

Spiritual Aspects of Leadership Development: Moral Approach towards Understanding Leadership Phenomenon

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Abstract

Corporate organisations have recently started expending substantial resources on training and development of their future leaders. Though myriad aspects of leadership effectiveness are focused upon during their on-the-job grooming and in various professional and management courses, spiritual aspects of leadership development are often ignored or not considered relevant to the ground realities of the contemporary corporate world. In the following write-up, an effort has been made to highlight this point that various spiritual aspects of leadership development are known to play decisive role in grooming effective leaders in the contemporary organisations.

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Development, Corporate Leadership

Introduction

Are leaders born or do people opt to be leaders? The question has agitated the minds of academicians, leaders as well as of common man since time immemorial and there is no easy and commonly accepted answer to this question. Over the years, the concept of leadership has gained unparalleled significance in management literature. Though pivotal role of a leader has never been ignored in military organisations; they are the profit-oriented, competition-driven corporate organisations and business schools, which have given a new meaning and significance to this concept. It is being argued that what the contemporary organisations need today, especially at the top and middle-level management, are

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leaders, not merely managers. The maxim of Peter Drucker and Warren Bennis, “*Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things,*” also points toward this thinking. Thus, management means efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall. [Covey, 1996]

Throughout the recorded history of mankind, military commanders and academic experts are known to have an aptitude for devising maxims concerning esprit de corps, fighting spirit, morale and the like; however, military organisations had rarely sought either to understand or promote combat motivation, an essential obligation of a military leader. For example, an officer, who graduated from the Royal Military College (Sandhurst) at the end of nineteenth century, later commented that the art of leadership was utterly neglected in the course curriculum. [Charlton, 1931] On the other hand, General Wavell recalled that during the course at the British Staff College at Camberley (1909-10), “insufficient stress was laid on the factors of morale, or how to induce it and maintain it,” – another significant responsibility of a military leader. [Kellett, 1982]

The Concept of Leadership

There are hundreds of definitions of leadership, though much of the variation in defining leadership is semantic. Some of the confusion about the precise nature of leadership arises from the fact that it has been referred as “a function, a characteristic, a combination of traits, a position, a relationship, a person or a group of persons, a process, an ability, an influence, a method of guidance, and even mere supervision; some also broaden the term to include any action a purported leader might take.” [Hardy, 1968] In general terms, leadership is usually defined as the process of encouraging and helping others to work

enthusiastically toward objectives. Robert Kreitner defines leadership as “a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational objectives. [Kreitner, 1995] For the purpose of this paper, we shall consider leadership as *“a spiritual relationship between the leader and the followers whereby the followers, being inspired by their leader, are ready to carry out their willing and enthusiastic efforts towards attainment of common objectives.”*

Leadership and Followership

Without followers, no one can claim to be a leader, yet followers and the concept of followership have not received sizeable attention from leaders, professionals or academicians. In organisations, followers are expected to assume leadership positions in their respective areas of responsibilities. Everyone knows that one cannot become a leader without first becoming a true follower. Therefore, due significance must be accorded to the concept of followership.

Leadership in Corporate Organisations

Leaders usually perform the managerial functions of planning, organising, motivating, leading, coordinating, and controlling the behaviour of people. By virtue of their position in the organisational hierarchy, they have to interact with the environment in which their organisation is going to operate, make a vision about the future, decide about the mission of the organisation, define objectives, maintain goal direction, provide means for goal achievement and promote group cohesion.

Assuming Leadership Roles in Contemporary Organisations

It is a natural tendency in most of the people to aspire for better living standard, more authority and power, continuing success, etc. In order to fulfil such desires, many people want to occupy important positions in their respective organisations. When such people are given the responsibilities of important assignments, they tend to presume that they have become the leaders. However, getting appointed on a certain post is altogether different phenomenon than becoming leader of people.

