

Application of Lord Krishna's Teachings in Business that resolved Arjuna's Dilemma

Ms. Sweety Gupta

Assistant Professor,
Rukmini Devi Institute of Advanced Studies, affiliated to GGS
Indraprastha University

Mr. Shiv Gupta

Manager & CEO at Incremators Web Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

Introduction

Bhagavad Gita

Bhagavad Gita is undoubtedly, one of the most inspiring and elevating book present in the spiritual literature of the world. Bhagavad Gita is universally renowned as an Indian book on spiritual wisdom and is a doctrine of universal truth. Bhagavad Gita shares the messages of Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead to his intimate disciple Arjuna.

Bhagavad Gita has seven hundred verses between Lord Krishna and the confused Arjuna narrated in the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata on the battlefield of Kurukshetra near New Delhi, India, in about 3,100 years BCE. This pious book contains the messages and learning given by Lord Krishna to Lord Arjuna, who faced the dilemma of choosing between the path of fighting for righteous or not fighting for his right. Bhagavad Gita imparts the knowledge of the Self and answers some fundamental questions of life. It is based on the cardinal principles of the Hindu religion and is a very pious book of Hindus. The Bhagavad Gita contains words of wisdom and many practical teachings that can be easily applied to the present day's life to solve the numerous problems faced by him. The Bhagavad Gita transcends the bounds of all religion or race, and contains divine wisdom addressed to mankind to help him provide direction.

Arjuna's Dilemma

In about 3,100 years BCE, Lord Arjuna, one of the Pandavas, was leading his army in a great war against those who had unjustly acquired his kingdom. In the middle of the battlefield he found that the other army that stood against him includes his guru, very dear friends, close relatives, and many innocent warriors. He at that point, got perplexed as to what he should do. Arjuna's dilemma was to choose between fighting the war with his guru, very dear friends, close relatives, and many innocent warriors to restore humanity and righteous; or leave the battlefield and forego his rights that he deserved. Therefore, he called out Lord Krishna to help him take a decision. This situation can be best described as choosing between these two different paths. In the

Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Arjuna has been coached by Lord Krishna just as a student is coached by a faculty in a university so that right path can be followed by Lord Arjuna. Just like Arjuna, every human being faces dilemmas in their every day's life when rendering their duties. Though neither we can compare Arjuna's dilemma to the dilemma that we face in our lives nor can we apply the same solution given by Lord Krishna to Lord Arjuna in our lives in the present times. But we can definitely learn few lessons from this incident that took place a long time back and is a revered part of Hinduism. Here are the few lessons we can learn from the teachings of Lord Krishna to Lord Arjuna. These lessons have been explained with the help of the verses taken from Bhagavad Gita. Some of these lessons are definitely helpful for us.

Act with conviction

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'Whatever is done without faith - whether it is sacrifice, charity, austerity, or any other act -- is useless. It has no value here or hereafter, O Arjuna. (17.28)'. In this verse, Lord Krishna has laid emphasis on acting with conviction. Through this verse, Lord Krishna is explaining the significance of belief in whatever you do. Therefore, one should do everything with strong belief. Before a business manager undertakes any action, he should himself believe in those actions. Half-hearted attempt never provide the desired result. Therefore, it is necessary for a business manager to give his best in everything he does because only then the team members will learn to contribute maximum towards the organization.

Perform your duties diligently

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'Always perform your duty efficiently and without any selfish attachment to the results because by doing work without attachment one reaches the supreme goal of life (3.19)'. In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of rendering the duties efficiently to Arjuna. Therefore, we should learn to give our best to whatever we do. The performance of duties at the workplace should be done sincerely by the employees. Additionally, an employee should perform his duties efficiently without any selfish demands from the employer. He should sincerely render the performance of job duties that constitute his

responsibilities and for which he is accountable for. The performance of the duties efficiently leads the individual to the path of success.

"Master the mind, and you master the world."

