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Unbridled intellectual sophistication and cleverness in people has lead to vile acts of deception to attain selfish ends at any cost. The prevalence of 'hidden agendas' in some organizations is an ugly manifestation of this. One is forced to read between the lines to decipher the true meaning of what is being said. The amount of wasted time and energy and the ensuing inefficiency this causes is scandalous.

When I started out as a trainer in Pakistan in 1991, I saw that the country's ambient culture was generally not conducive to honest and meritocratic behavior. This I thought was in sharp contrast to what I had learned and observed in the UK, where I lived and worked for twenty years. But I was wrong. What I have come to realize is that ethics and morality are not an east west thing. Good conduct is valued in all societies the world over. But lately, we have witnessed many lapses with shocking examples of deviant corporate behavior surfacing all over the world, in countries like South Korea (Chung Mong-koo[\); India \(B Ramalinga Raju\[\\), and many more.\]\(file:///C:/Users/Yasir/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.Outlook/5PKS4MYG/Getting%20to%20good%20-%20July%2017%202014.doc#_ftn2\)](file:///C:/Users/Yasir/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.Outlook/5PKS4MYG/Getting%20to%20good%20-%20July%2017%202014.doc#_ftn1)

The recent global economic meltdown forced me to reflect on what's at the heart of such a phenomenon. What I found was the workings hubris and greed in the highest levels of decision-making in governments and in the corporate world in general. Countless examples of arrogance, pride and greed have been exposed in recent years causing havoc in the lives of ordinary human beings.

We have been lured by the charm of superlatives used in our management vocabulary. Terminologies like excellence, greatness, transformation etc., are appealing, but we have, in the process, somehow, lost sight of the basics.

Basic goodness is missing, particularly where it matters, at the top! When I looked up the simple word good in the dictionary, I found that it means all those things, the lack of which has caused immense worldwide grief.

mce_style="font-size: small;">Good implies virtue, decency, morality, proficiency, ability, competence, helpfulness and so much else. In this context, title of books like Good to Great by Jim Collins seem to jump the gun. They assume we are ♦good♦, and now need to find ways to greatness. Such a thought lulls us into complacency. The fact is we have not ♦arrived♦♦there is still much to be done, just to be good!</p><p class="MsoNormal">Here is an eternal question for leaders like you to keep in mind: What can you do and how should you behave to achieve ever greater effectiveness in your organization? Learning from nature helps.</p><p class="MsoNormal">Let♦s commence by considering an attribute most of us desire in a leader♦credibility! Imagine people eagerly and habitually seeking you out for feedback. Listening to you intently, and acting on what you have told them, without any reservation. They always leave you feeling more reassured, confident and satisfied. They trust you implicitly and know beyond doubt that you have their best interest at heart and would never speak about them behind their back. They also know that you only speak to the person or people before you and simply state what you see, without adding or taking away anything. They find comfort in the fact that their secrets are safe with you. Do you know an individual whose standing is as sound as this in his/her community or organization? Is it possible for anyone to aspire to such height?</p><p class="MsoNormal">What I have shared above are the attributes of a mirror♦and a straight one at that! Only the image it reflects is inversed.</p><p class="MsoNormal">Your effective and efficient conduct boils down to one simple fact♦you cannot be a good manager or a leader, without first being a good human being. Slightly over a decade ago, a participant in a workshop asked me, ♦I thought this was a ♦management♦ course! Then why is my company so keen to invest in my personal improvement and grooming?♦ I thought that this direct question, although tinged with cynicism, was very relevant and timely. It probed corporate intent and made me think, as I am sure everyone in the room at the time did. ♦I cannot speak for the company♦s intent.♦ I responded. ♦But one thing is clear♦the more the company cares for you, the more you are likely to care for it by displaying a greater sense of ownership in the tasks you perform.♦</p><p class="MsoNormal">Interestingly, such a virtuous circle also makes commercial sense. The greater the level of trust people enjoy with each other, across functions, and vertically, the better will be the efficiency and quality of the enterprise. Higher productivity and speed to market translates into competitiveness, which is vital for enduring success. But to build trust with your people in order to engage them, you must act with integrity. This is why being a ♦good human being♦ becomes all the more important. </p><p class="MsoNormal">The above

discourse led to a brainstorming exercise in which I asked the managers, what according to them, were the qualities that constituted a good human being? What they expressed came as no surprise, and included words like honesty, confidence, genuineness, sincerity, caring, optimism, flexibility, commitment, responsibility, courageousness, decisive, visionary, curiosity, empathy, consideration, generosity and a lot more! Can you imagine a good manager lacking in any of the above attributes? I hope not! These virtues need to be present in varying degrees in everyone for a society to function. Aren't managers hired in organizations, not only for their skills and competence, but also for such intrinsic and essential

qualities?

