

## Impact of Changed Thinking

\*Mr. Sanjeev Baitmangalkar

### VALUES OF GOOD THINKING

Benjamin Disraeli, the great philosopher once said “Nurture great thoughts, for you will never go higher than your thoughts”. Look at all the successful people in the world, what do they have in common? What is that one thing that separates those who go to the top and those who never get there? ‘It’s **Good Thinking**’. If you are willing to change your thinking, you can change your feelings. If you can change your feelings, you can change your actions. And by changing your actions – based on good thinking – you can change your life.

All of us want our children to be educated in the best schools and colleges. I am not undermining the importance of good education. But the problem with most educational institutions is that they try to teach people ‘what’ to think, and not ‘how’ to think. Knowledge is power, said Francis Bacon. But knowledge has value only in the hands of some, one who has the ability to think well. We must learn how to think well and reach our potential.

Why should you embrace the value of good thinking? David Schwartz, Professor of Georgia State University and the author of ‘The Magic of Thinking Big’ says “where success is concerned, people are not measured in inches or pounds or college degrees or family background; they are measured by the size of their thinking.” Becoming a better thinker is worth your effort because the way you think, really impacts every aspect of your life. It doesn’t matter who or what you are, good thinking will improve your life. It will make you a better businessman, parent, teacher, executive or what ever you are.

Let me tell you of a few reasons why good thinking is important:

1. **Good thinking creates the foundation for good results.** Remember James Allen’s words “good thinking can never produce bad results; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results”. You understand this in the natural world, but try to understand this in the mental and moral world, and cooperate with it. You all know that poor thinking can produce only negative results, average thinking produces no result, and good thinking produces some progress but great thinking produces great progress. You cannot change your results without changing your thinking. Remember the proverb ‘as you sow, so you reap?’ If you need great results, you need to sow great thinking. Why do you think you fall short of achieving your complete dreams? It’s because you are trying to change your results without changing your thinking. The best way to develop good thinking is by surrounding yourself with it. How? You may ask. By reading positive attitude books, listening to positive thinking tapes and being amongst people who have developed the ability to think positive.
2. **Good thinking increases your potential.** In every way each of us is a leader – to our family, to our business, in our community, in our social environment, in our profession etc. You will become as small as your controlling desire or as great as your dominant aspiration. You are that person as you think in your heart. Our leadership ability determines our level of effectiveness. The lid on your leadership ability is low if you are a poor thinker and that lid is high if you are a great thinker.
3. **Good thinking produces more good thinking IF you make it a habit.** The problems we face today; cannot be solved by thinking in the same way we thought while creating them. Look around you

\*CEO, Stratmann Consulting, Bangalore.

the world keeps getting more complicated. It doesn't have to discourage you. Let me share a great quotation with you:

I am your greatest companion. I am your greatest helper or heaviest burden. I will push you onward or drag you down to failure. I am completely at your command. Half of the things you do you might as well just turn over to me and I will be able to do them quickly and correctly. I am easily managed – you must *merely be* firm with me. Show me exactly how you want some thing done and after a few lessons I will do it automatically.

I am the servant of all great men; and alas, of all failures as well. Those who are great, I have made great. Those who are failures, I have made failures. I am not a machine, though I work with all the precision of a machine plus the intelligence of a man. You may run me for profit or run me for ruin. – it makes no difference to me. Take me, train me, be firm with me, and I will place the world at your feet. Be easy with me and I will destroy you.

Who am I? I am **HABIT!**

The good news here is no matter how complicated life gets or how difficult problems may seem; good thinking can make a difference – if you make it a consistent part of your life. Success comes to those habitually do things that unsuccessful people don't do. The more you engage in good thinking, the more good thoughts you will continue to think. It's like creating an army of good ideas capable of achieving almost anything. Every one of you has the potential to become a good thinker. Remember – unsuccessful people focus their thinking on survival, average people focus their thinking on maintenance, and successful people focus their thinking on progress.

## CHANGED THINKING

“We can't stop you from thinking ... but we can start you on it”. What are we thinking? “We are going to turn this team around.” “I am going to turn my results around.” It's easy to believe that unsuccessful people need to change their thinking. But, how about the people who have achieved some degree of success? Can an individual go to the next level without changing the way they think?

Almost every success story I have read tells a similar story. They all failed in the beginning. Some of them many times. They tried to change everything around them, including others. No success. They realized that to change it all they needed to change themselves. They did this by changing their thinking, and then everything changed for them around them.

