



# "The Timeless Wisdom: Unveiling Management Principles In The Bhagavad Gita"

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## 1. Introduction:

### 1.1 Bhagavad Gita:

One of the remarkable contributions of India to the world is Bhagavad Gita. It is the message given by Bhagavan Krishna, to all of us to perform our duty with a pure mind so that we are successful. It provides "all that is needed to raise the consciousness of man to the highest possible level."

On observing the people with whom he is suppose to fight in the battlefield , he was confused, depressed and sat down on the seat of the Chariot, kept his bow and arrows aside and told Lord Krishna that he will not fight. Arjuna tried to his decision that how it is correct ethically, morally, religiously and socially. The Bhagavad Gita is philosophy told by Lord Krishna to the Arjuna to make him ready for the 'duty' in the battle field Kurukshetra. It has got all the management tactics to achieve the mental equilibrium.

The philosophy provides right direction to face day to day problems. Further, it conveys to us the necessary perspective for success in work life.

The Bhagavad Gaeta guide us to do right work/ action at right place and at right time. This helps to overcome problems faced by us in our day to day life successfully.

## 1.2 Management:

Management is part and parcel of everyday life. It is applicable at home, office, factory, Government, or any Charitable organization. Where ever people are coming together, for a common purpose, management principles are used to keep them together and achieve the purpose.

Managing people is one of the most important elements of management. Managing man is management.

According to Koontz management is “getting the things done through and with people in formally organized groups”

Management is a systematic process of conducting of various activities to achieve predefined goals. In this process manager has to identify the skills and qualities of manpower from whom he wants to get the work done. Motivate people to be involved in the work voluntarily and work efficiently.

## 2. Bhagavad Gita and Management :

At the end of First Chapter and in the beginning of the Second Chapter of Gita, Arjuna declares that he will not fight. He doesn't want any Kingdome and explains how he is right. Arjuna tried to convince Lord Krishna that his decision was correct.

Today we come across many people who are not ready to perform their duty and they justify how they are right. Arjuna refused to perform his duty. At the end of the Eighteen Chapter Arjuna surrenders Lord Krishna and accepts that he was wrong. He gained knowledge and he is ready to perform his duty with his all abilities and skills. If this text can change the mind of Arjuna and motivate him to perform his duty, it can be in general also.

Every manager wants to develop harmony in working equilibrium in thoughts and actions, goals and achievements, plans and performance, products and markets. The orientation is done in three levels of human beings:

- a) Psychomotor Level: Action – Karma Yoga
- b) Emotional Level : Devotion: Bhakti Yoga – Unification towards work
- c) Intellectual (Rational) Level: Knowledge: Dhanyan Yoga – All round study of the activity which we wish to do.

The most important question in every Manager's mind is how to get the manpower ready for work. How to ensure their voluntary involvement in their work? How can we improve the effectiveness of manpower? The answers to these fundamental questions are found in the Bhagavad Gîta.

At end, Bhagavan Krishna ensures that Arjuna is 'work ready'.

### 3. Management Guidelines from Bhagavad Gita:

What management is expected to do is listed as follows:

3.1 Thinking process.

3.2 Identify roots of the problem.

3.3 Work commitment.

3.4 Motivation to manpower.

Following points are discussed with the help of Bhagwat Gita:

3.1 Thinking process (Knowledge)

Management is systematic thinking process. Every manager has to think to prepare their work force mentally and physically ready for the work. Every manager has to make workforce understand what they are suppose to do, conditions / surrounding under which he has to perform and clear all doubts or problems of workforce. Then manpower gives you extraordinary results.

Arjuna listed many problems to justify his action. He raised all ethical, intellectual, religious issues. Lord Krishna listen all the justification and clarified all doubts one by one. Conversation between Arjuna and Bhagavan Krishna at the battlefield Kurukshtra is known as 'Bhagavad Gita'. At the end Arjuna surrendered to Bhagavan Krishna and said he is ready to perform as per the direction of Bhagavan Krishna.

3.2 Identify roots of the problem.

Manager must study the situation with open mind and then try to understand the behavioral pattern of available manpower. Manager must be a good listener. He must observe and understand requirements of the manpower and their problems. If manager is able to understand feelings and problems faced by manpower, and if he work to overcome the problems manpower will involve voluntarily involve in the work.

If performance of workers is not up to the mark, if there is inefficiency in the organization instead of firing and punishment it is necessary to identify roots of the problems faced by the workers.

Arjuna has presented to Krishna his “confusion,”. Arjuna rejected to perform and attempted to justify his decision strongly. Lord Krishna smiled. The smile of Krishna is extremely significant. He was showing to Arjuna that he was not condemning him, that his words had in no way offended or angered him. He was showing to Arjuna that he understood his feelings and his reasoning.