At the heart of good corporate governance lies ethical conduct imbued by a belief in managers of the value of corporate social responsibility. It remains a real challenge for companies to conform to the demands of building and nurturing principles that capture the soul of good conduct. Obama's philosophy of leadership brings us back to the forgotten fundamentals

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I have a low tolerance of nonsense and turf battles and game-playing, and I send that message very clearly. And so over time, people start trusting each other, and they stay focused on mission, as opposed to personal ambition or grievance. If you've got really smart people who are all focused on the same mission, then usually you can get some things done.

Consider this hypothetical scenario: What would you be willing to pay for a 15 seconds course that could change your life forever? The amount of money you decide to fork out will go into a bucket. The total amount gathered will be given to a worthy cause of your choosing! I hear you asking, How can a lesson of 15 seconds be so transformative? It can be! Just be honest to yourself and others and fair in all your dealings! How long did that take? And is this short edict not life changing?

Back in 1994, I was addressing a senior management team of a well-known local company in Karachi. At one point during the discussion, I remember posing this question: Can you think of a person who exhibits qualities of loyalty; stamina; strength; cleanliness; speed and dignity in his/her everyday conduct? At first there was a thoughtful silence. Then one of the directors pointed to the portrait in the boardroom and said, "Our Chairman!" Another remarked, "Jinnah!" I went round the room and heard more notable names. Once everyone had had the opportunity to contribute, I invited further reflection on the theme. "Gentlemen, imagine an organization in which every employee from top to bottom - was a living symbol of these six attributes. What kind of organization would that be? Outstanding remarks instantly filled the room: "An excellent organization!" "An admired and respected enterprise!" "A profitable company." "A growing and successful business!"

By now I could see a look of puzzlement and

amusement in the dozen. Time was ripe for me to share what I had in mind. "Gentlemen, the six attributes I just mentioned are embodied in a horse! Based on what you have said, why not fire most people and hire horses instead?!" Stunned silence followed. There was a touch of embarrassment on a few faces. What ensued was a lively discussion on what it meant to be human.

Our faith tells us that if we wanted to, we could be better than angels, or worse than animals. The foregoing discourse served to highlight a serious malady prevalent in our society. Why is it that we tend to look far and hard for a few prominent names who in our view encapsulated the six attributes and that too, of a horse? Why don't we see such qualities and many more, within ourselves and in people around us? Could it be that some of us have fallen below the level of animals? Could our ignorance be blinding us?

It's worth bearing in mind that animals behave as they are programmed to by nature they lack free-will. A snake is a snake. A lion is a lion. A deer is a deer. A fox is a fox. A sparrow is a sparrow. A dog is a dog. They only project what they are intrinsically. In short, animals remain true to their nature by default. Can human beings honestly project of themselves what they have chosen to be on the inside?

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It left us wondering who to trust? Who to believe?

In these dramatically uncertain times, what we need most of all, is people in organizations that can be relied on, not only for their capability, but for their authenticity. Is this asking for too much?

Simply getting to good is what we need today.

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geneva;">_____</p><div> <div id="ftn1"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[1] Chairman of Hyundai Motors. ♦ State prosecutors are investigating the creation of slush funds worth tens of millions of dollars. They say the secret money was used to bribe politicians and government officials to reduce the debts of troubled subsidiaries. ♦ http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2006/04/060426_hyundai.shtml </p> </div> <div id="ftn2"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[2] Founder & chairman of Satyam Computer Services confessed to a US\$1.47 billion fraud on its balance sheet. The Economist, Jan 10, 2009.</p> </div> <div id="ftn3"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[3] Time Magazine, - December 29/January 5, 2009 (p.40)</p> </div> <div id="ftn4"> <h1>[4] CNNMoney.com, Jan 05, 2009. Article titled: Congress looks for answers in Madoff scandal. Lawmakers ask how regulators missed the alleged \$50 billion Ponzi scheme.</h1></div></div><div style="mso-element:footnote-list" mce_style="mso-element:footnote-list"><div style="text-align: left;" mce_style="text-align: left;" id="ftn1"><div style="text-align: center;" mce_style="text-align: center;">----------</div></div></div><p> </p><p> </p><p></p><div class="mceltemVisualAid" style="position: absolute; left: -1000px; top: 0px; width: 1px; height: 1px; overflow: hidden;" id="_mcePaste"><span mce_style="font-size: small;" style="font-size:

