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**ACTIONABLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS FROM THE EPIC RAMAYANA :  
LINKING THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE**

**Dr. Reeta**

**Assistant Professor in Commerce**

**S.U.S.Govt. College, Matakrajri,**

**Indri, Karnal**

**ABSTRACT**

There are number of books, journals, articles etc are available, which talks about various management theories. They explain management not only as a science but also as an art. Numerous research papers and case studies provide us real life experiences and examples of using these management theories in building an organization. But way before the modern-day management gurus gave their theories, principles and concepts of management the great writers like Tulsidas, Valmiki etc had explained them in the ancient Hindu epics. History teaches if we are willing to learn. Ramayana, the saga of Rama's life written by Valmiki, not only tells the story of a great hero but also provides valuable management lessons that can be applied in modern-day organizations. This paper fills the gap by applying the teachings of Ramayana to the Modern Strategic Management discipline. The author has employed qualitative methodology, to explore the 7 kandas and establish a correlation between teachings of Ramayana and different facets of strategic management process like environment scanning, goal setting, strategy formulation, and strategy implementation. Full of twists and turns, the story Ramayana can help leaders become better managers.

**Key Words:** Ramayana, Management, Leader, Thoughts, Learnings

**INTRODUCTION**

Today the corporate world is keenly looking to various religious and spiritual scriptures, classics, epics and literary masterpieces for drawing various management and leadership lessons for the training, benefit and development of HR. Ramayana is a sanskrit epic poem written by Shri Valmiki, a Hindu sage and a Sanskrit poet between 400-500BC. It is regarded as one of the two great works of Indian Literature along with Mahabharata. Ramayana has 24000 shlokas (verses) categorized in 500 sargas (chapters), divided over 7 kandas (books). It is among the first text in the Indian history whose significance cuts across the genres of different ages, caste, gender, income etc. In fact, this famous Grantha carries useful tips on ethics and values, statecraft and politics, and even general and human resources management. The Ramayana has played an important role in developing ethos and morality in Hinduism. Ramayana is an ancient Indian epic that tells the story of Rama, a prince who is exiled from his kingdom and embarks on a journey to rescue his wife, Sita, who has been abducted by a demon king, Ravana. The characters Lord Rama, Mata Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata, Hanumana and Ravana are all fundamental to the cultural consciousness

of Hindu Religion. It depicts the duties and relationships of individuals, portraying ideal characters like the ideal father, the ideal servant, the ideal brother, the ideal wife and the ideal king. If one studies this mythological book, then one can easily make out about the various management lessons which are taught in them. Every incidence teaches us a new lesson and in itself is a classic example of putting management at its best use and getting the work done. Ramayana is the epitome of teachings that we can take cues from in our professional lives as well as personal lives.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The present study is based on some objectives, which are given under:

- To understand the essence of Ramayana in reference to corporate world.
- Linking the past with the present and the future in reference of the actionable management skills from Ramayana.
- To find out the implications of management thoughts underlying in Ramayana in the era of globalization.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a way to systematically write the paper. This plan of study of a researcher is called the research design. Descriptive research design is used for this study. The data required for the study has been collected from the secondary sources include epics, scriptures, holy books, magazines, research articles and Journals. Keeping in mind the objectives of study different news articles, books, research paper & websites have been reviewed. Moreover, the academic wisdom and knowledge of the author is being applied to prepare the paper.

### Management and Ramayana

Management of any type, whether in business or some other human activity, in simplest of words is the act of bringing people together to work for achieving the desired goal. Management can be broken down to activities involving planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling. Management bridges the gap between actual performance and the desired performance of the organization. Management is also striking the perfect balance between the interest of the employees and the interest of the organization as a whole. Who would believe that each of these concepts have already been laid down in epic literature long before its basic principles were founded. The present world is surprised to realize that the various epics and spiritual scriptures actually are ocean of the most effective management thoughts and leadership principles. One of the most significant contributions of India to the world is The Ramayana which is considered to be one of the first revelations from almighty. While the whole of the *Ramayana* has lessons on strategic management, statecraft and good governance, some of the chapters have specific lessons on critical aspects.

