

How to Eliminate or Reduce Egos and Be a Better Leader

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Abstract

Leaders or in fact, any person, check your ego! An English saying goes, “Pride comes before a fall”, and in this review research paper, the author, a practitioner-academician, seeks to investigate and assess the various types of egos such as self-importance, narcissism and a host of others that may impede or block the smooth working of leadership, more so, when leaders possess or carry their egos, high and mighty while leading. Such attitude and behaviors of egoistic leaders, among other things, include, for example, “admiring and caring more for themselves...(and) taking ego trips”, “smug” and “self-important leaders can make their people feel small, if not humiliate... or embarrass them”. With key pointers and examples, this paper seeks to illustrate and demonstrate that by minimizing the various egos, leaders can definitely better lead their people.

Key words: Ego, leadership, Tsunami leaders, various types of ego – including ego of gender, race and religion and ego of bureaucracy and paperwork; ego of technology.

Introduction

“A proud man is always looking down on things and people and, of course, as long as you’re looking down, you can’t see something that’s above you.” There is no place for ego in leading. Ego – whatever it is – can be a wedge or a barrier between the leader and his (her) people, affecting his (her) relationships and communication with his (her) people.

And if one looks at leaders in real life, one will discover that some people in leadership roles maintain their effectiveness over time, but that others go from being effective to becoming ineffective, sometimes becoming destructive forces in their organizations (nations).

One typical reason of this type of negative shift involves the ego or sense of self-importance that can occur when someone is in a leadership position and loses perspective about (**forgets or conveniently ignores**) his or her role in the organization (**nation/ international community**) (Bacal and Associates, 2014; **bold author's**).

Paper's Aim and Objectives

What this paper is contending is that valuing people (others) is a good business strategy (Michaelson and Michaelson, 2011; Harari, 2003; PHP Institute Inc., 1994; Maxwell, 1993) and that indeed leaders should be reducing or diminishing their egos to want, get, motivate (Collin cited in Harari, 2003) and retain excellent people or employees; they can then better lead their people.

It is the aim and intention of this research paper to uncover, explore and examine the various types of egos that may hinder or obstruct the smooth working of leadership, particularly so, when leaders possess or carry – instead of reducing or eliminating – their egos in their daily course of work and duties. It can thus be clearly seen that by reducing and even eliminating the various egos, one can perhaps better lead one's people.

Bad or ineffective leaders or what this author called Tsunami leaders (they are really non-leaders) are often “being preoccupied with (their) own self-worth” (Learning on Leadership, 2012), self-interest, self-centeredness and rather self-love. Kazimierz Matan once said (cited in Dedicatio, 2013), “‘Me’, ‘Myself’ and ‘Mine’ - Holy Trinity of selfishness.” Most of the time, egoistic leaders are more troubled and apprehensive with Covering-Your-Arse (CYA) syndrome or protecting their self-interests and themselves. Low (2003: 87) cautioned the need for leaders indeed “not to manipulate facts to cover (one)self.”

In contrast, good or successful leaders, in most ways, do not make themselves loom larger than life and matter more than their people. With no ego, one does or executes one's job without any consideration to one's self-interests, desires, pride or vanity. Indeed, for example, when one's about to sleep, one begins to think of all sorts of things one is likely to have a disturbed, interrupted or troubled sleep. One needs to be detached; and when detached, when one sleeps, one simply sleeps and one sleeps well and soundly. And when one eats, one eats heartily and well. When without egos or attachments, one simply does one's job, one does and fleshed it out well. Without ego or attachment, one also does things rationally and objectively.

“Don't put yourself above others” urged Soichiro Honda (cited in The NHK Group, 1996: 47). To successful leaders, “people matter” (Jack Welch, cited in Crainer, 2007: 21 - 31), and without their own agenda or self-interests, they “view people as partners” (Colin Powell cited in Harari, 2003: 33), meeting them with an open-arms approach, helping others whenever they can (Low, 2003). They also invest in people; leaders train their people (Crainer, 2007: 21 – 31; Maxwell, 1993). In this regard, Soichiro Honda (cited in The NHK Group, 1996: 175) spoke of “a leader has nothing to do with arrogance or showing off your authority or forcing people to follow rules”, but that of “nurturing people” and “by winning over people's hearts”.

