Fireflies

- Arundhati

I touch God in my song as the hill touches the far-away sea with its waterfall.

The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough.

Let my love, like sunlight, surround you and yet give you illumined freedom.

Love remains a secret even when spoken, for only a lover truly knows that he is loved.

Emancipation from the bondage of the soil is no freedom for the tree.

In love i pay my endless debt to thee for what thou art.

-Rabindranath Tagore

Inside this issue:

"Awareness Precedes Change"

by R.S. Murali

Dear Colleagues

It is a few months since we communicated with each other in this forum of Consultants Corner! Everybody thinks that somebody would do it – but nobody wants to be that somebody, and so everybody waits for somebody to do it and ultimately nobody does it! We need to learn from this. Note that failure provides experience towards success. But failures should not become a habit and that means we need to learn from experience. I am sure that from this month onwards we will be regularly sharing our ideas through Consultants Corner.

Change as we know is a permanent thing. Except for basic laws of nature everything changes in this world! For us to cope up with changes we need to understand that 'awareness precedes change'. I think you got the point – we need to be aware of what the change we want to have. Gandhi said 'be the change you want to see'. In order to be the change you want to see, you must be very clear or aware about the change you want to see in yourself. The change is basically in your behaviour – in the way to interact with people, the way you organize your work, the way you achieve your targets, and so on, and the need for such changes you need to clear.

The need for changes is based on what you want to achieve, in what time frame and where you are presently now. This awareness is an absolute conditionality for any change. You cannot search for your lost pen if you do not know its colour and shape! Here is a pen (your desire or objective) which you do not know about but you want. This lack of clarity makes things difficult to achieve. So, you need to be absolutely clear about what you want (to be).

Such awareness lies in your thinking – Are you aware how you think? Are you aware what you want and where you need to go? Are you sure where you are now?

– To change the results you are getting you must change the things you are doing!

– The arrow that hits the bull's eye is the result of one hundred misses!

Any feedback? Let us discuss.

Tips for effective folder(s) management

Remember the last time you frantically searched for a file or folder in your system and finally found it hidden in the most unlikely of locations. Here are a few tips for maintaining folders in an organized way:

— Never have more than 5 levels of folders. Anything more than this will make searching for a file very difficult.

— Keep all your work related files in **one drive** in **one single folder**. In other words, the first level of folders is generally one folder only (maybe in your name). For eg: *E:\Ashok.* This is particularly useful when one system is being used by many people.

— Within your folder create separate folders for each project you are working on. All files related to that project should be kept in that folder only. For eg: *E:\Ashok\BMP, E:\Ashok\Janalakshmi and so on.*

— Within the project folder, create sub folders depending on the type of files you are keeping. Some of the generic folder names can be:

☛ Preliminary activities (keep all the versions of EOIs, proposals, contracts etc. that you prepared to get the assignment)

☛ Implementation Notes

☛ Concept Notes

☛ Progress Notes

☛ Reports

☛ Presentations

☛ Reference material, and so on depending on the type of project
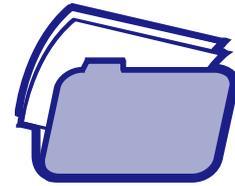
— At each level of folders, keep a separate '**workings**' folder. This folder will store all your working files, previous versions etc. for eg: *the folder - E:\Ashok\janalakshmi\Progress Notes\Workings* will contain all the workings and previous versions of the progress notes that we have issued to Janalakshmi

— In addition to the above, keep a separate folder to store all the junk stuff that you generate as part of the project (I am sure there will be plenty!). Keeping these files in the project folder will create a lot of confusion

— Most important, **DESKTOP** is not a place to keep files/folders. Keep files/folders on the desktop only temporarily.