Then Lord Krishna started his preaching. At the end Arjuna surrendered himself and ready to follow orders of Lord Krishna.

### 3.3. Know Yourself :

Every manager wishes to give right work to right person at right time. How to identify right person? Every management is interested to find out potentials of manpower through different techniques. It is necessary for every person to know his own qualities and skills so that he performs in the right duty with excellence. Manager identify skills and talent of the workforce around him, and then the duties are allotted.

Arjuna was trying to defend his action of non performance of duty was due to ignorance. Bhagavan Krishna explained him properly who you are. Arjuna was feeling sorry because he thought that he is going to kill all those who are standing before him. Krishna proved that how Arjuna was wrong. Pure knowledge of world was given to him and then Arjuna surrendered and ready to perform his duty as per direction of Bhagavan Krishna.

### 3.3 Commitment.

Today every organisation wants committed manpower. A person performing without commitment is not required in the organisation and may be immediately discontinued. Loyalty, punctuality, sincerity, dedication etc; qualities cannot be inducted through hard training but are behavioral part of human being. These qualities can only be and can be inculcated through counseling and busting values amongst manpower.

Bhagavan Krishna advised:

*“Karmanyevadhikaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana;*

*Maa karmaphalahetur bhoor maa te sango’stwakarmani”.* (2/47)

‘You have right to perform duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities and never attached to not doing your duty.’

Work is worship. Perform first result is the return effect of the performance. Working only with expectations of benefits means that the quality of performance of the current duty suffers. So, the Gita tells us not to think about an uncertain future but concentrate on present commitment.

## 4 Motivation to manpower.

Motivation is one of the main functions of modern management. Self-motivated manpower with high morale can achieve dream results. Motivation helps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of manpower. Motivated manpower is ready to do anything.

Arjun was depressed and rejected to perform his duty. Bhagavan Krishna motivated Arjuna to perform his duties with all energy.

## 5.Purpose / Motive :

Today every management decides purpose, motive, mission and objectives. This is well-informed to all the manpower so that there is a 'Unity of Direction' in the organization. This helps to improve better coordination and control.

*"Hato vaa praapsyasi swargam jitwaa vaa bhokshyase maheem;  
Tasmaad uttishtha kaunteya yuddhaaya kritanishchayah."* (2/37)

'You will go to heaven if you die in the war, and if you win you will rule the Kingdome. So, get up Kaunteya, and be ready for war.' Is a purpose given to Arjuna. As a result in the end Arjuna was ready for the duty.

## 6. Summary:

1. No man can attain freedom from action (Karma/ Duties), nor can reach perfection by merely refusing to act.
2. No one can remain without any action (inactive) even for a moment, so it is always better to use skills, qualities, and energy for right action.
3. Perform the duties allotted by the superior for action.
4. Great people are those whose mind (brains) controls emotions (senses) and perform his duties keeping themselves unattached.
5. Concentrate on work than results. Work is controlled by us but result is decided by work.
6. Action done with expectation of its reward/ results it leads to bondage (stress)
7. If performance is done with expectation, it generates stress. Stress affects efficiency and then we do not get expected results.
8. Focus on work and be 'WORK READY' than 'JOB READY'

**7. Conclusion:**

*Sanjaya Uvaacha:*

*Evamuktwaarjunah sankhye rathopastha upaavishat;  
Visrijiya sasharam chaapam shokasamvignamaanasah. (1/47)*

Sanjaya said:

Having thus spoken in the midst of the battlefield, Arjuna, casting away his bow and arrow, sat down on the seat of the chariot with his mind overwhelmed with sorrow.

*Arjuna Uvaacha:*

*Nashto mohah smritirlabdhaa twatprasaadaanmayaachyuta;  
Sthito'smi gata sandehah karishye vachanam tava. (18/73)*

Arjuna said:

Destroyed is my delusion as I have gained my memory (knowledge) through Thy Grace,  
O Krishna! I am firm; my doubts are gone. I will act according to Thy word.

At the end of Chapter-1 Arjuna refused to perform his duty and started giving justification of his action. As an expert management expert, Bhagavan Krishna listened to his justification and started preaching.

Bhagavan Krishna step by step removed all doubts and answered all the questions of Arjuna . As a result of this communication at the end of Chapter-18 Arjuna surrendered Bhagavan Krishna and said destroyed delusion, gained knowledge and now I am ready to follow your order.

**This is how Bhagavan Krishna made Arjuna 'Work Ready'.**

**Reference:**

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**Bhagavad Gita and Management:** M.P. Bhattathiri, Retired Chief Technical Examiner, Government of Kerala, India.