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**LEADER WITH GOLDEN HEART .....SRI CA. A. RAGHAVENDRA RAO (A CASE STUDY)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Srinivas group of colleges has come into being from a humble beginning in 1988, into a chain of institutions due to its visionary founder Sri CA A Raghavendra Rao. Today it spreads over 18 colleges with 70 courses and over 12000 students generating livelihood to 3500 employees and their families. His leadership qualities and values are distinct. He is wired like business people but bottom line oriented and extraordinarily committed to results. The steep ascend from humble person to an accomplished connoisseur speaks of his leadership style which could be emulated for young business aspirants. His vision for future is reflected in transforming society through education and human service.*

*Key Words: Leadership Style, Leadership Values, Transforming society, Education, Human service, committed to results*

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**“Leadership is all about results” - Peter Drucker**

***The true awakening of the nation lies in harnessing the potentials of the youth***

**Sri CA. A. Raghavendra Rao**

Leaders have vision. They share a dream and direction that other people want to share and follow. The leadership vision goes beyond written organizational mission statement and vision statement. The vision of leadership permeates the workplace and is manifested in the actions, beliefs, values and goals of organization's leaders.

**THE ORGANIZATION**

A Shama Rao Foundation was specifically established to impart quality and sustainable education to all. This foundation was born out of the belief of Shri A. Shama Rao, that education is the engine to transform society. The "Srinivas Group of Colleges" is one such venture that is sponsored by the A. Shama Rao Foundation. Propelled by the motto 'samagra gnana' the group of colleges aims to conquer all realms of knowledge in its diversity and totality.

Excellence is the hallmark of Srinivas group of colleges. Excellence, which will deliver professional manpower to the industry and the nation at large. The Group has constantly strived to provide the best of the faculty members and state-of-the art facilities. The students are encouraged and supported not only to excel in academics, but also to develop their personality through co-curricular, extra curricular activities and other extension activities.

**THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**

On the west coast of India between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea is a beautiful city Mangalore which today is very cosmopolitan in outlook. A sea of modernity welcomes a visitor to this ancient temple town which has grown and today is proud to have a diversity of cultures. Ancient places of worship, banks, hospitals, hotels, industries and educational institutions dot this magnificent landscape. Situated in this glorious place, Srinivas group of colleges under A. Shama Rao Foundation, endeavor to develop a centre of excellence, imparting quality education, to generate competence and skill to meet the scientific, technological, managerial and socio economic challenges. The Foundation is now in its bi-decennial milestone serving mankind, manages a plethora of institutes and other social service organizations. More than 20 educational institutions are competing and thriving in a radius of 10 sq meters

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### **EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

**Model the Way :** Leaders establish principles concerning the way people (constituents, peers, colleagues, and customers alike) should be treated and the way goals should be pursued. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because the prospect of complex change can overwhelm people and stifle action, they set interim goals so that people can achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives. They unravel bureaucracy when it impedes action; they put up signposts when people are unsure of where to go or how to get there; and they create opportunities for victory.

**Inspire a Shared Vision :** Leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Through their magnetism and quiet persuasion, leaders enlist others in their dreams. They breathe life into their visions and get people to see exciting possibilities for the future.

**Challenge the Process:** Leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. And because leaders know that risk taking involves mistakes and failures, they accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities.

**Enable Others to Act:** Leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Leaders understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.

**Encourage the Heart:** Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes.

These leadership qualities excel Sri CA. A. Ragavendra Rao.

### **ROLE OF LEADERSHIP**

Mr. Raghavendra Rao was born on 16th October, 1937, to Late A. Shama Rao, (Retd, Headmaster, BEM Higher Secondary P.U. College, Carstreet, Mangalore) and Mrs. A. Indiramma at Benagal, Pejamangore Village, Udipi. He completed his elementary education and further schooling at Innanje. After securing graduation in commerce in M.G.M. College in Udipi, he pursued his higher education in Chartered Accountancy. Reaching the present position he holds has not been easy and has involved a lot of hard work and commitment.

