

# Is Success A Sin?

*Insightful stories of work and life  
that speak directly to the heart and soul*

Dr. Rashid Alleem



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To my late father,  
Obaid Alleem,  
who did so much to  
encourage and inspire me and  
made me the person who I Am now



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  - to my executive secretary Khadeeja Mansoor, She was a prime part of the formulation of the book. I couldn't have produced this
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- and last, but not least, to those who worked behind the scenes for their advice, comments, recommendations, and never-ending encouragement, my success is your success.

May Almighty Allah guide you always.



"Stories are beings.  
You invite them to live with  
you. They'll teach you what  
they know in return for being a good  
host. When they're ready to move  
on, They'll let you know. Then you  
pass them on to someone else."

- A Cree Storyteller

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## Introduction

*Successful people are not people without problems. They are people who respond quickly and positively to their problems. In essence, their problems are not stumbling block, but stepping stones for personal growth and success.*

- Dr. Rashid Alleem

*"I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It's a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."*

This inspirational quote of George Bernard Shaw has motivated me, inspiring me to become more and more successful each day.

As part of my endeavor to incorporate "Excellence" at all levels in and around my workplace, I have written many business articles, booklets, books, and given thousands of presentations to assist and guide students, business managers, and leaders to work together to improve their professional and personal life so they become successful cutting-edge managers and leaders of tomorrow.

With more than 10 years of experience in government, semi-government, and private concerns, I began this venture of educating the young generation of my country by sharing with them my thoughts, reflections, observations, stories and personal experiences of what it is like to trust Almighty's principles, which will help us to be effective and significant leaders in a pressured and

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demanding world. My sole intention is to help them operate *effectively* in performance improvement teams and to participate in the never-ending search for excellence by following principles that produce both personal peace and dramatic results.

This book was written for CEO's, other organizational leaders and managers at all levels. This is NOT an academic textbook offering complex theories to learn but a book consists of *real-life* stories that teach you how to influence people so they understand your views and how to deal with obstacles that prevent you from achieving your potential. Most of all, this book reminds us of values and principles that need to be followed in order to have lasting success and to motivate us towards righteousness and soulful living. It is devoted to enhancing the young business leaders understanding of how to face the

business challenges in the workplace so they stop worrying about other people and what they're up to.

I am committed to helping you start thinking positively, creatively, and innovatively. I have, through this book, tried to lift a person's vision to a higher plan, raise his performance to higher standards and develop his personality to maximum capability.

In summary, this book will help you:

1. To see the power of forgiveness and let go your bad feelings.
  2. To gain ideas and encouragement from the real-life stories.
  3. To make wise decisions in the midst of challenging circumstances.
  4. To help you focus your thoughts and move you forward with a sense of purpose.
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As you will see, there are no conclusions or recommendations, just my observations and a piece of advice at the end of each story. The chapters are freestanding. You can read them straight through or jump in anywhere. Everyone has life lessons and stories. These are mine. All I can say is that they worked for me.

I anxiously await the opinion of readers about the conceptualization of this book, and there is information about how to contact me at the end of the book.

Enjoy reading!. You have picked up the right book. Trust me!

Your partner in success –

Dr. Rashid Alleem

Sharjah, UAE

January,2002



## A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR

*“Change the name and it’s about you,  
that story.”*

HORACE 65 – 8BC

This book is my opportunity to speak fully and completely, for the first and only time, without interruption or editing.

The stories are derived from the real-life incident, but some have been amended for two reasons first, due to the sensitivity of the stories. Second, to make them more concise to convey the particular message being illustrated. In this book I want to share with you a selection of these stories

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and experiences that have stayed with me over the years; each one of them taught me something important about life and leadership. I offer them to you for whatever use you may wish to make of them. My stories are real, so it's not just what's *in* the stories. It's what you take *out* of them that give them value.



## Why This Book

Hundreds of books have been written and will be written on SUCCESS. So why add one more to your Bookshelf? What's so good about this book? The answer lies in the fact that in spite of numerous write-ups on the subject, very few were written as *true-life* memoirs so that others could *learn* from one's experiences in order to achieve greater success and find his true voice.

This book is not about preaching religion, nor is it a debate about what is right or wrong. Rather, this book is about helping you make the right choices in challenging circumstances in your *workplace*. This fact makes it special, and different from many other books on success.

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This book will help you to get over a dispute that's keeping you up at night and shrug off those daily problems and issues that arise in all our lives.

Very simply, this book is intended to help you reflect on your beliefs, principles, and values and to seek Allah Almighty to equip and encourage you to do the right thing under pressure.

Read this book, heed its wisdom and experience how it can do wonders for you and help you *race* to the top!

May Allah bless you on your journey!



## The Big Question: Is Success a Sin?

Absolutely not. Success is *never* a sin. The means used to obtain it can be. It is only normal that success breeds *enemies* and it so happens that the greater the leader becomes the more the *foes* surround him. NO man in history has excelled and made no enemies. The most prominent of the personalities that the world has ever seen and admired was the *Holy Prophet Muhammad* (May Peace and the Blessings of Allah be upon Him).

For the past 14 Centuries, many thinkers, philosophers, scientists, and scholars, each a radiant star in our intellectual world,

have stood behind him in respect and admiration, and taken pride in belonging to his community.

His unique success induced Micheal Hart to consider Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as the most influential man in history. In his book *The 100: Ranking of the most influential persons in History*. Hart has to rank Prophet Muhammad the first person on his list.

His life is an example of the epitome of success, it also gained him scores of enemies even after his death till now. This is written in the following words of the Holy Quran: "*Thus we have made for every prophet an enemy from the sinners.*" [Al Furqan: 31].



## Before Reading the Stories

Please before continuing reading the book answer the following yes/no Questions. Yes No

Have you been faced with a very difficult dilemma? ☐ ☐

Have you been to a situation where the only option was a bad decision and a worse decision? ☐ ☐

Have you been in a situation that appeared hopeless? ☐ ☐

Have you been in a lose-win or lose-lose dilemma where a positive resolution seemed impossible? ☐ ☐

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Have you been in a situation where your faith tested beyond your perceived limit? ☐ ☐

Do you often think that events around you are out of your control? ☐ ☐

Do you look back to the past? ☐ ☐

Do you find it difficult to share your problems with other people? ☐ ☐

Do you stay awake at night worrying about things? ☐ ☐

Do you wish that you were in a different situation in life, in some way? ☐ ☐

Do you feel there is anything missing from your side? ☐ ☐



Is there anything you are running away from?

☐ ☐

If you have ready to answered “yes” to all or most of the questions, then let’s get started. It’s a journey worth taking (trust me)!



## About This Book

*“Is success a sin?”* is a book that shows the reader what it takes to win. I am convinced the thought providing content of the book will inspire you to think in a new way about your current business challenges as well as those facing you tomorrow.

*“Is success a sin?”* is simple yet insightful real-life stories of work and life that speak directly to the heart and soul.

*“Is success a sin?”* will help you focus on what will make you happy and successful in your work and in your personal life.

*“Is success a sin?”* will help you learn to stress less, focus your thoughts, move you forward with a sense of purpose, and enjoy life more.

*“Is success a sin?”* will help you make a wise decision in the midst of challenging circumstances.

*“Is success a sin?”* will help anyone going through difficult and confusing times to feel calmer and better able to deal with life’s twists and turns.

*“Is success a sin?”* shows you how to avoid emotional upsets.

*“Is success a sin?”* is a book of inspirational stories that will make you look at strangers in a new light.

*“Is success a sin?”* is a journey worth taking.

Enjoy Reading!

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# 1 | Story

*Memo  
to the  
Chairman*

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*“The challenge of Leadership is  
to be strong, but not rude;  
be kind, but not weak; be bold,  
but not bully; be thoughtful,  
but not lazy; be humble, but not  
timid; be proud, but not  
arrogant, have humor, but  
without folly“*

- Jim Rohn

## Memo to the Chairman

Effective interaction, mutual understanding, and co-operation are the key constituents of a healthy organization. Lack of proper communication and misunderstanding tend to *demoralize* any organization. In fact, leaders are those who co-relate with their staff such that misunderstandings are reduced and peace prevails.

I would like to relate my own experiences at how being forthright and straightforward helped me find solutions to the challenges before me.

Here is one of the stories that happened to me during my professional life helped me reaffirm

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such approach. Once, it so happened that a high-level manager of one of our affiliates, criticized our organization before higher authorities, stating that we had offended him and their concern.

### **The News is Out**

Whatever effort I was trying to keep the issue as low as possible and not to share with anyone, yet, somehow the news reached the chairman through *hypocrites*. Chairman called me up to find out what had happened. I was clear and open I told him exactly what happened and how much I had been trying to fix it. He kept quite wanted me to update him quickly which I did later.

On summons from my superior, my immediate reaction was anger and annoyance; I was taken aback at the *do-or-die* situation,



after all, *Satan* had sown enmity between us. What's going on here? Why was I being targeted?

Asking myself. But then I remembered the story of Buddha and his Disciples.

The story is once Buddha was walking from one town to another with some of his disciples. While they were traveling, they happened to pass a lake.

They stopped there and Buddha told one of his disciples, "I am thirsty. Do get me some water from that lake there."

The disciple walked up to the lake. When he reached it, he noticed that right at that moment, a bullock cart started crossing through the lake. As a result, the water became very muddy, very turbid.

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The disciple thought, “How can I give this muddy water to Buddha to drink!”

So he came back and told Buddha, “The water in there is very muddy. I don’t think it is fit to drink.”

After about half an hour, again Buddha asked the same disciple to go back to the lake and get him some water to drink. The disciple obediently went back to the lake.

This time too he found that the lake was muddy. He returned and informed Buddha about the same.

After some time, again Buddha asked the same disciple to go back. The disciple reached the lake to find the lake absolutely clean and clear with pure water in it. The mud had settled down and the water above it looked fit

for drinking. So he collected some water in a pot and brought it to Buddha.

Buddha looked at the water and then he looked up at the disciple and said, “See what you did to make the water clean. You waited long and the mud settled down on its own and you got clear water. Your mind is like that! When it is disturbed, just let it be. Give it a little time. It will settle down on its own. You don’t have to put in any effort to calm it down. It will happen. It is effortless”.