The Effect of Ego on Leadership

There is a Chinese saying that goes – “To draw a hen to depict a phoenix”. This best describes an egotistic or conceited person as (s)he may think that his or her attributes and qualities are the best or in fact, better than others; when it may certainly not be. The person is only thinking highly of him(her)self without any or good basis and foundation. This is similar to what Golda Meir (the fourth Prime Minister of Israel, 17 March 1969 – 3 June 1974) once said (Dale Carnegie & Associates, Inc. (1984: 37), “Don't be too humble. You're not that great”. After all, “pride is a vice, which pride itself inclines every man to find in others, and to overlook in himself. (Samuel Johnson (a/k/a Dr. Johnson, “The Great Cham of Literature” cited in Tentmaker, 2014).

Besides, egoistic people, not to say egoistic leaders, never ask or check if their interpretation or understanding of the matter is correct. They simply do what they think is right and what makes them happy. It is funny how they consider that whatever they say or do is always correct and that

everyone else is always wrong. Or they may even ignore the advice, inputs and feedback of others. They simply do not seem to understand that someone else can have a different viewpoint or perspective; they think they have the best and most absolute viewpoint. Points and views can only be tested by discussion with someone else. Until you see other or both ways completely (Kirsas, 2015).

Strategically-speaking, the competition or rivals of egoistic leaders can capitalize and take advantage of such leaders, and weaken them. Low and Teo (2014: 94) spoke of certain Chinese war strategies – particularly that of “the Commander embracing humility and conversely, making the enemy feel arrogant” as applied to business. They stressed that, “Since the olden days, even at ground level, arrogant soldiers have always been defeated. Even experienced warriors are no exception. Clever generals are not only humble but calm too. Composed, such a leader is better able to come up and devise plans to make the enemy feel big-headed, absorbed by self-importance and pride. In this way, victory is assured, and what is applicable to the opponent is similar to the English saying, ‘Pride comes before a fall’”.

“Admiring and caring more for themselves...(and) taking ego trips”, “egoistic or self-important leaders can (also) make their people feel small, if not humiliate... or embarrass them”. “They are so smug or self-satisfied” “...think(ing) that they are so smart or better than others.” “To these high-ego leaders, things may never be correct or perfect; their people may not be good or capable enough as them” – these are some inputs received from two interviewees who voluntarily gave their viewpoints when they knew that this researcher was doing the study. For the records, these interviewees gave their inputs during the period 1 July 2014 to 10 November 2014.

Leaders should indeed care for their people. And besides, they should do what’s right for their people, and these take precedent over protecting their position (Achua and Lussier, 2007). When the leader’s ego comes into play, servant leadership can be hindered. Servant leadership – often “service over self-interest” (Achua and Lussier, 2007: 315) – is needed as leaders are truly valued in “helping others discover their inner spirit” (Achua and Lussier, 2007: 315). They help followers uncover or discover the strength of their inner spirit and their potential to make a difference.

“Being stuck-up and condescending, egoistic leaders do not or find it hard to think service” (one interviewee’s inputs). As Jack Welch indicated, leaders must indeed “think service”. “Our job is to sell more than just the box” (Jack Welch cited in Crainer, 2007: 59). They must not be egoistic but get intimate, knowing the ground while developing good customer knowledge.

In addition, “egoistic leaders can adopt an irritating holier-than-thou attitude and worse, they get defensive when someone challenges their views” (one interviewee’s inputs). Being of high ego makes the leader not to listen well, and be, in fact, blind or oblivious of other valued viewpoints and perspectives especially of the opinions of their people and others; hence the egoistic leaders can cut themselves off and be closed to choices and options when deciding or making decisions.

Of the boss attitude (Low, 2013; Maxwell, 1993), leaders, with high egos, seldom listen; “they would also not admit their mistake(s)” (one interviewee’s inputs). They tell and impose their will on the group too. And an organization (nation), on the other hand, needs leaders to listen, serve and lead. Good leaders listen well (Colin Powell cited in Harari, 2003). Organization also needs team leaders who can get their people to think, feel and act as a team. The leader should be more collective minded rather than just thinking, feeling and acting for him(her)self and for his (her) self-interests.

