

When one's hands get dirty - The mind remains clean!!

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One of Mr. Ratan N Tata's (RNT) first assignments was the stewardship of the ailing electronics company in the Tata portfolio - Nelco. Story goes that a team of senior managers from Nelco was driving to Nasik along with RNT. Halfway into the journey, the car had a flat tyre, and as the driver pulled up, the occupants - including Mr. Tata - got off for a comfort break, leaving the driver to replace the tyre. Some of the managers welcomed the forced break, as it allowed them a much-needed chance to light up a cigarette. Some used the opportunity to stretch, and smile, and share a joke. And then, one of them suddenly noticed that Mr. Tata was not to be seen, and wondered aloud where Ratan Tata might have vanished! Was he behind some bush? Had he wandered off inside the roadside dhaba for a quick cup of tea? Or was he mingling with some passer-bys, listening to their stories? None of these, in fact, while his colleagues were taking a break, Ratan Tata was busy helping the driver change tyres. Sleeves rolled up, tie swatted away over the shoulder, the hands expertly working the jack and the spanner, bouncing the spare tyre to check if the tyre pressure was ok. Droplets of sweat on the brow, and a smile on the face. At that moment, the managers accompanying Ratan Tata got a master class in Leadership they haven't forgotten. And that's a moment that the driver of that car probably hasn't forgotten either!

Though Process to start: · When was the last time I rolled up my sleeves to do a task much below my hierarchy? ·

Do I wait for the big opportunity to showcase my leadership? ·

Is that big opportunity ever going to come? ·

Am I trying to manage upwards so much that I've lost the feel of the field? Ideas for action: ·

Humility is the essence of success. Be humble and even teach your children to be so. ·

To reach the top and remain there, always start from the bottom, else your days at the Top will not last long.

· Practice leadership in small things instead of waiting for the big crisis or a major Product launch.

· Seek to find opportunities to lead in everyday moments. ·

· Build your leadership skills one baby step at a time. ·

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