

## **Book Review**

### **Corporate Chanakya Successful Management the Chanakya Way**

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#### **Introduction to the Book**

Corporate Chanakya is a book by Dr Radhakrishna Pillai, who has a doctorate in Arthashastra and a Master's degree in Sanskrit. Dr Pillai is also the Director of the SPM foundation and part of the University of Mumbai. In this Book, Dr Pillai referred to the verses of Koutilya's Arthashastra and inferred the modern-day management of Indian and western ideas. This Book also spoke about the qualities of an effective leader and an impactful manager.

Corporate Chanakya is a book that is predominantly applicable to Information Technology (IT) industry and can apply to all the upcoming managers and the people who are stepping into leadership roles. It also helps to identify the style of one's Leadership and what are all the transformations that one needs to assimilate to achieve an effective leadership style. It was also very well narrated on how Koutilya would have handled any problematic scenario in today's organizational behaviour and why it would be so successful. It was also mentioned.

#### **Content of the Book**

Corporate Chanakya consists of three main parts – Leadership, Management, and Training. Further, the Leadership part has five sub-parts, the Management part is further classified into four sub-parts, and Training is again classified into four subparts. All 13 sub-parts were further divided and explained in 175 chapters, and this clearly says that the author Dr Pillai has a broader and deeper knowledge of both Arthashastra and modern management. Now, we will see what and how all the chapters are explained.

#### **Part I – Leadership**

There are five sub-parts to Leadership – Power, Qualities of a Leader, competition, People, and avoidance.

In the subpart - power, there are again 15 chapters that talk about the importance of management in a leader and the attributes associated with power. In this subpart, Dr Pillai has mentioned the significance of having power, how to control the office, the advantages that leaders will get while having power, and some other leadership attributes like – maintaining secrets, key pillars for business, success aspects, and how accountability can change things. The essential part covered in this subpart is an application of Arthashastra in business, a must-read for any nurturing entrepreneur.

In the subpart Qualities of a Leader, Dr Pillai covered the essential qualities a leader must possess in 17 chapters which cover the total alertness of a leader, Entrepreneurial advice, the

importance of multitasking of a leader, how to do business ethically, why a leader should have more comprehensive knowledge, effective decision making and for me the critical feature or quality is keep your people along.

In the subpart Competition, the author has excellently explained how to handle the competition in 22 chapters – which clearly says how important competition handling is in Leadership. He further explained what the best armoury any leader should have while handling the competition, how to safeguard from enemies, wait for the right opportunity, how to establish a win-win policy, create more win-win situations, how not to underestimate the competitor, get a deep understanding on Strategy and tactics, what are the aspects a leader should consider before planning any attack and concluded with tackling terrorism.

The best inference in this subpart inspired by Arthashastra is the game theory and its relation to the "Mandala theory" (circle of Kings).

The following subpart is People, which is considered to be very important., Still, the author explained it crisply in only six chapters. It discusses how a leader can emerge by having the right mentor, what wonders that motivation creates among the employees, the art of delegation, and concludes with protecting key employees.

With all the Do's mentioned in the initial four subparts, 10 Donots are beautifully explained in the last sub-part of Leadership.

## **Part II – Management**

There are four subparts under Management – Employees, Finance, Teamwork, and Strategy. In the first Subpart – Employees, Dr Pillai has exhaustively explained the significance of employees in management in 20 chapters, and it says how to ensure the safety and security of the employees, who are the right managers according to Kautilya, how to stop attrition, ensuring that the employees feel secure – which is a crucial intangible benefit that any employee would look to have in any industry, to have the rewards and recognition in righteous way possible. By explaining the above, he further explained ensuring quality control across the resources, selecting the right person to do the right job, effective communication (in Dr Pillai's words, don't beat around the bush!), and taking the correct initiative at the proper time.

After explaining all possible imperceptible benefits, in the following subpart, the author narrated the most desired use that most use human beings think of – Finance!

In this subpart, Finance, Dr Pillai explained how to earn money and inferred multiple theories Vishnugupta used in his Arthashastra. He further clarified how impactful the net profit is, how to handle the treasury in crucial times or difficult times, segregation of wages, proper budgeting, the profit margin at different times, and how to earn money correctly. In other words, how to make ethical money. He concluded that with all the financial theories from Chanakya's Arthashastra, Dr Pillai has excellently narrated the above topics in these subpart chapters, which will lay a road to financial wealth.

In the following subpart, the fascinating managerial term – Teamwork. The author has inferred multiple theories from Chandragupta's Arthashastra on how to achieve better teamwork in any work environment. He further narrated how effective an organization can have its security and monitoring systems, which can be the right business partner, how to conduct meetings effectively, when to plan for a business trip, maintain public relations, removing both horn and hollow effects while honouring a resource. He also explained how a team should accomplish

the task that it has started, team collaboration, and how to have everyone involved and work as a team – obviously the crux of teamwork!

He concluded this chapter with different management steps like brainstorming, effective collaboration, and team meetings to ensure that the teamwork is for a common objective than individual goals.

The next and last subpart of management is Strategy. In this subpart, the author tried to emphasize the importance of Strategy and how any organizational strategy can be a critical factor in any successful business. The strategy part is explained in 18 chapters which include – having the right information, management principles, having an open mind, multiple project handling, and how PESTEL (political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal) factors contribute to formulating a strategy. He further narrated the importance of CSR – corporate social responsibilities, DR – disaster recovery, and location expansions to have a stable organization. He also highlighted that time management is one of the key parameters while making the organization's Strategy.

### **Part III – Training**

There are three subparts under Training – Trainees, Boss, Organisation, and Advice.

In the first subpart - Trainees, the author explains how effective Training can be, the importance of potential leaders, gratitude to the people who helped in your career, grooming resources to take up new challenges, disadvantages of having multiples bosses and how to get the work done without forcing anyone to do on something which they don't like.

In the next subpart - Organization, Dr Pillai describes what wonders that self-discipline can do in an organization, how to maintain cleanliness at work, and go to places when nothing works out - this particular attribute will help the people who lost their jobs in attrition/recession, what should be your approach if one lost their job. He concluded with the migration plan to accept job seekers.

In the last subpart - Advice, the author has collated his entire message in this section. It states what would be the correct advice of consultants, the power behind the kings, and he finished with how to apply knowledge from Arthasastra.

The author put Koutilya's thought process derived from his exemplary works from his own Arthasastra and related to the current management scenarios to become a successful leader, a successful manager and a good boss.

### **Highlights of the Book**

There are three places in the Book which I feel the highlights are:

1) In Part I, the first chapter - Power - The author has excellently correlated the seven pillars of business from Chandragupta's Arthasastra to today's business as below.

The King - The Leader

The Minister - The Manager

The Country - Client

The fortified City - Head Office  
The Treasury - Treasury  
The Army - Team  
The Ally - Consultant

2) In Part I, Chapter 42, Another important aspect of conducting business - Game theory was related to Mandala Theory (Circle of Kings) from Arthasastra, and we all know how popular game theory is in today's industry.

3) The advice from the last chapter of part III, the author has advised not to read this Book as a novel; rather, he encourages us to have this Book read as a guide, which means reading a few chapters today and trying and implement in your real-life scenarios to get the real meaning of Arthasastra's implications to today's managerial life.

### **Evaluation of the Book**

Overall, Corporate Chanakya is a must-read book if you are an IT professional and stepping into a managerial role. It is a self-help guide for any upcoming manager on how to talk in a team -> nurture a team -> become the boss we dreamt of, -> Organization level decision making.

This Book is available on Amazon for Rs.250/-.