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At the core of any self-respecting and admired organization lies integrity, which lends it vitality and endurance.

The field of learning and development and OD (organization development) is always pregnant with astonishing possibilities. There is always room for improvement whether in individual capabilities, team working, systems and processes, leveraging of technology, redesigning structures or shaping the culture in any organization. Tinkering with any of these elements is futile, in the absence of an overriding context provided by the organization's vision, mission, values and code of conduct.

Whether you are about to launch a start-up, or are working with an organization that is established in a particular sector or industry, it is expected of you to be clear about why the organization exists in the first place. Its reason for being needs to be clearly understood and felt by all its stakeholders. If the organization's raison d'être doesn't engage our heart and soul, we have a problem.

At the core of any self-respecting and admired organization lies integrity, which lends it vitality and endurance. Integrity is adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty. It is the state of being whole. Integrity sets the tone and necessitates that all efforts to grow, manage, and lead an organization be based on a set of ideas and a philosophy that is transparent and leaves no doubt in the mind of all its stakeholders in terms of what the organization stands for.

geneva;">Any organization development effort which lacks integrity is bound to fail in the long-run and is ultimately unsustainable. In this article, I take the view that an organization thrives when its vision invites a genuine commitment from all its internal and external stakeholders. An organization's endurance comes from the strength of commitments people, working in it, make to each other, in the service of its

mission.

The foregoing may seem far-fetched to many. Quite a few would silently wish their organization's leadership would take heed, while there are also those amongst us who ardently believe in such ideals and do their utmost to manifest the same in their immediate spheres of influence.

The fundamental premise here is that organizations grow, only when people working in them continuously develop their capabilities and devote themselves passionately to serving its mission. Such a thought will remain a pipe dream if the ruling paradigm for hiring people remains, We hire people to perform tasks. Instead, what is needed is a declared intent which suggests, We hire people to grow them through

tasks.

Unfortunately, several organizations are still driven by the former paradigm. They survive only because they enjoy a monopoly position or some sort of protection from competition. Organizations of this kind don't inspire, let alone motivate. Instead, they breed mediocrity and subservience to higher ups. They are mostly opaque and people work in well guarded silos, suffering from fear and insecurity.

Such organizations are not developed. Instead, they are deliberately created to benefit the few at the cost of many. Here, the biggest stakeholder is the shareholder and the few managers who serve their interests diligently, neglecting the needs of others they are also meant to serve i.e., customers and employees. Entities of this nature survive by playing on human weaknesses such as insecurity and greed. Making money for personal gain is the key priority without due regard given to strengthening the organization by caring for the environment, the community, its employees and other stakeholders.

x-small;" mce_style="font-family: verdana, geneva; font-size: x-small;"/>In mediocre organizations, working environment is hostile. Members of senior management and the rest do not interact openly. Lip-service is often paid to principles of corporate governance, codes of conduct, policy guidelines and SOPs which are displayed where needed, yet discreetly flouted. Inflated egos rule. A compliant and manipulative culture evolves in which employees apparently do what they are told, but in actual fact, keep passing the buck to the lowest level. Blaming is common place and accountability non-existent. I realize how hellish this description sounds, but millions in Pakistan, and no doubt elsewhere, suffer the indignity of struggling in such organizations.

mce_style="line-height: normal; background-position: initial initial; background-repeat: initial initial;"/>Thankfully, we can breathe a sigh of relief, as there are plenty of emerging entrepreneurs and business leaders who are nowadays busy developing and transforming their organizations based on the latter paradigm, ♦We hire people to grow them through tasks.♦ Even though this is a liberating idea, it is not everyone♦s cup of tea, and understandably so. Many of us become victims of our self-constructed ♦comfort zones♦. We like to be in a familiar place, doing what we have learned over the years. It can be scary to work in a place that demands excellence and sets high standards of performance. And this is the tough reality leaders need to confront within them and also help others realize that continuous learning and improvement is an imperative of life, and not just a business requirement.

mce_style="line-height: normal; background-position: initial initial; background-repeat: initial initial;"/>There is no room for apathy in a culture that thrives on principles of excellence. Individuals need to discover and exhibit their inborn greatness in everything they do at work and in society. The main task of OD is to help top leadership in organizations shape, facilitate and nurture a culture that elevates human dignity, gives people a voice, and encourages responsible leadership at every level of the organization. None of this will be possible in the absence of candor and transparency. A culture of compliance is mediocrity. A culture of commitment is excellence.

mce_style="line-height: normal; background-position: initial initial; background-repeat: initial initial;"/>For far too long we have unwittingly embraced half-truths. This has led to a lot of workplaces becoming mundane. Earning the monthly paycheck becomes for many the sole reason for going to work.♦

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x-small;">◆I am a leader AND a follower.◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;" mce_style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;">
</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;" mce_style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;">Great leaders are great followers and vice versa. Who do we follow? Our ego? Our boss? Or, do we follow principles and ideas we believe in and signed up for? Strong and enduring organizations foster principle centered leadership. Weak organizations are personality dependent.</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;" mce_style="margin-bottom: 0.0001pt;">
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</div><div><div>Left hand column illustrates commonly held notions amongst most managers working in mediocre organizations. One of the key challenges for OD practitioners and organizational leadership is to systematically elicit the whole truth in all individuals who will be hired or are already part of the enterprise that is poised to become an enduring and admired organization.</div><div>
</div><div>Be clear about your vision, mission and values of your organization. Let those who are working with you decide if the idea and philosophy appeals to their inner core. Make sure everyone lives by the agreed values and is fully engaged by its vision.</div><div>
</div><div>Playing on human strengths lies at the heart of OD, and integrity is a strength that must not be ignored.</div><div>_____</div></div><div><div id="ftn1"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[1]<span style="font-size: xx-small;" mce_style="font-size:

xx-small;">http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Integrity?s=t◆</p></div>
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continue to empower your people at every level to deliver. Only this way will size lead to
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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">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal"
style="style" mce_style="style"><span mce_style="font-size: small;" style="font-size:
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.

A 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.

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 *Rethinking the Future* 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, *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 FedExed 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>