

“Time is the scarcest resource and unless it is managed, nothing else
can be managed.”

-Peter Ferdinand Drucker.¹

It has been a hectic July day for the people of Mumbai. Amidst the heavy rain, everyone has worked really hard, fighting their guts in resisting the temptation of either staying in their warm bed or going for a long drive to a nearby hill station. One of them is Mrs. Sarita Gandhi. To add up to her gloom, she misses the 18:43 local train, that she boards in the evening, every working day from Churchgate station. One of the busiest railway stations of the Mumbai sub-urban railway line, Mrs. Gandhi would definitely get another local train. But what worried Mrs. Gandhi was the *hot-samosas* she got to relish in the rain with her ‘Train Friends’, would now have to be either enjoyed alone, or be taken home as a cold snack with her family.

From the train on the platform across hers, she could hear the familiar sound of the hymns and the in-sync rhythm of the finger cymbals that played along with the hymns. This usual cacophony was the only sound that would accompany her to her home station. Mrs. Gandhi knew that in spite of boarding the next train which is only 10 minutes later, she would be delayed by another 30 minutes. So instead of worrying about the snacks, she had an impromptu dinner recipe in mind. Her evening snack of *hot-samosas* would now make a cold *samosa-chaat* at dinner time.

Ever changing plans where one depends on the other is like a house of cards. Each task depends on the other. All of them are found to be interlinked. This tactic is not limited to the daily commuters alone, but it forms the key to sustenance of the happening life of the civilians in Mumbai. Be it utilizing the time of travelling by catching upon news, trends, relaxation maybe a power nap or shopping at the traffic signals and listening to news in the car every day, each minute counts.

Welcome to the city of dreams. All types of dreams are realized here. Everyone is chasing their dreams and then there are thousands chasing a single dream. Not a minute to spare, not a minute leisure, or in a blink of an eye, someone else takes one over. Competition is gigantic and so are the hurdles. Multiple problems such as the scarcity of electricity and water, & excessive human resource, Mumbai manages it all. But how!

“Intelligence, imagination, and knowledge are essential
resources, but only effectiveness converts them into
results.”²

¹ Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, 2006, p 51

² Peter F. Drucker, *The Essential Drucker*, 2001 p 18.

An example of this effectiveness is the *Dabbawalas*³- The ones who carry hot lunch for servicemen in the city who leave early from their houses, to their offices later in the day. Around 5000 workers supplying about 1,30,000 Tiffin⁴ in the city. Having less than 40 seconds to load and unload the Tiffin from the trains, one can imagine the chances of error. But they proudly boast the minimal number of errors.

It is this organizational and coordinative spirit that is what forms the foundation of smooth functioning in city of Mumbai.

Time Management:-

With this essential element out of sync i.e. TIME, and more importantly, Time Management, the routine collapses and the schedule of the entire day, various tasks which overlap one another cannot be carried out as easily as every day routine work.

Because the very essence of the city, Mumbai, more than anything lies within the key of Time Management.

And this brings us to a mechanical perception of Human Beings, by Peter Drucker:

“The human being is a very poorly designed machine tool. The human being excels in coordination. He excels in relating perception to action. He works best if the entire human being, muscles, senses, and mind, is engaged in the work.”

As a student, when I travel 25 kilometres to and fro 5 days a week, I began to follow a set pattern. And this is where the above statement comes to application. On my way to station in the rickshaw, I practice my breathing exercises that keep me fresh for the day. As I board the train, I grab my copy of the newspaper and spend the 30 minutes of my travel reading the same. And on my way to the University, I listen to some Indian Classical Music that helps me take my mind off the news and focus on the classes. On my way back, I listen to the Radio, talk to my friends, have some snacks and shop fresh fruits and vegetables. I also skip taking a rickshaw back home and prefer to walk instead.

This set schedule helps in maintaining priorities and in many ways provides constant reminders as to what I am supposed to focus on. But if one is a student and an artiste, they have to constantly juggle between Academics and routine Art Practice. At such times, is the test of an Efficient Individual in making. How does one really do that? How can one find a balance in their life?

For this, Drucker has various solutions. On the surface one would find an easy solution like:

“Do first things first, and second things not at all.”

