

# From Strategic Business Unit to Spiritual Business Unit: A complete Organizational Transformation

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## Abstract

*Spirituality is one such element of that that transforms any human being into human resource. Due to innocence, many are under opinion to discuss the issue is a taboo in society and it must be understood that though spirituality is an integral part of all the religions, it is confined to only religious preaching. It can be taken as change agent to transform not just an individual working in an organisation but a complete organisational transform. In this research, a variety of spiritual techniques were deeply discussed to achieve the objective of organisational transform.*

**Keywords:** Spirituality, Economic Value Addition, Human Value Addition, Organisational Transformation.

## Introduction

*Spirituality is a way of life in the journey towards actualization of individuals, corporations and society.*

Over the past century management has continuously been evolving. There have been a wide range of approaches in how to deal with management or better yet how to improve management functions in our ever changing environment. From the Pre- Scientific era to the modern day management, from F.W Taylor to Peter Drucker, management has evolved from being mere concept to a matter of experience. It's been a process of transformation from the management theory of jungle to the modern day contingency and empirical school of thoughts. Along with these changes, the approach towards working in organizations has changed inevitably. From the Darwinian's concept of survival of

the fittest and cut throat competition, management has grown matured enough to discuss the utmost need for ethics, values, morals and spirituality.

The advent of spirituality in the corporate corridors shows its marks only a decade ago. It was towards the end of the 20th century that ethics, morals and values gained some voice. It was then in the beginning of 21st century that the urge to think more seriously and deeply about inculcating ethical and moral behavior in the form of a conduct was recognized. Corporate examples of Enron Corporation of Houston, Texas, LDDS WorldCom of United states, Tyco international of Princeton, New Jersey, Kanebo Limited of Japan, American International group (AIG) of Shanghai, China, Satyam Computer of Hyderabad, India, Scandal of Xerox, Bernie Madoff's Ponzi Scheme, the Stannford Financial Fallout, The Galleon Greed Scandal, Freddie and Finnie, Lehman

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Brothers, 2G scam-India, the NOTW (News of The World) episode, show that in all the cases trust built first to bubble status, and then only it popped.

Workplace Spirituality or Spirituality in the Workplace is a movement that began in the early 1990s. It emerged as a grassroots movement with individuals seeking to live their faith and/or spiritual values in the workplace. One of the first publications to mention spirituality in the workplace was Business Week, June 5, 2005. The cover article was titled "Companies hit the road less traveled: Can spirituality enlighten the bottom line?" Thompson (2001) denotes that spirituality at workplace has to do with how you feel about your work whether it is a job or a calling. Sanders et al. (2004) define spirituality in the workplace as, 'the extent to which the organization encourages a sense of meaning and interconnectedness among their employees'. Sheep (2004) defines spirituality at workplace through four components: self-workplace integration, meaning in work, transcendence of self, and personal growth of one's inner life at work.

But it was all like the case of blind men and the elephant. Whoever was holding the elephant from whichever part, was describing the elephant in his own way, without ever seeing it. The Western school of thought based on modernizing concepts could never ever match the solutions available in the East. Deeper discussions and explorations revealed that the solution lies in the text and scriptures of the country where the term Spirituality was born- India. It was then when the West started looking towards the East and establish new code of conducts based upon a deeper sense of value based humanitarian approach across all streams of life.

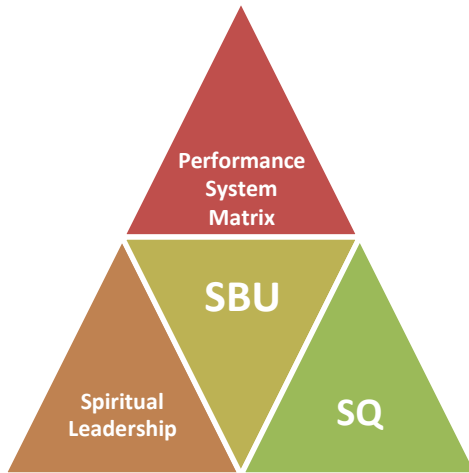
Spirituality can refer to an ultimate or an alleged immaterial reality; an inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of their being; or the "deepest values and meanings by which people live."