It is worthy to note that businesses need people to work as teams to meet their goals. Teams require effective leadership in order to function properly. In contrast, when the leader makes it all about themselves, the team (and the organization) suffers (<http://askthemanager.com/2009/06/the-effect-of-ego-on-leadership/>). “Thanks for everyone’s efforts” (Soichiro Honda cited in The NHK Group, 1996). And lateral or team leadership make people work together and happily to achieve the goals.

Besides, as General Colin Powell (cited in Berce, 2014) once pointed out that, “Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it” (<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/ego.html#UCMk3mJL5yIwEhS>); in leadership,

ego almost equally hurts both, interaction and communication process as well as the quality of decision-making.

Not particularly skilled in people's skills, self-interested and egotistic leaders, more often than not, isolate themselves; they are often cut off from the ground or people. On the other hand, "leadership is about a commitment to people" (Lord Marshall, cited in Crainer, 2007: 29); good leaders communicate or talk constantly to everyone.

When putting forward their ideas, comments and opinions, one of leadership's key mission or exercise is to help individuals feel psychologically safe around them and other team members. It is precisely the time when leaders must encourage search and exploration rather than stop or block it. Great leaders know that overusing their ego would lead to counterproductive results. Therefore, exceptional leaders have long ago learned to carefully pick their battles in meeting room to allow debate to flourish. And this is the only path leading to better team decisions (Berce, 2014), akin in spirit to the Italian proverb that indicates, "The pope and a peasant know more between them than the pope alone."

Ego, Attachment or Desire

A Jewish proverb speaks of "Pride is the mask of one's own faults". Pride or ego can indeed generate much desire, and it can really be energy sapping, draining the leader's (person's) drive or vitality which may distract or derail the leader's thinking, feeling, work and responsibilities as well as service to the people.

The late Osho once said these, "The ego feeds off your desire to be something else. You are poor and you want to be rich – the ego is absorbing energy, its life-breath. You are ignorant and you want to become a wise one – the ego is absorbing energy. You are a wretched nobody and you want to become powerful – the ego is absorbing energy." (Osho, *Die O Yogi Die, Ch 8* cited in OshoNews, 2014)

One, especially a leader, should better understand the process of the ego. How does the ego live? Osho stressed that "The ego lives in the tension between what you are and what you want to be.

A wants to be B – the ego is created out of this very tension. How does the ego die? The ego dies by you accepting what you are. That you say, ‘I am fine as I am, where I am is good. I will remain just as existence keeps me. Its will is my will.’”

Ego of Being More Important, Knowledgeable and Able

Considering themselves as more important, knowledgeable and capable, high-ego leaders may certainly not recruit or select better people than themselves. And it would then be a great loss to the organization or nation. [By right, leaders should positively select and hire even better or smarter people than themselves. In this aspect, Low (2011: 88-89, **bold, author’s**) spoke of the Matryoshka principle: “Commonly found in Russia, a set of nested matryoshkas consists of wooden figures which separates, bottom to top, each is subsequently bigger, and so on, and the wooden figures usually come in a set of matching five. When applying the Matryoshka principle to talent management, it simply means that leaders should always employ or engage someone, much more (**talented**,) able or better qualified than him(her)self as well as the fact that they share the same set of values.” Overall, the organization can truly benefit from this; and successful leaders should be able to attract and retain talents within the organization.]

It is common for someone who has power and authority to come to believe that (s)he is far more important, knowledgeable and able than is really the case. In common language, this is also known as ‘believing the press clippings’.

Even worse, a successful leader tends to harvest much praise and recognition for successes both from those without an organization, but also from followers within the organization. This is particularly difficult in situations where the leader sets up an internal organizational culture that supports communicating about positive things, and sweeping bad news under the rug. In these situations the leader does not receive the types of feedback about what (s)he needs to do differently, and comes to believe in his (her) infallibility (Bacal and Associates, 2014).

Then again, if, in a given situation, one is unconsciously (or consciously) focused on one’s own value or self-image, one’s leadership capabilities get usurped or hijacked. For example, if A’s ego priority is to be liked by A’s peers, that may cause A to not address certain issues or

challenge others' ideas, even if A disagrees with them. Alternatively, if A's ego drives A to be the smartest or high IQ guy in the meeting room, A may unconsciously fall into debating or rhetoric and rejecting others' ideas (Learning on Leadership, 2012).

