

# Management Skills of Thiruvalluvar

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## Abstract

*Thirukkural is one of the oldest books in the Tamil language. Thiruvalluvar had written Thirukkural about 3000 years ago. Thirukkural consists of 133 chapters. Each chapter consists of 10 couplets. A couplet is a one and half-line verse. Hence there are 1330 couplets. In this research paper a few couplets are shown to get glimpses of the Management Skills of Thiruvalluvar. These couplets tell us how Thiruvalluvar had thought about today's management techniques.*

**Keywords:** *Thirukkural, Management Skills, Tamil language*

**Paper Type:** *Perspective Essay*

One of the oldest languages in the world is *Tamil*. Ancient *Tamil* language has an infinite number of books of poems, prose and drama. *Thirukkural* is an ancient book written by Thiruvalluvar. It is a revered and sacred book for Tamilians. This book tells the way of good living for humans. The principles laid down in the *Thirukkural* stand the test for any period of time. *Thirukkural* was written by Thiruvalluvar about 3000 years ago. There are 133 chapters and each chapter consisting of 10 couplets. A couplet is a one-and half line verse. In this research paper a few couplets are analysed to get today's management aspects from Thiruvalluvar.

## Discipline in Management

In an organization or in any society discipline means following the rules, obeying the laws and going through the systems and procedures laid down by the organization or the society. The main goals of an organization are to increase the output, increase the profit and to look into the welfare of its constituents. To achieve these goals discipline is one of the major tools. If there is a lack of discipline, the parent body can take corrective measures to implement discipline. For an organization to grow big, each individual has to maintain discipline.

Thiruvalluvar has kept “discipline” at the highest peak.

In the 14th Chapter ஒழுக்கமுடைமை (Being disciplined), the 131st couplet says:

ஒழுக்கம் விழுப்பந் தரலான் ஒழுக்கம்

உயிரினும் ஒம்பப் படும்.

Uzhukkam Vizhuppan tharalan uzhukkam

uyrinnum ompap padum.

**Meaning**

Discipline for a person is a special character. Hence discipline has to be preserved much more than life.

**Explanation**

Discipline makes a man special. A person with discipline is always kept very high in the society or in an organization. Hence for a person, discipline should be guarded much more than his life. This means one cannot, under any circumstances, compromise in being disciplined. Thiruvalluvar has stressed the point that life is secondary to being disciplined.

**Patience in Management**

Patience is an ability to tolerate waiting, being upset or frustration. In an organization, to get an output one has to wait patiently. When the right time comes, actions have to be taken to get the output. Being patient is one of the major qualities for individuals in management. After waiting for a long period, if we miss the right time to strike we may not get the desired output. Again one has to wait to reach the stage. Being patient is one of the qualities needed to achieve results.

Thiruvalluvar has clearly explained about being patient and the right time to strike.

In the 49th Chapter *காலமறிதல்* (**Know the right time to act**), the 490th couplet is as follows:

கொக்கொக்க கூம்பும் பருவத்து மற்றதன்

குத்தொக்க சீர்த்த இடத்து.

Kokkokka kumbum paruvathu mattrathan

kuthakka seertha Idathu.

**Meaning**

The crane always stands on the pond patiently observing the water in the pond. At the ripening time, the crane dips its beak and swallows its prey (fish). In the same way the person has to wait patiently to execute his plan.

**Explanation**

One has to wait patiently to implement and execute the plan like the crane in the pond.

**Right Person in the Management**

A company flourishes because of its employees. If the right employees are in the right positions then the job is done. Hence the manager's job is to select the right candidates. The caliber of the manager can be measured from the employees who are working under him. Wrong recruitment can even ruin the company. The management has to remove such employees, who are weeds in the company. Management has to look into the candidate's experience, past performances and the behaviour. If the candidate doesn't work well with the rest of the employees, the production will be affected.

Thiruvalluvar has said the following 517th couplet in the 52nd Chapter தெரிந்துவினையாடல் (Knowing and taking action) about 3000 years ago as,

இதனை இதனால் இவன்முடிக்கும் என்றாய்ந்து  
அதனை அவன்கண் விடல்.  
Idhanai lthanal ivanmudikkum yenrarainthu  
athanai avankan vedal.

### Meaning

The King (Manager) has to study, research, analyze and find out whether this person is really capable of doing the job. If so the King (Manager) can handover the job to this person.

### Explanation

Thiruvalluvar has clearly said that the decision maker has to make a right choice for the right job so that the decision maker is free to look into his other activities. In ancient Tamil civilization the decision maker could have been a king. In today's management terminology the decision maker is the Manager.