These individual deepest values and meanings when collectively aligned in a group create a bigger circle of value based initiatives and puts the founding stone of a SBU (Spiritual Business Unit, hereon mentioned as SBU). There needs to be a greater sense in the present day's organizations to enhance the value base of each and every employee. After all, the question business leaders need to answer is- Which value needs to be exchanged

among them and their team members? What value does an employee bring home towards the end of the day? Does s/he go home frustrated, deprived, anguished or hurt; or does s/he reach back with a sense of achievement, greater hope, meaning and purpose for the next day, some new learning to share with her/his own people, and after all a smile on the face? Does s/he feel the urge for waking up next day and reaching out to the organization as her/his second home where s/he spend more than half of the waking time, or does s/he get the blues every day? Answers to these simple practical questions leave us with the understanding of a Spiritually built and run organization. John Elkington's 3BL although do draw some attention on People and Planet other than Profit motives but very less efforts have been made in this direction for the simple reason being practically these do not go that well hand in hand as the moral bankruptcy of the organization does not support the combination of profit (the traditional bottom line) with the much needed Social and Environmental cause.

"We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey," Stephen R Covey.

Spirituality is an element that is within the essence of each employee, and it can't be separated from the employee, whether a business decides to acknowledge the spiritual aspect of humankind or to ignore the spiritual essence, but a business cannot make spirituality vanish from humanity. A SBU increases the sense of satisfaction of the employee and extends to her/him a delightful event to cherish upon, as she knows that the performance is based upon values like honesty, integrity, trust, respect, togetherness and compassion. A sense of greater purpose drives the employee to perform with full zeal dedication and devotion, beyond the thinking of mere paychecks and this sense of greater purpose is considered to be spiritual. Spirituality guides behavior. It as well impacts the response of an employee towards the change. As there sustains an environment of trust, help, cooperation and not competition in a SBU, the response to change is always positive and the transition is comparatively smoother.



**Fig. 1: Campuzano & Seteroff, 2009 proposed the following model of a SBU**

Building a SBU is a two way process of mutual exchange of values and principles among the employees and the employer. It is a connection of one with the whole, one soul with the higher soul; similarly one employee's value system with the organization's value culture. "When two Buddha meets they become one, when thousand Buddha meets, they also become one". The natural sense of community in us makes us commune with the rest of the world. This helps us align with the organizational objectives and remain in communion with the same.

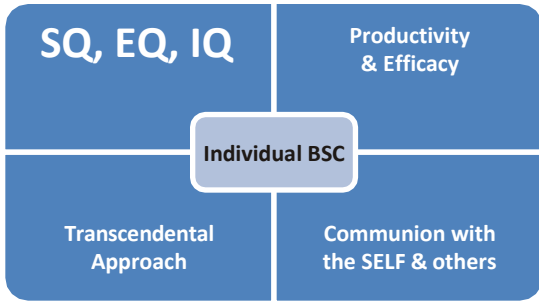
Spirituality is not an attribute that can be acquired by education. Spirituality is a journey from being at one level to the next up level. A SBU implements Spiritualized Leadership, Performance Systems Metrics, and a Spirituality Quotient. Here, employees and leaders search for meaning in the business organization. It is selfless and reflects shared values. Employees experience spirituality as a guiding force or a higher power (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). The guiding force or the higher power intertwines with work and influences behavior. It is like the modern day Astrophysicist's concept of Black hole; it is all around us, and it is still a mysterious force which is yet not fully understood. So is the guiding force of spirituality, which is present all around and inside us, and is also ready to intervene and guide us, provided we surrender ourselves and listen to its voice.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

SBU model offers a sustainable competitive advantage for increased profits, business performance, leadership, employee satisfaction and employee retention. The leader's task is to create an environment that will foster a culture of commune, empathy, faith, trust and belongingness.

