Working for a particular industry can be problematic for a spiritually committed manager, especially when the services or products being produced are not right as per the spiritual tradition of the manager. It is still a question whether it is possible to be a success in the business world and still remain a spiritual person.

**Concept of selfless service:** Managers face the challenge of making their work a form of sacred service to others. They can follow the ideal of non- attachment which is not surrendering objects of world but surrendering egocentric desires while being in the state of positive psychology.

**Work as meditation:** To work as meditation does not mean same to all. Actually work meditation aims at the experience of being absorbed in work. More clearly, a manager should take work as it is relaxing to his mind and an enjoyable exercise.

**Reason to be spiritual:** While working in business organization, managers have to relocate the reasons to be spiritual. They should find themselves good for others while performing formal duties. This should be the only reason for being spiritual.

**Conclusion:** Management is perceived as a battle where analytical, emotional and spiritual intelligence are three armors without which it cannot be won. Spirituality in management is important as it backs positive psychology i.e. courage, love, integrity, compassion, forgiveness, gratitude and optimism. Spiritual awareness helps managers to address philosophical questions of vision and mission of organization, awaken its true potential and then to make it socially responsible.

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