As member of a formal organisation, one must understand that the organisation can appoint one as head of a section, manager of a department or even Chief Executive Officer of a large corporate setting; it cannot appoint one as a leader of the people. By studying modern management principles and applying the latest techniques of handling people and getting work done from them, an aspirant may become an efficient and effective manager of an organisation. But, he would be still far away from becoming the leader of men under his command. Being a leader of men in a corporate outfit is not a bed of roses. No amount of leadership training at Staff Colleges, appointments at key posts, or attendance of myriad management and leadership courses can create leaders, though these experiences provide important inputs and impetus towards preparing people for the leadership roles. In short, an individual's own commitment, organisational environment, leadership development by the organisation, and the spiritual states of people are known to determine whether one would become leader of the people or not. Further elaboration of these ideas is given as under:-

- a). *One's Own Self – One's Body and Soul*: No inputs are more important and long-lasting than the person himself or herself in the preparation for the leadership roles. If

one is adamant at becoming the leader in one's area of responsibility then one would have to take charge of one's life and what happens in it and what happens to it. To start with, one must focus on one's inner speech. What is one's inner dialogue at most of the occasions, will largely determine one's destiny. If the inner dialogue is something like, "*Every thing in this world is pre-ordained.*" "*I would get that prize posting if the Boss favours me.*" "*I would have advanced to my desired position in the society if my parents were more educated, rich and well-connected.*" With such kind of inner speech, it is most probable that one would never become a leader. A lucky person, with such inner dialogue might rise to the highest office in an organisation, but one would never be able to assume a leadership role. Not because, it is pre-ordained, but chiefly because one never wanted to become a leader in the first place. If an individual has same or similar inner dialogue, but still want to assume the leadership role, then first of all, he'd have to change the inner dialogue to some thing like as follows: -

"From this very moment, I take the charge of my life. It does not mean that I am going to play God, but it means that I am going to contribute meaningfully toward my destiny."

"I am going to aspire for assuming leadership role in my area of responsibility even if the present Boss does not favour me."

"I am going to shower my love and gratitude on my parents, irrespective of their level of education, wealth or influence."

Self-image and Real Worth

What others think of you, is their problem, not yours. But, if your self-image is low then, in most of the cases, either it leads others to rate you low, or the tendency of other people rating you low forces you to adopt low self-image. Either situation is not desirable. As a human being, one's true worth reflects from what one does to self and/or to others. On the other extreme, a person might have a boastful self-image, but if his actions, habits and character do not provide credence to that image, he won't be able to leave his mark as a leader. In a nutshell, one can't assume the responsibilities of a leader, if one has been nursing low self-image or an arrogant one. Therefore, before you motivate yourself to enhance your self-image through some of the quick fix methods, remember that self-image is not cosmetic reflection of your personality, your clothes, your bank balance or your apparent talk. Self-image is the ultimate product of our character and conduct and it cannot be changed from low to high just by reading some articles or books on leadership and personal improvement, by presenting the pleasant side of our personality, or by quoting the examples of great leaders.

Overall Environment of the Organisation

The second most influential element in cultivating leadership characteristics is the overall environment of the organisation. In a typical corporate setup, this environment is made up of the following:-

- (a) Top-level managers and their philosophy about leadership and followership.
- (b) Organisation structure including authority/responsibility relationships, degree of centralisation or decentralisation, communication channels, policies governing human

resource induction, development, promotion, postings, etc.

Leadership style and philosophy of the reigning corporate leaders leave considerable bearing on “young Turks” aspiring to assume leadership roles. Thus, it becomes the collective responsibility of leaders working at different levels in the hierarchical setup, to adhere to a common philosophy about leadership and followership. From this philosophy should flow the principles, styles and practices, which all the personnel are required to follow. Because employees spend most of their time working with their seniors and colleagues, on-the-job behaviour and off-the-job conduct of seniors leaves a long-lasting impression on juniors. Gradual consolidation of this day-to-day influence of seniors cannot be mollified merely through leadership courses, or by changing the organisation structure and policies.

On its own, organisation structure affects the formation of a leadership pool in a decisive manner. In a particular organisation, if authority / responsibility relationships, communication channels, human resource policies, etc are based on the concepts of centralisation and authoritarian structures, the organisation would only produce autocratic leaders. The adage, “*As you sow, so shall you reap,*” can testify that it would be highly imprudent to expect the development of democratic leaders in an organisation structured on the edifices of authoritarianism and centralisation.

Leadership Training or Leadership Grooming?