### **A Call for Action**

Remembering the story cooled me down I started jotting down my feelings in the following memo to the chairman.

Your Excellency,

Effective interaction, mutual understanding, and co-operation are the key constituents of a healthy organization. As you are aware, lack of proper communication and misunderstanding tend to demoralize any organization. In fact, leaders are those who co-relate with their staff such that misunderstandings are reduced and peace prevails.

I deem that leadership sets the tone for business organization – leaders either lead the way or they communicate those cutting corners, deception, and disrespect is acceptable. In fact, business ethics start at the *top* and the line staff will always rise or sink to the level of performance they see exemplified above them. Leaders represent the *gold standard* of ethical behavior. Build the relationship skills that increase trust, teamwork, and accountability.

We at Brothers have always considered Challenger as an affiliate, in fact, *respecting* them sincerely for their years of experience and expertise and have never looked at them with prejudice. Moreover, I personally had a good rapport with the previous Director General of Challenger, Mr. Ali Abdullah.

Brothers has always stated that Challenger is *not* a competitor but a complimentor!

Now, let me try to draw your kind attention to the incident that happened yesterday. I was in a very important promotional meeting when the Director General of Challenger came to our main office without an appointment, met with some of the staff had a cup of coffee with our commercial director and left quietly. It was only later that I discovered that he wanted to meet me and that he was unhappy about not being seen feeling not welcomed! Meanwhile,

I tried to call him on his mobile phone several times and sent him "Please call back" SMS. But found no response!!

As we belong to one big family, it is very important that we realize our interconnectedness and not bicker and blow up over *silly* matters. I believe we have the choice to see or reject to see anyone the choice is up to us. It is against my principles and the ethics of my religion to ignore and not receive anyone in the right time. In fact it's right there in the Holy Quran: "*But if you do not find any one therein, then do not enter them until permission is given to you; and if it is said to you: Go back, then go back; this is purer for you; and Allah is Cognizant of what you do*". [Al-Nur:28].

I would like to reiterate that I value your leadership in all matters immensely. Keeping in mind my past 10 years experience in government, semi-government and private concerns, I have personally experienced this paradox, that as we proceed towards success we make *more* enemies, especially from the *hypocrites* within the organization!

Lastly, I am very sorry to take so much of your valuable time by engaging you with my thoughts and emotions, but I felt that it is a part of my commitment to you and that I needed to share this information with you only, as judgment should not be based on emotions but on facts. We have always taken pride in learning from you, your perceptions, your principles and your virtuousness.

Looking forward to your immediate comments and appraisals before the problem comes to

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the attention of others. You know the old adage: *Employees share good experiences four times, and bad ones eight times!*

Best regards,

Rashid Alleem  
Director General

### **Rethink!**

Rereading the letter many times helped me *release* my anger. I finally learned to turn my thinking around. I made up my mind *not* to give up, kept calling the gentleman concerned and decided to present all the issues and my feelings about them point blank, finally, I got him on the phone around 8:00 pm. I was careful, patient and diplomatic throughout the process.



## **The Result?**

The person concerned was embarrassed. His first instinct was to *rebury* the problem, as he never expected me to bring up the issue again. But I was totally composed and informed him that I was just about to send a memo to our chairman explaining to him what had happened exactly. But after giving it a thought I believe if we didn't resolve our problems internally and have the courage to discuss face to face then our relationship will be weakened, our business will be affected, and our employees' morale will go down. We have to be wise enough.

Soon we solved all our misunderstandings and as a result, we started communicating effectively. More importantly, the chairman was delighted to note that all our

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misunderstandings were resolved and he *appreciated* the way I handled the situation.

### **My Advice**

I found that subtle differences like these occur due to our *attitude*. They can develop from something as simple as the language we use, the sequence of the phrases, and the way we use them.

Whenever you are angry, be sure you use the *right* phrases at the right time. *Secondly*, make a conscious decision to *refrain* from saying what you don't want to say and to say what it is you really want to say. *Thirdly*, the next time you find yourself in a troublesome and volatile situation, be sure to focus on the *positive* side of it. This will make you feel better and also help you work through it. With this disposition, you will find yourself focusing on the solution rather than the

problem. *Fourth*, changing the tone and the dialogue can open up productive, meaningful communication.

### **Attitude is Everything**

Meanwhile, a positive attitude is a *key* to success. Hence the best way to control your focus is to analyze the situation, positively and ask yourself *good* questions such as, “*What is the good in this situation?*”, “*What have I learned from this?*”, “*Are there any options to be evaluated?*” or “*How can I tackle the situation?*”. By asking yourself effective questions, you will *force* your mind to look for and find solutions to problems and ways to make the situations better. On the other hand, if you ask yourself questions of *despair* such as, “*Why does this have to happen to me?*” “*Why am I always the target?*”, “*What did I do to deserve this?*” Your brain will look for

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those exact and accurate answers to suit your questions and thus tell you why bad things happen to you and why you deserve something bad!

### **Collector or Hoarder**

They are two types of people collectors or hoarders, mind you, there's a difference: Hoarders collect indiscriminately, collectors collect selectively. They only collect things that they really love.

### **Garbage in, Garbage out**

Remember here, you are confirming that you really deserve bad things happening to you. It's one thing when someone else tells you something negative like that, but when you tell it to yourself, you are sure to *believe* it! I guarantee you, that you will always believe yourself even if it's only subconsciously. In

other words, be careful what you ask for!

So, practice focusing on positive thoughts and learn to ask yourself effective questions that will lead to constructive answers. If you look hard enough, there will *always* be a positive side to every situation. For every challenge that you face in life, focus on the *solution*, not the problem. If you focus on the problem at hand, you will *never* find the solution.

Last but not least, it's not what happens to us but rather what we *do* with what happens to us that makes the difference. Remember: "*The only thing in the world you can change is yourself and that makes all the difference in the world.*"

One of the most powerful messages of all times was: "Change the person in the mirror, and your world will change".

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Believe in the best, hope for the best and move towards the best... It's your choice!



# 2 | Story

*Patience  
and  
Perseverance*

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*“Patience and perseverance have  
a magical effect before which  
difficulties disappear and  
obstacles vanish”*

- John Quincy Adams



## Patience and Perseverance

There has been a major transformation in the way I view my professional and personal problem. Previously, I used to see them as *hindrances* in the path of success. Now, I see them as *challenges* to improve and an *opportunities* to be unique!

### **Perfection in Character**

A story, which has inspired me all through my childhood and still inspires me, is that of “*Perfection in Character*” embodied in the Holy Quran and characterized by the blessed Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). The story is the *declaration* of Ayesha’ (Prophet

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Muhammad's Wife) innocence, which was stated by Allah Almighty through the revelation of the following verses of the Holy Quran: *"Allah forbids you from it [slander] and warns you not to repeat the like of it forever if you are believers."* [Al-Noor:17].

Though Prophet Muhammad was hurt and offended, when it happened, his patience, forbearance, and belief in Allah helped him to *overcome* the situation without much difficulty. Hence, patience and belief in the Almighty Allah are the most important priority one should have.

### **The Slander Against Ayesha**

This story summarizes the slander that the hypocrites during Prophet Muhammad levied against the Mother of the believers, Ayesha (May Allah Be Pleased With Her). This was

an important event in Islamic history that also led the revelation of important verses in which Allah vindicated her.

### ***Allegations***

Ayesha once accompanied the Prophet Muhammad on a campaign and was traveling with a caravan. She accidentally got separated from the caravan during the journey and was stranded in the desert. Safwan bin Mu`attal, who was traveling separately happened to get to the same place where she was and seeing her stranded, brought his camel and made it kneel so that she could ride upon it. Then he set out leading the camel until they caught up with the army. This gave rise not just to suspicion, but *allegations* against them, with Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, the leader of the hypocrites, being the foremost in spreading them. He *fabricated* the lie and

whispered it to others, until some of the Muslims started to believe it, and began to talk about their suspicions. As for Ayesha as she was ill during those days, she did not know about the slander that the people were indulging in. What upset her when she was ill was that she observed the Prophet's behavior too had changed towards her.

On inquiry, when she finally came to know about the slander from another lady, she sought the Prophet's permission and went to her parents' home. She said: *"Rumours about this slander went on spreading in the city for about a month, which caused a great distress and anguish to the Holy Prophet. I cried due to helplessness and my parents were sick with mental agony."*

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) remained in great *anxiety* with regard to Ayesha for one whole month. At last, one day he visited her and her parents. He sat near her (which she says he had not done since the slander had started). Feeling that something decisive was going to happen that day, Abu Bakr and Umm Ruman (Ayesha's parents) also sat near them. The Holy Prophet gently said: "*Ayesha, I have heard this about you. If you are innocent, I expect that Allah will declare your innocence. But if you have committed the sin, you should offer repentance, and ask for Allah's forgiveness; when a servant (of Allah) confesses his guilt and repents, Allah forgives him.*"

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Hearing these words, tears dried in her eyes, as Ayesha reported. She looked up to her father expecting that he would say something in her defense, but he said, *‘Daughter, I do not know what I should say.’* Then she turned to her mother, but she also did not know what to say. At last Ayesha replied; *“You have all heard something about me and believed it. Now if I say that I am innocent – and Allah is my witness that I am innocent – you will not believe me, and if I confess something which I never did – and Allah knows that I never did it – you will believe me. I cannot but repeat the words which the father of Prophet Yousuf (Joseph) had spoken: “I will bear this patiently with good grace.”*

Saying this she lay down thinking that Allah was aware of her innocence, and He would certainly reveal the truth. At that moment,

suddenly the state of receiving the Divine Revelation appeared on the Holy Prophet when pearl-like drops of perspiration used to gather on his face even in severe winter. The revelation vindicated her stand and proved her innocence. When it was over, the Prophet was overjoyed. The first words he spoke were: *“Congratulations, Ayesha, Allah has sent down proof of your innocence”*, and then he recited the following verses that had her vindication: *“Verily those who brought forth the slander are a group among you. Consider it not a bad thing for you. Nay, it is good for you. Unto every man among them will be paid that which he had earned of the sin, and as for him among them who had the greater share therein, his will be a great torment.”* [Al-Noor:11].

