



Human Resource Management System

Know Thyself

Walter E Vieira

When we talk about SWOT analysis, what we are talking about is the age-old directive given in the scriptures of every religion. Know thyself. Going further 'To thine own self, be true.' And that is the essence of knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses.

To initiate someone else blindly, is a big mistake. To try and clone, is an even bigger mistake. Yet many do it, in order to be like their boss; or to please the boss; or in the hope that it is the real path to success. And it isn't.

Each of us has talents. Some are good at literature, others at art; others at mathematics and still others are good at geology or astronomy. It is a natural, inborn inclination.

There are those who like to work alone, and therefore prefer research or assignments where they are totally independent. And there are those who are gregarious and outgoing and would like to work as members of a team or a group.

There are those who have the ability to lead who always stand out; who immediately command respect. And there are those who prefer to be led; who prefer to take directions; who would much rather concentrate on the "how to", rather than the "why should" which is the mark of the leader.

There are those who are 'thinkers', who are good at planning. Good at working on concepts. The 'high brows' of the business world! And there are the 'doers' who may not have conceptual skills but they know how to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirtied and get the job done. And not bother now or even in the future to find out how what they have done, fits into the theoretical framework of the 'thinkers.'

And there are the 'integrators' always very few much fewer than thinkers and much, much fewer than 'doers' who 'are good at both, thinking and doing.' These are the people, who invariably go to the top of the organisation. Or, they may be so complete, and restless, that they want to become 'entrepreneurs'.

Only if you know where you belong and are honest with yourself about your talents, inclinations, desires, hopes, aspirations, goals, fears, insecurities, dislikes, preferences, will you have the courage to take tough decisions, which may make you look silly in the short run but admired as a winner in the long run.

It is the case with the young IIM graduate (MBA) who turned down offers at campus recruitment at mouth watering salaries to start his own business, making idlis. He supplied first to the college canteen and over the first few years has built a large food supply business in the South of India. He probably now makes as much as he would have made in a corporate environment but he has much more. He has self satisfaction and he loves his job. He is not working a day in his life, because his work is his hobby!

Walter Vieira, is a Senior Management Consultant who started India's first Marketing Consulting Company (MAS) in 1975. He offers consulting and training services to companies in India, S E Asia, Africa and USA, over three decades. He is the author of 11 books including The Winning Manager; and Manager to CEO. Has lectured at Kellogg, Cornell, NYU and many other business schools. He has published over 700 articles in the business press. Was the first Asian elected Chairman of the ICMCI (the world apex body of Management Consultants from 42 countries). Walter was awarded Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004 by IMC-India.