

BUILDING AN RBM CULTURE

The People Dimension

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Introduction

Results Based Management, or RBM, is the frequently focused concept today in most NGOs. It is popularly understood and recognized as a comprehensive life-cycle approach to management that integrates business strategy, people, processes and measurements to improve decision-making, and drive change¹.

While focus on individuals and issues has been the overriding reality of the past, the results based management approach has become imperative to the present. For example, the RBM approach would be on ensuring that more children are educated as against building more schools (Kennedy, 2004).

Today Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) is putting greater efforts to create a new working model in their approach to development.

Development sector has been working through a number of channels to enhance results and accountability. While results have always been important, it is now expected to use information from results as a critical component of management decision-making.

In a statement ADB's Governor in Canada² says that there is a need for the banks to get closer to action; to work on development effectiveness and build a culture that focuses on results. To be able to achieve success through RBM, the conditions he outlined in his speech are:

- Strong commitment to results by senior management
- Focus on capacity development and staff training
- Emphasis on flexibility and simplicity
- Promotion of RBM as an analytical programme management tool, and
- Strong complementarities among Results Management, Risk Management, Internal Audit, evaluation and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

Along with this cultural change is also identified as an important component for RBM to succeed. According to the findings of Ms.Binnendijk³ transforming the organizational culture including values, attitudes and behaviors of the personnel is critical to RBM.

Though strategy and performance monitoring systems have been the focus of RBM, the people dimension too needs equal focus, as individuals involved in any endeavor contribute significantly to results. All things being equal, it is individuals who make the difference.

This paper, therefore, seeks to elaborate on a unique concept of people dimension that is used in building an RBM culture. It is through an alignment of 'Vision' and 'Values' and development of learning orientation with a need to excel, a definitive way in which organizational leadership can be developed.

The Proposed Concept

Results are outcomes of an activity. As much as successful completion of a project means meeting established milestones, failure of the project highlights aspects that could not be accomplished. RBM, therefore, refers to enhancing the possibilities of achieving all the objectives and going beyond, by way of value addition. In the process RBM should enable optimization of all resources with a high Return on Investment (ROI).

The causes for failure could be:

- Lack of clear vision / purpose / objectives / goals
- Lack of clarity on the values that govern the operation
- Lack of context-sensitivity or inability of the project leader to understand the implications of various dimensions of a given context in the execution of the project
- Lack of flexibility, or unwillingness to change
- Lack of leadership at multiple levels

In the corporate world, in order to be results based, continuous efforts are on to achieve leadership in the following dimensions.

- Cost
- Quality
- Innovation
- New product / service introduction and development
- Demand management
- Flexibility – higher output
- Responsiveness
- Customer service

The combination of the relevant dimensions given above depending on the context, play a critical role in enhancing the results in any business endeavor, be it in manufacturing a product or providing a service.

In enhancing the results using one or more of the above dimensions, two routes can be taken: one, systems and process improvement and two, people development. Systems improvement seems to be the focus in most of the RBM initiatives and people dimension seems to have lesser attention. However, both are equally complementary for successful RBM.

People as most important component

When an extensive survey was conducted using the Interview Method with global corporate leadership, one consistent message that emerged was that the best-led companies knew and believed in the value of people. RBM is not possible without creating, nurturing and optimizing human capital. Only those organizations and leaders who have optimally utilized human capital would enjoy competitive edge (Ashby and Miles, 2002).

The new economy has evolved over the last century in stages. While the nineteenth century was the Agrarian Age, the twentieth century ushered in the Industrial Age where skilled labor was the predominant requirement. Subsequently it moved to today's information age where intellectual capital is the main aspect.

The future holds some clear evidences; Information Age is giving way to Consciousness Age, where cultural capital will be the predominant feature; creativity, vision-values and customer collaboration will become important; and emotional intelligence is an expected competence. While social responsibility will be expected, the buzzwords will be 'transformation' and 'evolution' (Barrett, 2001). Development will become imperative to any improvement.