## **My Story**

I experienced something eerily similar a couple of years ago. I, too, was bewildered for months. My reputation was dragged through the mud, I faced one of the most difficult dilemmas of my life. My heart was perplexed and confused. I felt defenseless and shredded, attacked and mutilated. It was one of those situations when you can't be sure that what is happening is real!

My values and principles were challenged by one of the middle managers at a government authority concern I was working for, a few years ago. He did his best to bring into question my character and reputation. I was in a confused state when he *alleged* that I was having an affair with one of the staff members. I was perplexed at being the *talk* of the town for weeks. The most frustrating part



was that the friends, relatives, and associates whom I had always supported and helped became a *part* of this scandal. It was a fire in my heart. I just couldn't believe this was happening. I repeated over and over, '*what did I ever do to deserve this?*' *What's the right thing to do in this situation?* '*Why me?*' I had no answers – just more questions.

Even though I had what I believed to be a strong faith, it was devastating. Unanswerable questions floating in my mind. I was struggling painfully.

I tried desperately to make sense of the situation. At night, I would lie awake and listen to a blessed recitation of the Holy Quran and many other inspirational audio books and listened to different philosophers. I felt bit relaxed. I felt Almighty was speaking to me.

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I prayed and purified myself, the tears ran out of my eyes. Nothing much I can do! I felt helpless. I never gave up. I continued to search and ask God to help me heal and get better.

Jesus makes this point plain in Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it will be given to you: seek, and you will find: knock, and it will be opened to you". So go ahead ask.

### ***Surrender To Almighty***

I remember one particular night when I was praying, I cried out, 'Oh my Lord! Please help me. I just can't handle it anymore. It's just too much. I just can't do anything, So you have to! Lord, you brought us here for a reason. You have something in store for me '. I had finally surrendered fully to Him. I was filled and surrounded by the spirit of God. I remember reading what was written in James 1:3 "The

testing”, “*The testing of your faith produces endurance*”. I was brought to a special place of tested faith in God. I was at peace. I was guided by an inner intelligence, which was a tremendous source of wisdom and comfort. I received a whisper from my soul, “*If God is for us, who can be against us?*”

### **Refuse to Give Up**

However, My faith, patience, good judgment, and understanding kept me strong, hopeful, and optimistic. Using the example of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and learning from great leaders experiences, I persevered with the help of Allah and was unhurt by this incident. Allah, the All – High, All – Glorious, said: “*Glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, - who say when afflicted with calamity:*” “*To Allah, we belong, and to Him is our return. They are those on whom*

*(Descend) blessings from their Lord and Mercy. And they are the ones that receive guidance”*. [Al Baqarah: 155-157].

I began to see messages of hope coming my way. More and more, I sensed God at work in my life. It is not who I want to be it is who God wants us to be. When our hearts are connected to heaven and filled with faith, our words will reveal our faith and trust in God.

That was a powerful, hope-filled moment. “You are not alone, God is with you”. Two weeks later, a remarkable peace came over me. That’s the great thing about having a relationship with God. When you are in God’s will, things seem to move along. Everything came together smoothly. The truth came to everyone very suddenly, and the truth made everything perfectly clear or at least clarified the situation. A couple of months passed, and I

hope and pray that the situation will not happen again. Once is enough in my lifetime.

### **Build a Better Man Before Building a Better Society**

Just remember situations like these are *common* especially in big organizations where there are non-productive and idle staff members who do *nothing* but spread rumors and gossip.

*Secondly*, remember that you cannot remove resentment by more resentment. Resentment and anger only aggravate the situation. There is a Chinese proverb that says “*he who seeks revenge, digs two graves*” one for himself. Hence, try to calm down and view the situation from another angle and consider the events and effects by asking yourself the following key questions: *what are you doing with your anger? Who is being harmed by*

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*your anger and retaliation? Are you, in turn harming yourself?* It enables you to become the observer of your thoughts instead of being controlled by them. You start to relate to your thinking, and *not* from your thinking. That changes everything. It allows you to become far less reactive, and to make much wiser choices.

Don't get me wrong; this is *not* to say that you should always turn the other cheek when you are hurt, but revenge or decisions taken in anger are not at all beneficial. I believe when a person humbles himself before God, things change: priorities, attitudes, and relationships. I always remind people that none of us knows what is waiting for the next chapter of life. Every single day is important. We learn to take responsibility, yet stay open to seeing, hearing, and sensing God's direction.

**Petition and Perseverance**

Here I would like to tell the reader one important thing I discover in this issue that the prayer is a very powerful tool. It's not dry and difficult as most people think, It is so simple if you make it honest and heartfelt. When we pray and make requests to God for things we want and need, we are praying prayers of petition. The prayer of perseverance is a prayer that does not quit. It's prayer that keeps on praying and doesn't give up.

When you integrate God's principle along with your unique values, talents, and character, you become the successful and significant leader, God intended you to be.

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The message I would like to convey to those who spread rumors and gossips is that accepting failure or criticism is never easy, but those who take feedback and make amendments create *lasting success*. The *self-actualized* person learns from his mistakes, makes amends, adjusts, and goes on. No blame needs to be identified. Just awareness and correction of yourself. You must know that nothing positive will come from being negative and nothing negative will come from being positive.

Moreover, we need to view *our errors* as part of the process of success. If we learn to accept them and use them, they can become our tools instead of our enemies.





# 3 | Story

*Motivation*

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*“Failure will never overtake me  
if my determination to succeed is  
strong enough.”*

- Og Mandino

## Motivation

Motivation in Islam is not restricted to monetary and material incentives but includes *spiritual* incentives which have proven their effectiveness throughout history. Allah, the Almighty, All-High, Said: “*We never waste the reward of anyone who did well.*” [Al Khaf 18:30].

Today, motivation is the cornerstone of any business organization strives for excellence. It means informing, inspiring and empowering employees to do their best personally and professionally at all times. Motivation is like food for the brain. You cannot get enough in one sitting. It needs continual and regular top ups.

‘Motivation’ comes from the Latin word “mover”, which means “move”. Numerous definitions have been found for the term but these definitions basically include four common characteristics of motivation:

1. The motivation that *activates* human behavior.
2. The motivation that *directs* their behavior towards a particular goal.
3. The motivation that *helps* sustain this behavior.
4. The motivation that *reward* people for doing what you want them to do, and you can get them to do almost anything.

The above is the essence of motivation found in the greatest management books but *seldom* seen in real business life. I have experienced motivation both – as a motivator and also as a person who has been motivated.

## **A Letter From My Daughter**

Actually the following letter from my beloved daughter Reem encouraged me to write this story and share my experience with the readers.

Dear Dad,

I love you so much!

I am writing this note to you to tell you how proud I am of having a caring dad like you. You are my source of inspiration and motivation. This is what I have in my heart to tell everyone in the school about you: 'You might walk the streets and find a poster of Rashid Alleem, you might sit in a café and hear people talking about how great he is and you wonder, why is he successful why do people talk so good about him and praise him, let me tell you this, my dad worked hard to reach the goal, it doesn't just take minutes to

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build success, success starts with stages, ideas and more. Trust me it's not easy. It is indeed hard.

My Great Dad,

You are such a great dad, you are not just my father but also my inspiration leader who opened a lot of opportunities for me to reach, and let me think more about what I desire to achieve in the future, you made me think that every person can be successful by working hard for his or her dream.

I am so sorry dad for writing such a short note to you (haha), but really it could be even more than this. I can write a book just describing how proud I am of you, and a series of books just describing how a great authentic leader you are and you are limitless, (at home too!) it would take me forever just to thank you.

And one more thing before I finish this, even though you are an open minded father, you also taught me that life has boundaries and whenever we cross the boundaries you remind us what the consequences are and that so we don't make another same mistake.

You always guided me and told me that life is a lesson, we make mistakes, but we learn from them so we don't do it again and again. We must keep challenging tomorrow.

With great love,  
Reem Alleem

### **My Experience**

One of the hard experiences I had while working in a non-profit organization in

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Sharjah for about 7 years which helped me to realize the importance of motivation in business.

For the first time in my career, I had to deal with a lot of *negative* motivation. There *was* always a focus on what *wasn't* working instead of what was working or how to make it work. I had to make a real effort to maintain a positive attitude. It had exercised my faith in both challenging and rewarding ways.

### **Cheerful Giver**

Looking back, however, I clearly remember the years when I volunteered to work as a General Manager while I was enjoying my full-time job working as production superintendent in an American Oil Company called AMOCO. I helped create guarantee sustainable success by introducing a large



number of challenging, yet, revenue generating projects. I led the organization to one revenue and earnings records after another I was making a achievements and business improvement in the face of an increasingly tough and changeable business climate. I sacrificed money, time, and energy and received neither compensation nor ‘pats on the back’. It was painful. I was pushing myself so hard I was wearing my body down. I accepted the job when the charity was struggling financially and didn’t have enough financial and human resources to make its programs the way it needed to be funded.

### **I Am a Workaholic**

Eventually, I was working sixty hours a week and was seldom able to spend *quality* time with my family and friends or even to have time on my own to relax and just putter

around the house. I rarely took a vacation and almost never thought about how work had taken over my life. Did it worth it?

I received very little credit for my efforts including the chairman of the board. I wanted something lasting to remind me of my *remarkable* achievements. Instead of motivation, *criticism* and *jealousy* were the responses I received from them at first I felt terrible. Thus I was disappointed, depressed, and distressed. Until one day I read somewhere, "*the most effective way to achieve right relations with any living thing is to look for the best in it, and then help that best into the fullest expression.*"

### **Decide to Decide**

I immediately realized where I had gone wrong. The problem was my *attitude* and the

way I saw things. As the old saying goes; *"We have met the enemy and he is us."* This is what had to be changed because I know that my attitude makes a big difference in my life. A positive attitude is recognized as the "magic" that transmits the best of anyone's personality. The philosopher Soren Kierkegaard wrote, *"Our life always expresses the result of our dominant thoughts."* A negative attitude closes the door. So I decided to change my attitude towards others, to do my best so that no one could make me give up. My life would depend only on my decisions.

