

The Problem of Indiscipline within Organizations

In today's world, the issue of maintaining discipline and order exists as a problem, which is manifested within institutions and organizations across global communities. The fallout comes from a decline in observing standards, disrespect shown for authority and a failure to follow process and procedures. It is accepted that society functions based on laws, rules, regulations, procedures, practices and adherence to policy. Leaders are expected through their behaviour and decorum to lead by example. The problem emerges when some leaders fail to practice what they preach. Their behaviour and actions are tantamount to communicating the wrong message (s) to those whom they lead.

It is for persons who are intelligent and of sound mind to make a judgement of what is wrong or right, acceptable or unacceptable. Organizations require leaders who are not prone to accept irresponsible behaviour and whose sense of objectivity is not compromised simply because they wish to satisfy the selfish desire(s) of someone else. Individuals who allow themselves to be dictated to and to be complicit to any action without taking into consideration, how it impacts on their integrity are merely followers, and therefore not suitable for assuming a leadership role.

A good leader has to show the ability of being an independent thinker and decision maker. Equally so, the individual must be able to recognize when an action is not a sensible one, is indiscriminate, ill-advised and needs to be tempered. It is basically ineffective leadership or management, where a change of behaviour, attitude and approach of another cannot be influenced. The problem of growing indiscipline within our organization can be attributed to those who have lost a sense of direction, focus and ability to behave rationally.

Trade unions would want to attract leaders who have labour relations knowledge, experience and academic qualifications. Each of these is important, but at the same time the integrity and the ethics of the individual stands as pride of place within the mix. The loss of respect for those who lead, translates into the loss of confidence. This ought to matter to any leader and propel that individual not to accept and support sub-standard behaviour. Since leaders should set the right tone, it is therefore disgraceful when any leader on the floor of a meeting would attempt

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to disrespect the chairman by flouting the procedural rules which are commonly referred to as the standing orders. It is totally unethical, when the chairperson of a meeting can be addressed as a hypocrite. It is worse when continued attempts could be made to mislead a meeting and moreover for the Chairperson of the meeting to be disrespected and disregarded. Regrettably, this is the sad reality of what is being experienced in some organizations. This indifference must be stamped out if any civility is to be restored.

The search for solutions to resolve the indifferent practice and behaviour may not be difficult to be found as perceived. Chairpersons and members of organizations should not be prepared to tolerate any unbecoming behaviour. Persons who are not prepared to abide by the rules or respect the rulings of the chair should after being cautioned, be evicted from the meeting. If the behaviour of any individual is deemed to be obnoxious, then the organization should be prepared to evoke whatever disciplinary action as set out in its rules, providing always that the disciplinary procedure and process are followed.

The tendency to accommodate the sometimes despicable behaviour and short comings of leaders, should never be entertained based on friendship and/or any other association the parties may enjoy. In as much as an organization functions on the lines of accepted business and management principles, there can be no plausible excuse for the accommodation of any fundamental breaches of rules, regulations, procedures and order, by chosen leaders who are expected to lead by example.

Our societies today are crying out for role models. The respect for organizations stands to be compromised if those chosen to lead are guilty of practicing double standards, and / or are willing to accept and preside in an atmosphere which is not conducive to good governance.