While the West has been having an overriding influence on the management thought during the Industrial Age, the Japanese management principles have been playing a key role in the last few decades. The early Meiji leaders of Japan have adopted the western management principles with a keenness to preserve their special values (Westney, 1987). The Japanese cultural understanding impacted Taylorism when it was introduced in Japan. The key themes that influenced Japanese organizational behaviour (that largely influenced transitional behaviour in the East) centered on the following four factors.

1. Central importance of context – since correct action depends on the context.
2. Need to evaluate a model or prototype – the way the Japanese learnt to behave.
3. Need to avoid embarrassment by not meeting the expectations of others - the fundamental motivation of average Japanese.

4. Importance of the central role of process - which means, 'doing something in the right way' rather than 'getting the right result'. (Yoshimura, 1997 P 33).

These principles from the East largely signified 'nurturing' against the West's principles that were considered 'instrumental' to organizational behaviour.

The expectations of the Consciousness Age, therefore, rely on individual development as the core of organizational development and change.

As leaders, the focus needs to be on,

- Personal creativity, where alignment of values becomes important.
- Personal productivity, where alignment of mission is critical.
- Knowledge/experience, where professional development is imperative.
- Emotional intelligence, where personal development is the path (Barrett, 2001).

In an evolving context, people development should be a growth-oriented and maturing process where the focus is on developing the fundamentals, rather than skills and abilities. The development of competence should be an outcome and not the focus.

This 'maturing process' involves understanding the following components:

1. Micro picture and macro picture are equally important

For a wall to be strong, each brick needs to be baked well. People development needs to give space for each individual to 'mature' and 'blossom'. This blossoming needs to be nurtured.

2. Development should focus on working with causes, than on symptoms to bring about deep change

Individuals need to work with their own orientation towards results and develop the required competencies and frame of mind for achieving qualitatively and quantitatively superior results. While working with people individually or collectively, it is important to work with causes than symptoms.

"To tear down a factory or to revolt against a government or to avoid repair of a motor cycle because it is a system, is to attack effects rather than causes; and as long as the attack is upon effects only, no change is possible. The true system, the real system, is our present constructions of systematic thought itself, rationality itself, and if a factory is torn down but the rationality, which produces it, is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government is left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government." (Robert Pirsig, 1974 p.88)

The systemic approach to RBM is less likely to yield higher results since the best systems cannot provide the expected results if the individuals involved don't realize the essence behind each system. A system over a period of time could become a ritual than a supportive tool as illustrated in this parable⁴.

Each time the Guru sat for worship with his disciples, the ashram cat would come and distract them. So he ordered his disciples to tie the cat to a pole whenever the inmates of the ashram were praying. After the Guru died, the cat continued to be tied at prayer time. And when the cat expired, another cat was brought into the ashram to make sure that the Guru's orders were observed faithfully at prayer time. Centuries passed, and learned treatises were written by the Guru's scholarly disciples on the ritualistic significance of tying up a cat while praying.

A functional system can always contribute to efficiency but not effectiveness. Effectiveness depends on individuals who use the system. These individuals need to address their beliefs and reflect upon working on the core dimensions that would allow them to make better choices resulting in higher results.

Schon (1983) has highlighted the need to question beliefs as an important part of adult learning. Brookfield (1995) has suggested that knowledge constructions can be refined, deepened and corrected through reflection. Three stages are described in critical reflection.

- Identifying the assumptions that underlie our thoughts and actions
- Scrutinizing the accuracy and validity in terms of how they connect to, or are different from, our experience of reality, and
- “Reconstituting these assumptions to make them more inclusive and integrative...” (Brookfield, 1995 p.177)

In today’s ever-changing environment, people need to be responsive, their learning has to be formative; and changes have to be deep. Instead of loading them with prescriptions and formulae on success, one has to enable them to realize what goes into achieving results and further their understanding on the basis of success from which they can make their own prescriptions.