These are some of the techniques which have worked for me. Try these and give feedback.
— **Ashok Rao**

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
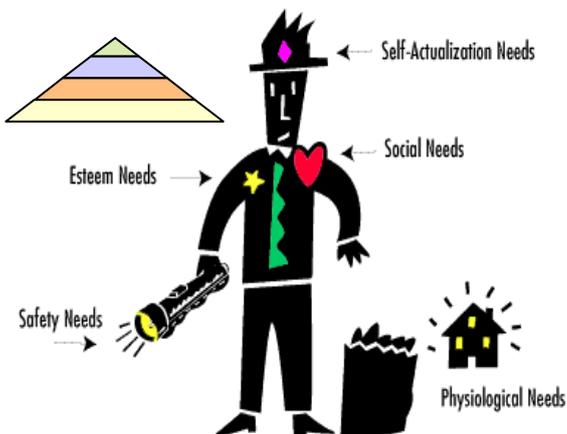
Physiological Needs — The basic needs of survival for a human being. Eg:– Food, Water, Air, Sleep and Shelter.

Safety Needs — One's attention turns to safety and security in order to be free from the threat of physical and emotional harm. Eg:– Living in a safe area, Medical insurance, Job security and Financial reserves.

Social Needs — Social needs are those related to interaction with other people and may include: Need for friends, need for belonging and need to give & receive love.

Self-Esteem — Esteem needs may be classified as internal or external. Internal are those related to self-esteem such as self respect and achievement. External are those such as social status, recognition and reputation.

Self-Actualization — It is the quest of reaching one's full potential as a person. This need is never fully satisfied. Self-actualized people tend to have needs such as: Truth, Justice, Wisdom and Meaning.
— **Manaswini**

Shape your thoughts...... As you think, so you become

Everybody has a mind to think, but the ones who succeed in life are those who think beyond the territory. Whether a child or an adult, they start thinking before getting into action. Thoughts vary from person to person. The difference between a great person and an ordinary is, a great person always thinks out of box and the ordinary person thinks within box. To think big one should drop his/her ego first, then the mind is free from all constraints to think.

Many years ago, a rider came across some soldiers who were trying to move a heavy log without any success. The corporal was standing by as the men struggled. The rider asked the corporal why he wasn't helping. The corporal replied, "I am the corporal; I give orders." The rider dismounted, went up to the soldiers and helped them lift the log. With his help the log got moved. The rider quietly mounted his horse and went to the corporal and said, "The next time your men need help, send for the commander-in-chief". After he left, the corporal and his men found out the rider was George Washington.

Moral of the story is, we can think big if the thoughts are not covered by ego.

The men who try to do something and fail are infinitely better than those who try to do nothing and succeed.

Simplicity and humility are two hallmarks of greatness
— **Mohanty**

Its happening in NCRCL™!!

New people joining

- Mix of young fresh management, commerce and engineering graduates have joined us to support the delivery mechanism.
- Some senior and experienced researchers, consultants, technical and administrative personnel have also joined resulting on widening of the base areas in which NCRCL intends to excel

New projects

- Support for ERP implementation at Indian Terrain
- Business plan for setting up of International schools in Chennai and Delhi
- Feasibility report and financial projections for a JV to start ITES business
- Process study and preparation of User Requirement Report, development of software for a leading outdoor advertising   company.
- Inputs for organisational and accounting inputs for Rajkot City Improvement plan
- Valuation of Cold Roll Mill, Sisodra (a unit of Tata Steel) for take over by a Germany based steel giant.

Projects in horizon

- Streamlining of Internal Systems and Processes for Camson Bio Technologies Limited
- Support for Star Cement LLC, Dubai in recruitment and training of accounting professionals with need based skill sets
- Process study and systems audit for Cars India Private Limited
- Major breakthrough expected in our new domain of specialization - risk management systems under Basel II Accord. Look out for details in the forthcoming issue ……..

Programmes attended by NCRCL staff

- Achieving World Class Strategy Execution with Balanced Scorecard – By Robert S. Kaplan
- Process mapping for SMEs
- SAFA conference on Values and Perspectives in the areas for Networking
- Key issues in conversion of accounting system in Local Bodies – Role of CAs'
- RSM held a two day training workshop at Chennai Office on Preparation of Project Report, which was also attended by Bangalore staff.