Why should you change your thinking? It's hard to state the exact value of changing your thinking. Good thinking can do many things for you: generate revenue, solve problems and create opportunities. It can take you to a whole new level – personally and professionally. It really can change your life. A few things you need to know about changing your thinking:

1. **Changed Thinking Is Not Automatic** – You know Laurel and Hardy. “Neither of them had any bad thoughts; in fact they had no thoughts at all” – Larry Maxwell. Do many people take after Laurel and Hardy? Yes. A change in thinking doesn't happen on its own. Ask yourself; do I want my company to be mean, nimble, flexible, responsive, competitive, innovative, efficient, customer focused, and profitable?

Good ideas rarely go out and find some one. If you want to find a good idea you must search for it. If you want to become a better thinker you need to work at it. And once you become a better thinker, good ideas keep coming. Find out; is your business bloated, clumsy, rigid, sluggish, noncompetitive,

uncreative, inefficient, disdainful of customer needs, and not making enough money? The amount of good thinking you can do at any time depends on the amount of good thinking you are already doing.

2. **Changed Thinking Is Difficult:** The only people who believe that thinking is easy are those who habitually don't engage in it. "Thinking is hard work, that's why so few do it" – Albert Einstein. Because thinking is difficult, you must use anything that will help you improve the process and master the process of intentional thinking.

One of the factories I visited (say ABC) has set itself an ambitious target of 50% growth in sales volume. This is backed up by their present demand. Walking in there, I remembered William Wordsworth's 'Daffodils' – "ten thousand saw I at a glance" – there is material everywhere and you can't walk without tripping. This situation occurs typically when the agenda on Excellence in Manufacturing is absent and the number push at any cost is the priority. Are they thinking about reducing WIP, lead times, cycle times, suppliers, search times, through put times, flow distance and space, set up and change over times, or improving existing systems? Even if the intent exists, it is not visible. What do you think is the 'thinking' philosophy in this company? Manufacturing Excellence or pushing sales at any cost? If thoughts are not invested in thinking "how can we grow by using methods and practices that yield higher efficiency, lower costs and better results", the elastic limit will soon be reached and the organization will be put behind many years. Chaos can be sorted out by thinking of better systems and methods from the foundation level and not by chaotic working. Some times organizations stop thinking in the hope that things will somehow work.

3. **Changed Thinking Is Worth The Investment:** "More gold has been mined from the thoughts of man than has ever been taken from the earth" – Napoleon Hill. When you take the time to learn how to change your thinking and become a better thinker, you are investing in yourself. Gold mines tap out. Stock markets crash. Businesses shut down. Real estate investments go sour. But a human mind with the ability to think well is like a diamond mine that never runs out. It's priceless.

Quite the opposite to the above case is a SME (say XYZ) that decided to graduate and becoming a large scale contract manufacturer, from its present profile of component and tier two level assemblies. The management of the company judiciously decided to invest in a different kind of 'thinking' that would challenge the present and secure the future. Although they have a long way to go, they are already realizing the benefits of this changed thinking. What makes the difference between the earlier company and this one? It's their 'thinking'. Success begins with the thinking.

Looking back at Mysore Kirloskar, it can be said that while the Hubli factory was adaptable in it's thinking to change, the Harihar factory was dormant and therefore these two units of a great organization produced entirely different results. The investment they made at Hubli in the 'thinking' yielded results that exceeded expectation.

4. **Changed Thinking Is The Best Gift You Can Give Others:** "My guess is that well over eighty percent of human race goes through life without a single original thought" – author H. L. Mencken. When people change the way they think, they not only improve their own life but also the lives of all the people they impact (in their organization, family, social circles etc.) Learning to think well is a great investment in yourself – but it's also the greatest present you can give someone else, because it represents the gift of unlimited potential. I have been asked many hundreds of times, "what happened to MKL?" Perhaps the best answer is "they changed their thinking – the wrong way". When you are succeeding as an organization, you need to take your thinking to the next level, and not climb down. The 'right' changed thinking is the best gift you can give.

## IMPACT OF CHANGED THINKING

Most people who don't feel content with their lives don't know the reason why. They suspect the circumstances or blame the other people. Even honest and self-aware individuals who know the problem lies inside of them still may have trouble getting to the root of the issue. They ask themselves, "Why am I this way?" They desire to change, but don't do anything differently so that they can change. They merely hope things will turnout all right – and they become frustrated when they don't. Recognize that only when you make the right changes to your thinking do other things turn out right in your life.