The Bal Kand	Personality development in the growing years through the values of humility and discipline
The Ayodhya Kanda	Suggests the issues related to good governance
The Aranya Kanda	All about duty and devotion

The Kishkinda Kanda	The most valuable possession, human friendship
The <i>Sundar Kanda</i>	Classic account of strategic management
The Yuddh Kanda	Lessons of courage and strength
The <i>Uttar Kanda</i>	Depicts crux of effective Human Resource Management

## **ACTIONABLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS FROM RAMAYANA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS**

In this modern world the art of Management has become a part and parcel of everyday life, be it at home, in the office or factory and in Government. In all organizations, where a group of human beings assemble for a common purpose irrespective of caste, creed, and religion, management principles come into play through the management of resources, finance and planning, priorities, policies and practice. Management is a systematic way of carrying out actions in any field of human endeavors. If we want to develop the skill, orientation and attitude to draw upon the repository of knowledge for our day to day living issues (such as Business Management), then we will realize that the world of ancient Indian wisdom opens up. One may locate a number of direct and relevant thoughts in these texts in the Ramayana. The Ramayana offers perspectives on how to manage certain things in life, understand complex things that we go through in simple terms.

### **Ramayana and Clear vision for yourself and for your followers**

Like Rama, it is important for all the employers to set and share vision with the followers. This would enable motivation in them to perform because there would be clarity of goals. Lord Rama made it quite clear what he desired. In the case of Ramayana, Rama's clear vision was to rescue his wife Sita and defeat the evil forces and there was a clear plan of action to get there. His aims, objectives and strategy for accomplishing them were all extremely apparent. This clarity about the goals as well as the process enabled the army to put its heart and soul in the campaign to rescue Sita.

Everything begins with a vision, followed by a plan well-laid. A foreseen vision will always be a motivating factor to focus on the goal and to not get deviated. Having a clear vision is crucial. A visionary leader is someone who anticipates probable future objectives and creates an effective plan of action to reach those objectives. He lays up specific actions to achieve the desired result. Once you have a vision and a plan, half the battle is won as you know how to proceed.

### **Ramayana and Nurturing Business Relations by Strategic Alliance**

In Ramayana, Sugriva showed the best managerial characteristics and knew the importance of making allies and knows how to forge useful connections to achieve targets. Sughriva with his managerial skills managed Angad the son of Bali to work for him. He worked with Rama and defeated Bali who was far mightier and got back his kingdom. Sughriva and Rama alliance ultimately leads to the formation of *vanar-sena* (monkey-army) for defeating Ravana.

Businesses run on a good relationship and an ideal manager would value good relations with the employees, clients etc, to make it count for the organization. When it comes to business, building strategic alliances benefit the organization. Building alliances with different partners be it for marketing or finance or operations or technological insights, or just on a personal level, does pay off in the long run in the form of business expansion.

### **Ramayana and Crisis Management**

A team's knowledge must be trusted and a leader must count on their assistance in times of need. Lord Rama experienced numerous challenges on his quest to save Sita. One of Lord's most difficult crisis situations was possibly caused by Brother Lakshmana's severe wounds in the battle. Rama was emotionally attached to Lakshmana, and he also relied heavily on Lakshmana to defeat the powerful Ravana. Lord Rama handled this crisis with poise, confidence, and composure. According to Vibhishan's counsel, Lord Rama dispatched Hanumana to obtain the Sanjeevani plant, which ultimately saved Lakshmana's life. Lord Rama demonstrated his reliance on Hanumana and Vibishan.

A crucial characteristic a leader must develop is the ability to manage the situation with calm and assurance. A leader may be certain that he will experience crises while in office. Multiple crises are also possible. Only when a leader is faced with a crisis scenario can the quality of crisis management emerge. A leader does not always need to be able to offer solutions when there is a crisis.