Some recommendations are as follows:

- **From EVA to HVA:** Economic Value Added should be replaced by Human Value Added. Focus should be paid on how much value has been added to the human resources and how much have they contributed as a result of alignment.
- **From Survival of the Fittest to Arrival of the Best:** Explained later.
- **From Success to Excellence:** Focusing on Excellence and not Success, as every excellent effort does yield success.
- **From Capitalist to Socialist:** Change in approach from Capitalist (individualistic/money and profit oriented) to Socialistic (developmental/collective commune).
- **From MBO (Management by Objectives) v/s MBV (Management by Values) approach:** The internal drive for excellence and not success yields team performance, higher dedication, deep sense of commitment, and of course, no doubt about higher profit margins.
- **From Organizational BSC to Individual BSC:** Kaplan's and Norton's Organizational Balance Score Card should give space to Individual Balance Score Card. As the organizational performance is measured on the parameters of Finance, Customers, Processes and Learning & Growth; similarly, Individual should be rated on the 4 quadrants of SQ, IQ, Communion with peers-customers- and stakeholders, and Productivity & Efficacy.



**Fig. 2: Individual Balance Score Card**

**Quadrant 1:** SQ, EQ & IQ: Spiritual quotient (SQ) is described as a measure that looks at a person's spiritual intelligence similar to EQ and IQ.

**Quadrant 2:** Transcendental Approach: This is a unique approach as taught in Indian scriptures, especially Geeta when Arjuna had to fight against his own family members but yet stand by the values, ethics, truth and honesty.

**Quadrant 3:** The productivity and efficacy of the employee in terms of value contributed to the organization shall also be measured.

**Quadrant 4:** Communion with the SELF and others: How well does one manage to remain connected with her/ his real self? Also, how does one reflect the same communion with others?

Following are some postulates proposed by the patron founder of Thought Revolution movement, reverend Spiritual Guru, Pt Sriram Sharma Acharya, which imbibes the guidelines for building a strong SBU:

**Postulate 1:** Abiding with the essential disciplines of the Divine/ Humanitarian principles.

Everlasting and rich organizational cultures are based on practicing tested disciplines. Any healthy culture is the outcome of healthy practices.

The personality of any corporate house is reflected by its actions, deeds, initiatives, culture, people and off-course the key decision makers. For e.g. The recent advertisement by TATA Steel, showcasing its relationship with its employees says: It is not an advertisement, its life @ TATASteel; relations stronger than steel; "A promise is a promise, and it has to be kept", Ratan Tata. This is a reflection of strong character based upon divine values.

Such examples showcase the value based DNA of the organizations, which starts from the top and come down to create a culture and represent the high value system of the organization.

**TIP:** Start from the top and bring in values based changes throughout.

**Postulate 2:** Regarding the body as a temple of God, we will be ever watchful to keep it healthy and full of vitality by adopting the principles of self-restraint, order and harmony in our daily lives.

Health is wealth. Often we ignore our body and stop regarding it as a vehicle for conducting and achieving the best in the world. HR departments emphasize on providing physical infrastructure & amenities like Gymnasium, pools, recreation corners, etc but the employee usually gives no thought for her/his health. Yog is making its importance felt but that too more like a fashion statement or an in thing, and is limited to Aasan, Pranayam and not as a Way of being.

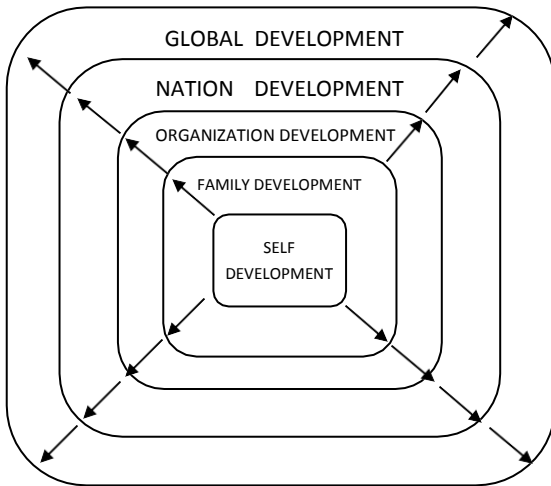
**TIP:** Create meditation corner/peace corner; yog as a compulsory practice for atleast 15 mins in the morning and 15 mins in afternoon, to keep employees fit and afresh; Check the menu at Cafeterias, if any- offer sprouts, curd, beans and other vitamin rich food as it keeps both body and mind fit and fresh.