Interestingly, Bacal and Associates (2014) highlighted that - apart from inadequate feedback from followers, another cause of ego sabotage comes from what is called misattribution of success. It is common for people to use the halo effect, and attribute success to leaders, when in fact, that success has nothing to do with the specific leader, but to a large variety of other factors. Misattribution attributes cause and effect to the wrong sources.

It is worthy to note that no one ever choked swallowing his pride. And when a leader is not egoistic or does not think that (s)he is more important, knowledgeable (smarter) and able than his (her) people; he knows that (s)he is fallible; (s)he often seeks the opinions of others. (S)e also listens well. "Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk" (Doug Larson cited in Deep and Sussman, 2000: 58). And it is often and indeed good to seek the opinions of one's people (Matsushita Konosuke once implied these, cited in PHP Institute Inc., 1994). It is also good to be consultative (Matsushita Konosuke spoke of these; PHP Institute Inc., 1994), and the leader too learns a thing or two from his (her) people. After all, to be a great leader, one has to be a great learner (Crainer, 2007). Besides, (s)he can be creative when getting others to opine. Otherwise, "your ego can become an obstacle to your work. If you start believing in your greatness, it is the death of your creativity". (Marina Abramovic cited in <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/ego.html#UCMk3mJL5yIwEhS.99>).

Ego of Having More or Greater Experience(s)

Some old folks may say these: "I'm more seasoned, I'm older than you and therefore, I'm wiser and can be a better judge than you." Often, older people would want to claim that they have had more experience(s) and greater inside knowledge as well as insights of the company and industry, having taken more salt than younger people. And they thus have better judgment or assessment of the situation or issue(s) involved than younger people with lesser or fewer experience(s). It is also not uncommon for someone who has more or greater experiences to come to believe that (s)he has far more experiences, familiarities and greater understandings than

others. And if this is the case, then such a person and a leader would ignore, if not limitedly accept the advice or pointers from rookies or from younger and inexperienced person(s).

It is true that in the corporate world, experienced people often disregard the views of recruits as they are seen as being wet behind their ears and not having enough familiarity, understandings and previous, precious involvement.

Such an ego of having more experiences can actually, if not stubbornly, confine the leader to his (her) respective field; and (s)he can, in fact, be more limited, less creative and innovative, indulging in lesser out-of-the-box thinking. One should thus keep one's mind open and flexible to factor in broader perspective(s) and greater insight(s).

Ego of the Past

“You will never reach the second base if you keep one foot on the first base.” (Vernon Law cited in Dale Carnegie & Associates, Inc., 1984: 61).

There is no point basking in past glories. Andre Maurois once said that, “the first recipe for happiness is avoid too lengthy meditation on the past.” Indeed one form of ego is to be overly attached to one's past when there is really no point and/ or need to cling onto the past.

Johnson (2003: 57) advised, “Look at what happened in the past. Learn something valuable from it. Use what you learn to improve the present”, and be more in the being which we did well when young and now, when older, have forgotten about it.

Move on.

Often all of us hear the claims of the ego and these are of the past, “I did this, I did that” – it is ALL in the past (OshoNews, 2014). And the clinging on to the past patterns and habits of dysfunctions can create much suffering (Wolf, 2015).

A Malay saying, “pisang tidak berbuah dua kali” [meaning the banana plant does not bear fruits twice;] one should indeed not be overly concerned with the past. If an incident happens, it happens and there is no turning back; there is no point regretting and harping on the issue(s) involved. Leaders should not be digging out old bones, needle or nag their people on their past mistakes. What is critical is for the leader to get the people to learn from their mistakes, gather what can be learnt and what can be improved upon, and move on).

A leader cannot change the past but (s)he can learn from it. When the same situation arises, one can do things differently and enjoy a more successful present. In other words, when one is in the being, living in the present, one is “tuning out distractions” and creating one’s own present by what one gives one’s attention to (Johnson, 2003: 40-41).