### Recruitment in the Organization

Recruitment and selection of candidates are very important activities of management. The management should see the vacancies of the firm. They should look for the essential qualifications and the needed skills of the candidates for their vacancies in the firm. The production, the output, the profit are the work of their employees. Hence at the basic level the right person has to be employed. The procedures and techniques that are followed to select the eligible candidates vary from post to post and from organization to organization. Delaying the employment may decrease the production or making the employment well in advance may cause a lot of expenditure for the firm. Hence the employment has to be on the right time.

Tiruvalluvar in his 516th couplet in the 52nd Chapter தெரிந்துவினையாடல் (Knowing and taking action) said that,

செய்வானை நாடி வினைநாடிக் காலத்தோடு  
எய்து உணர்ந்து செயல்.  
Seivanai nadi vinainadi kalathodu  
yaithu unarnthu seyal.

### Meaning

The King (Manager) has to study the person to be employed; he has to study the job to be given to the person; if the person is suitable for the job then the job has to be handed over to him at the right time.

### Explanation

Thiruvalluvar has referred to the time of employment. The King (Manager) should make a detailed study of the person regarding the capability of him doing this job. The capability is nothing but the essential qualifications and skills pertaining to the job on hand. The King (Manager) should also study about the job to be performed. The job and the man have to be analyzed. If the person is capable for the job, then the king has to employ the person at the right time.

## Payment for the Employees

A good organization should be a good pay master. Today's Management gives various benefits to its employees. The benefits include

- (i) Health insurance
- (ii) Vacation
- (iii) Over-time benefits
- (iv) Casual leave
- (v) Medical leave
- (vi) Children's education
- (vii) Leave for the death of relatives
- (viii) Accident benefits
- (ix) Personal loans
- (x) Vehicle loans
- (xi) Retirement benefits
- (xii) Pension
- (xiii) Paying the taxes for the employees.

The employees should be given reasonable benefits. If the employees are satisfied with their benefits, then

- (i) They will not be absent for the work.
- (ii) They will think twice before quitting the job
- (iii) They will have a very high commitment towards the output or the production of the company
- (iv) There will be more production
- (v) They will have self-satisfaction

This is how today's management show their gratitude towards their employees.

Tiruvalluvar in his 520th couplet in the 52nd Chapter தெரிந்துவினையாடல் (Knowing and taking action) said,

நாடோறும் நாடுக மன்னன் வினைசெய்வான்  
கோடாமை கோடா துலகு.  
Nadorum nadhuga mannan venaiseivan  
Kodamai kodathu ulaghu.

**Meaning**

As long as there are persons who are doing their work dutifully, the world goes on its rightful way. The King should take care of such dedicated persons daily.

**Explanation**

Thiruvalluvar has stressed the point that the persons (employees) who are sincerely working should be taken care of daily by the King (Manager). The “taken care of daily” is today's emoluments, benefits and facilities for the employees. The “world goes on its rightful way” is the profit, output, production of the management.

**Employment for the skilled and talented in Management**

The management of today devices a lot of parameters to select the suitable employees for the organization. The Human Resources Department of the management is the key department for the recruitment of people. There may be a lot of applications with necessary qualifications, skills and experiences for the post advertised. It becomes a tough task to recruit them. The help of computers and customised software for recruitment are used. The most important aspect in recruitment is that the jobs should not be given to the persons who are familiar to the department or known to the management. Only the talented should be given the job.

Tiruvalluvar in his 515th couplet in the 52nd Chapter தெரிந்துவினையாடல் (Knowing and taking action) said,

அறிந்தாற்றிச் செய்கிற்பாற்கு அல்லால் வினைதான்  
சிறந்தானென்று ஏவற்பாற் றன்று.  
Arinthatrich seikhitpatkku allal vinaithan  
siranthanenru avt pat tranru.

**Meaning**

The job has to be given to the person who is skilled and who can face all the difficulties which come in the way of completing the job. The job should not be given to the person simply because he is affectionate towards others or known to the King.

**Explanation**

Thiruvalluvar has made it clear that the King (Manager) should not give the job to the persons known to him, or to the persons who are pious or to the persons who are good to others. Thiruvalluvar has stressed the point that it has to be given to the persons who are fit enough to complete the job in spite of all odds.

**Conclusion**

Thiruvalluvar is a poet born 3000 years before. Archeologists and historians are yet to ascertain the exact period of Thiruvalluvar. The couplets written by Thiruvalluvar stand good for any period of time. A few couplets above, just give the glimpses of the management techniques of the great poet. There are 1330 couplets giving ways for a perfect living for any generation.

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