3. People development is valuable only when it is integrated well with realities of life, including the organization

Recent studies have identified that the gap between knowing and doing is growing larger in the Information Age. In 1996, 1,700 business books were published in the United States alone. Each year over US\$60 billion is spent on management training in organizations. Each year billions of dollars are spent on management consultants - the 1996 estimate was US\$43 billion. (Pfeffer & Sulton, 2000)

To combat these, the best practices in leadership development reviewed popular practices including,

- 360-degree feedback (also called as multi-source ratings of performance)
- Executive coaching (focused one-to-one learning)
- Job assignments (to challenge or stretch an individual’s leadership capabilities)
- Mentoring (long-term developmental relationships)
- Networking
- Reflection
- Action learning (Project-based work)
- Outdoor challenges (outbound wilderness learning programme)

Usually two or more of these are combined in leadership development initiatives. Though these are only methodologies, the trend is opting for customized programmes that are best able to capture the organization’s unique culture and competitive challenges. (Day, 2001)

It has been observed that people develop through multiple sources, namely projects-in-place, training, work associates, new jobs, and off the job. If integration of learning has to happen, leadership development has to be through an integrated model that uses multiple sources and multiple methodologies.

4. Development requires clarity on purpose and process with an ability to learn to learn, forming the foundation for individual and organizational excellence

Context sensitivity has been the foundation of Japanese management thought. Sensitivity to context cannot be attained without clarity of purpose and process. While purpose is spelt through ‘vision’, process is spelt through ‘values’.

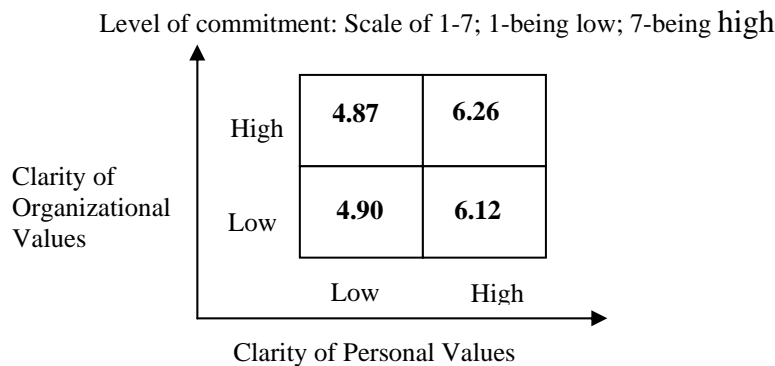
Purpose gives a sense of direction to the individuals. “The vision of an organization is a concise word picture of the organization at some future time, which sets the overall direction of the organization. It is what the organization strives to be. A vision is something to be pursued.” (Abraham, 1995, 1999).

Most individuals have knowledge about vision; they also formulate their vision but how many of them have the clarity of the vision is something that is not really known. Clarity on vision gives the individual an opportunity to make appropriate choices. This ‘appropriateness’ relates to the context. Therefore when the context continuously changes, clarity enables the leader to be more responsive to the context without losing the direction in which the individual and the organization need to travel.

Values are defined as ‘those beliefs one holds within oneself, which govern the behaviour in any given context.’ (Sampath J M, 1999) Values give meaning to the vision and define the process in which the vision could be achieved. Therefore it becomes imperative for vision and values to be aligned. Kevin Wheeler, Director, National Semiconductor University says, “We believe that a set of guiding principles must be firmly in place if a company has to prosper.” Indeed, all companies have guiding principles whether they are explicitly stated or not. However, implicit principles can be counterproductive if they are in conflict with the vision.” (Abraham, 1995, 1999)

Recent corporate scandals have brought out the truth that individuals need to align their vision and values and this alignment cannot be achieved without clarity. The following research data indicates the role of clarity with regard to personal values and organizational values on the level of commitment of the individual.

Personal & Organizational value system
 (Source: B.Z. Posner and W.H. Schmidt, Journal of Business Ethics)



When the level of commitment among individuals was measured the data indicated that when clarity on organizational values was high and clarity on personal values was low, the commitment actually came down to 4.87 from 4.90. But when the clarity on both was high, commitment levels went up to 6.26. Clarity, coupled with alignment of vision and values at individual and organizational levels needs to be high to travel on the path of RBM.

