

# An Outstanding LEADER Before Someone Else Will

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Anything of 'gospel' in nature will be heard attentively, and appreciated too. Following it and applying in practice become optional and an individual prerogative. Many National, International Symposiums and Guest Lectures, though promoted with spiritual gusto and conducted with never before grandiose, remain, as gospels to be kept at the bottom of the mind at will, by choice (the symposium handouts lie in a visitor conspicuous location-some advertisement that).

I read in The Economic Times, the coverage on Mr. Noel Tichy's address to the top business intellectuals (most of them might have been LEADERS) in New Delhi on 21/03/2011, under the auspicious of CII – India's congregation of successful intellectual industrialists.

I am one among the millions who agree with Mr. Tichy, and would love to follow his prescriptions and migrate to the path of success in professional life and personal life too! The transformation of "**Being A LEADER To Becoming An Outstanding LEADER**" is by controlling one's destiny before someone else will.

**Mr. Tichy had a touchstone in re-defining the leader of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. His prescription is simple and brief, but it takes to be a Jack Welch, Narayana Murthy and the likes, to get administered by the prescription.**

Turning to Indian context, which I know a bit, it's pertinent to ask 'How many Indian LEADER's are LEADERS first? Leave alone becoming an "outstanding" leader and hence an "outstanding LEADER".

We Indians are taught from the day we can understand, that "follow and respect the elders, Without questioning," (questioning is audacity).

LEADERS capitalize on this, to enslave the people by unleashing "fear psychosis", rather than taking a 'parental approach' or "teacher like" approach.

Alas, most of the LEADERS, tend more towards dictatorship approach with "I know all, hence I am here" approach. "I instruct - you do" syndrome, irrespective of number of seminars the LEADERS have attended on "Human resources capital management" "Leadership through synergy" and the likes.

While agreeing with Mr. Tichy that leader should be a "Teacher," I dare add one more attribute, he must be a "learner" too, a committed teacher and a continuous, unbiased learner.

Most of the LEADERS accept the concept in public while refusing to "teach or learn" in private. They reiterate that they are Icons of knowledge, bundle of ideas, volcanoes of energy,

more perfect than perfection "and they strongly hinge upon their perceptions, in spite of HEARING/READING Noel Tichy's prescriptions.

Mr. Tichy talks of E3-"Emotional Energy Edge" and this is translated by our LEADERS thus "I have provided you a JOB {Just Obey the Boss} and you are indebted to me. Your survival hinges on the level and extent to which you **enslave, epitomize, and pigmy** yourself at my beckoning!! And this should continue as long as you are at the other end of my whip!! Liked the "Sermon" from "the boss??"

Let all the LEADERS touch their soul and confess in front of their own mirrors (privately), that they are prepared to learn and teach continuously and that they have intellectual, emotional and spiritual guts to develop "**LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS**" as recommended by Mr. Tichy. Some at least, who attended his presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> march, should attempt before they forget the event as one of those, filling the agenda gap of the organizers.

CHANGE in line with environmental demand is first resisted at the top, and slaves, down the line are blamed for 'change failure'.

Many LEADERS I presume are split personalities. They speak of hi-fly concepts in seminars, sponsored interviews, but in practice, they are hypocrites doing what **THEY WANT AND CONVENIENT TO THEM.**

One of the LEADER's whom I know, talked from the elevated, glorified platforms of "perfection, professionalism, giving & taking, system dedication and what not". But he behaved just the opposite – adhoc decisions, individualistic dictates, etc., He was unable to recognize the skills, talents and creativity of his people, hence lost a golden opportunity of using them to build competitive advantage to his business. **His limitations became the limitations of the organization.**

It must be no different elsewhere! When I spoke to some of my peer professionals, they too lamented, "yaar, no one wants creativity, innovation, breakthroughs, lateral thinking, as they have their own agenda of sorts and these things do not fit into them.

Let us examine the prescriptions given by Mr. Tichy:

**A MUST PROFILE OF A SUCCESSFUL LEADER AND HOW WHAT IT MEANS TO MANY OF THE DESIGNATED LEADERS.** This comparison would, I presume, wake up few of the LEADERS.