### **Ramayana and Communication**

Ramayana provides valuable insights into the importance of communication through its characters and their interactions. Ramayana portrays this aspect through the characters of Lord Rama and Sita. Their communication and understanding of each other's thoughts and emotions played a pivotal role in their relationship and helped them overcome various challenges. Lord Rama was known for his effective communication skills, which enabled him to build alliances and negotiate with various entities. In addition to these strategies, Rama and his allies communicated regularly and openly, sharing information, feedback, and support. His clear instructions and effective communication helped them work together and achieve their goals. This highlights the importance of clear and effective communication in both personal and professional life.

### **Ramayana and Time Management**

Ramayana provides valuable insights into the importance of time management through its various characters and their actions. Lord Rama's unwavering focus on his goals and his ability to prioritize his tasks is a testament to the power of effective time management. Hanumana was always punctual and made efficient use of his time which helped him complete his tasks effectively. His dedication to time management enabled him to achieve success in his endeavours.

In today's fast-paced world, time management has become essential to achieving success and personal growth. Time management has become more challenging due to various distractions, such as social media and digital devices. It helps individuals achieve their goals, maximize productivity, and lead a fulfilling life. By learning from the examples of

Ramayana, we can improve our time management skills and achieve success in both personal and professional life.

### **Ramayana and Delegation of Authority and Responsibility**

In the epic literature, Rama was also responsible for delegating the right responsibility to the right person while freeing his wife, Sita from the clutches of the Demon King Raavan. Hanumana was given the responsibility to find out where Sita was in Lanka. Lord Rama knew that Hanumana had the skills and expertise to complete the task successfully and trusted him to do so. Hanumana, in turn, demonstrated his abilities by completing the task with flying colors. The engineers **Nal and Neel** were given the task to design the bridge from India to Sri Lanka.

Delegation of authority is a critical management technique that involves assigning tasks and responsibilities to subordinates while retaining accountability for their successful completion. Effective delegation helps organizations achieve their goals efficiently by empowering team members, improving communication, and fostering trust. The manager has to be clear about what he wants to achieve, how he wants to achieve it and what means he can employ to achieve the same. Thus, the Ramayana teaches us that effective delegation of authority involves identifying the right person for the task, providing them with the necessary resources and support, and maintaining accountability for the successful completion of the task.

### **Ramayana and Values**

Throughout the Ramayana, there are many examples of values, where characters exhibit traits such as honesty, loyalty, courage, and compassion. Rama is unwavering in his commitment to his duties as a prince, a husband, and a protector of his people. He demonstrates honesty, integrity and courage in all of his actions, even in the face of great adversity. Rama's companions, including his brother Lakshmana and the monkey warrior Hanumana, show unwavering loyalty to him throughout their journey. They put their trust in him and support him in his quest to rescue Sita from Ravana. Other values in the Ramayana include humility, respect for elders, and devotion to God.

The Ramayana teaches us that these values are essential for leading a fulfilling and meaningful life. By embodying these values, we can cultivate strong relationships with others, make a positive impact on the world, and find inner peace and happiness. Overall, the Ramayana is a powerful reminder of the importance of living a life based on values. By following the example of the characters in the story, we can cultivate a deep sense of purpose and meaning in our lives and make a positive impact on those around us.

### **Ramayana and SWOT analysis**

SWOT analysis of Ramayana can help us appreciate the timeless wisdom and relevance of this epic and apply its lessons to our own lives and endeavors. Rama's unwavering commitment to his duties and principles as a strength, while his initial reluctance to take up arms against Ravana can be considered a weakness. Similarly, Ravana's formidable military and magical powers can be seen as a threat, while Sita's demonstration of her purity and faithfulness presents an opportunity for Rama to showcase his values and win the support of his followers.

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool that is used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organization or a project. It is a simple but powerful

framework that helps businesses and individuals identify their internal and external factors that affect their success. By conducting a SWOT analysis of Ramayana, we can gain a deeper understanding of the characters' motivations, goals, and obstacles and draw valuable lessons on leadership, strategy and personal development.