Ego of the Future

By clutching tightly onto the past, it becomes impossible to live in the present. And by grabbing too strongly onto what could have been done, there are fewer opportunities to take now. By not closing the door on one chapter or aspect of our lives, we make it rigidly difficult to move to the next. (Ego-Friendly, 2010).

Let us explain further. If one emphasizes too much of the future, one is attached to the future, to the dreams and even desires of the future, one develops the ego of the future.

When one has released all the attachment and tension about the future – that one should become this and one should become that – the ego evaporates. The ego lives on a base of the past and the future. Understand this a little. The declarations of the ego are of the past, “I did this, I did that” – it is all in the past. And the ego asserts, “I will certainly accomplish this, I will, for sure, show you that I can accomplish that.” That is all in the future (OshoNews, 2014). “Be in the present. (When you want to be happy and successful), focus on the right now, use your purpose to respond to what is important NOW (Johnson, 2003: 81). One thus enjoy the joys of living and leading.

Whatever it is, the ego simply does not exist in the present. If you come to the present, then the ego disappears. That is death to the ego. Coming to the present is the death of the ego (OshoNews, 2014). After all, “life is always NOW. Everything seems to be subject to time, yet it all happens NOW” (Tolle, 2012).

Ego of Owning Things and Being Materialistic

Here, one is obsessed with materialism, being closely attached to material things when in fact one does not own things. ‘One comes with nothing and goes with nothing’ – this is what the Buddha once said; and it’s as simple as that.

Standing tall and with integrity, leaders are not to be corrupt or be bribed; they are indeed to steady themselves, free from craving, greed and self-indulgence, so that they can help others while not being engulfed by money, things or luxury. It is better for them not to be materialistic or tempted – they simply do their job and duties

Crass materialism is bloated egoism and it is with little regard and consideration for others; and such a leadership is not only bad for the people, but for the leaders too. Low (2013a: 404) put forth that materialism is baseless and that “subscribing to materialism can lead one to become intoxicated with emptiness; especially when without spirituality” Besides, he argued that: “Each person for him(her)self; materialism is greediness and emptiness, and likened to salt without savor, corrupted and disgusting, good to be strewn on the ground and be trampled upon. It is better to help the needy than the greedy; the needy need or go for the essentials but the greedy go for the extras and excesses. He or she has enough yet craves and hunger after for more while using or stepping on others in the process of getting more. To such a person, more is good – and/or worse, at the expense of others.” (Low, 2013a: 404).

It is difficult, if not impossible to give sound leadership when our leaders are obsessed and absorbed at the survival needs as their direction and route to fulfillment. Good decisions may be taken, but our craving for materialism interrupts and frustrates the wholesome and healthy implementation. This is the madness of our materialism, which invariably jeopardizes society’s ultimate good (Oyewole, 2014). Leaders should be altruistic and indeed caring for others.

It is indeed worthy to note that leadership is for those who are dead to materialism (**without ego or attachment to materialism**), those who are dead to death, and those who are dead to themselves (**selfless or without ego**). It is for those whose personal craving or desire has been buried completely in the people's will and for those who rate their lives on the positive impact made on the lives of others. Leaders are those who put their lives on the line to put the people on the right lane (Olufayobi, 2014; **bold author's**).

Ego of Gender, Race and Religion

Increasingly so, leaders and organizations are appreciating that in order to be successful and recruit and retain the best employees, they must value the diversity of their employees and the clients they serve (Lieberman, 2015; Stone, 2013).

It is worthy to note that in terms of one's culture, one can get into much in-group thinking, getting entrapped and becoming ethnocentric. One can, at times, also be very much preoccupied and proud, not to mention arrogant with a rather superior feeling of one's gender, race and/ or religion. Any person, let alone a religious leader, may also think that his or her religion is a superior religion than any other religions. But be extra careful.

And a leader should be fair, not having favorites or excluding and being bias against anyone based on gender race and/ or religion; (s)he should not place glass ceilings or discriminate against any person based on such factor(s); instead (s)he should recognize, better appreciate, tap and use any talent or person(s) available to benefit the organization (nation). One would certainly want to live, valuing diversity, appreciating the various/ other cultures, being racial and religious tolerant while enjoying peace and harmony and truly harnessing their attendant benefits.