### ***I've Got Something to Say***

Hence, my dear Brothers and Sisters, the next time you find yourself in the beginning of a bad mood, take a few minutes to sit quietly. Take a deep breath and look at the *bright* side. Don't feel depressed when you are scorned,

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mistreated, and demotivated by your seniors. Relax! Keep your eyes on your goals, and keep your chin tilted upward toward the sunshine, don't give up! That will give you the time to develop a rich and rewarding inner life.

### **What Else?**

Think of your thoughts as *seed*. What you plant in your mind grows and attracts like-minded thoughts and experiences. Whether you plant seeds of worry and fear or seed of hope and joy in your mind, your life will bear the fruit of your thoughts.

Remember, you have all the *energy* to change your world. Negative attitudes and depression shouldn't stop you from achieving your best or motivating your colleagues.

The old saying “*you reap what you sow*” is truer today than ever before. Give yourself the recognition you deserve and You'll produce the results you need.











# 4 | Story

*Know  
Who!*

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*“There are two primary choices  
in life: to accept conditions  
as they exist, or accept  
the responsibility for  
changing them”*

- Denis Waitley

## Know Who!

A Substantial amount of experience, motivation, and dedication are needed in order to have a passion for handling major projects. It so happens that often the *wrong* person holds the chair of authority in project management, while more dedicated and experienced people remain as *doormats*!.

In March 2000, I was appointed by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Muhammad Al Qasimi Ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah as a Director General of Hamriyah Free Zone to transform the young authority into a world class Free Zone attracting FDI to the city of Sharjah from all over the world. It was the

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first assignment given to me by our president. What a challenge!

On my first day at work, I noticed we had a temporary office arrangement as our new headquarter being built. The unpleasant side is the HQ project was over budget and late. Why? When I drilled down the root cause of the delay I found out an interesting story. The project was awarded to a very *influential* businessman who owns a construction company. This “very influential” man got the job through some high-ranking officials, but he turned out to be "a trouble maker". He brought the project to a standstill. As a result, our organization suffered terrible losses. His company failed to complete the project on time, causing our organization to lose (hundreds of thousands of dollars) as the

project was being financed by a local bank with the high-interest rate (11%).

Moreover, it affected the Organization's Business Plan for that year and created a big dispute among the staff. I was very upset, reasonably so, about the situation and made several attempts in vain to talk directly to the owner of the company. Each time I attempted to see him concerning the existing issues, I was referred to his office manager who offered thousands of promises but kept none. This situation became unnerving, especially due to the man's potential and influence.

### ***Listen to your Heart***

I was actively seeking wise advice from respected friends and peers but ended nowhere due to the *sensitivity* of the issue. Then I remembered this quote: "*When you get into a*

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*tight place and everything goes against you till it seems as if you can't hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that's the time and the place that the tide will turn."*

"It's your decision, Rashid, It's up to you, not to decide is to decide " It was just me talking to me. . . and I remember reading a great statement in Romans 12:12 says: "*Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and always be prayerful.*" I knew then God has so much in store for me. He wants to hear my voice and see my humbleness. The right time is coming. I have to wait. Just wait.

### **Turn to Almighty Completely**

I sat quietly. I sought God's guidance. I had questions like, 'God, I have full trust in you, I know you have so much in store for me. But

what should I do now?’ ‘What is the right course of action?’ ‘What path should I take?’ I felt my heart resonates with a, ‘Yes, this is right answer’,.... ‘*Be afraid of nothing. You have within you all wisdom, all power, all strength, all understanding.*’ Go ahead, face the challenge!

Looking back, I realize that in such cases despair and anger can do *more* harm than good. In fact, the more you hang on to your anger and resentment, the unhappier you shall be. After all, it’s one of the main messages of the Holy Quran: “*Who restrain anger, And pardon (all) men: for Allah loves those who do good*” [Al Imran : 134].

Prophet Muhammad (Blessings and Peace be upon him) Said: “*Wisdom shall be sought by Muslims, wherever they find it they are the ones most deserving of It*”

By having *faith* in Almighty Allah, the competence, and the determination to make the best out of the situation was the *only* solution.

### **A Courageous Decision**

Trusting in Allah means allowing Him to be the Director of your life. I was being led by Him, and His plan for my life wouldn't allow me to fail. I said to myself: "*What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.*"

I decided to write a *termination* letter directly to the company's owner without getting approval from my chairman.

I was fast couldn't wait a second. He received the letter and was very upset. He called up my chairman expressing his anger and disappointment of the letter.



My chairman called me up, was totally unhappy with my decision due to the sensitivity of the matter. I said to him; “Sir, the company breached the contract. This has to have an end and I do appreciate your concern and the sensitivity of the project, but please leave it to me. Trust me.”

Eventually, his services were terminated by a firm decision from our organization. My faith gave me the strength to make this decision. My decision has had positive and profitable results. Not only has the organization benefited financially by saving much of the interest, but the trust and morale of the organization have been strengthened considerably. Employees felt good with their new boss and his leadership qualities of taken a tough decision.

## **Let's Meet**

I called up my chief engineer to call all engineering department colleagues so I can address them directly towards the next steps needed. I said “we have to create an enjoyable work atmosphere and make the best use of the money and the time we spend working to complete this project. We all collaborate in one way or another. When you are collaborating with one or more coworkers on the project milestones, make a point of working with them, show some winning ways for sharing information, allocating workload fairly and clearly to create a common shared vision that you can all aim toward. Get an agreement from every member of the team as to exactly what you want to accomplish.

While you may not all see exactly eye to eye, make sure that everyone is on board as far as

possible enable everyone to feel a valued team player. If someone in the group isn't in agreement with the team, ask him questions, get his input and, ultimately, his agreement to work toward the common goal. You can waste your own and everyone else's time if you're not all on the same track. Make a point of complimenting coworkers who've done a good job. If you're genuine in your praise, you'll help create a nurturing atmosphere in which it'll be easier for everyone to work.

Within a few weeks, the project was handed over to another local company who awarded the contract through the normal bidding process. This company turned out to be excellent and completed the project a few weeks *ahead* of time. It was noteworthy decisions. This achievement has reminded me of Peter Drucker quote, "*Wherever you see a*

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*successful business, someone once made a courageous decision.”*

I was so thankful because Allah had taken care of everything right from the beginning.

### **I am Possible**

When hard times come your way and things seem impossible just remember what Marcus Aurelius said: *“Because a thing seems difficult for you, do not think it impossible.”*

I like what Keith D. Harrell wrote in his book *“An Attitude of Gratitude”*: Each of us has the same ability to overcome a challenge or defeat a doubt. We can conquer our uncertainties by positively proclaiming what we want in our lives. We can override our “internal computers” and “reprogram” our subconscious minds.

The *first* step is to say it: Say it out loud, say it to others, write it, and post it on notes that you'll see throughout the day. *Second*, you must believe it. It's amazing how attitude and behavior follow the desires of the heart. And *last*, receive it. Allow yourself to visualize the end see you with the job you want, or the vacation you've dreamed of or reaching the academic goal you've been working toward. When you *continually* declare to yourself and others those things that you desire, then your outlook, attitude, and behavior will change to support your newly created belief.

### **The Glad Game**

Disney's 1960 movie *pollyanna* featured "The Glad Game" where you look for as many things as you can to be glad about, especially in a *negative* situation. Finding things to be grateful for in a negative situation make the *solutions* appear!

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In his valuable book, *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers said, “All efforts of worth and excellence are difficult. Difficulty does not make us faint and cave in – it stirs us up to overcome. God does not give us overcoming life – *He gives us life as we overcome.*”

I have learned much from this project both personally and professionally. People always say, “*It’s not what you know... It’s who you know.*” But I have a different view it is what you know that matters most, not who you know. If you trust God's principles.

## **The Agile Way**

The lesson to be learned from this story is “Our problems are man-made, therefore they can be solved by man.” So, no matter what industry or type of project is at hand, problems can occur either because of people:

1. Make them occur or
2. Don't take action to prevent them from occurring.

Two premises make up the cornerstone of Project Management:

1. People are the *cause* of a project's problems.
2. A project's problems can be solved *only* by people.

One more thing to remember here, adopting agile, moving quickly and easily, in your business will help you discover faster, smarter, and leaner ways to work. It will significantly speed you to find that breakthrough "Aha!" moments.







# 5 | Story

*He is  
My Boss!*

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*“Inside each of us, there is the  
seed of both good and evil.  
It’s a constant struggle  
as to which one will win.  
And one cannot exist  
without the other.”*

- Eric Burdon

## He is My Boss!

### **My MBA**

In 2002, I completed the requirements for my Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree at Atlantic International University in the USA. I had graduated with distinction. It was a wonderful moment. It came when I was serving in the position of Director General of Hamriyah Free Zone Authority, a highly reputed organization in the government of Sharjah. It was one of those memorable days. It took me two years, studying day and night, to pass my exams and earn my MBA. Indeed wonderful coverage was given by the press. Advertisements of congratulations were posted in some of the most highly regarded newspapers and replies started pouring in.

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My phone rang off the hook. I got calls from family members, friends, and people I'd lost contact with.

I was so happy when the congratulation letters with flowers started to arrive at my home and office, letter after letter after letter, it was wonderful! It would happen almost every day for a week. In fact, the publicity I got was much more than my family and I expected. But, sometimes happiness brings in a tint of despair.

### **How?**

One day, I happened to meet one of the journalists of a local daily newspaper requested to interview me for an article to be published about the free zone's latest achievements and a few words from my side about how to balance and find time to go for

higher education while leading a big organization as well as to see the impact of my MBA on the company future look. Meanwhile, I was aware of the fact that one of my classmates was the Chief Editor and was well known to me. He used to chat with me every now and then and also requested my assistance on various issues. So I was expecting a very good coverage the next morning. Unfortunately, it did not happen as I had expected.

Quite frankly, I was shocked. How could it be? The interview which was supposed to appear in the paper that morning was completely changed!! The size of the article was reduced considerably, my photograph was removed and the interview was transferred from the top to the bottom of the page. Soon, the journalist came to inform me that the Chief

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Editor was very *adverse* to having my story in their newspaper and in fact it was the Chief Editor who ordered him to change the article. The journalist apologized by saying “I am indeed terribly sorry for whatever has happened. It was his order and I couldn’t help it... HE IS MY BOSS! But I would request you *not* to continue your association with this man as I know very well that you supported him when he had major business setbacks”.

