



PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

2.28 GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

When we draw from our spiritual view of life to evaluate a project, idea or situation, we view it from a more holistic perspective and focus on what is most meaningful.

Generating creative ideas at work can be fun and satisfying, but then comes “the moment of truth”: what are we really going to do with them? It’s a time of evaluating – a time that’s important, and always full of pitfalls depending on how we go about it. Some people “go by the numbers”; while others get caught up in “analysis paralysis.” Some decide by an intuitive “gut feeling”; while others go by what emotionally feels best.

But what does it mean to be *evaluative* – the next aspect of being a SPIRITED person – from a *spiritual basis*? From our own experience, we have found that when we draw from our spiritual view of life to evaluate a project, idea or situation, we view it from a more holistic perspective. We focus on what is most meaningful, and we seek to serve others without letting our own self-interest get in the way.

A European bank executive once told us how he evaluates a situation with a poorly performing employee:

In some cases, someone may grossly overstep their line, by misconduct or unacceptable underperformance. I try first everything to mend or correct the situation. I also try to evaluate the trade-off between the damage to the organisation in keeping such a person and the impact of firing them. I also try to carefully analyse, too, whether it is only my own ego which got hurt. Only if all efforts should fail, I am prepared to ask the person to leave, if possible on his own accord.

How does he draw upon his spirituality to make such evaluations?

With such decisions, I try always to do everything in accordance with my conscience, the innate higher intelligence which let us discern the right from wrong actions. Then there is no need to worry about the results. In this context, when crucial decisions have to be reached, and you do not have the clear answer to your problem, I am now convinced that in deep meditation your innermost self will give you the right response, just by listening to its subtle voice.

Sathya Sai Baba, a universal spiritual teacher, comments on the importance of accessing our spiritual source:

There is a force in you through which God works, and that is discrimination. Every man has the discrimination to know what is the right action and what is the wrong action.

Another executive, working with high tech companies in the USA, gave us another lesson about being evaluative: not relying on our own ego-driven intelligence:

I think that the greatest conversion I have had spiritually in my work has to do with the many times in my career where I thought that I was responsible for finding and convincing others of the right answer. In other words, it was up to me to figure it all out. I worked from sheer individual will power and intelligence.

Now that I look back I can see that this type of attitude and behaviour is what caused me to fail the most. Yes, I might have made it through the project okay, but did I really help people to unite around a common vision? Today, I feel that it is much more about working together in a collaborative way.

Sathya Sai Baba brings these lessons about being evaluative into a clear perspective when he says:

The educated person... must know how to keep the mind well within check, the intellect sharp and clear, unhampered by prejudices and hatreds, and feelings untouched by egoism. Reason can be tamed only by discipline, by systematic application of compassion, calmness, forbearance, and endurance.

From all of this, we must conclude that being evaluative is the opportunity to make creative decisions that really get to the heart of the matter – bringing together the best of our spirituality and reasoning mind. From that basis we can make decisions based on our higher values, seek input and consensus with others, and anticipate consequence. And most importantly, we follow what we know inside as right and wrong.

So, ask yourself: *From what basis do I evaluate people and situations in my work? How can I draw from my spiritual view of life when I am being evaluative?*

This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Book 2 – Work as a Spiritual Practice*. To download the full book of articles, as well as additional book chapters, articles, workbooks, and research on the subject of “spirituality and human values for leadership and work”, visit our website: www.globaldharma.org