

# OKM and AI Techniques – Innovation in Human Resource Management

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## Abstract

Drawing lessons from Indian epic “Hanuman Chalisa” the author has evolved a technique called OKM (Ocean of Knowledge and Merits) technique for an effective internal communication in the organization with its human resources that ensure building a positive and energetic environment leading to maximum contribution by each of them in the organizational development. A similar approach has been developed by the western countries called as AI (Appreciative Interaction) for developing both individuals as well as organization. OKM, however, endorses the innate infinite potential of human being against AI which attempts to harness the same. An extended application of OKM technique can overpower the five devils of Kama, Krodha, Mada, Moha and Lobha which are the root causes of all the evils in an organization.

**Keywords:** Appreciative Inquiry (AI), Human Resource Management, Internal Communication, Ocean of Knowledge (OKM), Organisational Development

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## Introduction

Management is defined as creating environment where people can give their best. Hence at the core of management is people management and managing people means managing their behavior for desired results. People behave differently on different occasions with different people and for different purposes. In all this, what is common from an organization point of view is the attainment of desired result through these behaviors. There have been several researches to unfold the dimensions of human behavior at work place. The attempts have been from both the western thinkers like Elton Mayo etc. and also the eastern thinkers like Prof. S. K. Chakraborty etc. While most of the western researches are based on experimentation like Hawthorne Studies, the eastern researches draw their inferences from *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *epics* etc. which are treated as reservoir of experiences of our Saints and Seers. The present paper puts forth similar experiences of the Hanuman character in Indian epic named “*Hanuman Chalisa*” in the form of Ocean of Knowledge and Management – OKM – technique and draws a parallel with a synonymous western concept of

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Appreciative Interaction – AI – technique.

## Communication Dimensions of Human Behavior:

Human behavior is reflected through his / her communication including semantics. Communication (Koontz and Wehrich, 1990) is defined as the process of sharing and / or exchanging information, message, feelings, knowledge, emotions etc. between two or more persons. This sharing could lead to pleasant feeling, knowledge building, confidence building, team spirit and so on which are the positive dimensions (Robbins et. al., 2019) of communication. Or it could also be detrimental to the existing environment leading to

distorted, broken relationships and bad feelings which are the negative dimensions (Robbins et. al., 2019) of communication. A successful communication adheres to its positive dimension resulting into collective wisdom, an inevitable element of organizational and individual development. Therefore it is necessary that only positives are focused while communicating with each other. It does not mean that the fallacies of employees are to be ignored. But the employees' faults can also be communicated using positive dimension of it like even a non-working stop watch is right twice a day. To be result oriented a communication should bring smiles and cheers and not tension and fears on the faces of the parties involved in it. (Fry et. al., 2002)

### **Appreciative Interaction (AI) Technique:**

It is a development tool that draws on strengths and emphasizes on possibilities in the future. It focuses on positives rather than the problems, constructive communication rather than criticism. Appreciative Interaction technique was evolved in western management for establishing an effective internal communication system in the organization. This technique uses 4 D's (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2007) as its method of Organizational / Individual development as listed below.

- Discovery
- Dream
- Design
- Destiny

#### *Discovery:*

Discovery calls for discussing the strengths and core values of an organization and for finding out and appreciating what gives life and energy to people, to their work, and to their organization.

#### *Dream:*

Dream leads to visioning the possibilities and grounding the vision on the potential of the organization.

#### *Design:*

Design aims at directing the participants to define how

to make the ideas happen and how to create and design structures, processes, routines and relationships that support the dream.

#### *Destiny:*

Destiny calls for making action plans on how to implement and maintain change and nurture a collective sense of destiny.

Thus the approach in AI technique is materialistic in nature where it attempts to grow strengths in the employees through use of appreciative interaction.

### **Ocean of Knowledge and Merits (OKM) Technique:**

A *Sanskrit Subhashit* goes like this:

*“Amantram Aksharam Nasti,  
Nasti Mulam Na Aushadham  
Ayogyah Purusho Nasti,  
Yojakah Tatra Durlabhah.”*

This means that there is no letter in the script that is not a mantra, a chanting, a principle; What we need is a *Pandit*, a scholar to pronounce it. There is no root / plant without medicinal value; What we need is a doctor to diagnose it. There is none in this world who is ineligible, inefficient, ineffective; What we need is a Manager who manifests it.

We relate this truth with the contents of Indian epic “*Hanuman Chalisa*” (Goswami Yulsidas). It is said that the young Hanuman was so powerful and energetic that he could do anything, perform any task and would mostly be engaged in destructive activities. Once he did the same thing where he destroyed the hut of a *Sanyasi* and his beautiful gardens. The *Sanyasi* on his arrival back to his hut saw the destruction and lost his temper. He cursed child Hanuman saying that he will loose his entire energy and power for ever. The disciples of the *Sanyasi* around got scared. They pleaded their master to forgive the innocent child. The *Sansyasi* agreed to their plea but said that the curse could not be taken aback. Yes, if somebody starts praising Hanuman of his abilities, strengths etc. he will get them back and perform any task with full power and energy. The entire epic of “*Hanuman Chalisa*” is songs of praises for Hanuman that made him to perform unbelievable task including

jumping and flying over the big ocean to reach Lanka, lit the State on fire in presence of great *Yodhas* like *Ravana*, *Kumbhakarna* etc. and return back safely.

