

Who is Better Off?

Once in a management development program a very interesting point cropped up, who is better off? One who knows all, or the one who does not know all?

The first response of the class was the one who knows all. But soon it was realized the statement is an utopian one. The person who believes he knows all, lives in a fool's paradise. Is the one who "does not know all" better off? No, he would be stupid. Perhaps the person who does not know all, is better off only if he also realizes that he does know all, as he would be aware of his serious limitations and would try to overcome the deficiency whenever a particular body of knowledge is required. What is then important is that the person should know a person(s) who know more than him, if not the experts in the field.

This brings to the fore an important resource that needs to be acquired developed or cultivated; that of networking with experts in various fields in which one's job responsibilities may need specialised knowledge. In business/ management we need expert knowledge from different fields, of varying depth, often all of a sudden (not necessarily in crisis situation).

Developing this network resource, consciously and proactively, becomes an important exercise for professional and non-professional managers alike. The advantage it gives is that one doesn't to learn all the subjects as expert, for (hopefully) using it in the future, but know enough to ask relevant questions and engage with expert in the network resource, to get as much information as needed when required. Incidentally, the expert also have their professional group to solicit more precise and accurate information in as much details as needed.

The network resource is not just having list of name and telephone numbers of experts, but a close relationship with people who are responsive persons as friends. Once you have developed it, you are relieved of acquiring all the knowledge and become "know all". At the same time you will know enough to discharge duties meaning fully, promptly and efficiently.