



# Managing with Limited Resources

Commander VK Jaitly\*

## Abstract :

*Author brings out the ethical objective of learning and practicing the use of limited resources to manage successfully, as against wasting unlimited resources, leading to poor lower efficiency & productivity.*

**Key words:** *Resource management, unlimited resources, wasteful, limited resources, Optimum utilisation, efficiency productivity profitability, project management, triple constraints, scope, cost, time,*

## Introduction

My parents gave me and my three brothers and sisters very good education despite the limited means at their disposal. We all studied in government run schools at Jammu Tawi. At home also, there was no separate room for studies. In fact, it was the same room as bed room during night, sitting room during the day and dining room during lunch and dinner. The same room was used as study room too. So it was a 4 in 1 room. What a luxury! And whenever, I needed a bit of concentration, the roof top under a slanted cot with a bed sheet on top became my study room and sometimes two of my friends also joined me there. One of them is the Deputy Director of IIT Delhi today

and the other is a Superintendent of PGI, Chandigarh.

Such situations of survival with limited resources are the greatest learnings of our life. We learnt to live and achieved the best possible results with our limited and constraint resources. Lack of resources was never an excuse for not achieving something within our boundaries. Though there must have been a lot many things that we must have missed experiencing and learning during our growing up years. But we learnt to manage with limited resources. This type of learning rarely comes to people who grow up with unlimited resources at their disposal. So they

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are generally at a disadvantage, when faced with situations where they are expected to achieve results with limited resources.

## Discussions

I am sure you must have come across a number of managers and leaders who performed exceedingly well when there was no limitation of resources at their disposal. But the moment, there was scarcity of men, money or material at their behest, they stumbled and performed poorly or just managed at an average level. And there are people who just don't know how to use their resources judiciously and end up in wastage of time, money and effort while trying to put up just an average show or even perform below par. The Indian society has coined a beautiful word for such people; Kaddu and some call them Pappu also lovingly. Such people keep giving excuses for their poor performance despite abundance of resources at their disposal.

Defence Forces Officers are used to facing VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) environment and that too with highly limited assets and sometimes in the face of raging battle from a well-equipped enemy in a hostile terrain. Remember the Border movie where Major Chandpuri was tasked to stop the advancing mechanized infantry brigade of Pakistan in the battle of Longewala with handful of soldiers with simple rifles and machine guns. Such situations teach you the maximum use of each and every item in your resource kitty and that too again and again judiciously.

It is no wonder, that this world is full of stories of successful great leaders in diverse

fields of corporate, business, defence, politics and even in the social sector who belonged to very humble backgrounds. Such people learnt the lessons of life in a very hard way and their thorough understanding of the ground realities helped them in achieving great results even with limited resources. They knew precisely where the shoe pinches.

Those who are born with a silver spoon in their mouth, at times are miles away from the reality. They are drawing room warriors. They may have bookish knowledge. They may know all the theories postulated by the great philosophers, scientists, management gurus and intellectuals. But the knowledge of which theory applies where will be understood only by those who have experienced the ground realities.

Once we were discussing the problems faced by tribal people in remote areas with Shri. Shyam ji Gupt who has been heading the Ekal Vidyalaya movement for last about 35 plus years that is running 81,000 Ekal Schools in remote villages. Some of us including doctors, engineers, professors and management experts started giving a lot many suggestions. Shyam ji listened us with full interest. At the end he just said, "Excellent suggestions. May I request you all to just spend a week in these remote areas. See with your own eyes, experience yourself their problems and then you will come out with more practical viable solutions and we will definitely follow them."

Today, we have some politicians with total urban background and some foreign education, who have no understanding of the problems, our farmers are facing. Some of them are not able to repay their loans. Instead of removing

their basic problems so that they don't have to take loans at all, can a loan waiver to farmers, year after year be a solution. Unfortunately, our highly educated bureaucrats also compromise when the politicians put pressure to implement some short sighted schemes with no long term solutions and with eyes only on votes for the forthcoming elections.

All of us must try to learn the judicious use of resources at our disposal. Any abundance of resources leads to poor efficiency and therefore less productivity and profitability. Even if the top management has plenty of resources, they should allocate only that much to their supervisors and managers which is just sufficient to achieve their objective.

As per the philosophy of Triple Constraints of Project Management, a project manager is expected to achieve the objective of the project within the triple constraints of Scope,

Cost and Time. So the project manager never has unlimited resources at his disposal. In fact, s/he rotates his resources of experts and machines for different projects to ensure their best possible utilisation.

## Conclusion

So let us learn to use even the limited resources, Mother Nature has provided us for our future generations to inherit a beautiful Earth.

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