### **Violent Enemy**

For a moment, I was annoyed I did not know what to say or how to find ways to overcome the situation. I calmly disagreed; pointing out that it was certainly our *violent* enemy who caused him to do that.

The journalist was not pleased. His face reddened as he demanded to know just what made me say that “Nonsense!”

“Do you think this will matter a week from now?” It won’t matter, then, what’s the point of being upset today?! I said.

“Rashid, you are too kind and thus people easily take you for a ride!!” said the journalist.

“Well, you might be right to a certain extent. But I strongly believe that if we don’t prioritize and practice patience we will spend a lot of our lives being upset and frustrated. The reality is that life rarely goes according to our plans. Life is a game that is played from the inside-out”. It is clearly said in proverbs 23:7 *“for as he thinks within himself, so he is”*

“Yes, but ...” He said softly.

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He looked into my eyes and I looked into his, I said “Don't drive me nuts. Now you listen to me, and I will give you some advice, I'm reminded of The Holy Quran *"Say to my servants that they should (only) say those things that are best. For Satan doth sow dissensions among them: For Satan is to man an avowed enemy"*. [Al Asra : 53].

It means choosing love over hate, and kindness over proving yourself. It means letting go of the *ego* in order to allow God to work within you. It means calling your ‘enemies’ friends as the Dalai Lama used to refer to his enemies as ‘*my friends the enemies*’.

“Did you hear or read about *The Echo* story”?, I said

“No, tell me about it, sir”. He replied.



## **The Echo Story**

A little boy got angry with his mother and shouted at her, “I hate you, I hate you”. Because of fear of reprimand, he ran out of the house. He went up to the valley and shouted, “I hate you, I hate you” and back came *the echo*, “ I hate you, I hate you.” This was the first time in his life he had heard an echo. He got scared, went to his mother for protection and said there was a bad boy in the valley who shouted: “I hate you, I hate you”. The mother understood and she asked her son to go back and shout, “I love you, I love you”. The little boy went and shouted, “I love you, I love you”, and back came the echo. That taught the little boy a lesson – that our life is like an echo: we get back what we give.

After listening to the story his reaction began to soften. I found myself starting to relax.

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And, after a little more fuss, he left saying "a thankful person is thankful under all circumstances".

### **A Final Word**

“Brothers and Sisters, whenever such a scenario arises in your lives or whenever someone *denounces* you behind your back, don’t become frustrated. Instead, restrain your anger, think positively, and leave the rest to the Almighty Allah. It takes a little faith and patience. I know it can be challenging to begin this practice, but The Holy Quran is showing you the way to do it. God says that each person is responsible for his deeds alone. We are not responsible for what others do. But by being kind to them even when they are at their worst, we can set a good example and bring them to the right path as well. As the Holy

Qur'an added. *"You will see your direct enemy has become your closest friend"*

Despite Life's ups and downs, people with the right attitude remain successful so, be encouraged! be blessed! be successful! . . . and remember! What life means to us is determined not so much by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life. Things that happen to us aren't as important as our reaction to them. Remember:

Hold on to your dreams  
And stand tall  
Even when those around you  
Would force you to Crawl.

Most importantly, It is important to remember that in dealing with adversity, perhaps the four most important words that you can remember are these: "This, too, shall pass" Whatever it

is, however difficult it may appear, say to yourself “This, too, shall pass”.

In conclusion, a wrong attitude is any type of thinking that causes us to act in ways that hurt or isolate us from others. Its results cause unneeded stress for the people who holds on to it. And – even more importantly – this kind of attitude doesn’t lead to growth; it only fosters stagnation.

Without a doubt, the right attitude is the key to overcoming any problem which you may face in your personal or professional life. Remember, it is very important that even in the most difficult situations in life you must use your *personal* positive power which magnetically attracts all of the people in your personal world.... Count on It!



# 6 | Story

*The  
Expert*

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*“Weakness of attitude becomes  
weakness of character”*

- Albert Einstein

## The Expert

One of the stories I felt I must share with you in this book is the story of ‘THE EXPERT!’ which happened to me while I was serving as a Director General of one of highly reputed organization in Sharjah Government, which under my leadership and management achieved breakthrough performance by cutting costs and mistakes, enhanced productivity, led to greater market share, and eliminated the need for investment in a new projects. That’s why I used to enjoy being part of it every day.

The experiences I had from the story have stayed with me over the years and taught me something important about life and leadership.

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**Too Excited**

Our growth rate attracted almost every bank in the city to call on us to offer their financial services. We were over 1 billion dollars turn-over organization, our chairman was pleased. Probably so excited he wanted more money. So he thought if an expert were to join us, we could do wonders. So, he decided to transfer the expert to us. And thus, it began

Everything was running “just perfect”, all of a sudden an expert pops in from another organization, everything was turned upside down and the project went out of control!

Before I go on, let me assure you that each industry has its own unique set of problems and sources of stress, and each job carries its specific burdens and occasional nightmares!



“The Expert” story confirms that ..!

let's go for it.

### ***Changing Challenges to Opportunities***

Throughout my life, I was driven to win and succeed. I was often traveling, jet-lagged and exhausted. I had little time and energy left to give my family. The turning point was summer of June 2003, when a highly paid expert was transferred to our organization as an adviser to help us achieve sustainable productivity and performance improvement.

At first, I was perfectly happy. I welcomed him to our organization, gave him full support and went through the details about our business and organizational culture with him. I narrated the events that pulled the company from the brink of failure and my role in it. I further elaborated on the organization

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historical achievements, earning records and its overall progress. I did not neglect to mention increasingly grueling and erratic the business climate grows to be. I was open and fair with him.

### **Welcome Aboard**

An e-mail was sent from my executive office to all staff welcoming him and asking everyone to give him the support he needed to achieve his mission.

We paid him handsomely and placed great faith in him. For the first few weeks, the expert showed great interest in the business, whenever I asked him to do something he says, ‘okay okay’. He’d enthusiastically accept the job. He was a “workaholic”, who couldn’t stand weekends because he was away from work. He seemed like God’s gift to us!.

Everything appeared to be well until August 9, 2003. My busy day at work was interrupted by his behavior. Unfortunately, this behavior only lasted a month. His work attitude changed, tremendously. He was nit-pickety, choosing to obsess over the tiniest problems and blowing them out of proportions. I was called upon for the smallest, silliest problems that were presented like could truly cause a huge trouble for the organization. As a result, fingers were pointed, team morale suffered, tension simmered. Collaborative work was unproductive, every employee at every level, may it be a senior post or the most junior level, was frustrated.

I reported the situation to the chairman, who asked me to give the man more time, he was determined to show some faith to the expert to make a difference! The situation was

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alarming. My patience was growing thin. “I had to do something proactively and effectively. Otherwise, the ship was going down”. I started losing my temper but my reaction as a leader was critically important. There was pressure mounting from all side to make a change ...any change.

I was disappointed, but not discouraged. I took my car and drove around till one o'clock in the morning. Then I realized the reality of the situation. I drove home, got some sleep, and went to work the next day. I made the decision to call up the man and decided to have a very long face-to-face discussion with him. I asked him, in a nervous tone, “what’s going on here?” He looked at me and kept quiet. I told him straight forward that “It was extremely important to maintain a good working and personal relationship with you. You should

work for us instead of us working for you. I firmly believe that you should add value rather than just *police* the system”.

There was a moment of silence.

I explained, ‘It is also emphasized in the teachings of Holy Qur’an through the prohibition of spying. Allah, the Exalted, said: *“O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (As possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead Brother? Nay, ye would Abhor it.. But fear Allah: For Allah is Oft-Returning most Merciful.”* [Al-Hujurat : 12].

And one thing more people who don’t trust one another might resort to spying and counter-spying something which leads to the

waste relationships between the companions. Prophet Muhammad (Blessings and Peace be upon him) also said; *“A leader who is suspicious of his people will lead them to mischief.*

### **I Am Sorry**

He looked at me with a puzzled look on his face and said, “ I’m sorry .. I didn’t mean it !.. as a matter of fact, I’m just trying to *motivate* them to produce results and outstanding success. Sir, Mr. Chairman spoke to me. I did explain everything to him. I am willing to do whatever job you want me to do to support the organization to reach its best.” He replied.

Both of us fell silent. I broke the silence stating, “Well, You must stop this now?.. Don't rush too quick judgments about people on their assignments. Unfortunately, that kind of attitude doesn’t lead to growth; it only

fosters stagnation. It is difficult to initiate bridge-building when a relationship is *colored* by bias or by a long history of negative interaction. Don't be insincere; look for ways to be sincere. Use your scanner to look for attributes that will support positive contact."

He took one look at me and said, "Yes, indeed. Trust me, As long as I am here, you are going to get the best of me.. I am committed."

'One last thing, you have to learn to focus on our core values and the important things like trust, respect, integrity, and honoring our organization.' I said.

'You can count on me.' He replied!

One last thing, remember what the Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy, famously said:

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"everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself".

### **Everything is Gonna be All Right!**

My next course of action got things going in the right direction. It had a real impact on our business and stopped the hassle and frustration. I called up a meeting and invited most of the "key people" in the organization from first line management to the top executives and told them; We are not going to be distracted by the expert, we must increase the level of communication, collaboration, and respect among our managers and senior staff. We are going to focus on doing our job, exploiting our opportunities, solving our problems, reaching to be business excellence organization....God bless you all".



Things started to go back to normal. I was able to restore balance and guide our employees onto a more productive path. But, later, the expert couldn't help it, instead of building a new bridge, he put up walls. I tried to meet him halfway, but it was all in vain. This time he targeted me. this time he talked behind my back and misinterpreted my actions. He started speaking ill about me, back-stabbing and criticism in front of our chairman and attacked my effort to the rest of board of directors... dirty tricks, rumors and malicious gossip spread like wildfire across the organization and outside too!