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'One must elevate - and not degrade - oneself by one's own mind. The mind alone is one's friend as well as one's enemy. The mind is the friend of those who have control over it, and the mind acts like an enemy for those who do not control it. (6.05-06). In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of mastering mind to Lord Arjuna. According to Lord Krishna, there is no greater enemy other than an uncontrolled mind in this world. One can achieve a lot if they are able to control their mind. One may fall short of words to describe the importance of focused mind. There is a famous proverb, "A directionless mind is like a ship without a rudder". Therefore, one should provide a right direction to their activities with a firm determination and this can only happen after mastering the mind. A person who has controlled his mind provides direction to his activities that he can achieve the desired result effectively and efficiently.

Come out of Comfort Zone

Lord Krishna said to Lord Arjuna 'O Arjuna, when inertia is predominant, ignorance, inactivity, carelessness, and delusion arise. (14.13). In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of change to Lord Arjuna. According to him, following a particular routine can lead to low productivity and hamper performance. One should therefore try to perform new activities to bring change and excitement in life. When an individual feels lethargic or is struck in a state of inertia, he should make an attempt to bring enthusiasm to their lives by coming out of their comfort zone and by learning new things. Similarly, a manager should always attempt to try and learn new activities, technologies, processes to improve the productivity and output level in the organization to gain an edge over its competitors.

Practice Meditation & Perseverance

Lord Krishna said: 'Undoubtedly, O Arjuna, the mind is restless and difficult to restrain, but it is subdued by any constant vigorous spiritual practice - such as meditation - with perseverance and by detachment, O Arjuna. (6.35). In this verse, Lord Krishna has shared the significance of Meditation & Perseverance to Lord Arjuna. A focused mind is required to take crucial decision in life. A focused mind could be achieved through Meditation & Perseverance. Meditation improves mental productivity which automatically turns to higher job productivity. Therefore, one should practice meditation to achieve their personal as well as organization's objective effectively. An organization can reduce wastage and unproductive activities if the human

resources are well equipped with focused mind as they will not indulge in unproductive activities and this can happen with Meditation & Perseverance.

Achieve your Dream

Lord Krishna said to Lord Arjuna, "That resolve is in the mode of ignorance by which a dull person does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despair, and carelessness, O Arjuna. (18.35)". In this verse, Lord Krishna is explaining the meaning of dreams to Lord Krishna. Every individual aspires something or the other and these aspirations take form of dreams. Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam Sir, former President of India said "Dream is not that which you see while sleeping it is something that does not let you sleep." Every individual should make all possible attempts to achieve their dreams as individual's dreams are capable of providing a direction to one's life. The beauty of dreams lies in the fact that they make life beautiful and worth living.

Be firm and strong even in adversity

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'Considering also your duty as a warrior, you should not waver because there is nothing more auspicious than one's personal duty in life. (2.31)'. In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of facing the adverse situation with firmness and determination to Lord Arjuna. Every individual has to face difficult as well as easy times in their life. Similarly, in business one has to face both favorable and unfavorable situation. However, one should remain focused even in unfavorable situation. A manager should make a suitable strategy in difficult time to overcome the adverse period and he should not run away from the situation. If he can face difficult times with strong determination, then no one can stop him from achieving the organizational objectives.

Distribute profits to employees and contribute towards society

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'The righteous who eat after sharing with others are freed from all sins, but the impious who cook food only for themselves (without first offering to God or sharing with others), in truth, eat sin. (3.13)'. In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of sharing to Lord Arjuna. Lord Krishna suggested Lord Arjuna that one should inculcate the habit of sharing with society. When we talk about business, we are aware about the fact that business consumes the resources of the society. Therefore, it is all the more important for business to contribute towards the welfare of the society. It is also suggested that the business profits should also be distributed to the employees to engage them and the business should also indulge in corporate social responsibility to serve the society well.

