



PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

2.13 POSITIVE SPIRIT – POSITIVE INFLUENCE

When we want to have a positive influence at work, it takes more than wishing “If only *other* people would...” It takes being spiritually true to ourselves and consciously acting from that basis.

“**IF ONLY OTHER** people would be honest and respectful, then my company would be a better place to work.” At work, it’s very tempting to think this way – to focus on changing *others* rather than changing ourselves. But as the Greek philosopher Socrates (470-399 B.C.) once said:

Let him who would move the world, first move himself.

Or, as Ramón Ollé, President of Epson Europe, told us:

First put yourself in order. After that, everything will follow.

This is never more true than when you want to positively influence the people you work with. People we’ve known at every level of organisations – from production workers to CEOs – have shown us that our effectiveness in influencing others at work goes up exponentially to the degree that we “first move ourselves” to embody our spirituality.

One example is Deependra Moitra. Since we have known him, he has held leadership positions with Lucent Technologies and Infosys. Here’s how we see that he positively influences others from his spiritual basis.

First, he is clear about his own spiritual view of life and sincerely strives to do his work from that basis:

“Living with a purpose” would be a spiritual theme for me. True fulfilment is then the outcome of this journey. The personal principles that are most important to me are integrity and honesty. I can never compromise on those.

Then, he seeks to think, speak and act authentically in alignment with his spiritual views:

I ask myself questions like: Am I able to really make people happy around me? Am I able to make them comfortable? Am I able to provide them with a sense of direction? Am I able to really help them grow? Am I able to help them be successful? All of these questions, in my opinion, are a spiritual approach to how I want to interact both personally and in business.

From his spiritual integrity, he tries to uplift others in their work:

When I talk about spirituality in business, I think it really boils down to taking care of people's emotions and being truthful. For me to be really successful in relationships and in doing productive work with others, I consistently try to communicate to people in a way that their dignity and emotions are respected.

Helping others to bring out their unique potential is another way that Deependra seeks to be a positive influence at work:

We all have unique DNAs: that is God's way of telling us that every individual is unique. We must understand how we can tap into that uniqueness to do something productive. I do not believe in force because I think it's against the law of nature. I have never attempted to force any of my associates in the last five years on even a single issue. I believe in dialogue.

And lastly, he inspires people to discover a larger meaning in their work:

I influence people by creating a cause and helping them to identify how they can contribute. I place a lot of emphasis on understanding each individual. When I know that someone will do good in a certain environment, I make sure that his/her job is designed that way. Focus and purpose are very much present here – that's how it links to my way of defining spirituality in organisations and management.

Does this way of being a positive influence at work really foster collaboration and make a tangible difference? Here's one success story that Deependra shared with us:

When we engaged in a quality program to be certified as a Bell Labs organisation, we became certified in just one year's time – a splendid and rare accomplishment given the stringent assessment process focused on innovation and excellence.

Thus, from people like Deependra, we have learned that when we want to have a positive influence on others at work, it takes more than wishing, "If only *other* people would..." It takes being spiritually true to ourselves and consciously acting from that basis.

So, ask yourself: *How can I positively influence others at work from my spiritual basis? How can I uplift others in being their best and help them to discover a larger meaning in their work?*

This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Book 2 – Work as a Spiritual Practice*. To download the full book of articles, as well as additional book chapters, articles, workbooks, and research on the subject of "spirituality and human values for leadership and work", visit our website: www.globaldharma.org