When I first heard it, I could not believe that I started asking why is that? ...what 'bad' I did for him ?...Is this the man whom I was down-to-earth with, had my morning coffee with and

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shared our business progress with?...Our dreams! Why? ... What else could happen? How Am I going to deal with it? I was under significant pressure. I felt I had been “walked – on”. It was hell on earth.

I eventually asked myself, should I be writing about this matter to the chairman and the rest of the board members? I said no.. the timing wasn't right. Again, I have to treat it with more perspective, wisdom, and patience. Otherwise, he could use that pressure to his advantage!

### **Blame Game**

He criticized us on the following: *First*, He frequently complained that he was left out of important decisions. That bothered me because it was not at all my intention,

spending forty hours or more a week in an office, along with rush deadlines, heavy workloads, racing between appointments, and daily dilemmas can make running the business, a very stressful experience. I was not focused on keeping him up-to-date on *every* aspect of what was going on. Besides he wasn't assigned to look after the day to day activities and routine jobs.

The *second* criticism was if there was a problem, we swept it under the rug and moved on to the next project. That bothered me too because our reputation throughout the country is high and is evidenced by the increasing number of new clients plus, most significantly, we have the best project management system in town. We have been running successful projects for years. Our organization is considered and recognized as one of the High-

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Performance Organizations in the Middle East. In fact, recently, we have been appreciated by our chairman for saving about two million dollars on the newly completed inner harbor project. We were rewarded like super Bowl winners or Olympic gold medalists.

To put it simply, I created a standard of excellence and professionalism that is admired throughout the country.

The *third* criticism was that I am running the organization for fame and glory. That was another false statement as my TV and Radio interviews and press releases were part of our marketing and branding strategies which was approved by our chairman and the board of directors. It is obvious when you create

outperforming organization you become media focus.

He questioned my management! My competence was questioned. How come and people call me “Mister Achiever!”

This was extremely painful to me. I felt it was not an attack on my organization, it was a ferocious attack on my personal integrity.

He resisted my leadership. He was out to get me.. “That man will eat me alive!” I could not sleep that night. I couldn’t find peace, my mind restless, my heart disturbed, my efforts ignored. I had worked all my life to achieve what I was, where I stood. I wasn’t born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I started pretty much at the bottom and have worked my way to a position where I have been able to fulfill many of my ambitions.. Now everything was

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wiped out. All of my accomplishments were ignored. My mind would not let me have peace.

I couldn't wait, I picked up the phone, called him up and said, "You can't defeat me. You can't hold me back. I will overcome this situation soon. If God be for me, who dare be against me?" I didn't give him much chance to speak. I hung up the phone.

### **Don't be Sad**

I guess when you honor God with your life, keeping Him in the first place, He puts something on you called a commanded blessings. You attract good people, ideas, and influence. The following morning out of nowhere, I met one of my close colleague (a talented sales and marketing officer) He knew what was going on between me and the expert. He said "Rashid, forget it. Don't be stressed

and distracted by him. It will be *trash* in a couple of weeks from now. Remember you are looked up to when tough decisions need to be made. You are always there “In the eye of the storm” and remember Booker T. Washington quote “*One man cannot hold another man down in the ditch without remaining down in the ditch with him.*” You have nothing to fear. *God knows you're anointed. God is "the all-seeing One, He is protecting you, just accept the riches of His grace and stand in the cool shade of His loving arms. Be patient. Trust God's timing."*

“Thank you, It’s nice to have someone around that I can always count on”. I said to him.

I appreciated his empathy and his kindness. I was blessed to have a caring friend to lean on during this time of tremendous change and disappointment.

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## **Lights in My Thinking**

His words were like when you're in a room where one of the lightbulbs on the ceiling isn't working, but you don't realize how dark it is until someone changes the lightbulb and then you're like, whoa, it's so bright in here.

## **Jealousy and Bitter**

I realized that I would have to find a safe harbor for our organization .. and fast. I began analyzing the problem, jotting it to its root cause and realized the man was insecure. He couldn't handle someone's success, his jealousy wasn't one that blasted into the realm, rather it simmered within him, sickening his personality, feasting on his insecurity. It bled slowly, poisonously into the outer world showing its true colors long after you've met the man.



**Never Too Late!**

I have prayed, believed, and stood in faith. Things had shifted in my favor. What was meant to harm me, was now being used to my advantage by The Almighty?

After few months our chairman started realizing that “The Expert” is not meeting his and the rest of the board members expectations of bringing more revenue to the organization. He called him down to his office and said. “There are carrots and sticks here, you perform, or you’re gone, “What counts is what you deliver”. We don’t want lip service. Walk the talk.”

The Expert didn’t expect such statement from the chairman. He did not know what to say. He remained quite.

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“I’m not kidding! The rest of the board members are not happy with your performance too. You have to shape up.” Chairman continued.

That was the chairman’s strongest message to him. For the expert, it was the straw that broke the camel’s back. He was under too much pressure to produce short-term results. He was trying to protect himself due to his low performance.

Then it happened. Two months later, he was laid off. The rest, as they say, is history... What a quick end!

### **Keep Being Your Best**

Now, some of you may ask me; was this a life changing incident? Absolutely not. I hadn’t changed. I had the same value system after this matter. I have always been driven by my

values and timeless principles. I have a passion for winning and the will to win is the will to survive. I have had my ups and downs in life, but looking back, every time there was a wreck, there was a rescue.

Other people have probably made a determination as to which party is “wrong”. The easiest thing to do is to blame the other party. We know that he “should work more cooperatively”; He “should” be more supportive. But In leadership, a critical component in managing conflict is building diplomatic bridges to even your worst adversary. You cannot make another person like you, nor do you need to. As a great influential leader said, “*Be yourself but be that perfectly.*”

## **The Challenge**

Effective crisis leadership is composed of three things – communication, clarity of vision and values, and caring relationships. Leaders who develop, pay attention to and practice these qualities go a long way toward handling the human dimension of a crisis.

And last, but not least, we are reminded by the Holly Quran; *“Noor can goodness and Evil Be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: Then will be between whom And thee was hatred Become as it were They friend and intimate!”*. [Fussilat : 34].

With that kind of attitude, you can win. You’d better believe it.



# 7 | Story

*Emiratisation*

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*“To speak ill of others is a dishonest way of praising ourselves. Nothing is often a good thing to say, and always a clever thing to say”*

- Will Durant

## Emiratisation

In his book “self-matters” Dr. Phillip C. McGraw forced readers to explore one of the most challenging questions facing us all: *When you look in the mirror, who is hiding beneath that face?*

I may have never been able to answer the question, had I not experienced the following story. The memories are still as fresh as the day they were created. They’ve left a lasting impact. The story, “*Emiratisation*”, is my own. It happened to me when I was running a government owned organization. It is one of the stories which I will never forget in my life as it was one of the hardest *experiences* I have ever had!

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I was the young leader doing all I could do to help the young UAE Emirates to improve their skills and get proper training and qualifications to face future challenges. The problem was that everything I was doing was chosen to please other people by meeting or even exceeding their expectations while totally *ignoring* my own voice, needs, and passions. I was just like a candle burning herself to give light for others without noticing that time was flying.

### **Doing Good**

I am proud to say for more than ten years, I was aggressively running through the implementation of the *Emiratisation* policy, which was supported by the federal and local governments in the UAE. There was an urgent need to work hard to qualify nationals and enable them to gain the best skills in the



shortest time possible as UAE leadership has the vision to be among the best countries in the world. It is one of the most critical duties of the government, and indeed of all the institutions, to ensure that nationals are well qualified and can challenge tomorrow.

U.A.E leaders aim to see the country among the best in the world. To bring this vision to life, organizations have worked relentlessly to produce qualified nationals with impeccable skills in the shortest time possible. It is one of the most critical duties of the government and institutions to ensure U.A.E's future is in capable hands.

Being a part of one such organization for ten years, I worked hard towards the implementation of the "Emiratization" policy. I was

responsible for providing a supportive environment that stimulated creativity.

One of the government organizations I had worked for I was responsible for helping nurture an environment of creativity and support for locals; ensuring that learning and development efforts must prepare them to contribute to the organization and the larger society and to grow personally and professionally throughout their careers.

In that organization, there were two young locals whom I personally did the best I could to prepared them to hold senior positions and evolve their leadership. It took me a lot of time and efforts to meet that objective through a very well structured career development program I had personally coach and mentor them to unlock their potential. In less than three years they were promoted to

department heads responsible for many planning and strategic decisions. Thus enabling them to achieve greatness at a young age. I had spent most of my time and energy to guide them through a well-structured program. I pushed them to rise above their potential and they did. In less than three years, they were responsible for decisions and strategies many another just dream off. The pride I felt at the success of these two men was well-deserved.

It was the afternoon of August 4, 2003, when my superior called me up to see him in his office urgently. Upon my arrival I was told, I wasn't paying enough attention to the two gentlemen and not doing enough efforts to help them achieve their expectations, and I was dedicating most of my time and expending more of my energy to non-locals in the organization and for that reason they were

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just about to submit their final resignation to the authority and find “greener pastures” where they will feel needed and appreciated!”

Their decision spread quickly through the whole organization and created *hassle* environment and unpleasant situation among the staff. You know the old adage: *Employees share good experiences four times, and bad ones eight times!*

I reported to my chairman office the following morning. I was let in and greeted him with a big smile. Then I looked into his eyes. Without speaking a word, I felt speechless for some time. “Could they be wrong?” I asked. “I don’t know. You should have the answer.”, he said.

“Should I”, I exclaimed, “I’m extremely sorry to hear that from you now... are we living in

the “dog eat dog world?” I said with bit frustrated tone.

“Calm down Rashid. Why you are saying that?”

I smiled slightly and explained patiently, “I wasn’t expecting such a “childish” act from them to reach you so fast. You know my profile, I have been developing locals talent for more than ten years and I have been appreciated for helping them grow, learn, produce, and thrive. I was leading with love and care. I prioritized other's needs and expectations over my own passion and requirements. I chose to burn my today to light someone else's tomorrow.”

