

## Carburettor Attributes

*"The leader's flame that burns so bright in battle is not his alone. It comes from the interplay of his forces and those of the members of the team. Both contribute essentials which produce leadership". Matthew Rigway*

This issue 'Leadership Carburettor Attributes' is the last in the series of leadership attributes using the mechanical devices themes since in February 2010.

A carburettor is a device in an engine that mixes liquid fuel and air in the correct proportions, vaporizes them, and transfers the mixture to the cylinder to generate power. Its function is to burn fuel to create pressure into motion that empowers the vehicle.

Efficiency and effectiveness in mixing the right amount of fuel with air in a carburettor, is to provide maximum energy to run the vehicle. If this is not achieved then the engine "runs lean" and "runs rich" and becomes very smoky, bogs down, stalls easily, and wastes fuel.

The evolving technology has complicated carburettor now to include: *Main circuit* - Provides just enough fuel for fuel-efficient cruising; *Idle circuit* - Provides just enough fuel to keep the engine idling; *Accelerator pump* - Provides an extra burst of fuel when the accelerator pedal is first depressed, reducing hesitation before the engine speeds up; *Power enrichment circuit* - Provides extra fuel when going up a hill; and *Choke* - Provides extra fuel when the engine is cold so that it will start.

New technology has introduced a more efficient carburettor system of *fuel injector* that injects fuel directly to the jets. Most of the new fuel-saving vehicles use fuel injectors.

Efficiency in the carburettor is attained and maintained by regular cleaning of the jets to guarantee the lifeblood of the vehicle, powerful engine and fuel economy.

Similarly, quality leadership with a focus on timely service-delivery needs regular maintenance and cleaning to remove barriers

to meet the modern age demands. Carburettor cleaning attributes become handy.

Sometimes, dirt accumulates until it chokes the effective leadership. This stands in the way of planning, creates disharmony in the team, break in communication, retards results and growth of the organisation.

*"I have been left wondering why I waited far too long to reflect, to confront the thick dirt on my stuff, the stagnant stuffed shelves of my former life." One leader exclaimed.*

The leader ready to take off, but the engine experiences a hard start and has little power. The signals for attention are loud and clear. The red warning lights cannot be ignored or just thrown away into storage or left on the pending tray. Filing them in lockable cabinets does not clear the problem. The leader, who stops to look at the bonnet, forever becomes grateful.

Open the bonnet, as it were, and discover and re-discover the clean up job that must be undertaken or fixed to bring out the operation vibrancy.

Why must it stop, for the leader to open up the bonnet? Where is the wisdom of continual reflection, the practice of regular service and "cleaning up"? Regular handling of the inbox as they arrive, give them time and space they deserve, or to pass them on to someone who can. This is a declaration and practice of efficiency.

Clean out the sludge: Clean or remove anything that is in the way of your recovery! The cry of the man under the water and inside the belly of a fish:

*"In my distress I called to the LORD for help"*

A clogged carburettor needs expert help to resuscitate it to a state where starting only needs one kick. Does the engine in your leadership need technical inspection? Expose yourself and your leadership to professional evaluation. This will avoid the clogged leadership characteristic of crawling unhealthy organisation.

In "A theology of turnaround" Gordon MacDonald identifies **Authority, Affirma-**

**tion, Allegation, and Agreement** as the elements to turnaround the famous seven churches. Surprisingly, these points to attributes of cleaning out the sludge in leadership carburettor, to get the organisation engine fired up.

The small happenings are pointers to organisational or structural or programme sludge as well as people sludge. Often the leader has been too busy to listen until everything comes to a halt, impossible to work, and demanding immediate attention. Let him who has an ear, listen. Listening to the **Authority**, the one who understands, says, it is time to clean the sludge.

**Affirmation** of the things which were running well but now the engine cannot start. The "former glory" often blinds the leader. It creeps in over time but immediate diagnostic evaluation is required to know what and how the operation or the rot in the organisation or what in the leadership that has to be cleaned.

It takes time for leadership to know that the **Allegations** were actually true: they are beyond gossip and the whispers in the hall ways; constant denials of the louder publicity cannot continue.

*"I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead."*

The accurate diagnostic evaluation is clear and points to what has to be done to clean the sludge. What is required is **Agreement**. Be obedient and agree that the surgical operation has to take place. Like anything of value, a price has to be paid. The leader who wants the cleaning has to sanction for the beginning of the task. It may require a toolkit and replacing the clogged parts beyond repair. It may require the replacement of the leader or some of the closest associates.

Overhaul and replace with new technology, new systems and structures, renewal of values, a relook at the vision and mission, an overhaul of strategies, re-engineering the policies to create a culture of stewardship and accountability.

The end result is revitalised leadership and an invigorated organisation with life.

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