All of us – more so, leaders – should certainly not forget history and the dire, dangerous consequences, scourge and harmful, damaging effects of promoting egos such as that of race and religion as well as hatred and intolerance against any person, religion(s) or people(s). Look at Germany and Europe during the 1930s and the time of World War 2, Adolf Hitler was seized by an obsession with the Jews and he had always been straightforward or direct about his plans.

During his rise to power, Hitler had repeatedly blamed the Jews for Germany's defeat in World War I and later economic hardships (<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/holocaust.htm>). Hitler's dream of a racially 'pure' empire would tolerate no Jews and he announced many a time the "annihilation of the Jews" living in the territory under his control. To Hitler, killing millions of Jews could only be achieved under the confusion of war - from the beginning he was planning a war that would overwhelm Europe. Note that in the early days, Hitler often spoke of how he would deal with the Jews; his favorite or choice words were *Ausrottung* (extirpation), *Vernichtung* (annihilation), *Entfernung* (removal), *Aufräumung* (cleaning up). (http://www.adolfhitler.dk/new_page_8.htm).

Ego of Social Class or Group Status

A social class is a group of individuals who occupy a similar position in the economic system of production. Social classes or statuses can give rise to groupthink (Janis, 1971) and communication barriers; they divide a society that stresses on or reinforces the caste system or hierarchy.

A leader cannot put him(her)self on a pedestal, high and away from the people. A leader should not or cannot be exclusive; to be persuasive to his (her) people; the people should be able to identify with him (her); and (s)he is one of them.

Interestingly, humble and modest, Mahatma Gandhi (Achua and Lusier, 2007; Sofri, 1999; Fischer, 1950), the Father of Independent India removed much of the social class ego and communication barriers. Simply dressed or even half-naked – just wearing a lion cloth, he was able to be identified with the masses, the ordinary Indians. Speaking their language, Gandhi related well with the Indian farmers/ commoners, and he can thus be assessed as having led the Indians well and into independence.

Ego of Bureaucracy and Paperwork

Leadership is influence, it calls for changing people's behavior. Interestingly, leaders do things, and leaders as influencers do things better than others (Grenny, Paterson, Maxfield; Mcmillan

and Switzler, 2013). Interestingly, egoistic leaders can be rather suspicious of others; and they may typically not trust their people, demanding much paperwork and proofs. They may perceive or make Theory X assumptions of people (McGregor, 1985), that is people are lazy or not capable of self-direction. And they may also micro-manage them. Lording over them, they bark orders and expect adherence. They bureaucratically tell rather than sell.

Leaders “kill bureaucracy” (Jack Welch cited in Crainer, 2007: 113-124).

And one must be proactive; one must have the power to ACT. And the answer is in one’s hand (Deep and Sussman, 2000; Jack Welch cited in Crainer, 2007). Leaders “never sit still” (Jack Welch cited in Crainer, 2007: 41). Leadership is about action, “doing” and executing (Price and Price, 2013: 40-49), “walk the talk” (Colin Powell cited in Harari, 2003: 7) and solving problems (Maxwell, 1993) and some leaders (or in fact they should be called non-leaders or limited leaders) may prefer to hide behind the skirt of bureaucratic machinery rather than taking action, serving people and solving problems.

Bureaucracy can be defined as administration characterized by concentration of power and/ or excessive red tape, unnecessary procedural steps, much paperwork and routine (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/bureaucracy>; <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/bureaucracy>) and it can stress more on the form rather than the content and substance. That is the order of things bureaucracy. And this may indeed cause much inertia and inefficiencies. Stressing on procedures, they want forms to be completed and certain paperwork or procedures done before action(s) can be taken.

It is aptly said that “the ego relies on the familiar. It is reluctant to experience the unknown, which is the very essence of life.” (Deepak Chopra, *The Third Jesus: The Christ We Cannot Ignore* cited in Goodreads Inc., 2015). Without the bureaucratic ego and being less task-oriented (it’s really about breaking paradigms and being outside the comfort zone), leaders can be more friendly and personalized while getting things done.

Ego of Technology

Remember this turn of the century book, Naisbitt, Naisbitt and Philips' (1999) "High tech, High touch"?