To start with, the whole concept of leadership training is a misconception; humans can't be trained to become leaders; however they may be groomed and developed. Now, question arises, “How can we

groom leaders in organisations?” Experience guides us that this is considered as a fairly straight task; in order to groom future leaders, every big organisation boasts of its own training units, staff colleges, etc, where future leaders are churned out. The second question arises, “Are these training units and staff colleges producing the leaders of requisite knowledge, motivation and character?” The answer to this question might be both yes and no. The reason being; that development of leaders is a much more complicated and baffling task than is usually accepted. To start with, it must be accepted by the top leadership that in the course of grooming leaders for future, they are dealing with human beings with their minds, feelings, emotions, and with their souls, the spiritual part of a person. Are organisations taking care of all these aspects of leadership grooming in staff courses? We all know that most of the corporate organisations have on the whole ignored these aspects of leadership development.

Leadership development institutions play an important part in the task of preparing people for leadership roles. That is why most of the organizations give the highest priority to the selection of principals / directors, instructors and key staff of these institutes. However, with the passage of time, several dysfunctional concepts / notions, even assertions of senior staff about the needed leadership character traits have sprouted up in every organisation. If the leadership development institutions are headed by men or women of unmatched acumen, character and courage, they usually do not let go such tendencies unchecked. However, if an organisation makes these institutions as resting place for the dejected, demoralised and superseded staff, then it needs no outside enemy to pull apart the entire organisational edifice. De-motivated and demoralised people usually keep on blaming the system, the organisation, senior

leadership, colleagues; in short everybody except themselves for their present predicament. Therefore, it is imperative for any forward looking organisation to place their best people at the helm of the affairs of their leadership development centres.

Spiritual Aspects of Leadership Development

Spiritual aspects of leadership development are no less important, but have received scant attention from writers, academia and leaders themselves. The chief reason being that religion or spirituality has been conventionally considered as irrelevant to grooming of leaders, especially the corporate leaders. However, historical records and contemporary studies across the cultures have confirmed the central place of morality and spirituality in leadership development. In this regard, following constructs provide a reliable platform to launch a meaningful leadership development programme:-

- (a) *Aim of Life:* A leader's aim of life is considered to leave a profound effect on his success as well as happiness, and his acceptance as a leader. However, what aim of life should a leader have, is a mind-boggling question since no one can tell a prospective leader about his aim of life. Before we can further probe into this question, we must, first of all, be aware of the philosophy of a leader about life itself. Does he believe that he has come into this world by chance or by intelligent selection by some Supreme Force? Does he believe in life after death? Does he believe in the Day of Judgement? Straight-forward answers to these questions would largely determine what will be his aim of life. If you believe that you have been sent to this world with a

purpose and that there would be an eternal life hereafter and that there would be a Day of Judgement, then your aim of life would be considerably different from a person who believes that his present life is a result of mere chance of mating of two dots of his parents. As a Muslim, we can get guidance from the Holy Qur'an about the purpose of our lives. Allah (Subhana Wa Ta'ala) says in the holy book: -

Tell them: "My service and sacrifice, my life and my death, are all of them for God, the creator and Lord of the worlds." [162, 6 – Al-An' am]

"I have not created the jinns and men but to worship Me." [56, 51 – Adh-Dhariyat]

From the above verses, it becomes clear that our main aim of life in this world should be to do each and every thing to please Allah (SWT). Worshipping Allah in its wider sense means leading and living a life according to the Commandments of our Creator, rather than merely following the rituals of five times prayers, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, etc. Worshipping Allah means that our behaviour to our seniors, colleagues, subordinates, relatives or strangers, our conduct in our homes, factories, offices or any other place and our manners on the roads, in markets, and in Courts of Law would be to seek approval of Allah (SWT). If we can do it, then we will be successful in this life as well as hereafter.

- (b) *Creativity*: No Muslim can deny that Allah (SWT) is the greatest Creator, who manifested each and every thing in this universe from the state of nothingness and who created man from clay. And Allah (SWT) has endowed the man this quality of creativity in abundance. Have you ever pondered about the origin of our thoughts, even the most bizarre ones? Did you create them or they just appeared from nowhere? Did you ever experience the joy of reaching the solution to a complex problem through some instant thoughts, which seemed to descend direct from the Heavens? A leader, who aligns himself with his aim of life, would experience abundance of creativity in his mind and soul. This creativity, first of all, would appear in the shape of mere thoughts, but later on, these thoughts would be converted into plans of actions, which would further manifest in the form of new roads, buildings, schools, colleges, universities, airports, and so on. In essence, there is no end or limit on the power of creativity of true leaders.
- (c) *Enthusiasm*: A true leader ought to be enthusiastic about what he thinks about and what he does. He must believe in what he intends to do himself and what he wants his people to do. Enthusiasm of a leader is usually contagious. Inspired leaders inspire others to follow the suit; they inject untiring spirit in their followers to perform at their optimum level. In order to transfer their enthusiasm, leaders should frequently talk to their people on formal as well as on informal occasions. They should

talk about the capability and capacity of their people. They should talk about the future and how they are going to reach the visualised future with the active support of their followers.

