

## ***Talent or Loyalty***

Raji is a beautician and works with a high end beauty and hair salon. Bridal makeup, Party makeup and party shoots are her forte. She is quite experienced and is trained by the top beauticians both locally and abroad. She wanted growth all the time. She is exuberant, diligent, hard working, straight forward, clever, sharp, energetic and makes her clients very comfortable during the whole process and the customers are very happy. Sales improved as more customers walked in, many more footfalls and the salon was getting more popular. Someone even remarked to the Director to have a signboard outside the salon which should read as “Don’t wink at the woman coming out of the salon, she might be your grandmother !!” such was Raji’s contribution.

Madhuri works in the same salon. She is a hair dresser and beautician. She was trained by the top hair stylists and beautician locally. A little sober by nature Madhuri was not as vivacious and competitive like Raji, she was a very nice person though, down to earth. All the people working there were so comfortable relating with her. She was good in her work but since she was lethargic and not so energetic she was just able to service the same number of clients. If one had to compare Raji and Madhuri, in terms of talent, understanding the client’s needs, servicing more customers and doing a great job Raji was way ahead.

Raji was furious on the day of annual appraisals. She found that both she and Madhuri got the same increase in salary. She considered resigning immediately. She thought to herself that she had brought in new customers, increased sales, the salon had become famous due to her immense contribution. In addition to that she was able to convince the customers to make use of other facilities like massaging, spa, pedicure so she was convinced that the Management was turning a blind eye to her brilliant performance and decided to move. But the Management and CEO saw it in a different perspective. Before finalizing the pay raise the CEO told the Directors that Raji is enormously talented. But sooner or later she would leave the company for a much better salary. Further Raji’s excellence at work makes the company insecure. She might start her own company after a while. She might join the competitor’s firm and also take the customers along with her. Retaining her is not easy. We would never be able to put up with her demand that would anyway keep rising year after year.

On the other hand Madhuri would not leave us for she is in the comfort zone here and we too feel comfortable with her after her many years of service here. Loyalty and stability are very important to us and Madhuri can offer just that. Many Raji’s would come from time to time and provide us the necessary surges and spikes, just like the bull run in the share market. It is an enormously emotional need for the company to retain people who are loyal to the company; they might not be very talented but they won’t rock the boat either. If we sink they sink with us. People do not realize the importance of retaining such employees who are actually the spine of the company, the CEO was saying. Further some of the practices in the company are not principled and virtuous as the company portrayed which a sharp person like Raji would come to know will put it up in the media. On the other hand Madhuri would do the un virtuous and dishonest works for no extra emoluments since she is aware of her low market value and so without opening her mouth she would stick to her job. So, it would be better to

compensate their raise equally to even out things, the CEO said to the board of Directors. If Raji leaves it's just fine and just as can be expected, we can hire another similar Raji in her place.

Be it in most of the larger business enterprises, Educational institutions, clubs or Charitable institutions the thought process would be similar. Talent is respected and acknowledged but those who are loyal are there to stay. For most of them they would prefer loyalty over talent. An ideal case of talent with loyalty is quite rare these days !!

In the epic Ramayana, the rakshasa king Ravana had two brothers – Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana. Ravana abducted Sita, Rama's wife and held her captive at Lanka. Both Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana despised this despicable act and fervently advised Ravana to return Sita to Rama but Ravana would not relent. Kumbhakarna chose to stand by his brother whereas Vibhishana defected to Rama's camp. Vibhishana breaks from Ravana since he considered Ravana had broken the Dharma by holding captive another man's wife. He did not follow the law of righteousness. People call Vibhishana a traitor since he left his brother and joined Rama and divulged the secrets of Ravana's camp and about Lanka to Rama which enabled Rama to overwhelm Ravana and take back Sita.

However a prudent, rational and a sane person would see Vibhishana as a traitor to the forces of evil and to a sense of lawlessness and not as an ordinary traitor just because he defected. This is a very important point one has to make note of. In fact the might of the Rakshasa army along with the well organized warrior demons could not even be compared even on paper to the flimsy army of monkeys. However Vibhishana chose to be on the right side and not on the strong side – with Rama as he surrendered to Rama and joined him. Kumbhakarna stood by Ravana following the Dharma of loyalty to his kin whereas Vibhishana decided to move since his ideal got failed to be heard. Every year during Dussehra the effigies of Ravana and Kumbhakarna are torched to celebrate the victory of right over wrong. There is a Kodandaramawami templ at Dhanushkodi in Rameswaram known as Ram – Vibhishan temple.

In the Mahabharath, Karna known as a charioteer's son was made king of Anga by Duryodhana. They were such thick friends. Duryodhana refuses to give back Indraprastha to the Pandavas when he was supposed to give it back to them. Karna along with many others stood by the side of Duryodhana even when they knew Duryodhana was wrong following the Dharma of loyalty and owing allegiance to the one who took care of him all these years. Krishna tried to lure Karna to move away from Duryodhana since Duryodhana's acts were wrong. Karna did not heed his advice and blindly stuck to his favorite Duryodhana to whom he was ever so loyal. For this Karna had to lose his life in a very unceremonious way.

The CEO and the Management unfortunately look at Raji as a traitor who would leave them sooner or later. They see Madhuri as Kumbhakarna or Karna who would stay with them loyally.

So, as far as Raji is concerned the best thing is to move out and be in a place where they follow ethical practices and reward talent. It's better to give the resignation letter after she finds a suitable job and not to take an emotional decision. To continue with her present job and give her best till the last day at work.

As far as Madhuri is concerned she has to inform the Management to follow ethics and in case do not follow, leave her job. She has to be more aware of what is taking place in the work place. She needs to set targets even if the salon had not fixed one. Not only at work even anywhere she has to be very objective, be aware and should know what she has to do for growth. In today's world of competition one has to, at a minimum run at a good pace to at least stay in the same place !! So, she has to work towards it.

The Corporate we are talking about has to adhere to the ethical standards they had set for themselves, nurture, reward and retain talent. People like Raji and Madhuri would come and go. The best performer has to be rewarded and the Management should have the knack of retaining such people. Organisations would grow only because of good and loyal people, so both Raji and Madhuri should be retained. If the top Management is not able to retain good employees, the top Management should be changed. They could consider in this case making Raji, a working partner in their company.

Finally follow the right path and be with the right people otherwise be ready to face the consequences like Kumbhakarna and Karna.