True while it is excellent to be high-tech, one should not forget about being high-touch too. At times, nations and corporates can be too obsessed with technology that they may hold technology high and be technologically egoistic – as if, sad to say, all the answers can be resolved by technology and things high-tech or being tech-savvy. And they just forget about things human (all human values and what mankind stands for) and more importantly, high-touch.

Being more persuasive, enabling one to assess the other party's frankness and making decisions, face-to-face meetings or simple chit-chatting to each other are much more critical in helping one attain certain business objectives. In person meetings are much better at hastening and deepening relationships much faster than if you were to communicate solely with high tech tools or aids (WH & Associates, 2011).

Just high tech – and without high touch – can be very impersonal, task-oriented, sterile and cold. Naisbitt, Naisbitt and Philips (1999) contended that in a high-tech world with an increasing quest for balance, high touch will be the key to differentiate or distinguish products and services. Concentrating on the effects of technology in reshaping society, Naisbitt, Naisbitt and Philips (1999) puts together a mountain of evidence implicating technology in relentlessly accelerating our lives and stirring profound longings for a more emotionally satisfying life.

Though relationships in human lives are truly critical, one needs to wisely ensure that one's not too attached or over-dependent on others so much so that it becomes an addiction or a bad habit; one is not oneself without one's favorite person(s)' support or when they're not around. [Or confusing love with obsession – such as one becomes sexually involved with and/or emotionally attached to a person without taking the time to get to know them or one fears of being abandoned and being lonely, causing one to stay in and return to painful, destructive and abusive relationships; <http://www.relationshipaddict.com/> Of significance, in *Power of Stillness*, Haricharan, 2010 asked, 'why we all are or most of us struggling with relationships?' and in turn, he spoke of "EGO... ..this false image likes to create drama to get attention... drama brings

jealousy, possessiveness and one day... the ship of relationship sinks down with the load of EGO... recognize it and help yourself by paying attention on who is acting into the relationship 'real you : Love' 'non real is ego'"] Nonetheless, relationships are meant to be the most beautiful part of human life (<http://happylovinglife.com/ego-and-relationships/#sthash.KWV6iz1d.dpuf>). People need people (Low, 2001); people prefers to deal with people (especially those whom they are familiar with) rather than with some heartless, unfeeling or cold-blooded people. And that also makes business transactions interesting or fun!

Conclusion

Successful leaders ordinarily do not make themselves more important or loom larger than life than their people; enlightened, they put their people first; yes, but also valuing peace, harmony and international collaboration, they cooperate while enhancing collaboration with other peoples and nations. They should function and work with less, little ego or simply without any ego. After all, even as a non-leader or an ordinary person, "if your ego starts out, 'I am important, I am big, I am special', you're in for some disappointments when you look around at what we've discovered about the universe. No, you're not big. No, you're not. You're small in time and in space. And you have this frail vessel called the human body that's limited on Earth." (Neil deGrasse Tyson cited in <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/ego.html#UCMk3mJL5yIwEhS.99>).

As long as we live, having egos are unavoidable; nonetheless, perhaps, leaders or in fact all of us should come up with further plans and even learn some lasting ways of reducing or avoiding having egos to improve ourselves. In this regard, Deepak Chopra has these to say: "If you want to reach a state of bliss, then go beyond your ego and the internal dialogue. Make a decision to relinquish the need to control, the need to be approved, and the need to judge. Those are the three things the ego is doing all the time. It's very important to be aware of them every time they come up." (Thinkexist.com; 2014). In other words, one simply does one's job and fulfill one's leadership duties and responsibilities. One simply executes, does and takes actions.

To this author, if one really needs to develop an 'ego', one can develop a (leadership) 'ego' that identifies itself with good habits like setting good example (Price and Price, 2013; Low, 2013)

and other qualities such as regular exercise, proactivity (Price and Price, 2013; Jack Welch cited in Crainer, 2007), solid productivity and relating to others (being altruistic) and engaging with life. In other words, a person or a leader can develop an ego of discipline and character building [Remember “the only thing that walks back from the tomb with the mourners and refuses to be buried is the character of the man.” (J.R. Miller cited in Deep and Sussman, 2000: 144)] as well as being altruistic.

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