- (d) *Kindness*: Enthusiasm alone would not open the doors of success unless the leader is also kind-hearted, especially in dealing with the employees working at the lower levels. Kindness generates feelings of mutual liking, respect and caring attitudes between the leader and his followers. Feeling of kindness leaves its mark in multi-dimensional manner. About effects of kindness on human beings, Dr Wayne W Dyer says:-

“The positive effect of kindness on the immune system and on the increased production of serotonin in the brain has been proven in the research studies. Serotonin is a naturally occurring substance in the body that makes us feel more comfortable, peaceful and even blissful...Research has shown that a simple act of kindness directed toward another improves the functioning of the immune system and stimulates the production of serotonin in both the recipient of the kindness and the person extending the kindness. Even more amazing is the persons observing the act of kindness have similar beneficial results.” [Dyre, 2002]

- (e) *Love*: As opposed to the feelings of hate, love converts inner thoughts and feelings from discord and disharmony to well-being and harmony. We can imagine ourselves as vicegerent of the Supreme Being, who has given us the option of either obeying His commands and love others as He loves them; or of digressing from the right path. Dr Wayne W Dyer refers

this phenomenon as will of man to function either from the material world socket or from the spiritual world socket, or from the both. He further adds that when we plug ourselves in the material world socket, we usually feel anxiety, disharmony, anguish and hopelessness in solving our problems. On the other hand, when we plug ourselves in the spiritual world socket, we immediately feel a sense of peace, tranquillity and relief from angst. Thus, feelings of love dissolve all negativity, not by fighting against it, but by injecting the energy of highest frequency into it. (Dyer, 2002)

- (f) *Generosity and Gratefulness:* No one can deny that man comes to this world empty-handed and so shall he depart from here. Even then, we see most of the people amassing and hoarding wealth through hook or crook. It is perhaps due to our short-sightedness that we fail to see beyond what is visible to the naked eye. However, when we muse over the working of this universe, we see that it is being run on the Principle of Give and Take. Just consider the example of our ecosystem. Due to heat of sun, water of oceans, rivers, lakes and streams converts into water vapours that move towards the upper atmosphere, where the temperature of these water vapours drops to a considerable extent, thus they are converted into clouds. Then, these clouds cause snowfall and rain on the earth. Due to heat in summers, snow melts and converts into water, which after channelling through different streams and rivers,

ultimately reaches oceans. We can well imagine the situation, if any component of the ecosystem refuses to give, what it is supposed to give. The ultimate result would be that no component would be able to receive either, what it wants to receive. Same principle applies in human relationships. Mostly, we get what we give. If we give happiness to others, we receive the same in return. Similarly, if we give tension and hatred to others, we should not expect getting tranquillity and love. From my personal experience, I can vouch that I have seen people becoming rich by spending and by giving away their wealth to the needy. Being generous also means being grateful to Allah (SWT), who has enabled us to spend our wealth on others. Thus Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:-

“Whatever you spend you will do so for yourself, for you will do so to seek the way that leads to God; and what you spend in charity you will get back in full, and no wrong will be done to you.”[272, 2 – Al-Baqarah]

- (g) *Connectedness*: The mankind was created from a single dot, declares Holy Qur'an. It means that all of us are connected with each other, irrespective of one's creed, colour, caste or status in the society. When we become aware that we are not alone, and that there are many people out there, who would come to our help, we feel ourselves stronger. Occasionally, tell yourself: “You are not alone in this world; you are not what you possess, what you do or what others think of you. Rather, you are connected with Allah (SWT) and with the entire human race through a common heritage. Thus, you have

an unlimited inventory of resources available to you for problem resolution.”