**Postulate 3:** With a view of keeping our minds free from the inrush of negative thoughts and emotions, we will adopt a regular program of study of ennobling and inspiring literature and of keeping the company of saints.

Good companionship, good literature and elevated people nurture and shape our personalities, which in-turn creates an organizational culture. Spiritual space/ meditation corners/ Yog rooms/ Reading zones, should be accessed more as compared to Smoking zones and plush cafeteria.

**TIP:** Study corner with inspiring, ethical and moral based literature, case studies & biographies of value based organizations/ people/ institutions/ civilizations, etc should give way to magazine stands and smoking corners. Also, regular training workshops and brainstorming sessions on such topics should be organized.

**Postulate 4:** We will consider ourselves as inseparable parts of the society and will see our good in the good of all. 'Oneness with the whole', such was the principle of our ancestors and that's what made us self sustainable, diverse, peaceful and contented. CSR has got its real essence in this principle of the East. A CSR should be sustainable and shall bring change in the lives of both who conducted it (employees) and the beneficiaries (society members). There needs to be a societal will rather than creating headlines.



**Fig 3: A Holistic model of development:  
Allowing everybody to develop**

**TIP:** Find the special areas of interest of employees; determine their social orientation and initialize them to create activities of CSR. Replace CSR with ISR (Individual Social Responsibilities). Make CSR initiatives employee driven; the department should help & execute it. Start from your own campus. Let the employees feel responsible for their office campus and then take them outside to meet the needs of the society.

**Postulate 5:** We will earnestly and firmly imbibe in our lives the virtues of wisdom, honesty, responsibility and courage, and will constantly and sincerely endeavor to create an environment of loving kindness, cleanliness, simplicity and good will.

Wisdom to do the right things, honesty to our own selves, responsibility to commit and contribute and courage to follow a principled employee life; such attributes should

gain focus in the Assessment centers of the HR department and strategic policies.

**TIP:** Create an honesty counter at the work place, example a cash drop counter at cafeteria or a stationary counter. Let people use the drop box to put in the money against the things/ eatables they consume. Observe the collection against inventory at the end of the day. This is a very effective tool to find the level of thinking among employees, honesty, loyalty and trust towards the organization and may reflect to the HR related issues like attrition.

The more the loyalty, the better is the trust and faith and lesser will be the attrition. This shall also indicate the moral and ethical patterns of the employees at a large and how much do they refrain from the basic moral code.

**Postulate 6:** We will never evaluate a person's greatness by his worldly success, talents and riches, but by his righteous conduct and thoughts.

The ever failing and dissatisfying Appraisal systems of the institutions fails because the evaluation patterns are based on the output, success, targets, client base, etc. Imagine an appraisal system focusing on the righteous conduct and thoughts will encourage an indomitable will among the employees.

**TIP:** Create Appraisal system, which rate human value systems, practices of the employees, their conduct at the office, initiatives and motives in different activities, along with the talent, skills and other KRAs.

**Postulate 7:** We will never do unto others what we would not like to be done unto us.

"Be the change you want to see", Mahatma Gandhi ji. If the top management starts practicing what they preach, organizations will become a heavenly place to work for. Top management should focus on this and cautiously practice everything on them before communicating it down to the rest of the organizational levels so as to make it a culture.

**Have a look at these statistics:**

Only 45 % feel that their managers behave in a way which is consistent with company values.