Hanuman, the monkeys are our ancestors, forefathers. We inherit the same power and energy from them that we have today like Hanuman the ocean of knowledge and merits (OKM). We only need to be reminded of our power house. We need to be praised of our abilities and rest shall be the outcomes. This is what we term here as OKM technique. This subscribes to the idea of “*Ayogyah Purusho Nasti*” of the said *Sanskrit Subhashitam*.

### **New Perspectives of Human Resource Management:**

The neo-order human resource management is based on Indian philosophy which assumes that man (and woman) has innate and infinite potential. One has to realize this fact and have to have self belief. Human being is generally not introvert and there he / she needs somebody else to make him / her realize the potential possessed. This requires praising him like Hanuman, reminding him of his abilities, highlighting his qualities / merits, poking his knowledge, touching his heart to move him and he does the rest thereafter. Human resource management therefore is rightly called as human response management and to emit favorable response from human beings this new perspective is the order of the day. Mahatma Gandhi had said, “The moment the slave resolves that he will no longer be a slave, his fetters fall.” (BIMTECH, 2019)

### **OKM Model of Human Resource Management:**

If we develop the tendency of looking up to merits of others and others also do the same the entire environment turns positive. There are positive vibrations. There spreads energy. One gains confidence. Everybody is then confident of doing anything and everything. The potential to do this thing is already there in every human being, as they say man has infinite potential, it has simply to be unleashed which OKM technique exactly does. Three experiences (can also be called now short stories) from the life of Swami Vivekananda and a story of a beggar are narrated below to exemplify the statement.

#### *Story 1:*

Swami Vivekannada was once crossing a bridge over river Ganges in Varanasi (Swami Nikhilananda, 1943). He suddenly noticed a few monkeys chasing him from behind. He got afraid and started running away fast. A monk standing on the other bank of the river saw Swamiji running away. He shouted at Swamiji, “Don’t run away, face the brute.” Swamiji immediately stopped running, turned his face towards the monkeys and glared at them. What a miracle, those monkeys stopped and ran back. The potential within Swamiji to face the monkeys was unleashed through utterances of the monk and the desired result achieved without even harming monkeys.

#### *Story 2:*

Swami Vivekananda was the guest of the King of Khetri in those days (Swami Nikhilananda, 1943). One evening, the king invited him to a function. A lady dancer was to come and perform all sorts of dances to please the king. Swamiji sensed the situation and murmured to himself, “This is not the right place for him.” He suddenly got up and left the venue. Exactly the same moment that lady dancer entered the hall and seeing Swamiji going away started singing, “*Prabhujit Avagun Chit Na Dharo.*” Swamiji heard the lines of the song and felt guilty of his feelings about the lady dancer. He immediately turned and came back to that hall and touched the feet of the dancer and said, “Excuse me mother, I was wrong.” The desired behavior emitted from Swami Vivekannada at the instance of that lady dancer.

#### *Story 3:*

Swamiji became a celebrity overnight at Chicago (Swami Nikhilananda, 1943) after his historical speech at religious congregation. A few days later a young beautiful lady from US proposed to him, “Swamiji, I want a son like you.” Swamiji quipped, “Why like me mother, why not me myself?” The lady got moved and her heart changed. This was re-engineering by Swami Vivekananda to what was done to him by the lady dancer at Khetri back in India. This is application of OKM technique.

*Story 4:*

Assets of a beggar: A beggar was begging for a few coins and, as usual, nobody was obliging him. A man was watching all this from a distance. He called the beggar and wanted to know what was he asking for? The beggar murmured, “a few coins, Sir.” The man said, “Look, I shall give you rupees ten thousand but will chop off your two hands instead.” The beggar denied taking rupees ten thousand. The man again offered, “I shall give you twenty five thousand rupees for your two legs.” The beggar denied. The man went on offering, “Eyes for fifty thousand, head for one lakh rupees.” No, said the beggar. The man shouted at him and said, “You are worth hundreds of thousands of rupees and you are begging for a few coins!” One needs OKM to know the worth of the beggar.

**Conclusions:**

OKM thus also kills the devil side of human beings as obvious from the above three experiences of Swamiji – the *Kama* (the incident at Chicago with young beautiful lady), the *Krodha* (the incident at Varanasi with chasing monkeys), the *Moha*, the *Mada* (the incident at the King Khetri's dancing venue) and the *Lobha* (the story of the beggar). The OKM model emphasizes the spiritual characteristic of human beings, “*Aham Brahmasmi*” Where as the AI model is based on the materialistic nature of human being. OKM is a classic technique for

stabilizing collective wisdom in the organization so that it boasts of an environment where people can give their best – the true definition of management. The model makes us to realize our human assets which otherwise go unnoticed and hence unused.

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