³ <https://hbr.org/product/the-dabbawala-system-on-time-delivery-every-time/610059-PDF-ENG>

⁴ <https://hbr.org/2012/11/mumbais-models-of-service-excellence>

But on reading in depth and coming across a surprising view in his book ‘Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices’, Peter Drucker quotes:-

“Keep your eye on the task, not on yourself. The task matters, and you are a servant.”⁵

Here Drucker is talking with reference to leadership in Non-Profit Organizations, but if one applies this principle to application in their life, the task is bound to give an outcome that is not only abundant in its result but also satisfies the do-er in various aspects. One may carry out multiple actions, but when it is directed towards the task, the individual doesn’t bother about their self, but strives for perfection of the task.

Changing Times: Technology, Management and B-Schools:-

A Pre-Socratic Philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (near modern Kuşadası, Turkey) who was active in c. 500 B.C.E. is known for his contribution – ‘Universal Flux’ which states that everything in the world is constantly changing. And change is only constant.

Though not all that he says is relevant but we can certainly see for ourselves the changes in our world. And what is the most notable change is-Technology. Technology is that what enables us in bringing about change. What we see is, technology itself traces its path from tools and equipments to industry and now- The Age of Digitalization. Digital Revolution that began in late 20th Century has laid the foundation of the digital economy. Humankind has come a long way from barter system to minting coins and printing notes to contemporary digital economy. The reason for all these changes and advancements has been nothing else but ‘Ease of Management’

The question that now arises is, ‘What is Management and how does it comes to play in these confusing, complicated and changing times?’

The answer can be found in the Book- ‘The Essential Drucker’⁶ where Drucker says:

“Management is about human beings. Its task is to make people capable of joint performance, to make their strengths effective and their weaknesses irrelevant.”

21st Century, along with the Digital Revolution, is also taking ahead the field of Management. Management what once began from theoretical, rational outputs in Industry and Finances, now is an integral part of Academics, Administrative, Public Welfare, Corporate Sectors. Etc. Management is the key to the fundamental functioning of any organisation in today’s world. India alone comprises of around 3000 B-Schools⁷. That gives a hint to the demand of students in the field of Business, Management and Administration which go hand in hand with one another.

⁵Peter F. Drucker. *Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practices*, New York:Routledge, 2011 p 20.

⁶Peter F. Drucker, *The Essential Drucker*, 2001 p 10

⁷<http://www.time4education.com/CAT-MBA/About-MBA/TIME-B-School-Categorisation>

The Indian Institution of Management, the top institutes that provide education in this field are the toughest to get into. To crack the entrance examinations, there are coaching institutes which add on to the revenues generated through the field of Management.

While these students spend a lot of time with books, theories and learning that they miss out on On-Field experiences, or so Drucker thought. The books of noted Management Scholars, the orders of functioning in different societies, and also interning for companies is a part of their course. Drucker talked about the students who lacked experience and need to be provided with a job where they can be guided by experienced workers who have been in the field for about 15 to 20 years already.

Now, with changing times, the mode of learning has changed as well. Instead of only theories, now Practical Experience is a part of the course structure as well. These young Managers are hired by various companies in both public and private sector that enables smooth functioning in the administrative works. In turn of their services they are provided with letter of experience which let the Recruiters know about the non-academic performance of a freshly graduate Management student.

“One cannot hire a hand—the whole man always comes with it.”⁸

The above statement is a proverb of the Human Relations people. And it can be seen very well in terms of now HR-Human Resource. Human Resource brings out the best in people, as we read above. With freshly graduate students, the experiences the chances of success and failure are not known. With every new employee, there is an addition to the surprise package in the company. The HR managers job is to sharpen an employee’s strengths and enables them to work upon their weakness. In an organisation, different people strengthen the ability of another while some shadow another’s weakness. Such is the power of Management and the role of Managers in the 21st Century Corporate World.

Conclusion:-

What we see in this essay is, there are various aspects to achieving perfection that can lead to success. The key to Human Potential in our changing world to succeed, I believe is Management. Management that has multiple aspects, including managing Time, managing change, managing resources and balancing the shortcomings of a given organization or the society. While people often form their own chains of management, it is also found that there are experts who can guide the masses and potential leader to yield the best for and from them. The youth today realizes the importance of Technology and it is to minimize the hurdles that the world faces. The world today is global and not limited to the leadership of said countries, but all the nations coming together and moving towards prosperity, where the each one stands out with its own distinct quality To end my essay, and on the observation of our contemporary society, I shall quote Peter F. Drucker,

“Management will increasingly be the discipline and the practice through which the “humanities” will again acquire recognition, impact, and relevance.”⁹

⁸ Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, 2006 p 75

⁹ Peter F. Drucker, *The Essential Drucker*, 2001 p 13