



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 8. Issue.2. 2021 (April-June)

INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA  
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FROM RAMAYANA

Prof. Dr. DEEPA S. KUMAR

Professor, Department of English, Govt. MLB Girls P.G. Autonomous College, Bhopal MP



Article information

Received:29/4/2021  
Accepted: 27/5/2021  
Published online:02/06/2021  
doi: [10.33329/ijelr.8.2.132](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.8.2.132)

ABSTRACT

The present paper throws light on the insights hidden in the Ramayana which can enrich management strategies in the modern era. Ramayana is one of the greatest holy tests of India which is having many lessons on management strategies that can well be a part of modern management literature. Our ancient Indian scriptures have been repositories of knowledge and references of modern management theories and practice. By reading Indian scriptures like Ramayana one can be an expert in management strategies and get success.

Management strategies are supposed to be a discipline of a comparatively recent origin. Management as a practice is as old as the civilization. The need for managing the affairs was always there and human beings were adopting practices that management books talk about today. References to many of those practices can be found in our ancient scriptural texts. As such drawing insights into management practices from scriptures, throw light on how to manage the day to day affairs effectively in organizations. Though all such tests have significantly contributed to the development of management literature and practices the present article has focused on managerial insights given in the Ramayana.

Ramayana narrates the saga of the life and times of Lord Rama. There are many versions of Ramayana which has been translated into many languages but the two most popular versions are those of sage Valmiki and Goswami Tulsidas who has written the Ramayana and Ramacharitamanasa, respectively known in common parlance as Ramayana. It is one of the greatest of the Indian epics offering lessons on statecraft and management that has transcended time and space.

The question that needs to be answered is why Ramayana has been chosen as the text that can offer clues to effective management practices for both states as well as the organization. The first and foremost reason is the fact that in the Indian ethos, Lord Rama is held as 'Maryada Purushotam' that is the ideal human being or the model leader. Rama's personality has to be assessed in this light. His leadership style, his approach to managing his people, his way of dealing with difficulties was all based on the premise of values and ethics. Dharma or righteousness was the touchstone on which he based his decisions. There may be questions as to the universality of righteousness, given the popularly held view that right and wrong may depend on situations and sometimes are culturally or socially determined. However, we must agree that some cardinal values have withstood the test of times. They have transcended eras, civilizations and geographical boundaries to prove that are held in the same vein everywhere always. Thus lying and treachery, greed and deceit, vanity and egotism have always been treated as undesirable human qualities whereas truthfulness and loyalty, contentment and integrity, humility and mildness have always been treated as desirable. Rama symbolized these desirable

attributes. This was the reason that Rama has been the role model for his leadership, the ideal style, his governance and his model approach.

The Ramayana very succinctly talks about 'Rama-Rajya' or ideal governance and offers essentials of the crucial art of leadership. A reader of Ramayana has to figure out why Ravana, the mightiest of the demon kings having huge wealth and a large team of heavily armed warriors and strategists could be humbled by Rama, the Prince of Ayodhya who was assisted only by an army of monkeys and had no armor or other protective gear. This is in itself a great learning experience that teaches that it is only integrity and honesty that experience that triumph in the end.

Then a question arises, that why does Ravana gets defeated and lost? The answer is that he was defeated primarily because of 'Adharma' and non-righteousness. His intentions were not noble and this proved to be his undoing. It was his haughtiness- the 'Ahamkara' that clouded his power of reasoning. He was egocentric and ignored sage's counsel. The driving forces behind his decisions were negative emotions- lust, greed, envy and pride. He was the antithesis of all that Rama stood for.

Rama was motivated by the right cause, was humble, and listened to his people, respecting their views and seeking their advice on sensitive issues. He was everything that Ravana was not- honest, righteous, respectful, warm and loving.

Leadership essentially involves making critical decisions and at times there are some very close calls. One has to take decisions requiring immense moral strength and courage. Leaders have to develop the art of tightrope walking. It is about striking a balance despite the frequent temptations and opportunities that can throw one off balance. One slips and down one goes. Rama was supposed to be a role model in this matter.

