Vijja Uppattham Settha

'Creation / birth of knowledge is the greatest'

BY K.A.I. KALYANARATNE,
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

The deliberate and purposeful adoption of the Lotus flower (Nelumbo nucifera)

for the PIM's logo projects a harmonious synthesis that brings out serenity, purity, holiness, sanctity and intellectual resurgence. Literature, and more importantly eastern literature, ranging from Egypt (Egyptology) to China (Sinology) abounds in instances symbolizing the lotus flower to 'awakening / blossoming/arising of wisdom.' In fact, in Buddhist literature the lotus symbolizes 'enlightenment'. Enlightenment is synonymous with a wide array of meanings including understanding, insight, learning, knowledge, awareness, information, erudition, wisdom, instruction and teaching.

The Lotus flower begins growing at the bottom of a muddy, murky pool, and slowly emerges towards the surface, bursting out of water into a beautiful blossom. During the night the lotus closes and sinks under the water, and emerges again with the sunlight of a new day. How apt, therefore, is the PIM's logo that tells the name of the Institute by way of its acronym, and creates a visual symbol that justifies its principal objective. The Logo is the Institute's brand image.

At the level of the institution a research culture maybe fostered when research actions are cohesive and when the institution makes research easy for researchers (an "enabling" environment). This involves: (a) sharing expertise and knowledge, (b) having research direction, niche or strategy, (c) having institutional support including commitment at the top level, researcher's perception of that support and administrative support, and (d) provision of research facilities and resources. Research culture may develop when at the level of the individual consideration is given to (a) motivation and incentive, (b) developing the institution's endowment of research skills through recruitment and/or education and training and (c) the parallels between the study of research culture and organizational culture per se.

How the PIM imbibes research culture into the institutional structure

- PIM creates the desired physical and intellectual ambience to create a vibrant research culture for the germination of knowledge.
- Once sprouted the PIM provides necessary care for knowledge to grow.
- On reaching maturity the PIM polishes and brightens the newly sprouted knowledge. (Similar to the overall task of a lapidarist)
- The PIM transforms such new knowledge into usable knowledge.
- The PIM assists in the transference of newly found knowledge to usable knowledge via appropriate forums and publications.
- The PIM aims at the furtherance of such new and usable knowledge, and ultimately creatinga knowledge-oriented society.

LOGOS – Lounge for doctoral students

The PIM, seeing the seclusion needed especially for research- deliberations , created a lounge, named 'Logos' for the Institute's doctoral students, as it is a must for them to be in an exclusive home devoid of the hustle and bustle of a normal educational centre. In fact, it has created a study environment that is very necessary for deliberations relating to research. The concept behind the Logos is similar to the 'Santhagara' of the 'Lichchhavis', used for the general- assembly hall of a particular kshatriya clan of ancient northern India where the old and younger of the same clan met to decide on the general and state affairs. In short they were 'discussion-forums' in the days of yore.

Measures taken to actualize Human Imagination

In addition to the above, the PIM has chosen "Igniting Human Imagination" as its tag line, to clarify a point as well as to create a 'dramatic effect'. It is on record that the 'University of California, San Diego and the Arthur C. Clarke Foundation have launched a center to understand, enhance and enact the gift of human imagination. The mission of the Center is to help society become more effective at harnessing imagination. This pursuit will bring together the inventive power of science and technology, with the critical analysis of the humanities, and the expressive insight of the arts.'

Peripheral measures to boost up Creativity and Innovation

The PIM's initial involvement in 5S has been to improve sustainable housekeeping, and thereafter, to go beyond towards advanced 5S that demands creative and innovative approaches. The approach adopted towards creative 5S is mainly two-fold, viz.,

- Learn the rules (the basics) before you set out to deviating from them. Sans the basics of 5S you should not venture into 'advanced 5S'.
- Reach cross-domains - Just as familiarity breeds contempt, constant exposure to similar fact patterns produces lazy thinking.

Another recent introduction is the initiation of the 3-H Forum (Head-Hands-Heart). When you are doing something new, you often need to get a full commitment to the task. When engaged in a task or implement an idea we are all influenced by a combination of preferences for thinking (head), doing (hands) and feeling (heart). The entire PIM community, that is, both students and staff are given a free-hand to be creative and display their creative products, on the 3H display facility.

Conclusion

A knowledge-based organization needs to offer great promise in terms of performance and capability. Indeed, many researchers are actively deliberating to understand how organizational strategy and structure can be combined and integrated to harness the competitive power of knowledge. My brief essay attempts at defining the model designed and adopted by the Postgraduate Institute of Management to help induce the flow of knowledge, and more particularly, creativity and innovation through an organization. Because of the time-critical nature of most knowledge work in modern enterprises, we focus in particular on knowledge dynamics, to enable rapid and efficient flow, and to help the enterprise become more knowledge-based.

Bertrand Russell on creation of mental habits and acquisition of knowledge

"Education should have two objects: first to give definite knowledge — reading and writing, language and mathematics, and so on: secondly to create those mental habits which will enable people to acquire knowledge and form sound judgments for themselves." (Free thought and official propaganda, 1922)

Addenda

Santhagara is a pali word derived from a combination of Santhain Pali or Canstha in Sanskrit (group) and Agara (house or assembly point) and was used for the general assembly hall of a particular Gana sanghasolar dynasty kshatriya clan of ancient northern India where the old and younger of the same clan met to decide on the general and state affairs.

Definition of Nelumbium by Merriam-Webster
New Latin, from Sinhalese
nelumbu + New Latinium