Sri A. Raghavendra Rao started practicing Chartered Accountancy with one staff in his office in 1965, he has now 75 employees working under him in the firm and having 7 branches in other cities. In 1979, he contested for the South India Regional Council of Institute of Chartered Accountant in Chennai and won the election during his four years of time. In the council, he served as a Chairman of the India regional Chartered Accountant Students Association at Chennai and also as secretary of S.I. R.C for sometime. During this time, he was the taxation committee Chairman of the SIRC and conducted regional taxation seminars at Mangalore. During the year 1980, he planned and set up a vegetarian hotel in Mangalore, and named it as "Hotel Srinivas". In 1984, the Classification Committee of the Tourism Ministry of India inspected the hotel and classified it as a 3 Star Hotel. It is the first pure vegetarian hotel to be classified so in Karnataka.

During his service, Mr. Raghavendra Rao has been privileged to meet several top leaders of the country as well as top officials and discuss with them, some of the problems about the development of the region. In the year 1988, he set up a Trust by name "A. Shama Rao Foundation" supported and encouraged by the then Vice Chancellor of Mangalore University and under his able guidance, he set up his first Professional Degree College in Hotel Management namely the "Srinivas College of Hotel Management" in August 1988. The strength of the college was only seven in the beginning and it was affiliated under the B.H.M degree discipline by the Mangalore University. Second year, the strength became 11 and the number of students went on increasing every year until it became 100 students in two years. In 1993, he set up the Srinivas Physiotherapy College. It is affiliated to Rajeev Gandhi University for its quality teaching with Post graduate teachers and a research centre. After that, he went on setting up new degree colleges in various fields of education. Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (MBA/MCA), Srinivas College of P.G. Management Studies(BCA/BBM/MSW), Srinivas College of Pharmacy (D.Pharm, B.Pharm, M.Pharm, Pharma.D & Ph.D.), Srinivas Institute of Nursing Sciences (B.Sc.N/M.Sc.N), A. Shama Rao Nursing School(GNM), Srinivas College of Education (B.Ed.), Srinivas Institute of Technology (BE/B.ARCH/M.TECH/MBA/ MCA/Ph.D.), Srinivas Pre-University College (PUC Science & Commerce), Vijayalakshmi Institute of Hospitality Sciences (B.Sc. (HS)/B.Sc.(ID)), Srinivas School

of Business (PGDM), Srinivas School of Engineering (B.E., M.Tech.), Srinivas School of Management (MBA) Srinivas Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Center (MBBS/MD/MS), Srinivas Institute of Dental Sciences(BDS/MDS). With a penchant for humanitarian services, he has also established A. Raghavendra Rao Charitable Trust, Adka Shama Rao & A. Indiramma Charitable Trust, Vijayalakshmi Education Trust, Srinivas Management Academy for Research & Training Trust (SMART Trust), Srinivas Institute of Rural Reconstruction Agency(SIRRA) to offer charitable services and relief to the needy and deserving. Today the group has 18 colleges, with 70 courses and over 12,000 students. More than 3,500 employees work in the Srinivas Family.

Recognitions followed achievements, starting from advisory committee member to vice president, president and secretary of Canara chamber of Commerce & Industry until he was merited outstanding manager award by Mangalore Management Association. He was member of the Senate of Mangalore University for two terms from 1985 - 88 and 1995-98. This apart he has bagged innumerable awards and positions which distinguishes him from men of his feather. He was conferred 'Sri Krishnanugraha Award' from Sri Sheeroor Mutt, Udupi (1995) and Sri Kaniyoor mutt, Udupi (1998) and Lokashastraseva praveena award in 1999. He is the recipient of district level Rajyotsava award of Govt. of Karnataka (2004), Viprajana Award (2006) and Chitrabharathi award for the contribution in the field of education in 2006.

