

If money alone can attract the professionals?

A professional is someone who can do his best work when he doesn't feel like it.

~ Alistair cooke

John Abraham started his career as a brilliant student. Unfortunately inspite of sincere efforts he could not make it to All-India Services. The failures never came in his way as demotivators rather he made those failures as strengths by acquiring higher qualifications later he got selected in private sector as management trainee. He had the solid base of academics which helped him in acquiring knowledge and skills which were required to step up in the ladder of hierarchy. Though, he got the exposure by working in different departments of the organisation during on-the-job training however, he opted for dept. of personnel although the growth there was not very fast. Maintaining peaceful industrial relations by way of tackling unions became his expertise. Like any other private company his job as personnel officer was not specified, therefore, he offered his services for the legal and administration department also.

Having inherited honesty as value it became difficult for him to compromise with corruption which led him to think about changing the job where he may have the freedom of maintaining his value system. In the private sector John was having good salary, frindge benefits and other perks. There were no status blocks and the work culture was having the concept of owning the organization. Even a senior executive was being addressed with the first name. These things helped John in enhancing his self esteem and ego in a positive manner. He was respected by the unions and proved to be a pro-active industrial relation's man, a go-getter opinion leader.

The unfair labour practices were quite common in private sector and his organization also had its own share in the field of corruption by giving bribes to the concerned authorities for bypassing various legal requirements relating to labour welfare. John at times felt suffocated for not being able to compromise with the voice of his conscious which made him to change the job and he applied for all India competitions and he was selected in public sector companies. In one of the companies he merited top position in all selection stages, therefore, he joined the same at the level of Assistant Manager.

Public sectors had their own rules, regulations, pay scales and perks etc which were not comparable with the private sector. Moneywise John was a loser but somehow he felt satisfied for being able to come out from the suffocating environment of corruption and witnessing exploitation of labour class. The public sectors in the country were not having professionalism especially in the field of personnel management. The organizations were run on the old pattern of central government and the image of personnel department was not more than a department of administration. It was being run by the executives coming from the clerical cadre of central government. There was a great opposition for induction of John Abraham in the organization because in the department of personnel and administration there was no outside blood induction barring a few executives at a senior level.

While working at different units John performed very well and achieved certain milestones as targets set by him. The performance appraisal system in the organization was not having any objectivity, therefore, the exemplary performance of John was not reflected in terms of his annual appraisal reports. John was feeling satisfied and content because of his pro-labour attitude, cooperation with the unions and counselling skills were appreciated by all the concerned authorities. He initiated new projects gave emphasis on training and showed remarkable inter-personal skills. He was happy to have the freedom of speech and maintenance of his moral values. He acted as a crusader against corruption which was not objected but the same invited displeasure of dishonest bosses, which harmed his performance appraisal in the form of getting average ratings.

The performance appraisal system in the organization was quite unilateral and career of the executives was in the hands of immediate bosses. The annual confidential reports used to be written at the whims and fancies of the boss. John was fortunate to have some outstanding reports also when he worked under directly recruited professionals. The bosses coming from the clerical cadre suffered with great amount of inferiority complex and always tried to spoil the career prospects of John.

John witnessed number of ups and downs during the long period of two decades in the public sector. He could rise up in the ladder of hierarchy whenever there was a quantum of selection because he could prove his merit in the competitions. However, when it was a question of stepping up strictly based on Performance Appraisal Reports he lacked behind. His honesty, straightforwardness and sincerity towards the organization invited lot of controversies and he was given unpopular postings when he reached the higher level.

There was a sea change due to open policies of the Government which allowed foreign direct investment. A lot of Multi national companies came in India and public

sectors were also getting privatized. In some cases joint ventures came into existence with public and private participation. There was a boom in the information Technology sector. The compensation management with regard to salary and wages got a new trend since it was strictly based on performance. The performance management developed the concept of competency mapping and 360 degree appraisal. Profit sharing gave rise to high pay package to the executives in multi-national companies. John Abraham always weighed himself in the market by applying in the private sector with no intention of joining there. As a matter of fact he wanted to know his market value i.e. why he used to make attempts to be successful and unsuccessful also in the selection process.

A stage came when the government policies attracted the organization where John was working and some of the units of his organization got privatized with the major share of multinationals. The large number of dynamic executives joined the private sector mainly due to very high package being offered to them. Though the nature of work was the same but the job description and performance appraisal was having new dimensions. The executives who joined the private sector got very high packages to the tune of 35 lakhs per annum as compared to Rs. 12 Lakhs in the public sector. John still had over 10 years balance service with the public sector when this temptation came in his way for joining the private sector on a very high package which was otherwise unbelievable. Being a professional having wide exposure, and a well read man John was aware about the happenings and was analyzing the situation, its pros and cons from different angles. When John was still aspiring for the position of General Manager in the public sector with due seniority, his colleagues in private sector already reached to the level of sr. vice presidents with high pay packages.

Undecided about the situation John applied for a senior position in the private sector on the strength of his academics and long experience. He successfully underwent stages of selection process and found himself in dilemma when he was reaching the final stage. The package offered to John was to the tune of Rs. 32 Lakhs per annum. John calculated his salary and after commuting all the perks and facilities offered by the public sector came to the conclusion that his existing package is only 12 Lakhs per annum. John was finding himself in a confusing stage and was not able to digest the temptation of high salary package. At this stage he had the occasion of interacting with some of his colleagues who joined private sector. It was a matter of great surprise for him when he was told that the private sectors working will be entirely different with regard to organizational culture.

The concept of management by objective for appraising performance was being practiced. It was totally result oriented performance management and the employer were not in the habit of getting NO from the employees. The principle was beg, borrow or steal

to achieve targets. It was 12 working hours with six days a week as compared to 8 hours per day with 5 days week in the public sector.

John learnt in his life to solve the industrial relations problem by applying pro-active techniques analyzing undercurrents and dialogue with the unions. He had the long experience of sorting out difficult issues by the application of his communication skills and leadership qualities. But he was made aware that things have changed. Since the top management in the private sector will not have patience to wait for the results testing the skills to solve the problems.

The honesty was no more a value and lost its charm for money it was the action by hook or crook. John was told that in case he decides to join the private sector he should be prepared to change his thinking. Corruption and bribes should not be an issue in his mind. He should only remember about the work and the results. The freedom of speech should also have some breaks since he will not be allowed to call a spade a spade.