5. Any leadership development for RBM should demonstrate the key principles of RBM

Training aimed at RBM should have clear ROI and address the learning–doing-learning cycle. It has to be an evolving module with a process of learning through understanding, doing and integrating. Specifically with reference to the Development sector, it should be integrated into the projects handled by them with adequate space for integration of learning outcomes.

PACE - A integrated module for developing people dimension of RBM

Based on the key components of people development discussed earlier, the module that has been developed is called PACE, an acronym for Performance, Alignment, Competence and Excellence. PACE also

means rate at which something progresses. With the collective experience of having worked in the area of values clarification with over 20,000 individuals globally, in over 500 workshops, the module has the wisdom from these experiences built into it. The module that facilitates multi-source learning leverages 81% from learning through work associates, projects-in-place, training and new jobs.

In order to integrate the Learn-do-Learn, the programme runs through different phases. Each of the phases are described below.

Pre-intervention I	Understanding the organization, its projects culture and formation of the support team.
Pre-intervention II	Pre-phase activities of collecting 360-degree feedback data.
Phase I (workshop)	Understanding the power of vision – values leadership Executive coaching and development Developing the basis for CPE plans (Critical Project Execution)
Phase II (workshop)	Learning for nurturing excellence Getting deeper clarity on CPE
Phase III	Presentation of leadership and CPE learning
Phase IV	Review of development / changes / ROI

The different phases would be linked with intervening periods of a specified time frame based on the requirements of the organizations. The participants will work on using their learning from the workshops on the job and develop the CPE (Critical Project Execution) dimension during these periods. They would be given offline and online support during this period. Mentors and the PACE coordinator would support the participants from within the organization.

Pre-intervention I and II

The activities at these stages would be customized to each organization based on their profile, activities, and available information base. The objectives of this phase are:

- To study the organization and understand the culture and business aspects. The insights so gained would help in customizing the language and design of the workshop and align the workshop to the organization's current context.
- To induct the organization's senior management into the design of PACE and discuss the ROI envisaged.
- To collect all the relevant information and draw the participant profile to enhance and personalize the intervention.

Phase I - Understanding the power of vision – values leadership

This is a four-day intense workshop, with the following objectives:

- To understand what it means to be a leader and a high vision - high values organization.
- To understand the meaning of values and learn how to work with causes than effects to bring about deep change.
- To gain feedback on one's value profile and the way one handles one's Freedom, Relationship, Power and Influence, Learning and Honesty and Integrity as a leader, collaborator, follower and friend.
- To align the gaps at various levels in order to converge one's energy to achieve set goals.
- To understand conflicts and learn how to solve them.
- To learn what blocks one from changing in an ever-changing world.
- To understand what goes into the making of leaders, high achievers and contributors.
- To learn how to be developmental than detrimental in one's role as a leader.
- To understand the organization's vision, mission and values in a deeper sense.

The envisaged takeaways from Phase-I would be:

- Understanding the meaning of Vision and Values
- Better understanding of oneself resulting in better integration
- Higher level of openness and objectivity while exploring issues
- Enhanced level of accountability and ownership, and better decision-making
- Reduced transactional cost resulting in optimization of organizational resources
- Finding ways to bridge the gap within thus synergizing one's effort
- Increased credibility resulting in building a trusting culture
- Greater level of involvement resulting in quality output
- Aligning self and organization vision in helping to build organizational synergy
- Being proactive with an understanding of the contextual changes than being reactive
- Having clarity on what it means to be a 'High-vision and High-values' Individual and organization
- Clarity on why one does, what one does and the way one does things with a better understanding on what it takes to live up to one's potential
- Developing a road map for the CPE proposal

One – on – one coaching

Two different tools are used to collect data.

1. For the multi-rater feedback system, a 30-item **Value Profile Instrument**⁵ is used. The instrument is developed based on the principle – *'No single value by itself is valuable. Values are interdependent and one needs to understand this interdependence in order to understand one's own behaviour.'*

The Reliability Scores of the instrument are:

	Reliability Index	
	Self	Others
Correlation between forms	0.8256	0.9163
Equal – length Spearman– Brown	0.9045	0.9563
Unequal - length Spearman– Brown	0.9045	0.9563
Guttman Split-half	0.9026	0.9554

The participants also go through an intensive one-on-one coaching on their value profile. This gives them clarity on their, Achievement Orientation; Relationship Orientation; Leadership Orientation; Learning Orientation and Integrity Orientation. Data is collected to provide clarity on the three styles, as members of the organization.

