# SPIRITUALITY IN WORKPLACE

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## ABSTRACT

*Spirituality is a process to develop the sense of morality and ethics within oneself which helps the individual to be stable and correct during the interpersonal transactions. Embracing Key Spiritual values in business context as quality accountability, cooperation, service, intuition, trustworthiness, respect and justice, can make business socially as well as ethically responsible. Work place is a place beyond earning bread; it is a place where a person can express himself, nurture organizational objectives and quality. Thus organizations implement spiritual workshops for employee personal and work balance. Leadership should be exercised based on spiritual values, then character and reputation. Good work cultures nurtures spirit of individuals by creating opportunities in the form of jobs, careers and industries devoted to community well-being.*

**Key Words:** *Spirituality, Leadership, Morality, Ethics, Work Cultures.*

## Spirituality at Workplace

"The rational man has to grow into spiritual man. That is the task set to each individual if he is to fulfill his destiny as a human being" Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

"Western efficiency and dynamism combined with INDIAN spiritual values will create the best management in the WORLD". Swami Vivekanand 1894.

## Introduction

Spirituality means the enhancement of the soul for the peace of mind and surrounding, it is about the spirit in the live human being, which comprises of life with enthusiasm in the workplace, we can see the big picture better; our work, products, and services are more likely to be environmentally friendly, compatible with other cultures, and respectful of the contributions of the various vendors, customers, and contributors to the organizations work cultures and ethical practices.

According to India's spiritual leader, Sathya Sai Baba, fundamental human values such as concern for well-being, responsibility, love, truth, and inner peace provide the foundation to every major spiritual tradition. These fundamental human values also directly support established business values such as how:

- *concern for well-being* fosters great service
- *responsibility* fosters trust and quality

- *caring* fosters collaboration and daring
- *truthfulness* fosters honest relationships
- *equanimity* fosters creative, wise decisions

As business leaders, we can learn how to integrate personal and spiritual values into the workplace to stimulate quantum leaps in creativity, process improvement, customer service, and other business and moral values.

Spirituality in the workplace is an experience of interconnectedness and trust among those involved in a work process, engendered by individual goodwill; leading to the collective creation of a motivational organizational culture, epitomized by reciprocity and solidarity; and resulting in enhanced overall performance, which is ultimately translated in lasting organizational excellence. Spiritual teachings use this principle to remind us of our integration with our world and the fragile nature of this relationship.

There is a ripple effect within the spiritual worker that starts with these internal changes and expands through "connection with empathizing colleagues" to "team performance, which is expressed in increased support, elevated trust, and enhanced understanding," ultimately leading to "a greater degree of responsibility and ownership, as well as awareness of the bigger picture." The possible outcomes to this sequence include greater output, better organizational performance and culture, and increased job satisfaction.

Most of us spend more time at work than with our families. We can make the choice to experience the workplace as a positive experience and also enhance our personal lives. In these trying economic times and shrinking workplaces, why not change your life by changing your mind?

Thus the big question changes from "How can we show that spiritual values can contribute to the bottom line?" to "How can we bring business into an expanded sense of our spirituality?" Business is a learning ground for deepening our spiritual awareness. With this approach, ask yourself: "How would we conduct ourselves differently at work? How would rewards and motivations be different? How would we communicate differently? How would we work to meet our commitments to our customers? How would we deal with pollution, recycling, and 'green' issues? How would we measure the health of a company (would quarterly earnings still be important)?

The answers to these questions might imply incremental or radical changes in how we operate, depending on who we are and our circumstances. The one thing we feel confident about: the answers would lead us to greater prosperity, both materially and spiritually, rather than less and organizations can grow in goodwill and profits, which will help the environment to sustain effectively.

**Workplace spirituality; research and this article***:*

Workplace spirituality is a broad and diverse area of research. According to Mellisa Everett the criteria for defining and measuring good work, and principle centered business. Goodwork is:

- Enhance worker through work place opportunities that encourage creativity coupled with some measure of work controls in jobs that are inherently interested in producing something of lasting value.
- Serves and supports other people in their lives and good work.
- Causes a little harm to others and the environment as possible.