**THE SUCCESS STRATEGY**

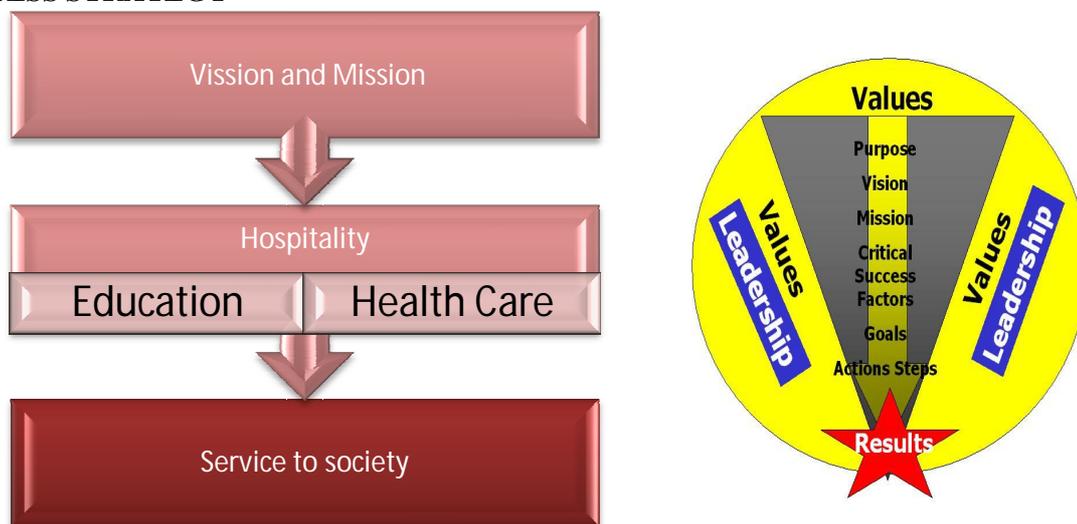


Fig 1: Transforming Society through result oriented leadership model

The Model developed clearly depicts the path taken by the visionary in transforming the society by result oriented leadership values

**Vision**

Transforming Society through Education, Hospitality and healthcare services by setting up institutions in dynamic equilibrium with its social, ecological and economic environment striving continuously for excellence in education, research and technological service to the nation.

**Mission**

To provide knowledge based technological education to the students and train them as a competent professional manpower with ethical values to fulfill the needs of the society and industry by implementing the State-of-the Art education including technological innovation.

The Srinivas group has three core areas of operation .Hotel Srinivas in the Hospitality sector which is even today known for its vegetarian cuisine. Provides ample employment opportunity and also mouth watering delicacies in the town of Mangalore.

The group has 18 colleges with 70 courses and over 12000 students. This group houses a diverse set of students from all over the country and abroad .Quality remains the hallmark of the group.

A feather in the cap was added to the group by diversifying into a medical and dental college with respective hospitals. Health care with latest technology and affordable price has come as a god’s gift to the people in the surrounding area with the establishment of these hospitals.

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## **LEADERSHIP VALUES OF SRI CA. A. RAGAVENDRA RAO**

### **Visionary**

He has a vision - a picture of the future - of where he wants to take the Srinivas Group. He has improved both the quality and acceptance of the vision by partnering with peers, executive team, key employees throughout the group.

### **Inspirator**

He inspires everyone in the Group to accomplish his vision. Employees are passionate about what they do. This inspiration extends to customers, students, suppliers, and all other stakeholders. He is a charismatic and works by setting example. He demonstrates his passion for the vision through every word and action. According to him "Rest is nothing but change of work"

### **Strategist**

He is a strategic leader .Strategic leaders are clear and directly face the strengths and weaknesses of their own, as well as their external opportunities and threats. They think in terms of leverage - fishing where the big fish are and partnering to gain market advantage.

### **Tactical**

He is wired like business people but bottom-line oriented and extraordinarily committed to results. Good leaders assess what they set out to do before launching new initiatives.

### **Focused**

Mr Ragavendra Rao believes that actions can be measured through results. He thrives on facts, figures, numbers and data. Being a CA he has strong financial talent.

### **Persuasive**

He motivates by persuasion rather than supervision. He encourages students to make the best use of student life in the campus, and continuously motivates the teaching staff to keep themselves updated. The key here is the leader speaking from his heart.

### **Likeable**

He is people-centric. He recognizes that interpersonal skills are paramount. He displays high degree of emotional intelligence, and thrives on finesse and likeability.

### **Decisive**

Sri CA. A. Ragavendra Rao can make decisions quickly -- often with incomplete data yet making the correct judgment. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing."

Rarely is a leader able to get 100 percent of the information needed for a decision. Typically it is "60 percent and go" or "80 percent and go."