- a. **Leadership style:** as rated by subordinates.
- b. **Collaborative style:** as rated by colleagues.
- c. **Followership style:** as rated by Boss(es).

In addition, close family and friends rate them on **Social style**. This instrument could be used to draw up the Individual as well as the Group profile on the imbalances in the above-mentioned orientations. The tool gives both quantitative and empirical data, which is used in coaching the participants after the workshop on a one-to-one basis.

The uniqueness of the instrument is its ability to not slot people into predetermined positions but to provide the possibility of space and position unique to each of them drawn from the dynamic interrelations between the values. The instrument provides clarity on why whatever is happening is happening the way it is happening and the possible areas one needs to focus on for change.

2. The **Vision-Value Instrument**⁶ is a 40-item tool, whose Reliability is as follows

	Reliability
Alpha	0.7978
Guttman split half	0.8038
Correlation between forms	0.6732
Equal length Spearman-Brown	0.8047
Unequal length Spearman-Brown	0.8047

The results of the questionnaire are presented in the form of a grid, which indicates the position of the participant with regard to the participant's Vision and Values individually as well as against the group. This instrument also gives Individual and Group profiles, which indicate the extent of alignment in the vision-values orientation in the individual and in the group.

The coaching results in drawing up of an action plan for each participant in the areas of concern as identified through the two instruments. The coaching session is also utilized by the participants to understand the root cause of their behaviour. The discussion in the one on one coaching would be recorded in an audio tape and handed over to the participant. The participants would have the choice of sharing the same with their mentors/ colleagues/ family. The information and discussion with the facilitators would be considered personal and will remain confidential.

The envisaged takeaways from coaching would be:

- A good understanding of self in the critical role that one plays in the organization.
- A space to confidently articulate and audit one's values without judgments.
- An action plan to bring about the desired change to enhance their contribution and live up to their full capacity.

Phase II - Learning for Nurturing Excellence

This is a three-day intense workshop, with the following objectives:

- To understand the business context and see the implications of one's own frame of reference to change.
- To understand how competition is handled in most competitive contexts.
- To understand learning, and learn how to learn – a skill that is vital for every leader today.
- To understand what it means to learn to learn.
- To gain clarity on the process of learning.
- To understand the distinction between mindless and mindful learning.
- To facilitate the movement from being a knowledgeable person to a wise person.
- To understand what it means to be a leader creating an impact.
- Understanding business acumen.

The Takeaways envisaged from Phase II would be

- Deeper level of understanding of one's environment
- Recognizing the power of being a learner
- Moving from ignorance to wisdom
- Learning how to deal with dynamic situations
- Learn to look at situations from a three dimensional framework
- Apart from this there will be further value addition by
 - Optimizing resources in terms of synergy / learning to collaborate
 - Drawing inspiration from within to achieve and excel
 - Learning to be influential

Phase III - Presentation of Leadership and CPE learning

Participants would be given an opportunity to present their experiences and learning from the PACE programme to the senior management of the organization. They also present their development plans and the support required to integrate their learning into the organization functioning.

PACE process and methodology

The processes used in the intervention are

- Results driven
- Action oriented – CPE
- Developing fundamentals of Learning & Leadership
- Learning to work with others in developing and executing business ideas
- Conceptual clarity with an action-integration process that drives learning deep to bring about meaningful change
- Involvement across the organizational hierarchy to build a culture of excellence
- Phased intervention to mix learning-action-learning (learn to learn)
- Multi-level, multi-dimensional feedback process using powerful tool Value Profile Instrument.

The methodology is more process-centered and semi-structured. Multiple methods like simulation, audio, video, and lecture, small and large group activities are used.