Describing the features of organizations that facilitate workplace spirituality and assessment of the outcomes of workplace spirituality (e.g., Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Milliman et al., 2003). One of the aspects examined in the existing workplace spirituality research is the ways of facilitating workplace spirituality and ethical behaviour. In researching this aspect of workplace spirituality, some research works have addressed the topics such influence and follower empowerment to facilitate value congruence across the strategic, empowered team, and individual and, ultimately, corporate social responsibility''.Spiritual leadership is a mechanism to facilitate employee experiences of workplace spirituality. Thus, aspects of workplace spirituality such as spiritual

leadership or leader's spiritual and moral values incorporate and influence ethics-related aspects in organizations and assessment of the outcomes of workplace spirituality (e.g., Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Milliman et al., 2003). One of the aspects examined in the existing workplace spirituality research is the ways of facilitating workplace spirituality. In researching this aspect of workplace spirituality, some research works have addressed the topics such as description of workplace spirituality, sources of workplace spirituality or features of an organization facilitating workplace spirituality, and an approach to facilitating workplace spirituality. Outlining a comprehensive model for workplace spirituality facilitation based on the inputs coming from these various individual works can make several contributions. First, it will help in integrating the various views reflected in the individual works in the existing workplace spirituality research. This will be a relevant contribution in light of an observation noted by Tischler et al. (2007) that existing workplace spirituality research has been fragmentary and non-cumulating in nature. Second, it will help integrate or use in a mutually complementary manner the inputs coming from various works on workplace spirituality facilitation. For instance, some works focus mainly on the individual spiritual development as a means of spirituality facilitation in organizations (Heaton et al., 2004), whereas some works focus mainly on the organizational aspects such as organizational values, plans, and HR systems (e.g., Milliman et al., 1999). A comparison of individual-focused and organization-focused approaches indicates that each of these two approaches has some features that can complement the other approach. The integration of different approaches, including individual-focused and organization focused approaches; to workplace spirituality facilitation will be a valuable contribution as it will outline a possible way in which the features from multiple approaches can be linked in a mutually complementary manner for workplace spirituality facilitation. Third, specification of a comprehensive model incorporating the relevant elements from multiple existing works would provide a comprehensive view of workplace spirituality phenomenon and would help depict the possible linkages and interdependencies between various elements of the workplace spirituality phenomenon moral and ethical relationships with organizational performance.

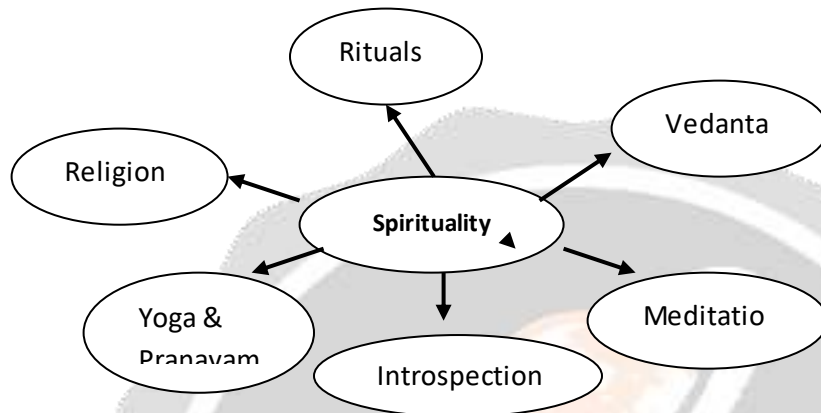## Various views on possible ways to facilitate workplace spirituality:

*"We are all spiritual beings. Unleashing the whole capability of the individual -- mind, body, and spirit -- gives enormous power to the organization. Spirituality unlocks the real sense of significance of the organization's purpose. People of many faiths, or no faith at all, can join together in a common cause of service to others through their work".*

Organisations workforce are from a diverse background, employees interact from their individual beliefs, based on their personal upbringing and environment; their interaction in the group and organizational setup forming the work relationships and outcomes, in the form of quality of results. The ethical approach in the organisation depends on the relationship shared by an individual employee in taking decisions and its impact on the functional operations and the organization. Spirituality is essential to employee's health, trust, creativity, commitment, ethical behavior, and productivity. Spirituality tends to ground in a greater good beyond the self, helps to value other people, and creates more depth and sensitivity.