Virtues of a Corporate Leader

Vision and Futurism

One of the basic character traits, which distinguish a leader from a non-leader, is his ability to articulate a vivid picture of a future where he wants to go and where he also wants his followers to take along. Therefore, a good leader ought to have a vision about his own destiny as well as of the organisation he leads. In order to transform his vision into reality, a leader has to pursue long-term planning, with focus on the desired future to keep his organisation going in the right direction. Long-term planning enables a leader to devote requisite resources to attain long-term goals.

Contemplation and Wisdom

One of the pre-requisites to become a visionary is the ability to think clearly, think ahead and think about thinking. Thinking as such should not be considered as a leisurely activity, in which proverbial philosophers are stated to waste their time. Rather, thinking positively about future and thinking innovatively enables a leader to devise the ways and means of reaching his cherished destiny. In order to get maximum benefit out of contemplation exercises, one needs to be wise enough to distinguish between haphazard, leisurely and impracticable thoughts from the focused, profound and practicable ones. One of the methods of becoming contemplative and wise is to listen more and speak less. A relevant proverb of Dong Larson is worth referring here:-

“Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would have preferred to talk.”

Courage

Most of the leaders in the contemporary world as well as in the history of mankind are known to possess more courage than the ordinary folk. Courage might be of two kinds: physical and moral. Physical courage enables a person to do what is right, in spite of the danger of physical injury or death. Moral courage equips a person to take the right / moral decision and act on it despite the dangers of becoming unpopular among one's colleagues, of being rebuked by the seniors or getting an adverse report from one's senior. But, that is the price, which courageous leaders are usually willing to pay without any remorse. The quality of being courageous demands that a true leader sticks fast to his cherished values, like "integrity first", "service before self", and "excellence in all we do.

Emotional Intelligence

Myriad studies in the last few decades have concluded that contrary to common belief of direct relationship between Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and success in life, Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has emerged as a dominant factor in personal success, satisfaction and happiness. Salovey and Meyers define EQ as integrated effect of five qualities of a person, namely *knowing one's emotions* (the ability to recognise and understand one's moods, emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others), *managing emotions* (the ability to control or redirect disruptive pulses and moods, and the propensity to suspend judgment to think before acting), *motivating oneself* (a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status, and a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence), *recognising emotions in others* (the ability to identify emotional makeup of other people, and skill in treating people according to their emotional state), and *handling relationships* (proficiency in managing relationships and building networks, and an ability to find

common ground and build rapport). (Salovey and Meyers – 1990) Daniel Goleman also asserts on the basis of his and numerous other researches that a high level of emotional intelligence is the sine qua non of leadership. Without it, a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive, analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but he still won't make a great leader. [Taylor and Rosenbach (ed) – 2005]

Trustworthiness

Trust means belief of people in the truthfulness of a statement or a person without examining it. Nothing is possible without trust between a leader and his followers. It is the common thread that binds a leader with his people. Trust can't be imposed from top on people working at lower levels in the organisation; it is a kind of reward, which true leaders earn through their habits of speaking truth, behaving consistently and cultivating an unblemished character. Highlighting the necessity of trust in human relationships, Frank Crane says, “*You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you do not trust enough.*”

Justice

Dictionary meaning of justice is “conformity of an action or thing to moral right or to reason, trust or fact. In his day-to-day dealings with his people, a corporate leader ought to internalise the canons of justice. His thinking, speech and actions, all must display fairness, impartiality and due process. A true leader never allows his personal liking or disliking, idiosyncrasies or parochial behaviour becoming decisive in his leadership role. Most of the great leaders in the history of mankind are known for preferring justice over cheap publicity or inclination to shower their affection on the chosen few.

Solitude and Service

The virtues of solitude and service are integral to grooming of all leaders. Despite being heavily committed in his professional duties and personal chores, a leader must spend some time in solitude for introspection so that he can judge his behaviour on regular basis: “How many people was he able to serve in his capacity as a leader, as a colleague, even as a junior leader?” How many people did he satisfy and how many were turned off due to his (egoist) behaviour?” Answers to such questions may lead a leader to find his strengths as well as his weaknesses. Ultimately, similar inquiries and efforts also help a leader to devote his life to serve others. Thus, great leaders are usually remembered for their passion to serve and ask such questions as: “How can I serve my people, for e.g., my seniors, my colleagues and those living at the lower rungs of the societal ladder?”