### **Ethical**

He is direct and straightforward in performance expectations and accountability. Being direct and truthful can be difficult but good leaders know it's hard to beat the truth.

### **Receptive**

He is open to feedback and dedicated to lifelong learning seeking continuous improvement in quality. Excellence is the hallmark of the group and there is no room for compromise on quality. The values of this great leader have percolated within the group. As a result, 'service to society' be it in hospitality, academics or health care is the driving force of this entire group.

Results are clear ... the key difference between highly successful leaders and just OK leaders are that very successful leaders are conscious and deliberate. Very successful leaders like CA. A. Ragavendra Rao demonstrate focus, passion, a sense of urgency and dynamic agility.

*Focus* – Mr Ragavendra Rao has had the ability to clearly set the competitive differentiators for the Srinivas Group in the marketplace and then focus the energy and resources of the organization toward the achievement of those differentiators.

*Passion* – The able leadership has built a strong commitment throughout the workforce to achieve demanding yet compelling goals.

*Speed* - with technology, time to market and customer response time are absolute critical success factors. Having great products and services *too late* is the same as not having them at all. The Srinivas group was a

pioneer in setting up a three star hotel, academic institutions and medical center. Creating and executing with a sense of urgency is a fundamental requirement for success.

*Agility* - the ability to adapt rapidly to shifts in the market place, in customer demands and in technology. Organizations that are successful do not just cope with change. They ride the wave of change like a surfer, with the same agility and flexibility to shift without missing a beat. The Srinivas group has changed with times. The group has come to offer a variety of courses with latest specialization for the first time in Mangalore.

### **THE CHARISMA OF THE LEADER**

CA. A. Raghavendra Rao's Hobbies include reading tax journals and commercial journals and to educate and bring out more students into the education field.

He says waiting for his CA results in 1965, which were very doubtful, has been an unforgettable experience for him. "If I would have not passed, there was no future for me. I would be a common man," he concludes.

He places a lot of emphasis on hard work and his message to the readers is not much different from his own goals. He says, "Work hard and build up a constructive thinking for future generations. People should be good to one another. We have to keep everyone happy, and there should be no room for jealousy among our brethren. We have to try to lift up someone and not to pull them down. We have to think of others prosperity and not disparity."

What is his vision for the future, we ask him. He responds "Transforming Society through Education by setting up academic institutions in dynamic equilibrium with its social, ecological and economic environment striving continuously for excellence in education, research and technological service to the nation."

### **CONCLUSION**

The complexity, of challenges that has facing the organizations requires a competent, skilled and engaged leader. A leader who invests the effort in developing a strategic model that is right to embrace and design programs that go beyond a sequence of courses to those that create a robust and multi-dimensional curriculum that enables the group to meet its needs and priorities.

### **Questions**

1. How do you justify Peter Drucker's statement of leadership in the context of Srinivas Group..
2. Sri. CA. A. Raghavendra Rao has created a 'world from a rubble' substantiate the role of his leadership style in achieving this.
3. "Leaders are not always born, but they are made" support this statement with the case.

### **Exhibit 1:**

#### **Positions held**

Articleship of Chartered Accountancy course under Late Sr. A Umanath Rao, C.A. Mangalore.

Member of Institute of C.A of India in 1965 (A.C.A.) & Fellow of ICAI in 1970 (F.C.A)

1979 to 1983- Member of the Southern Indian Regional Council of Chartered Accountants of India, Madras.

1980 to 1981- Chairman of the SIRC C A Students Association, Madras

1982 to 83 - Secretary of SIRC, Madras

Leading consultant & Auditor for Finance, Trading Commercial & Industrial Concerns.

1985 to 1987 - President of Canara Chamber of Commerce & Industry

1983 to 1984 - Secretary of Canara Chamber of Commerce & Industry

1984 to 1985 - Vice-president of the Kanara Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Chairman of Advisory Committee to Canara Chamber of Commerce & Industry for several years.

1985 to 1987- Member of the Karnataka Telephone Advisory Committee

1987 – Member of the Customs Advisory Committee for the Karnataka Customs Collectorate.

1987 to 1988 Working President of Besant Women's National Education Society.

Chaired many of the Taxation and Accounting Seminars held at Madras, Belgaum and Mangalore.