Visit by Ramesh Ramanathan

- During September 06, Mr. Ramesh Ramanathan made a short but a constructive visit to NCRCL's Chennai office. He was introduced to all the staff members, following which he gave a brief talk on his association with RSM and NCRCL Bangalore, his vision on Janaagraha and his ambitions on future Urban India.

Other highlights

- The long cherished dream of NCRCL is becoming a reality with the first working paper on "Accountability of Urban Local Bodies – India" ready to be published.
- The other working papers in the pipeline are:
- On "Good Governance"
- On "Corporate Social Responsibility"
- NCRCL has entered into an MOU with AEC Business School to form ANSA – AEC and NCRCL School of Accounting with a view to provide quality coaching classes for CA, ACCA and CFA. This entity is in the formation stage and hopes to be in action by end of this year.
- After a long gap NCRCL Chennai has revived its Friday Knowledge Sharing Classes.
- NCRCL Bangalore is working on FBAS as a Software Product.

— **C. S. Suresh**

ALWAYS MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Many years ago, a large American shoe manufacturer sent two sales reps out to different parts of the Australian outback to see if they could drum up some business among the aborigines. Some time later, the company received telegrams from both agents. The first one said, "No business here...natives don't wear shoes." The second one said, "Great opportunity here...natives don't wear shoes!"

— **Vinoth**

Management Terminologies (contd..)

Compiled by Praveena

Metrics: Often used interchangeably with measurements. However, it is helpful to separate these definitions. Metrics are the various parameters or ways of looking at a process that is to be measured. Metrics define *what* is to be measured. Some metrics are specialized, so they can't be directly benchmarked or interpreted outside a mission-specific business unit. Other measures will be generic, and they can be aggregated across business units, e.g. cycle time, customer satisfaction, and financial results.

Net present value (NPV): The future stream of benefits and costs converted into equivalent values today. This is done by assigning monetary values to benefits and costs, discounting future benefits and costs using an appropriate discount rate, and subtracting the sum total of discounted costs from the sum total of discounted benefits.

Performance-based budgeting: A management process in which performance of various activities in an organization is measured, and budgets for further work on these activities is adjusted based on their performance. (Note: this does not necessarily imply that budgets for poorly-performing activities will be reduced; see the discussion here.)

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Return on Investment (ROI): In the private sector, the annual financial benefit after an investment minus the cost of the investment. In the public sector, cost reduction or cost avoidance obtained after an improvement in processes or systems, minus the cost of the improvement.

Risk analysis: A technique to identify and assess factors that may jeopardize the success of a project or achieving a goal. This technique also helps define preventive measures to reduce the probability of these factors from occurring and identify countermeasures to successfully deal with these constraints when they develop.

Sensitivity analysis: Analysis of how sensitive outcomes are to changes in the assumptions. The assumptions that deserve the most attention should depend largely on the dominant benefit and cost elements and the areas of greatest uncertainty of the program or process being analyzed.

Six Sigma: Literally, refers to the reduction of errors to six standard deviations from the mean value of a process output or task opportunities, i.e. about 1 error in 300,000 opportunities. In modern practice, this terminology has been applied to a quality improvement methodology for industry.

Total Quality Management (TQM): A methodology for continuous monitoring and incremental improvement of a supply-line process by identifying causes of variation and reducing them. Originated by Deming in the 1950's, and widely applied in the Federal government, where it was sometimes called Total Quality Leadership (TQL).

Value-added: Those activities or steps that add to or change a product or service as it goes through a process; these are the activities or steps that customers view as important and necessary.

Value chain: The sequential set of primary and support activities that an enterprise performs to turn inputs into value-added outputs for its external customers. An IT value chain is that subset of enterprise activities that pertain to IT operations, both to add value directly for external customers and to add indirect value by supporting other enterprise operations.

Certificate of Excellence Awarded

Congratulations!!!!!

Shri N.C Sundararajan presenting Certificate of Excellence to Praveena, Deepak, Zainul and Mohanty (clockwise from left) at the 7th AGM of NCRCL held on 9th September 2006.

Praveena and Mariam Jacob have cleared CISA exams in their first attempt.

Kalyani and Lakshmi for receiving gold medals in their respective post graduation course.