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style="style" mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal">No matter how big your organization gets,
continue to empower your people at every level to deliver. Only this way will size lead to
advantage.</i><i

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small;" style="font-size: small;"> <p class="MsoNormal" style="style"

mce_style="style">It is always
useful to explore the history of any company to understand how they got to being what they are
today. Corporate success usually follows some combination of visionary entrepreneurship and
luck. When companies acquire early successes and achieve a dominant position in some
market or markets they become profitable and usually follow a steep growth trajectory in their
early years. </p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="style" mce_style="style"><span

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small;">With the passage of time, however, pressures on managers come mostly from inside
the firm. Building and staffing a bureaucracy that can cope with growth is the biggest challenge.
External constituencies are neglected. The firm needs, hires, and promotes managers, not
leaders, to cope with the growing bureaucracy. Top managers allow these people, not leaders,
to become executives. Sometimes top management actively prevents leaders from becoming
senior executives. Managers begin to believe that they are the best and that idiosyncratic
traditions are superior. They tend to become increasingly arrogant and aloof. The problem is
compounded when top management does nothing to stop this trend and often ends up

exacerbating it. </p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="style" mce_style="style"><span

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strong, insular and conceited culture develops. Managers fail to acknowledge the value of
customers and other key stakeholders. They behave in an inward-looking, sometimes political
fashion and fail to acknowledge the value of leadership and the talent available at all levels
that can provide it. They tend to stifle initiative and innovation. They behave in centralized and
authoritative ways.</p> <p class="MsoNormal"><span mce_style="font-size: small;"

style="font-size: small;"> </p> <span mce_style="font-size: small;" style="font-size:
small;">Consequently, as organizations grow, whether in terms of sales, number of employees,
range of products and services, market share, or whatever, they start to lose the advantage
they once had. According to John Naisbitt in the book <i style="style"

mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal">Rethinking the Future</i> ♦ it is the small companies
who are creating the global economy, not the Fortune 500. And these days a small company
can be as small as one person. ♦ In his book, <i style="style"

Megatrends 2000 he gave the example of his neighbors Linde and Lito who have a publishing company called Western Eye Press. He continues, ♦It♦s just two people and they publish wonderful photographic and guide books. They create them on Macintosh computers in their basement in Telluride. They print out the camera-ready pages on their own high resolution laser printer. Then they FedEx♦ed these pages to Seoul, South Korea, and the printer there manufactures their books and ships them to distributors all over the world. Western Eye Press is a key player in the global economy and its just two people on this little mountain perch in Colorado.♦ Large corporations and global conglomerates, if not careful, end up becoming highly bureaucratic, over-managed, rule-driven and inflexible by virtue of their size. In this day and age of cyberspace and nanotechnology, fetish with size of a business can become an impediment. This is particularly true for organizations that have grown significantly in scale in terms of revenues and market share. Organizations like Citibank have lost touch with their core constituents. It may be a major player with a strong brand image, but customers interacting with its frontline employees are often disappointed by their state of helplessness in resolving routine problems. This could be on account of slavish adherence to archaic procedures. Often, individual contributors in big companies don♦t take the initiative needed to listen and understand customer requirements with the intent to ultimately delighting them. There is a lot to be said for systems and processes, but if they are not customer oriented and responsive, the game is as good as lost. Quality can now be replicated anywhere in the world. China is leading the way in this respect. With the falling of trade barriers and dropping of quotas, the Chinese have taken their global market share in textiles from 16% to over 50% in less than a decade. In recent years, the Pakistan market has been flooded with Chinese products (mostly electronic, light engineering) that are low priced and in much demand. We no longer live in a world of big mainframes. We live in a world where the real power is large networks ♦ a lot of individuals connected together ♦ Facebook & Twitter are pointing the way. A network does not have any headquarters. Chinese excel in this field and have spread their global business through this means. Naisbitt cites Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) as a great example of a huge company that thrives and grows through networking. He quotes Percy Barnevik (Former CEO at ABB) as having said, ♦We grow all the time, but we also shrink all the time.♦ As the network gets larger, the nodes get smaller. So, no matter how big your company gets, continue to excel by empowering your people at every level to deliver. Building agility and responsiveness is the key.</div>