Level of Spirituality of an individual depends upon the various aspects practiced by him in the form of:

- *Religion* a personal faith followed to believe in, and worships of divine by a person belonging to a particular religious background,
- *Ritual* is a peculiar manner in which customs and beliefs are practiced.
- *Vedanta's:* The Vedas (about 4000 years old) talked about 4 basic goals of existence*:*
    - *Prosperity*
    - *Satisfaction of desires*
    - *Moral duty*

     o *Salvation*
- *Meditation*:Focusing, concentrating and connecting to divine.
- *Yoga and Pranayam:* Physical and mental control on body and mind through proper exercise and breathing to bring control on desire.
- *Introspection***:** in-depth thinking and personal thought analysis, and balancing individual's behaviour pattern in a given situation.



These practices as explained through the above diagram, have being followed by people since the beginning of Industrial era, in a mythological manner through teachings of religious leaders and epics like Bible, Mahabharata, Ramayana, etc. which referred to the conduct and human character, governing the individual or a group code of conduct, moral principles or set of values.

**Role of Spiritual Leaders in Corporate Effectiveness**

There are various spiritual leaders and practitioners who guide and help the employees to face individual and organizational stress through methods like corporate discourses, training programmes, individual employees are sponsored for spiritual programmes outside the organizations eg.

**Pranayam and Yog Revolution By Patanjali Yogpeeth of Swami Ramdevji Maharaj**, here a healthy and sensitive mind and body is made free from all kinds of violence, casteism, regionalism, communal differences and gradually there shall be more of harmony, love, peace, humanism, sense of service, empathy and tolerance in this world. There will be heaven on earth. The integration of science with spiritualism will reduce the negative impact of development.

**Vipassana Meditation by S.N. Goenka,** Vipassana meditation aims at the highest spiritual goals of total liberation and full enlightenment. Its purpose is never simply to cure physical disease. However, as a by-product of mental purification, many psychosomatic diseases are eradicated. In fact, Vipassana eliminates the three causes of all unhappiness: craving, aversion and ignorance. With continued practice, the meditation releases the tensions developed in everyday life, opening the knots tied by the old habit of reacting in an unbalanced way to pleasant and unpleasant situations.

**SriSri Ravishankar** a spiritual Leader's findings on Spirituality and Corporate on achieving Personal Excellence through Yoga and Meditation, through his practice of Art of Living which teaches Sudershan Kriya and Yoga and its effect on employee performance and to reduce stress is:

- 40% of job turnover is due to stress
- 60-80% of accidents on the job are stress-related
- Repetitive musculoskeletal injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome have become the leading workplace health cost & account for 1/3rd of all Workers' compensation awards in the US

Add to this scenario a global recession, economic instability and corporate competition. The result is an overwhelming burden of stress and its associated fall outs in the workplace. Research has shown that high stress levels suppresses the body's immunity, leading to higher sickness in the workplace, thus affecting efficiency and a higher rate of workplace absenteeism. The programs conducted by the group seeks to address all these concerns by providing a solution that tackles stress in an effective and effortless manner through simple stress-elimination tools that have helped employees discover a roadmap to a new way of working and living.

Corporate testimonials record the transformation from stressed-out individuals to more centred employees who are more open to better teamwork, increased productivity and better profits. This bottoms-up approach has helped managements turn their companies around in less than 20 hours. The Individual and Organisational Benefits are listed below:

**Individual Benefits**

- Reduces stress and burnout
- Improves health and wellness
- Increases mental clarity, decision-making skills
- Improves work-life balance
- Enhances efficiency
- Leads to greater commitment & job satisfaction

**Organisational Benefits**

- Enhances team performances profits
- Facilitates Change Management
- Boosts morale and team building
- Fosters greater ethics and integrity
- Reduced sick leave owing to better health

His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has dedicated himself to reviving human values and ethics in every sphere of life. Merging spirituality into corporate life has been one of the many areas of focus.