I was quiet for a while, then added with a strong voice, “But here is something I would like to share here; I am very active at work

and always create a positive energy which ignites people's mind to generate ideas and suggestions. I like things to be done "yesterday", and the two gentlemen are lazy fellows one asked to do things in fast track or urgent basis. So I am sure it is just jealousy from them.

"aha! I see" the chairman replied.

In this case, I feel there is something "fishy" going on. As they say; "A person who is sitting on the ground does not fall, and people do not kick a dead dog!"

Then I added: "I need to find out fast from them if you would allow me to call both of them to my office or yours and discuss it openly?"

"Calm down. It's all yours Rashid. Do that, don't forget to keep me updated. And

remember, people who fight fire with fire usually end up with ashes.... God bless you”.

‘Ameen, Thanks for the advice. But I know for sure that: *He who digs a hole for another may fall in himself*’, I shot back.

“Well said, Rashid”, he replied!

Without more words, I left his office. I had no idea what to do next. I was so angry.

### **What to Do Next**

I am a very sensitive person, I felt bad that day. “I can’t believe this is happening.” “There is no good on earth.” I said to myself. The problem walked out of the office and followed me home at night as an uninvited guest, I felt it was going to take over my family and my personal time. It was one of those situations when you can’t be sure what

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is happening is real. “I have to do something to stop this emotional problem.” I said to myself. My plan was ‘well, So be it. I will roll up my sleeve and dig myself out of this mess, I will stand firm against the devil, I’ll fight back, and I’ll fix them.”

### **What are You Saying**

The next day, just as the sun rose above the horizon, I went to my office, planned the day and decided to call both of them down to my office for a cup of coffee and a chat. I told them: “Folks, your criticism is not fair. You know how much I care about you. How much I’ve been doing to unlock your potential and improve your managerial and leadership skills to be among the future leaders who can create a difference and make a better tomorrow. I was personally coaching and mentoring you.



to bring the best out of you. You had the best of the best from me.”

“Sure, sure”, they replied together.

“Challenge me. I always praise you loudly, criticize you softly. I show you in meaningful ways that I put your needs ahead of mine”. This was such an amazing statement that they were struck speechless.

## **Jealousy**

To make a long story short, we had a long discussion about the issue and found out it wasn't “big stuff” they were talking about. It was only *Jealousy* which is there in all organizations. Tens of excuses were given to me during the discussion, none I was convinced of or sounded real. As Benjamin Franklin said, *“I have generally found that a*

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*man who is good at excuses is usually good at nothing else”.*

Indeed, I don't have a crystal ball why they did it to me, but one thing is for certain: You will have to face criticism in your life, which in its onslaught is like an *interminable* war. It shows no sign of ending. As long as you shine, give, produce, and have an effect upon others, then disapproval and condemnation will be your lot in life. For that reason, as long as you are from the *denizens* of earth, expect to be hurt, to be insulted, to be criticized, to be hated! The Holy Quran says: "*Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried?"*" What a wonderful statement.

So, remain firm and patient when facing their insults and criticism. If you are wounded by

their words and let them have an influence over you, you have realized their hopes – to make your life miserable and wretched. Remember the Chinese Proverb: *“Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps a singing bird will come”*.

So do good and forgive. It is stated in the Holy Quran: *“Who restrain anger, And pardon (all) men; - for Allah loves those Who do good”*. [Al-Imran : 134].

### **Keep Being Your Best!**

That is all of my story. If you are faced with a similar situation do not seek revenge. I would like to remind you about what Lawrence Appley said: *“Organizations are made up of all different kinds of people; their backgrounds vary; their convictions may be as wide apart as the poles; their ambitions and*

*motivations are individual; their drives, ideas, and thinking processes follow separate patterns. The manager has to accept these differences and use them to guide the group toward the attainment of common goals. He cannot crush them and mold them into a uniform pattern, but he can temper them, influence them, and convert the organization into a dynamic, hard-hitting unit that attains its objectives”.*



# 8 | Story

*I am not going  
to Loose my Peace*

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*“Speak when  
you are angry and  
you will make the best speech  
you will ever regret”*

- Ambrose Bierce

## **I am not going to loose My Peace**

“I’m not going to loose my peace... I won’t let her get the best out of me... I’m not even forty years old yet... life is too short to live stressfully. Life is fleeting. I need to live and love in the moment! The only time I have is today, I should live each day as my *signature* day. Forgiveness brings peace. Rage and anger bring nothing but more of the same.” Statements I made when I looked at myself in the mirror. Why did I say that?

Well, the story which I’ll be sharing with you soon will explain it all.

In my business life, I came across so many experiences and I have learned many lessons.

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A few I learned easily, and others I learned the hard way.... That is life. I totally agree with Aldous Huxley when he said; *“Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.”*

On an early Monday morning in late spring, I was sitting in my office having my coffee when my secretary rushed in with a letter in her hand addressed to me with confidentiality stamped on it. I opened it right away and found out it was the resignation of our senior HR officer... But I should first tell you something about this officer.

Linda was a young lady of good family. She decided to resign from her job suddenly, after 3 years of service. Indeed, I was surprised the way she resigned, she was performing well and her commitment to the job made herself somewhat of a ‘star’ in the organization in a



very short time. During the *exit* interview, I asked her the reasons behind the resignation. She said straightforwardly; “It’s personal.” Then after a short pause; “family reasons!”

“When you say personal reason, do you mean work related matters? I need more clarification. Would you?” I asked.

She rubbed her chin and looked the other way “I want to be a housewife and to be with my family! I just can't balance work and life”. She said.

Then started talking in a low and emotional way about how her family life been on the negative side because the long working hours she spends on her job.

I listened with empathy. I did my level best to help her but she insisted. I sympathized; I

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really did! I wrote her a nice letter wishing her the best in her life. The following lines are part of the letter which was sent to her.

Dear Linda,

It is with great regret and disappointment that I accept your resignation. I can understand your desire to return to family life at this time, but I want to express my personal and very warm thanks – as well as the appreciation of a grateful our staff – for the outstanding performance and excellent job you have been doing for the last 3 years.

Your reputation for professional thoughtfulness and personal integrity is indeed the base of the exceptional performance you exhibited.

In spite of your return to private life, you can call me at any time, should the need arise. Thank you for your service and good luck in your next endeavor.

My warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

Rashid Alleem  
Director General

I thought the story would end here but didn't. Read to find out more!

### ***I Need to See You***

After sending her the letter I left for a business trip. Our chairman took over the business during my leave. It happened that he came to look into few issues. While he was in his office the young lady, Linda, desperately wanted to see him for an urgent matter, he let

her in. “Yes, what can I do for you, Linda?”  
He said with a smile.

“You must have heard about my resignation?”  
She said.

“Yes, and I felt sorry for that... and I know how much efforts your boss tried to keep you, but you...?”

She interrupted him and said: “I spent three years and everything seems the same, no change at all”.

“....”

“Sir, Staff motivation and moral is going down!!” She added.

He looked her in the eye and asked, “What kind of an answer is that? That is unfair criticism at all”.

She paused for a moment, and answered, “yes, but what I mean... you can ask anyone around here”. Then she continued talking and talking.

He listened patiently to every detail, which didn't take much time. When she was finished, He responded; “Stop it. The first thing you need to realize, Linda, is that your judgment on us is wrong because unhappy people don't produce quality services, products, and profitability. Our growth rate has been maintained at 35% for the last 3 years. *None* of our competitors has achieved that target yet!”.

Linda continued to listen as if she been taken by surprise.

“Anyway Linda, whatever decision you made is yours. I wish you the best in your new endeavor”.

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She went to her office. The first “bad” thing she did was deleting all HR related files from her PC. When did her assistant ask her why she was doing that? She started bad-mouthing us and said “I made it and I break it now. I don’t want anybody to use it after me, I don’t care anymore. I don’t belong to this place anymore”.

### **Bitter or Better**

When the matter was reported to me I was angry at her. She never talked about employees, moral or other HR related matters she talked to the chairman about. My options were ‘bitter or better’. Then I knew I could choose to give up and put the pillow over my head, or I could fight back. But “the best fighter is never angry” as Lao Tzu said it nicely. Then I made sure that my decisions align with my faith, values, and timeless

principles. I asked myself, “What is the right thing to do?” Forgiveness, yes to forgive her. We are counseled to love others, forgive, be of service, and to act with humility and compassion. The Bible says, “*Forgive and you shall be forgiven*”. Then my first comment was: “oh, she is just being human”. I regarded the whole situation impersonally and look on Linda as a doctor looks at a sick patient. I remained calm, cool and steady because many times the worse in people will bring the worse out of us, so don’t ever fight fire with fire the only thing you can do in such cases is to pray for them, you can’t fit everybody in your path. Almighty Allah, the lord of the universe, is the only one who can change them and Almighty will never change them if they don’t change themselves as it stated in the holy Quran: “*Verily never Will Allah change the*

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*condition Of a people until they Change what is in themselves.” [Al Raad : 11].*

In the end, even if we disagree with each other, I believe that the way we treat each other is more important than the idea we hold true.

So, if you are in such situation don't be sad, you are not alone. We are all made to experience this in one way or another. So be more patient, rule over your emotions, life is too short to live stressed out when you lose peace you lose joy. God will fight the battle for you. Let God lead. He will guide you into all truth. Please do read this: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and learn not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall make your paths straight”*. -Proverbs 3:5-6



Remember, others have gone through this successfully when they listen to their own mind and heart. You can, too. “Yes, sometimes it’s not at all easy to say. That why you need to practice it and make sure it becomes a habit. Remind yourself that someday, your practice will pay off. It would be foolish for me to challenge you much further on this, but I’ve got, to be honest. Clearly, life should be about *gaining* allies, *not* picking up enemies. I really love what is written in the Holy Quran about forgiveness. *“Nor can goodness and evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: Then will he between whom And thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate!”* [ Fussilat : 34].

### **Turn it Around**

Finally, I want you to be in your *comfort* zone when the difficult times come. I want you to

see the bigger picture. If you keep the weaknesses of others in your mind, they will soon become a part of you. I want you to be aware of the situation surrounding you and not just what is in front of you at the moment. When something goes wrong, when your mind begins to wander down the path of worry, stop and ask yourself; is this truly important? Is it life-threatening? No? Then relax. Sit back and have fun. You can't have a better tomorrow if you are thinking about yesterday all the time.