<b>A MUST PROFILE AS RECOMMENDED BY MR.TICHY</b>	<b>WHAT THAT MEANS TO A NORMAL LEADER ( by designation ) – INTERPRETATION BY AUTHOR.</b>
1. Integrity, Maturity, Energy	Yes, I have all these in plenty and more, hence I am here. My subordinates, I suspect.
2. Business acumen: - Deep understanding of the business - Strong profit orientation - Instinctive feel for how the company makes money?	Most of them presume they know this and only others do not know. All others, apart from me are costs and I am the value. If in doubt, instead of turning to their own, people, they turn to an external, un-attached agency for help.
3. People acumen: - Judging people - Leading teams - Coaching people - Cutting losses.	- Biased parameters for judging - Through dictates & instructions. - Coaxing them. - Cutting stronger, innovative people to remain strong among weaklings.
4. Organization acumen - Engendering trust - Sharing information - Listening expertly - Performance - Being decisive	- Endangering trust, genetic suspicion - Sharing failures, “hold”-- Info is power. - Listener is always the subordinate. - Demand from all below and authoritatively. - “I” driven decisions and enforcing.

<b>• A MUST PROFILE AS RECOMMENDED BY MR.TICHY</b>	<b>• WHAT THAT MEANS TO A NORMAL LEADER ( by designation )</b>
1. Curiosity:	- To know who’s secretly becoming stronger than me? - Challengers and not the challenges to be eliminated.
2. Superior judgment	- Punish by authority and power that be. - Fear is still the key.
3. Converting learning to practice	- No learning, no practice. Why learn, I know all, it is learning, learning and Learning for the rest.

The facts are there: it is left to the “self-introspection’ of the individuals.

In my 3 decades plus of work experience, in projects, corporate, and academics, put together, I have found very few LEADERS who were leaders IN THE REAL SENSE, found lots of them as dictators, few directors and teachers. Those who were teachers were alas, only preachers, they never practiced what they preached, **never walked their talk. Developing a second in command, creating leaders at all levels is a threat to most of them.**

**Teaching, learning, teaching, unlearning, learning and teaching should be a perpetual – intellectual, emotional and spiritual forte of a LEADER.**

**WHAT A LEADER NORMALLY DOES ( or what a normal LEADER do?):**

- Use authority to pin down self-esteem of enslaved employees, in the name of sheer discipline.
- Hypnotize the bought out commodities ( HR capital) to accept that he is the best, perfect leader to work with.

- Get rid of too intelligent people, rule by employing weak and lesser mortals.( in the kingdom of the mutes, one who can stammer is the king!)
- Encourage sycophancy as all your sub-ordinates weak, economically, intellectually, and are vulnerable on security grounds.
- Induce “glorification of the boss” syndrome.
- Believe strongly that “fear is still the key” and validate it by highlighting small lapses of people down below.

**WHAT A LEADER NORMALLY DOES NOT DO OR THINK?**

- Recognize the individual strengths by skill mapping and not skull counting; and evolve an OPPORTUNITY CHAIN for the skills. Opportunity chain could be established by evolving a participative, learning organization, encouraging team work, continuous improvement plans, etc,
- Recognize the “fit” of our demand chain with skill-supply-chain facilitated by the opportunity chain, to accomplish all the tasks as per plan.
- Create an “ activity-skill- resource – chain” and examine the fit with your expectations.

- Communicate understandably with all frequently and in a planned manner.
- Mean what you speak, speak what you mean and stand for it.
- Identify skill-gaps and fill it up with customized training.
- If you are not committed, why waste money on TQM, TPM, EQ, EI and the likes.
- Service leadership.

Managing is not a past time hobby. It is an ART, facilitated by scientific and researched knowledge base. All the theories and documented experiences are tools. LEADER cannot delegate LEADER's job. Ultimately, the limitations of the

LEADER become the limitations of implementing the prescriptions of Mr. Noel Tichy. It's better to take a "constructive approach" than "Instructive Approach". History repeatedly has warned us with factual, picturesque proof that

" A DICTATOR DIES HIS DEATH, DICTATED BY HIM, BUT EXECUTED BY OTHERS..... WHILE, A LEADER LIVES PAST HIS DEATH, KEPT ALIVE BY OTHERS."

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