What is CPE

CPE is an acronym for ‘Critical Project Execution’. This is a process, in which every PACE participant is expected to identify a project they are involved in, which is critical to the organization. The participants apply the learning from the workshops in order to bring in value addition and/or innovation in areas that impact the project, like cost, quality, responsiveness, use of technology in providing service, customer service, etc. The CPE also provides space for participants to,

- Learn to influence within and outside the organization
- Develop individuals to be leaders with focus on delivery
- Take higher level of accountability to results
- Add value to self and projects in work
- Appreciate the stake holder value addition
- Innovate and create
- Facilitate on the job learning and integration
- Contribute to build a RBM culture

PACE support structure

Successful people development initiatives are impossible without an influential champion. It would be impossible to have a lasting impact on people development without the explicit support of top management (Day 2001). It requires a strong support structure from within the organization. The proposed structure is as follows:

- **Mentor:** Chosen from Senior management / or alternatively, boss of the participant. Mentor plays a role in providing support in choosing the CPE and also guiding the participant as and when needed through the phases.
- **Participant:** Selected people from the organization for training
- **Team:** Support from project team comprising colleagues and subordinates
- **Top management** commitment as the foundation
- PACE intervention **coordinators** from the organization
- **External consultants** to facilitate the entire development process

The multiple layers in the support structure aids in eliminating bias, also enable sharing and dissemination of knowledge in a way that results in optimizing the RBM leadership development initiative.

Conclusion

This paper highlights the importance of people dimension in RBM. It also gives the example of one of the modules that has been used over the last 15 years in Fortune 500 organizations, NGOs and educational institutions in different countries, in different formats. The module has been designed and executed in accordance with the requirements and ROI envisaged by organizations.

Though the best practices of profit making fortune 100 organizations are quoted, the Development sector has one thing in common with them. It also depends on 'people' to get its results. Therefore, 'people development' processes would be the same at the core while it needs to be customized to the kind of projects and its outcomes they are involved in working at the organization.

The process of clarification of vision and values at one end enables the understanding of the beliefs that one holds and on the other shows the choice that individuals possess in formulating and changing one's beliefs. The change is out of a deeper understanding of the implications leading to realizations. Therefore, the changes are at a causal level than at the effect level.

Change becomes deep and meaningful only when it is a decision of the Self. While capabilities of intelligence and emotions are endowed to every individual, it is the ability to use one's intelligence and emotions in a given context appropriately that distinguishes one individual from the other. This depends on the beliefs they hold. Clarity and alignment in vision and values plays a vital role in enabling an individual to make appropriate choices. When influential individuals in an organization make appropriate choices, and be responsible to results, it would create a conducive culture to RBM.

A recap of key points

- ✍ In any given task, the attitudes of the individuals involved make a huge difference, more than any other factor, in achieving results. Success and failure of any project can be attributed to this **human factor**.
- ✍ RBM calls for a different orientation in the **culture** of the organization (culture here means 'the way of being'), which is created by those who belong to the organizational community. The higher the position and power, the greater is their impact on culture. This means that while working on **building a result-oriented culture** it is important to work with key influencers within the organization.
- ✍ For enhancing the results of an activity, it is essential that the **Vision/Purpose/Goal** of the task be defined clearly and understood by all concerned. It has been documented over the years that those who have individually or collectively had clear vision have accomplished more.
- ✍ **Personal Values** of individuals play a critical role in enhancing the results in any activity that they undertake.
- ✍ **Systemic** changes alone **cannot** achieve higher levels of results; it has to be combined with **deep-rooted shifts in individual and collective beliefs**.
- ✍ To ensure higher levels of result, the people-development process should focus more on **working with causes** that withhold people from performing, than with symptoms.
- ✍ **Aligning the Vision with Values** contributes to enhancing the results of any activity.
- ✍ Over the last two decades, in the context of extensive work that has been carried out with senior executives in various sectors, it has been observed and realized that when individuals **align their vision with their values, and are willing to learn continuously**, higher levels of results are a certainty.
- ✍ To enhance result-orientation any **people development initiative** should be built on the '**action learning model**', where there is a fair degree of focus on learning, doing and building. This results in expanding the capacity of individuals and their ability to achieve results.

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Note

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