Be action oriented

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'O Arjuna, there is nothing in the

three worlds — heaven, earth, and the lower regions — that should be done by Me, nor there is anything unobtained that I should obtain, yet I engage in action. (3.22)'. In this verse, Lord Krishna is imparting the significance of being action oriented to Lord Arjuna. You must have heard that "Your actions become your habits, habits become your values, and values become your destiny." So, in a way our actions are responsible for shaping our destiny. To accomplish desired results in our lives, we must couple our knowledge with the necessary action to attain those results. One should always be action oriented and let their actions speak louder than their words to prove their worth to others.

Be a leader and provide right motivation

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'The wise should not unsettle the minds of the ignorant who are attached to the fruits of work, but should inspire others by performing all works efficiently without selfish attachment. (3.26)'. There is a direct relationship between employee's level of motivation and his level of productivity. Employees often work hard only when they have some motivating factor and they are guided in the right direction. In the adverse situation, Lord Krishna guided Lord Arjuna and showed him the right direction. Similarly, a manager should also perform the role of a leader/motivator and guide the workforce to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Focus mind

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'Therefore, focus your mind on Me and let your intellect dwell upon Me alone through meditation and contemplation. Thereafter, you shall certainly attain Me. (12.08)'. Through this saying Lord Krishna has tried to inculcate the importance of a focused mind to Lord Arjuna. Swami Vivekananda said, "The powers of the mind are like the rays of the sun. When they are concentrated, they illumine." Therefore, one should understand the importance of a focused mind. A focused and a concentrated mind can achieve what a disturbed mind can't even think of achieving due to non-directional efforts. A focused mind takes decisions promptly and displays high problem solving abilities. Therefore, it is highly beneficial for the business manager to have a focused mind to achieve organizational objectives effectively and efficiently.

Set high yet achievable standards

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna 'Because whatever noble persons do, others follow. Whatever standard they set up, the world follows. (3.21)'. Since the business activities are directed towards the achievement of business objectives. It is suggested that the objectives are set with great care. The objectives of the business should be set high yet they should be achievable by the employees. If the business objectives

are set low then there will be huge loss of productivity as the business employees will direct their energies in achieving those objectives only and it will hamper the long-term objectives of business.

Discussion:

Lord Krishna has given many suggestions to Lord Arjuna to help him overcome the dilemma he faced during the battle. Do you feel those suggestions are applicable in the present management scenario where the business environment is so complex?

Do you think that the suggestions of Lord Krishna given to Lord Arjuna still hold the same importance that they held at the time they were delivered?

"Master the mind, and you master the world". Do you feel one can actually master the world by mastering mind? Comment on the same in context of the above text.

Great qualities that are crucial in business can be imbibed from the teachings of our revered deities such as Lord Krishna. Do you agree? Discuss in context of the above text.

"Old values and belief system stands valid even in the present scenario and still command the same respect". Do you agree? Comment on the statement.

"Dream is not that which you see while sleeping it is something that does not let you sleep." Do you agree with this statement of A.P.J Abdul Kalam?

References

- Miracles of Lord Sri Krishna, <http://www.speakingtree.in/allslideslord-krishna-the-greatest-management-guru-of-all-times>, Accessed on 23rd Jan, 2016
- Use Lord Krishna's Teachings for Better Decision-Making, <https://www.common-sense-living.co.in/common-sense-living-letters/detail.aspx?date=11/26/2014&story=178&title=Use-Lord-Krishnas-Teachings-for-Better-Decision-Making>, Accessed on 19th Jan, 2015
- The Bhagavad Gita, <http://reluctant-messenger.com/bhagavad-gita.htm>, Accessed on 10th Jan, 2016
- The Bhagavad-Gita, Complete with Explanation, http://www.gita-society.com/backup/section2/2_bhagavadgita.htm#14, Accessed on 4th Feb, 2016
- Bhagavad Gita, <http://www.asitis.com/>, Accessed on 24th Feb, 2016
- Bhagavad Gita, <http://www.dlshq.org/download/bgita.pdf>, Accessed on 10th Feb, 2016