Seven Vices of a Corporate Leader

Arrogance

Arrogance and know-it-all mindset makes a person blind and deaf, not in physical sense but in virtual sense. An arrogant person finds it unnecessary to see the things and events from others’ point of view and often considers it useless to listen to the suggestions of people around him. In the process, he actually denies his own access to valuable information, facts or recommendations – not good omens for eventual success of a leader. Therefore, a corporate leader must always endeavour to save his soul from this disease.

Backbiting

In our society, backbiting has attained the stature of our national pastime, therefore, all types of people, whether educated or uneducated, men or

women, elder or youth, can be noticed indulging in this self-destructive hobby. It is seen that we usually backbite about those people, who have either some physical / psychological handicap, or who invoke feelings of jealousy in us due to their status in the society, or who are simply considered to be a laughing stock. Neither of the above-stated premises is a valid reason for contracting this vice. In the long run, this vice also makes one unhappy and discontented with one's own circumstances.

Boasting

Boasting is another spiritual disease which attacks mostly, when a person attains a relatively senior position in the organisational and / or societal hierarchy. In the history of mankind, many promising leaders are known to be wasted due to their inclination to boasting their achievements and image out of proportion. In initial stages of this deadly disease, the victim might be aware of his true value, but with the passage of time, he starts believing in his own concocted stories of Greatness. A true leader must be watchful of such tendencies from the very beginning, because they would be easier to be kept in check there and then. However, if a leader starts enjoying his boastful image, he would soon become blind of his surrounding, his peoples' genuine needs, and of their worthy suggestions.

Miserliness / Extravagance

Being miser or extravagant in one's behaviour is tantamount to losing one's balance in the race of life. While a miser voluntarily makes himself, his family and his organisation poorer than they actually are; an extravagant person digs his own grave by wasting the precious resources on useless things and projects. Therefore, a real corporate leader must adopt a middle path – the balanced one.

Egoism

Ego means self-image, awareness of self-worth or opinion of oneself. However, when a person becomes egoist, all of his faculties of hearing, sight, speech, even thinking are overtaken by one's own judgement. Such a person becomes blind and deaf of his surroundings and tends to ignore the pleas of his juniors and counsel or suggestions of his colleagues. If such a person happens to occupy a leadership position, he becomes the biggest liability of his organisation.

Hopelessness

Nothing is more damaging for a society or for an organisation to be led by a leader, who loses hope due to adverse circumstances. If a leader becomes hopeless, there is no hope left among people working in a corporate setup. Without hope, nothing happens and nobody moves. Therefore, a true leader must make utmost endeavours to save him from this vice.

Ridiculing / Slandering

Ridiculing and slandering behaviour does not match with the dignity of a leader. A person, who is habitual of ridiculing and degrading other people, seldom gets their cooperation, hard work or respect. Rather, such a person is hated by those, who become victim of his curt behaviour. If a leader loses his dignity and respect, he in fact loses his right to lead.

Conclusion

Are leaders born or do people opt to be leaders, has been a burning question in all ages. Leaders usually perform the managerial functions of planning, organising, motivating, leading, coordinating, and controlling

the behaviour of people. No amount of leadership training at Staff Colleges, appointments at key posts, or attendance of myriad management and leadership courses can create leaders, though these experiences provide important inputs and impetus towards preparing people for the leadership roles. In short, an individual's own commitment, organisational environment, leadership development by the organisation, and the spiritual aspects of leadership development are known to determine whether one would become leader of the people or not. Now, question arises, "How can we groom leaders in organisations?" Organisations usually tend to prepare their future leaders in their training units / staff colleges or through on the job development, where various aspects of leadership development are taken care of. However, spiritual aspects of leaders' character are mostly ignored. The chief reason being that religion or spirituality has been conventionally considered as irrelevant to the process of leadership development, especially in the corporate setup. In the author's viewpoint, spiritual aspects of leadership development include aim(s) of life, creativity, enthusiasm, kindness, love for people, connectedness, generosity and gratefulness of leaders. Out of these spiritual aspects, seven virtues of leaders emerge, which include vision / futurism, contemplation / wisdom, courage, emotional intelligence, trust, justice, and solitude / service. On the other side, there are seven vices, which prevent a person from becoming a leader, which include arrogance, backbiting, boasting, miserliness / extravagance, egoism, hopelessness, and ridiculing / slandering.

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