In the Ramayana, we can see how Rama could retain his composure in even the toughest of the situations and rarely do we find him reacting despite strong provocations. That is what management is all about- leading dispassionately yet for the cause.

Let us now try to take a look at the Management lesson that Ramayana has to offer. Though the entire text of strategic management, statecraft, good governance, and values-based leadership, the focus is on righteousness or Dharma that is the rightful conduct that should be the bulwark of all leadership actions. Nevertheless, in some of the chapters, we can find specific lessons on critical aspects of management practice that appear to be highly contemporary. In the second chapter of the epic one can find a real treatise on the issues related to good governance. If one goes through the dialogue between Lord Ram and his younger brother Bharat, the kind of advice that the Lord has given to his brother on how to manage the kingdom will appear to be a great lesson on effective management practices.

While giving tips on good governance to Bharat, Rama dwells upon several subtle aspects of administration. The critical factor in good governance, Lord Rama says, is the quality of ministers. According to Lord Rama, the king must ensure that he appoints courageous, knowledgeable, and strong-willed men with high emotional quotient because the quality of advice is a critical determinant of the quality of governance.

While Ayodhya Kanda is about governance the SuNdar Kanda is classic account of strategic management. The Lord had been requesting the ocean God for good there days to no effect. It is then that Rama asks his brother Lakshmana to get him his bow and arrow so that he can forcefully dry up the ocean with his firepower. The Lord tells Lakshmana that an unreasonable person only understands the language of fear. The arrow was not shot as the mere sight of it made the ocean God tremble and surrender. There are many more such lessons on how to handle such unreasonable people.

Lessons on decision making are also there. Lord Rama advises his brother Bharat on how to make effective decisions. It should neither be taken unilaterally nor in consultation with too many people. There should be a core group of right people with the right intentions to advise.

Rama counseled Bharata on all facets of governance. From the quality of ministers and the importance of strategy sessions, to temperance in administration to justice, Rama expounds on all the subtleties of statecraft

lucidly. While inquiring Bharata of his well being Rama offers lessons on effective governance in a powerful manner. Though the dialogue between the two brothers runs into several pages and a thorough reading is required to understand the intricacies, some important lessons are obvious. A critical factor in good governance is the quality of the minister. Rama asks Bharata whether he has appointed courageous, knowledgeable, strong-willed men with a high emotional quotient as his ministers because quality advice is the key to effective governance. The emphasis is on competence and confidentiality.

Rama tells Bharata to prefer one wise man to a thousand fools as it is the wise who can ensure prosperity during an economic crisis. Even if there is one effective minister, the king will gain immensely. Appointing tested men on noble lineage and integrity for strategic positions is the key to a successful government. Moderate taxes should be levied on the people, lest they revolt. Rama wants Bharata to treat his soldiers well and pay their legitimate wages on time. Delays in payment of wages and other allowances can lead to dangerous consequences. Modern-day Human Resource Management advocates all these.

Modern Management literature talks about effective management practices through many theories and principles which at the time seem to be at cross purposes to one another often confusing the scholars and practitioners of management. Ramayana on the other hand succinctly offers lessons on Management that are clear and easy to understand and the beauty lies in their universality. It is a commonly believed proposition that managers need to act differently in different ethos underscoring the need for culture-specific management practice. However, there is a need to find out whether there are management practices that can work across cultures countries and even ages. Or in other words, whether is there a management practice that would transcend time and space and be effective at all places and all times a truly cross-cultural and time tested management paradigm. Ramayana is one such text that offers quintessential management lessons, lessons that are universally applicable and have withstood the test of time. It can well serve as a valuable management reference book.

#### **Work Cited**

Lee, N. H.. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1989. Print.

Thoreau, H. D. *Civil Disobedience*. Raleigh: Hayes Barton. Print.

Bhalla, Prem P.. *The Story of Rama*. New Delhi: Ghaziabad. U. P., 2009. Print.

Dhunoochand, Gian. *IDEALS AND VALUES IN THE RAMAYAN*. Delhi: Sahitya Sanchay, 2015. Print.

---