One person cannot change another even if there are good intentions. We are responsible to people but not for them. As a leader you need to teach the value of changed thinking and how to make those necessary changes; but the people themselves are responsible to make those changes.

Lets see how you can change yourself when you take responsibility to change your thinking:

**Step 1: Changing Your Thinking Changes Your Beliefs** – “In our pressurized society, people who are out of shape mentally usually fall victim to ideas and systems that are destructive to the human spirit and to human relationships. They are victimized because they have not been taught how to think, nor have they set themselves to the life long pursuit of the growth of the mind. Not having the facility of a strong mind, they grow dependent upon the thoughts and opinions of others. Rather than deal with ideas and issues, they reduce themselves to live full of rules, regulations, and programs” – author Gordon MacDonald. Or they will simply give up. Here is the good news: even if you lack “a strong mind” there is no reason to give up or live an unfulfilling life. The human mind can change. In fact that's one of the things it does best – if you are willing to put in the effort to change your thinking. As you strive to change tell yourself three things:

Change is personal - I need to change / we need to change.

Change is possible – I am able to change / we are able to change.

Change is profitable – I'll be rewarded by change / we'll be rewarded by change.

Remember, no matter how old you are or what your circumstances may be, you can change your thinking. And when you change your thinking, you change your beliefs.

If company ABC changes their thinking, and begin to think of 'adaptable manufacturing' it will change their beliefs about how efficient an operation they are capable of running. This is what company XYZ has done, and their belief is even more strongly reinforced today. At BPMT (in South East Asia) they had not produced a single machine in five years (read 'Ethics in Business is about who YOU are' in Indian Management July 2004). They changed their thinking on the issues that had held them down it changed their beliefs

**Step 2: Changing Your Beliefs Changes Your Expectation** – “The only thing that stands between a man and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible.” A belief is not just an idea that you possess, it's the idea that possesses you. A belief holds great power, because it changes an individual's expectation. “The first and the most important step towards success is the expectation that we can succeed” – Nelson Boswell.

**Step 3: Changing Your Expectation Changes Your Attitude** - A man walked into the tent of a fortuneteller in a carnival and paid his money to have his palm read. “You will be poor until the age of 45”, said the fortuneteller. The man was dejected. Then he had a thought “what will happen after I am 45?” he asked. “You'll get used to it,” she said. Our expectations have a tremendous impact on our attitudes. “Blessed are those who expect nothing, for he shall receive it” – Ben Franklin. Negative expectations are a quick route to dead end thinking. How many successful people do you know who are apathetic or negative? Positive expectations bring a positive attitude. They produce excitement, conviction, desire, confidence, commitment and energy - all characteristics that help a person to achieve success. If you would like to possess these qualities in great abundance then raise your expectations.

**Step 4: Changing Your Attitude Changes Your Behavior** – Have you ever observed how your mood affects the way you act? When you feel particularly happy, are you more energized? Are you more likely to be kind to others? Do you take on tasks more readily and complete them with competence and confidence? How about when you are having a really bad day? Do you get less work done? Are you less patient with your family and friends? Does everything seem like a chore? “Our emotions are the driving powers of our lives” – clergyman Earl Riney.

What is an attitude? Writes John Maxwell ...

- ☛ It is the advance man of our true selves.
- ☛ Its roots are inward but its fruits are outward.
- ☛ It is our best friend or our worst enemy.
- ☛ It is more honest and more consistent than our words.
- ☛ It is an outward look based on past experiences.
- ☛ It is a thing that draws people to us or repels them.
- ☛ It is never content until it is expressed.
- ☛ It is the librarian of our past.
- ☛ It is the speaker of our present time.
- ☛ It is the prophet of our future.

An attitude is little more than a mood or predominant emotion sustained over time. “That which holds our attention, determines our action” – said psychologist William James. In other words, your behavior follows your attitude. The two cannot be separated. “How can you know what’s in your heart? Look at your behavior” – writes Leroy Elms.

**Step 5: Changing Your Behavior Changes Your Performance** – A golfer’s game was suffering from many reasons, mostly his grip (the way he held the golf club). He went to the pro for help. “You are using a baseball grip,” said the pro. “You’re never going to improve until you change it”. The golfer tried the new grip and said, “this feels terrible is this right?” “That’s it,” said the pro. The golfer complained, “I’ll never be able to do it this way,” complained the golfer. “It’s up to you, you can do it the old way but you’ll never get any better”. The golfer’s performance depends on the change in his behavior.