**Vedanta Discourses by Smt. Jaya Row :**

The seminars offered by Vedanta Vision for corporate bodies and executives deal with the development of the human being. Managing him is perhaps the most daunting task. One that makes the difference between success and failure. You can buy the executive's time and physical presence. Even make him go through the motions of his job. But how do you ensure he is self-motivated, mature, enthusiastic…a committed manager, a person of character and integrity? A few organizations have stumbled upon such a person to head them. But how do you transmit these qualities? Technology and competence have given us power but to use them constructively we need knowledge, values, to fall back on. This is where Vedanta Vision steps in. The ancient values laid down by the thinkers and researchers in the past. Cutting edge technology pertaining to the human personality. This is why modern

Management has coined the term Spiritual Quotient to assess the net worth of an individual – not IQ. These discourses are sponsored by leading corporate bodies like the Tata Group - Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces, HDFC, Asian Paints, Unichem Laboratories, Piramal Enterprises etc.

## Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on Transcendental Meditation

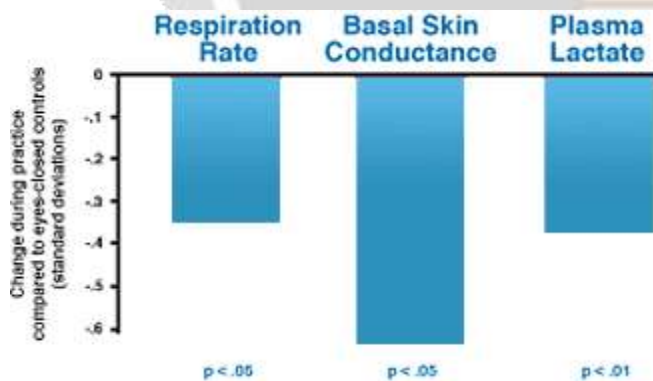"Through Transcendental Meditation, the human brain can experience that level of intelligence".

Transcendental Meditation is a simple, natural program for the mind, a spontaneous, effortless march of the mind to its own unbounded essence. This programme is conducted by corporate employees to strike a right balance between work and personal life.

Through Transcendental Meditation, the mind unfolds its potential for unlimited awareness, transcendental awareness, Unity Consciousness — a lively field of all potential, where every possibility is naturally available to the conscious mind. The conscious mind becomes aware of its own unbounded dignity, its unbounded essence, and its infinite potential.

Transcendental Meditation provides a way for the conscious mind to fathom the whole range of its existence — active and silent, point and infinity. It is not a set of beliefs, a philosophy, a lifestyle, or a religion. It's an experience, a mental technique one practices every day for fifteen or twenty minutes.

To ensure maximum effectiveness, the Transcendental Meditation technique is taught in the same systematic way used by teachers thousands of years ago.

**Physiological Indicators of Deep Rest**



Meta-analysis is a procedure for drawing definitive conclusions from large bodies of research studies. A meta-analysis of all available physiological research on the Transcendental Meditation program found that the practice of this technique produces a state of deep rest compared to control conditions, as measured by reduced respiration rate, reduced basal skin conductance (increased skin resistance), and reduced plasma lactate. Reference: American Psychologist 42: 879–881, 1987.

**Corporate Creativity and Harmony at Work By Swami Sukhbodhanand teaches to:**

Deal with the energy level in the organization. In a subtle form, a certain pattern of energy emanates at the work atmosphere. One needs the sensitivity to observe the manifestation of the ebbing attitudes and perceptions of the people who matter in the organization. When the permutations and combinations of all these interacting forces within the organization don't move in tandem with the culture and system professed by the management, there results a disharmony. The sad part is that no official platform can generally handle this disharmony in an empowering manner to create a difference in the energy level of the organization.

## Objectives:

- To bring forth creativity, spontaneity and childlike playfulness in the work, family and social atmosphere
- To be total and celebrative in living here and now
- The art of converting foggy thinking into clear thinking
- Processes which help to discover patterns that are life nourishing rather than life perishing.
- Meditations which helps one to unlock restful, blissful and loving centers within one-self and allows the process of self-healing
- Techniques to deal with destructive temptations
- Introducing tools for powerful thinking that can help to:

  a) Deal with difficult people.

  b) Build a happy relationship

  c) Achieve success at work.

  d) Discover causes that worry you.