Attended a number of All India Conferences conducted by ICAI and Hotel & Tourism Convention Organized by FHRAI, New Delhi.

#### **Awards and Recognition**

27.12.1995– 'Shree Krishnanugraha award' from Paryaya, Shri Sheeroor mutt, Udupi

18.01.1998- 'Shree Krishnanugraha award' from Paryaya, Shri Kaniyoor Mutt, Udupi

20.12.1999- 'Loka Shastra Seva Praveena' award from Paryaya Shri Kaniyoor Mutt, Udupi.

01.11.2004 - District Level Rajyotsava Award of Govt. of Karnataka.

28.05.2006 - 'VIPRA JANA' Award from D.K. Dravd Brahmins Association, Mangalore.

26.08.2006 - 'Chitrabharathi' Award for the contribution in the filed of education from Chitrabharathi Tulu Chitraranga.

23.12.2008 –'Outstanding Manager Award 2008' by Mangalore Management Association.

01.01.2009 - Achiever's New Year Award 2009, for the distinguished service to the Society in the filed of Education, Commerce & Industry by Academy of General Education, Manipal, along with Rotary Club of Udupi - Manipal and Syndicate Bank, Manipal.

03.01.2009 – "SIRC Diamond Jubilee Award" for senior Chartered accountant.

**Membership**

Member & Founder President of Kala Sangama, a Cultural body

Life Member of Mangalore Productivity Council and Mangalore Management Association.

Past member of Rotary Club of Mangalore

Past member of the Senate of Mangalore University - 1985- 88 and 1995 - 1998

**Director:**

Hotel Srinivas – 3 Star Hotel in Mangalore

Udupi Srikrishna Bhavan, Mangalore.

Srinivas Estates Pvt. Ltd.,

**Exhibit 2:**

**Srinivas Group of Institutions**

S. No.	Name of the Institutions	Courses & Intake	Affiliation
1	Srinivas College of Hotel Management	BHM (4 Years)100 /year	Mangalore University & AICTE
2	Srinivas College of Physiotherapy	BPT, MPT, Ph.D.170/year	Rajiv Gandhi University, Bangalore
3	Srinivas Institute of Management Studies	MBA, MCA, Ph.D.180/year	Mangalore University & AICTE
4	Srinivas Institute of Social Work	MSW120/year	Mangalore University
5	Srinivas First Grade College	BCA, BBM, DAVE350/year	Mangalore University
6	Srinivas College of Pharmacy	B.Pharm, M.Pharm, Ph.D.200/year	Rajiv Gandhi University, Bangalore & AICTE
7	Srinivas Institute of Nursing Sciences	B.Sc, M.Sc. (Nursing)90/year	Rajiv Gandhi University, Bangalore, & AINC
8	Srinivas College of Education	B.Ed.100/year	Mangalore University
9	A. Shama Rao Nursing School	ANM Nursing70/year	Karnataka Govt.
10	Srinivas Pre-University College	PUC (Science & Commrce)200/year	Karnataka PU Board
11	Srinivas Institute of Technology	BE, M.Tech, MBA, MCA, Ph.D.1200/year	VTU & AICTE
12	Vijayalakshmi Institute of Hospitality Science	B.Sc. (HS), B.Sc.(ID) 80/year	Mangalore University
13	Srinivas School of Engineering,	BE (4 branches) 420/year	VTU & AICTE
14	Srinivas School of Management	MBA 120/year	Mangalore University & AICTE
15	Srinivas School of Business	PGDM 60/year	AICTE
16	Srinivas Institute of Medical Science	MBBS150/yearB.Sc. (Allied Medicine) =300 seats/year	Rajiv Gandhi University, Bangalore & MCI
17	Srinivas Hospital	300 bedded General Hospital	
18	Srinivas Institute of Rural Reconstruction Agency	NGO	Registered Trust
19	Srinivas Global Education & Research Centre	Diploma in General Science	Autonomous

20	Srinivas Institute of Dental Sciences	BDS 100/year	Rajiv Gandhi University, Bangalore & DCI
21	Srinivas School of architecture	B.Arch. 90/year	VTU & AICTE

**Exhibit 3** Time line of Srinivas group