Don’t be too impressed with goal setting; be impressed with goal getting. Reaching new goals and moving to a higher level of performance always requires change, and change feels awkward. But, take comfort in the knowledge that if a change doesn’t feel uncomfortable, then it’s probably not really a change.

**Step 6: Changing Your Performance Changes Your Life** – When you change your performance – what you do on a consistent basis – then you have the power to change your life. In all my personal successes to achieve a change in my performance, I first had to change my thinking. I knew that I could not approach success in the same way mentally as I was doing before and still perform differently. I began by studying those I wanted to emulate. I also read hundreds of books that would help me change my thinking. I began to copy and duplicate the success attitudes. I have got better, but have a long way to go. I continued to explore more broadly. I began studying people on a level of skill beyond anyone in my circle. This may sound odd, but it took me many years to learn how to be myself. The whole process challenged me and at times I felt terribly lonely. I felt that I was the only person in the world who had to suffer through all these changes, even though intellectually I knew that I wasn’t. Becoming better required a whole new way of thinking, and it felt uncomfortable. I did it anyway. I continue to work on honing my skills and competence. I consider myself still a student of all the great teachers I have – whose books I read, whose counsel I seek and whom I would like to emulate. I learn from people better than I am. My thinking

continues to evolve. I am not perfect. I know that if I continue to improve my thinking, it will impact my beliefs, which change my expectations, which affect my attitude, which changes my behavior, which improves my performance. And that will change my life.

If company ABC changes their thinking, and begin to think of 'adaptable manufacturing' it will change their beliefs about how efficient an operation they are capable of running, these beliefs will change their expectation on the enhanced performance results. It will then change their attitude towards manufacturing leading to a behavioral change. Then, with a changed culture they will revel in their performance. This is what company XYZ has done, and their belief is even more strongly reinforced today. At BMT (in South East Asia) they had not produced a single machine in five years (read 'Ethics in Business is about who YOU are' in Indian Management July 2004). They changed their thinking on the issues that had held them down, it changed their beliefs, they now looked forward to global market share and it changed their behavior – the way they did things and ultimately it changed their performance from zero machines built in five years to rampant production flow on the pull concept and order books filled for two years with LC's in hand.

## THE NEXT LEVEL

Progress always requires change. Going to a new level always requires changing your mind. You may know that intuitively, but you need to make that idea foundational to the way you "do" life. If you want to live on a new level, you have to think on a new level. Bob Taylor the success story behind Taylor Guitars once observed, "In the end, clear and inspired thinking is the only way to change things for the better. Some one once asked me when I succeeded at a project I had failed before "What did you change?" and I answered 'I changed my thinking.'"

When MKL turned around from a situation of closure a decade ago, the fundamental change was in their thinking. They addressed change with an open mind, had strong beliefs and great expectations about success. It helped them change their attitudes and behavioral patterns that brought in performance, which exceeded all expectations. At every stage they lifted their own bar and moved to the next level.

Bottom line success may come to organizations during boom times very easily. But are they maximizing their potential of results, profitability etc? Many don't, as they get lost in comparative results. And comparative results turn you blind to seeing what you could have added to that bottom line if only you had paid attention to those unnecessarys. In times of success, you must more consciously lift your thinking to the next level.

Do you want to succeed where you have failed before? Do you want to go to a level you never even dreamed possible? Do you want to become the person you always hoped to be? If you do, don't try to start by trying to change you actions. Start by changing your thinking, change your mind. Nothing else you do will have as great an impact. Realise the impact of changed thinking.

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## About the Author:

**Sanjeev Baitmangalkar** is the CEO of Stratmann Consulting. Consulting in the areas of Lean Manufacturing, BPR & Turnarounds, Supply Chain Management, Industrial Marketing, Machine Tools and product development, provide training in areas of Finance and Leadership, working with overseas and Indian clients. He has also worked as the Director / CEO with the Texmaco Group in South East Asia, and as VP & SBU Head with the Kirloskar Group in India. Has also published articles on various management subjects such as Lean Manufacturing, Leadership, Ethics, Core Competence, Strategy, Process, Team Work, BPR & Turnarounds, and Case Studies etc. He can be contacted at [stratmannconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:stratmannconsulting@gmail.com)