Only 35% feel that what their organization says it values is consistent with what it actually rewards.

After all, it's not what you say, it's what you do.

**TIP:** Walk the talk. Initiatives like, An evening with the CEO, Culture exchange at the Shop floor, Coffee with the boss, etc helps employee feel connected with the management and gets inspired by knowing the leaders closely.

**Postulate 8:** We will actively involve ourselves in bringing together people of goodwill, in resisting evil and injustice, and in promoting New Creation.

Community initiatives by corporate houses should be based on this principle. There is a greater need in the organizations to ensure that people of good will stay tuned with each other and enrich the rest. They should beware of the Garbage trucks who keep on spreading the filth across the organization. When more such tunings take place among value based employees, it gives birth to innovation, creativity, team efforts and great ideas start manifesting. 3M, Google, Toyota are some good corporate examples who promote creativity and have

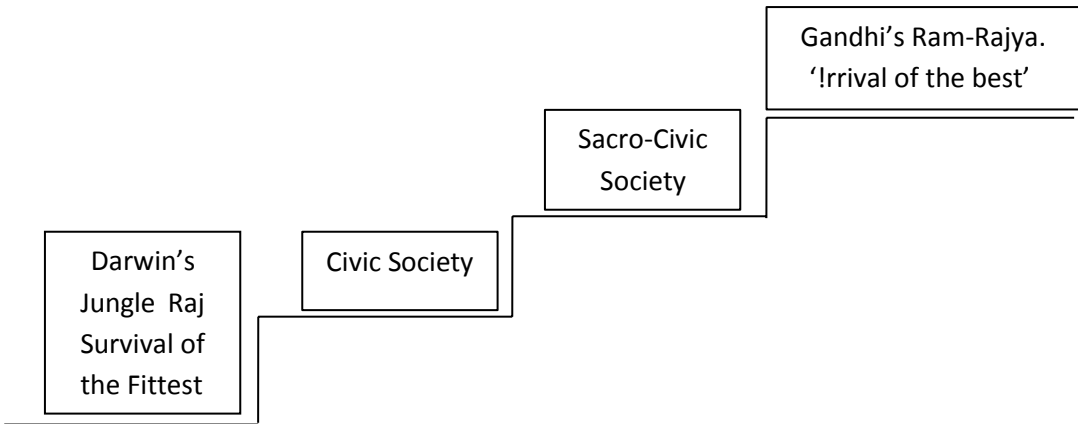
policies and systems in place to ensure justice. They not only promote innovation, but also are known for low attrition rates and retaining employees for longer terms and generate goodwill among them.

**TIP:** Create platforms and matrices to identify individual value systems; freeze such people together for some time and then unfreeze them to spread the good values across organization.

**Postulate 9:** We will remain committed to the principles of national unity and equality of all human beings. In our conduct we will not make any discrimination among people based on caste, creed, color, religion, language or gender.

The buzz of Globalization is the prime Vedic concept called 'Vasudev Kutumbakam'. There is a huge gap between Darwinism (survival of the fittest) & Gandhism (survival of the weakest/ poorest), which needs to be filled. The fight of the fittest always encourages the animal instinct and on the name of competition again gives rise to the unethical and unhealthy practices.

Here is an exhibit of the same...



**TIP:** Ishwar Jan To Tene Kahiye Je Peed Parayi Jane Re. In a Ram Rajya, everyone enjoys equity; be it the queen of Ayodhya or the Common Laundry woman. Only Good Dharma is worshipped. In Darwinian's Jungle Raj concept, which prevails all around today, it is only about Survival,

and that too at any cost. Hence, in corporate terms, we have not evolved; rather we have become animals, and so are the jargons like CRAB Mentality, CUT THROAT competition.

**Summing up:**

The governance of the corporate house and institutions, in both crisis and smooth sailing situations should focus on utilizing these learning as building blocks of their culture. Only when these become the fundamental ingredients of the organizational personality, will we not face such Ethical bubbles and reports like NBES will have different findings.

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