



## Management - 1

By

Dr. Sanjay Banerji

Founder Director/Dean of Amrita School of Business

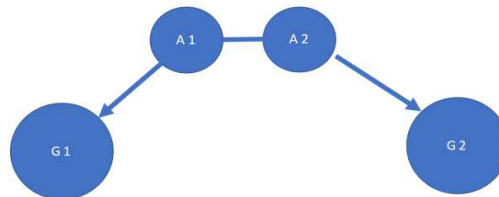


Dear Friends,

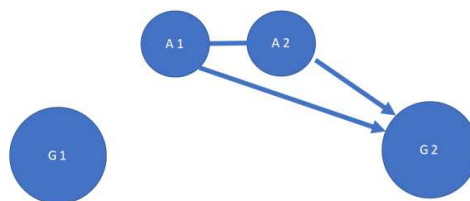


Greetings from Amrita. I plan to start a new series of blogs, trying to share with you some of the basics of management. I do hope that this would be useful for all, especially those who are trying their hands for the first time to manage the Self-Help Groups (SHGs). I shall try to keep them as simple as possible.

Today, I shall try to discuss the essence of management. Let us consider a short story of two hungry asses: A1 and A2 tied together by a small rope. A1 wants to go to grass 1 (G1), and A2 wants to go to grass 2 (G2) to fill their hungry stomachs.



As a result, both are unable to eat grass to their satisfaction. Although these are asses, they did have some intelligence. A2 talks to A1 – “look, we are both hungry, and there is enough grass for both of us. Why not we go together to G2, finish it, and if we are still hungry, we can go to G1 and continue eating.



A1 agreed, and the two lived together happily thereafter. The End.

This story illustrates two basic principles of management: 1. Coordination and 2. Communication.

Whenever, more than one individual tries to attain a common goal, they may not succeed, in spite of their best efforts, unless their efforts are coordinated. The two asses did try to eat

grass in their own way, but failed, because they were pulling each other in different directions. This is but natural, in the absence of a third force. That third force is the force or power of coordination. It is necessary to direct their individual efforts in such a way that both of them pull together in the same direction.

But this coordination cannot happen all by itself. It requires an understanding by both the parties that both of them are going to benefit from joining their forces together. That understanding can only happen through proper communication between the two.

This is the basic function of any manager. S/he must talk, write, or discuss using all possible forms of communication to explain the common objective we are trying to achieve, and tell individual participants, what is expected from each one of them.

We human beings are not the strongest of species in Earth. However, we have been able to figure out how to nurture natural forces to our advantage. The first such understanding was about fire. We found that meat burnt in fire is easier to chew and is tastier. Although this happened accidentally, we tried to make fire on our own, and started burning the meat or fish before eating it. Slowly, we learned how to tend a fire, and control it. All other mightier animals were kept at bay, by having a fire burning at night.

My pet theory is that the need for management was felt from that time onward. Someone had to keep awake during the night to tend the fire, and that person had to sleep during the day. Someone else had to provide food for him. So, the common goal of group safety could be achieved, if and only if some people agreed to keep awake all night, and others took care of their livelihood – food, drink and sleep etc. Someone had to decide who should do what.

As a matter of fact, animals also follow the same principles. A herd of elephants is led by a male elephant who protects the entire herd. We humans have made this process much more elaborate to our advantage as well as disadvantage.

We shall continue our discussions in the coming months.

Aum Namah Shivaya.  
Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhawantu.  
Aum Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi.  
Aum Sri Gurubhyo Namaha  
Harihi Aum!