## One last Story

We all face times when we are overworked and overwhelmed. For many, this is a temporary condition that improves over time. For others, the situation continues, often resulting in burnout and creating a sense of hopelessness. With that in mind, I want you to know that this book was written for you, regardless of what you're going through. My big goal is that you feel inspired and hopeful after reading the book.

For those who have gone through big or painful stuff in their lives, I would like to say "*Never let the sun set on your anger*". At the end of every day, be willing to discuss and resolve your conflicts or determine in your own mind to forgive, forget, and let it go."

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Study this small story; hope that makes a BIG change in you.

A Professor began his class by holding up a glass with some water in it. He held it up for all to see and asked the students, 'How much do you think this glass weighs?'

'50gms!'.... '100gms!' ..... '125gms'.....the Students answered.

'I really don't know unless I weigh it,' said the Professor, 'but, my question is: What would happen if I held it up like this for a few minutes?'

'Nothing' the students said.

'Ok, what would happen if I held it up like this for an hour?' the professor asked.

'Your arm would begin to ache' said one of the students.

'You're right, now what would happen if I held it for a day?'

'Your arm could go numb, you might have ever muscle stress, Paralysis, and have to go to the hospital for sure!' Ventured another student and all the students laughed.

'Very good. But during all this, did the weight of the glass change?' asked the professor. 'No'

'Then what caused the arm ache and the muscle stress?'

The students were puzzled. 'Put the glass down!' said one of the students. 'Exactly!' said the professor.' Life's problems are something like this. Hold it for a few minutes in your head and they seem OK. Think of them for a long time and they begin to ache. Hold it even longer and they begin to paralyze you. You

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will not be able to do anything. It's important to think of the challenges (problems) in your life, but **EVEN MORE IMPORTANT** to 'put them down' at the end of every day before you go to sleep. That way, you are not stressed, you wake up every day fresh, strong, and can handle any issue, any challenge that comes your way!"

The more we appreciate life and experience joy, the better able we are to balance the pain and keep things in perspective.

"Failing is never the problem. You have to experience failure to know what success is. "



## Your Mission

*"Until you spread your wings....  
you'll never know how high you can fly."*

-Anonymous

Dear Valued Reader:

Did you know that a falcon knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks? The falcon will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the falcon is soaring above it.

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The falcon does *not* escape the storm. It simply *uses* the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm. Therein, when the storms of life come upon you – and all of us will experience them one way or another – you can rise above them just like the falcon did.

Usually, storms come subtly, suddenly and surprisingly – without warning but they do not have to overcome you. By reading “*Is Success a Sin?*” book repeatedly you will learn something new and different each time, thinking of this book as a good friend or a comfortable resource that has more to share as you read between the lines and experience new situations.



Remember, what I said earlier successful people don't wait for disasters to occur and then blame something or someone else for their problems.

Good luck and good journey!



## About the Author

DR. RASHID ALLEEM IS WIDELY known as a visionary and thought leader in the business, socio-economic, academic and cultural fields. Known for his strategic thinking, he is respected by peers as a man with qualities of mind and heart.

Dr. Alleem dons many hats and hones various skills and passions. He is currently Chairman of Sharjah Electricity & Water Authority – UAE. He served for over a decade as Director General, Department of Seaports and Customs and Sharjah Free Zones Authority. He was the driving force in transforming the zones into a strategic commerce hub empowering thousands of businesses in the region, thereby contributing to the development of the UAE

economy. He has been instrumental in bringing on board over 12,000 companies from across 157 nations and attracting a whopping \$40 billion in FDI.

Dr. Alleem's leadership has helped create business excellence on other fronts as well. His participation as Vice Chairman of World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, as well as other organizations such as Sharjah Charity International, Sharjah Medical Zone, German Emarati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce and World Trade Development Council in Hong Kong, has seen his contribution enrich the business ecosystem in a noteworthy manner.

An honorary that visits faculties in numerous local and international universities, addressing almost 15,000 people a year, Dr. Alleem truly believes that excellence can only be achieved

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through sustainability by aligning commercial, social and environmental objectives.

A prolific writer both in English and Arabic, Dr. Rashid Alleem is the author of several books on management and leadership. His recent book *My Green Journey in Hamriyah*, a candid account of his endeavours in improving the environment and distributing his green message not only to entrepreneurs, but also organizations worldwide, has been well received. The book has been praised for its professional and practical approach on many knowledge platforms. Another book he authored, which is sought after in some circles, is *My Leadership Secrets*, written in English and translated into Arabic and German. He frequently addresses diverse audiences on the development of human

capital and socially responsible business empowerment initiatives.

In 2001, he founded Alleem Knowledge Center, a non-profit organization, which is a testament to his numerous initiatives and relentless efforts to promote leadership potential and to enrich the tenets of knowledge sharing.

When the financial meltdown happened in September 2008, resulting in the crash of the global economy, Dr. Alleem took up the cudgels and went about creating fresh benchmarks for the industry in an effort to mentor and prepare the industry captains to withstand crisis. Alleem Knowledge Center chalked out an elaborate agenda for organising various events under the banner – Alleem Business Congress – and addressed various key issues through this unique forum.

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Alleem Business Congress has set lofty benchmarks against the best international practices. Alleem Business Congress provides a wide platform where business leaders meet and work together to address survival strategies as well as the economic, social and environmental challenges of sustainable development by deliberating on Energy and Water, Leadership & Management, Project Management, Sustainable Development & Inclusive Growth and Marketing & Branding.

A commentator par excellence, his contributions on benchmarking overall excellence are much sought after in local and international publications. His thought-provoking articles have been the topic of discussion in various socio-economic events at national and international platforms. A popular persona with the local and overseas

media, Dr. Alleem's interview with, the BBC World English Channel for its Middle East Business Report segment, which is broadcast to an international audience, created a huge response from home and abroad. Recently, he was interviewed by Deutsche Welle (DW) a German international broadcaster, for the 'Made in German Report'.

Thanks to his leadership experience gained over two decades in the international business arena, Dr. Alleem is today acknowledged as a 'Change Leader' who strives relentlessly to usher in a new business ecosystem.

Dr. Alleem earned a Ph.D. from the University of Salford, Manchester, UK, and received an honorary Ph.D from Atlantic International University (USA) in recognition of his achievements in the socio-economic fields. With honorary doctorates from Somalia

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University for Humanitarian Services, and American Global International University in the US for his global business contributions and numerous academic achievements, Dr. Alleem is the embodiment of lifelong learning and harnessing intellectual capital.

Testament to his efforts are the various accolades he has received, including an Achievement Award by the League of Arab States in 2007, Gold Medal from the Mayor of Cannes for environmental efforts 2007, Excellence in Leadership award from ASSOCHAM in India 2008, and Celebrity of the Year by Khaleej Times newspaper.

As a tribute to Dr. Alleem's administrative acumen, The Leading European Architects Forum (LEAF) award 2008 honoured Hamriyah Free Zone for its support and for recognizing best practices and promoting



excellence. He's been endorsed as a Maritime Personality for 2009 by Marine Biz TV and the bagged Global Champion of Climate Change 2011 award.

Dr. Alleem has been named the Global Champion of Climate Change at the opening of the 'Youth & Climate Change' conference organized by Youth Exnora International at the prestigious IIT Madras campus, in India.

Acclaimed for his unique leadership qualities, Dr. Alleem has been conferred with the Middle East Business Leaders Awards 2012 as a tribute to his acumen in Training & Human Capital Development. He has also been decorated with the Jewels of Muslim World Award 2012 in Jakarta in recognition of his achievements as one of the top nine movers of Islamic economics. He was bestowed with the honour of Environmentalist of the Year 2012

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by the Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in recognition of his contributions towards a sustainable environment.

Dr. Alleem was recognized as one among the 100 UAE nationals who have contributed immensely to the ‘happiness’ of the UAE, on the eve of the United Nations’ ‘International Day of Happiness’ 2013.

In 2013, he was conferred with the ‘Certificate of Knight Award’ for his outstanding contribution in the field of ‘Leadership & Development’ by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and also bestowed with the Arab Organization Award for Social Responsibility from the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility in recognition of his CSR initiatives in Hamriyah Free Zone.

Dr. Alleem has also been decorated with the coveted '2013 Extraordinary Human' Award by the United Nations World Peace Organization in Washington, United States, on the occasion of the international day of people with disability.

In early 2014, Dr. Alleem was conferred with an 'Award of Excellence' by Daimler-Mercedes Benz Germany for his efforts in protecting the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of Mercedes Benz in the Emirate of Sharjah, UAE. Later in May, Dr. Alleem received the prestigious 'Global Economic Development Leadership Award' in Cochin, India.

In a rare tribute to the wisdom reflected in 'Management in the whole of the Arab World', Dr. Alleem was honoured with the

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‘Golden Arrow Award’ on 18th February 2014 in Dubai. On 3rd April, 2014, he was recognized as ‘Goodwill Ambassador for Peace, Care and Relief in GCC Countries, Middle East and North Africa’ by the International Organization for Peace, Care and Relief and Member of the Economic and Social Council of The United Nations. Many people also recognized him as the ‘Green Ambassador of the UAE’.

Dr. Rashid was recognized as “THE KNOWLEDGE AMBASSADOR OF UAE 2015” by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Dr. Alleem was honored with “Friend of Singapore Sustainability Award 2017” by government of Singapore, and “Golden Friend

of India Award 2017” by Indian Business and Professional Council on the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India.

Dr. Alleem was selected as one of the “Best Government CEOs 2016” in the Middle East by Middle East Excellence Awards Institute.

Dr. Alleem was honored with “Friend of Singapore Sustainability Award 2017” by government of Singapore, and “Golden Friend of India Award 2017” by Indian Business and Professional Council on the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India.

New York Institute of Technology, New York USA in collaboration with Multinational Business Academy recognized HE Dr. Rashid Alleem as “Exemplary Leader” in their International Seminar on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2017 in Dubai UAE. He is also titled “GCC Happiness

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& Peace Ambassador” by Voice of Kerala (VOK) at their event on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

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