### **Ramayana and Risk Management**

Rama's journey to rescue Sita from Ravana involves several risks and challenges and to overcome these risks, Rama and his allies adopt various risk management strategies. For example, before launching an attack on Ravana's fortress, Rama sends Hanumana to gather intelligence about the enemy's strength and defenses. He also forms an alliance with Sugriva and his army of monkeys, which helps him overcome his numerical disadvantage against Ravana. Additionally, Rama maintains a positive mindset and unwavering commitment to his duty and principles, even in the face of adversity. This allows Rama to formulate a plan that leverages his strengths and exploits his enemy's weaknesses, thus reducing the risk of failure or defeat.

Risk management is a critical aspect of any project or endeavor, as it helps identify potential threats and develop strategies to mitigate them. Ramayana provides a wealth of examples and lessons on effective risk management, including the importance of information gathering, strategic alliances and a positive mindset. By applying these strategies and insights to our own challenges and opportunities, we can increase our chances of success and mitigate potential risks and threats.

### **Ramayana and Team Motivation**

Rama demonstrates courage, determination and selflessness throughout his journey, which motivates his allies and followers to emulate his behavior and values. When Rama and his army were facing defeat at the hands of Ravana, Rama did not lose hope or give up. Instead, he remained calm and focused, and his steadfastness motivated his team to continue fighting. When Hanumana returned from his mission to find Sita, Rama expressed his gratitude and admiration for Hanumana's courage and loyalty, which motivated Hanumana to continue serving Rama with even greater devotion.

Team motivation is a critical factor in achieving success, as it helps ensure that team members are engaged, committed and enthusiastic about their work. Ramayana provides many lessons on effective team motivation, including leading by example, recognizing and appreciating team members, and fostering communication and collaboration. By applying these strategies and insights to our own teams and organizations, we can create a motivated and engaged team that is committed to achieving success.

### **Recommendations**

- Taking advice from people who do not know what your vision and objectives are, is like taking medicines without knowing what the problem is. It might cause you more harm than good.
- Effective delegation of authority involves identifying the right person for the task, providing them with the necessary resources and support, and maintaining accountability for the successful completion of the task.

- Effective communication skills enabled us to build alliances and negotiate with various entities, highlighting the importance of clear and effective communication in both personal and professional life.
- Ability to handle crises with poise, confidence, and composure teaches us the importance of developing crisis management skills as a leader.
- Clear vision and plan of action demonstrate the importance of setting and sharing a clear vision with the team to enable motivation and clarity of goals.
- A team's knowledge must be trusted, and a leader must count on their assistance in times of need.
- Participative decision-making approach, by listening to all counterpoints before final decision, demonstrates the importance of respecting and empowering subordinates.
- Planning and execution in time is a valuable lesson for managers to understand the importance of meeting deadlines on time to avoid losing customers.
- Utilizing available resources optimally to gain maximum output represents a skilful manager who vests responsibility with utmost faith in their team, encouraging individuals to give their best and get things done.
- Ability to build strategic alliances and make useful connections highlights the importance of networking and building alliances in the business world.

## CONCLUSION

Ramayana is primarily the tale of the triumph of good over evil. However, this victory has taught many important lessons in leadership and teamwork when observed closely. The Ramayana, an ancient Indian epic is not just a mythological epic but also a treasure trove of management and leadership lessons that can be applied in modern-day organizations. The Ramayana written thousands of years ago, enlightens us on all managerial techniques leading us towards a harmonious and blissful state of affairs in place of the conflict, tensions, poor productivity, absence of motivation and so on, common in most of Indian enterprises today – and probably in enterprises in many other countries. It has lessons of humility, virtue, obedience, and courage and urges us to walk on the path of righteousness. By applying these lessons in our personal and professional lives, we can become better managers and leaders and create successful and motivated teams.

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