**Organisational and Individual/Personal spirituality in relation to Workplace:**

In the diagram it is seen the work relationship between organisational spirituality, combined with
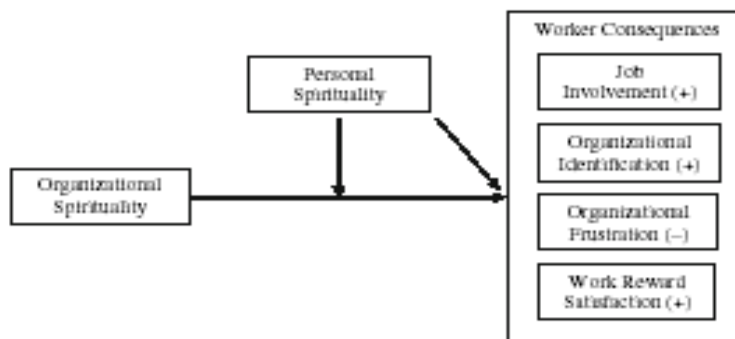


Figure 1 Exploratory workplace spirituality relationships.

**(Source pt.10 of Bibliography.)**

The result of employee performance depends upon the total involvement of organisational and personal spirituality in the organisations. It is the type of employee doing that makes the difference, the way he feels about the work and his commitment to the organisation. A person who is frustrated will not feel good about the work and will be stressed; this can be removed by the schemes like work rewards which will be satisfying and make him feel joyful. Thus one should be in the right state of health and mind to do any work significantly. Hence corporate encourage employee to attend and practice the preaching's of the sessions conducted by eminent Spiritual leaders to introspect on their moral and ethical value systems used while decision making.

Recommending mythological discourses and books written by Spiritual leaders, Speakers and Mythologists like Osho Yoga and meditation, Dr. Devdutt Patnik, on the initial sting of self-awareness and the fearsome awakening to the need for change. But it leads to ultimate peace and happiness in a work culture.

## Conclusions and Findings

The findings from the research is that, Spirituality brings Harmony and creativity at work in a program conducted exclusively for the employees. The programs is a rich blend of Western and oriental cultures and some of the techniques adopted are mirroring, Pacing, focusing, Self-audit and a series of unlearning and meditative processes.

During writing this paper and with personal interviews of corporate practitioners, Spiritual Practitioners and Industrialist on their views on Spirituality and todays work environment state that:

"Spiritual teachings invoke the values our grandparents imparted to us. They always talked about forgiveness, need to be kind to others especially the weak, undying and steadfast faith in God, truthfulness, loyalty, joy in sharing however little you have, respect for elders. I feel spiritual teachings take us back in time but as all of these covenants are essential to run an organisation ethically". Udai Singh Proprietor LakshyaTech MIDC Satpur, Nasik.

"After the Satyam crisis, we began putting in thrice the amount of work. My eyes would hurt when I woke up each day. But after the Art of Living course, I can run a marathon," said Kavitha Thonangi, head- global operations, SLW. "The kriya is amazing," says Kumar an Satyam employee. "My body felt so light, recharged and refreshed." His wife, Harika, who took the course with him, said it helped the family to cope with the stress together". "We emphasise practices that help them relax and give them perspective. It is important to show them that regardless of disturbances, they can stay centered," said art of living instructor Raj Waghray.

"The concept of Spirituality is that it focuses on individuals consciousness of right and wrong behaviour, and its effects on Business performance", Mr. A. Bishnoi, Executive Management Consultant, Mumbai.

"Spirituality is a individual phenomenon, which as per the persons upbringing and family values, taught and nurtured by the individual. He is alone responsible for the consequences of his behaviour." A Spiritual Practitioner.

"Spirituality in work place does not exists, especially in the financial market situations, as the decisions are intuitive and competitive, based on speculations. In this situation the organizational policies need to be transparent, for ethical performance and conducive work culture." Sr. Manager Commodity Exchange organisation.

"Our Organisation conducted training sessions on Transcendental Meditation, I practice it daily, and this has helped me to balance my routine corporate and personal life, and reduced my blood pressure." Sr. VP. Human Resource.

From the above views it is clear that spirituality plays a important role even in todays corporate scenario, organizations look forward for leadership with a vision, to take forward the corporate values and ethical practices, by encouraging their employee to participate in their spiritual pursuits and conducting training for the employees, individual efficiency and moral.

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